Page 001

The World War 1914 to 1918

Edited in the Reich Archive

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The Military Operations on Land

Eighth Volume

Published by E. S. Mittler & Son

Berlin in the Year 1932

Page 002

The Operations of the Year 1915

Events in the West in Spring and Summer, in the East from Spring until the End of the Year

With thirty-nine maps and sketches

Published by E. S. Mittler & Son   
Berlin in the year 1932

Page 003

Introduction to the Eighth Volume.

The present Volume VIII describes the operations in the West in the spring and summer of 1915, in the East from spring until the end of the year.

The previously practiced custom of concluding the depiction of events on the various theaters of war at the same time had to be deviated from, as the operations in the East formed internally coherent actions until the end of the year, whose depiction could not be interrupted. This also results in the larger scope of the present volume. The review deals with the position of the German Supreme Army Command on the question of warfare in the East throughout the entire year of 1915.

The inclusion of military formations has been omitted, as a special volume "Military Formations" as a supplement to the complete war work is in progress. The operational volumes will henceforth only provide brief information on the respective troop divisions of the armies in footnotes.

The Historical Commission has commissioned Major General a.D. Rudolf von Borries in Potsdam and Dr. phil. Hans Rothfels, Professor of History at the University of Königsberg i. Pr., with the review of Volume VIII. The Reich Archive expresses its special thanks to both reporters.

On October 31, 1931, the previous President of the Reich Archive, Dr. h.c. Hermann Ritter Mertz von Quirnheim, retired after reaching the age limit. He was succeeded by the Director of the Historical Department, Dr. h.c. Hans von Haeften. Oberarchivrat Wolfgang Foerster was appointed Director of the Historical Department.

Page 004

Table of Contents.  
The Operations of the Year 1915.  
Events in the West in Spring and Summer, in the East from Spring until the End of the Year.

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915 . . . . . . . . 1

1. Italy's Entry into the War . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1

2. The Worsening Economic Situation of the Central Powers and the Submarine Trade War . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 12

3. The Manpower Replacement and Munitions Situation until the End of 1915 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 18

The Deployments and First Battles on the Italian Front . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 25

The Western Front from Mid-April to Early August 1915 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 34

1. The Battles until the Beginning of the Spring Offensive in Early May . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 34

a) The Supreme Army Command and the Western Army in April . . . 34

b) The Gas Attack of the 4th Army at Ypres . . . . . . . . . 35

c) The Offensive Battles of the Army Detachments Strauß and Gaede 49

2. The Measures of the French and English Command until Early May . . . . . . . 51

3. The Beginning of the Spring Battle in Artois . . 55

a) The Battles of the 6th Army from May 9th to 14th . . . . . . 57

b) The Assumption of Command by General von Lochow in the Main Battle Sector and the Battles until Mid-June . . . . . . 69

4. The Battles of the Other Armies on the Western Front from Mid-May until End of July . . . . . . 78

5. New Major Attacks in Artois from June 16th to 18th and the Fading of the Spring Battle . . 84

6. Observations . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 94

7. The Reorganization of the Western Army until Early August . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 98

Page 005

Table of Contents.

IV. The War Against Russia in Summer and Autumn 1915

A. The Front of the Supreme Commander East until July 2

1. The Directive of the Supreme Army Command from April 16 ........................................... 103

2. The Attack on Lithuania and Courland.

a) The Operation against Schaulen, April 27 to May 3 .......... 106

b) The Capture of Libau, May 1 to 8 ........................................... 109

c) Defense against Russian Counterattacks, May 8 to 14 ......................... 112

d) Extension of the Battles to the Southern Bank of the Njemen, May 13 to 24 ................................................................. 116

e) Battles of the 10th and Njemen Army, May 25 to June 2 .......... 120

f) Measures of the Russians ................................................................. 123

3. Events with the 9th Army, Army Group Gallwitz, and 8th Army in May and June .......... 126

B. The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia

1. The Forcing of the San Crossing at Jaroslau from May 14 to 20 ........................................... 131

2. The Events on the Right Wing of the Army until May 19 ................................................................. 139

3. The Battle North of Przemysl from May 21 to 27 ................................................................. 159

4. The Battle for Przemysl from May 28 to June 3 .......... 165

5. The Russian Southwestern Front from Mid-May to Early June ................................................................. 182

6. The Advance of the Southern Army against the Upper Dniester from May 20 to June 3 ......................... 189

7. Operational Considerations and Decisions ........................................... 192

8. The Battles on the Right Wing of the Army from June 4 to 13 ................................................................. 193

9. Mackensen's Offensive on Lemberg in June

a) Deployment and Preparations ........................................... 196

b) The Breakthrough Battle of Lubaczow from June 5 to 15 ................................................................. 203

c) The Breakthrough through the Grodek-Magierow Position and the Capture of Lemberg. June 17 to 22 ................................................................. 216

10. Considerations ................................................................. 231

11. The Battles on the Dniester Front from June 14 to 22 ................................................................. 236

12. The Combined Army Commands during the Operation on Lemberg ........................................... 239

13. The Battles of the Southern Army End of June ........................................... 243

14. The Pursuit after the Capture of Lemberg until End of June ................................................................. 249

15. The Russian Southwestern Front in June ........................................... 253

Page 006

Table of Contents

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East Against the Russian Narew Front

[Detailed table of contents with page numbers 264-436, including sections about:

- The decisive meeting in Posen

- Implementation of the attack

- Continuation of the attack towards Bug

- Events at the 9th Army and capture of Warsaw

- Disputes between Supreme Army Command and Commander-in-Chief East

- The 12th and 8th Army in pursuit through Poland

- The conquest of Nowogeorgiewsk

- The Allied offensive on Brest Litovsk

- The Russian Supreme Command until end of August]

Page 007

Table of Contents

F. The Operation of the Supreme Commander East against Vilna . . 456

1. The Battles in Lithuania and Courland until the End of

August . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 456

a) The Battles of the Neman Army . . . . . . . . . . . 456

b) The Attack of the 10th Army on Kovno . . . . . . . 472

c) The Advance of the 10th Army until August 31 . . . . 481

d) Disputes with the Supreme Army Command . . . . . . . 489

2. The Battle of Vilna . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 494

a) Regrouping and Battles until September 8 . . . . . . 494

b) The Attack until September 14 . . . . . . . . . . . 500

c) The Concentric Attack and Pursuit from September 15

to 19 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 507

d) The Defense against the Russian Counter-attack and the

End of the Battle . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 516

e) Russian Operations and Observations . . . . . . . . 525

3. The Battles of the Neman Army from Mid-August to

End of September . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 533

G. The Capture of the Permanent Position and Events until Year's

End under the Supreme Commander East . . . . . . . . . . . 540

H. The Pursuit of Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold

after the Fall of Brest-Litovsk . . . . . . . . . . . . . 550

J. The Right Army Wing from Mid-July to Year's End . . . . . . 563

1. The Austro-Hungarian Offensive in Eastern Galicia

and Volhynia . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 563

2. The Offensive of Army Group Linsingen against

Rovno . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 577

3. The Russian Southwest Front from End of August to

Mid-October . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 585

4. Observations . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 588

5. The Capture of the Permanent Position . . . . . . . . 589

K. The Russian Supreme Command from September to December 1915 . 594

V. The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915 . . . . . . . . . . . . 598

1. The Situation until End of July . . . . . . . . . . . 598

2. Peace Initiatives of the German Supreme Army

Command . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 604

3. The Relocation of the Focus of Warfare . . . . . . . . 610

VI. Review of General von Falkenhayn's Warfare against

Russia . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 616

Page 008

Table of Contents.

Appendices. Page

Appendix 1: Comparison of German and Enemy Artillery in the Spring Battle in Artois 1915.

(In the map pocket at the end of the volume.)

Appendix 2: The Bilateral Infantry Force Ratio on the Western Theater of War around mid-June 1915 . 629

Appendix 3: Some Information about the Formation, Training and Deployment of the British "Kitchener" Troops . . . 631

Appendix 4: References . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 633

Index of Persons . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 639

Index of Military Units . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 651

The next volume, IX, will provide a chronological overview of the events of 1915 on all theaters of war.

Page 009

XII Table of Contents. Abbreviations. (Valid only for the notes.)

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

Army Department ....... = A. Abt. or Abtlg.

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

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

Landwehr Corps ......... = Ldw. K.

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

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

General Command ....... = Gen. Kdo.

Corps Command ......... = K. Kdo. or Kdo.

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

Higher Cavalry

Commander ............ = H. K. K.

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

Infantry Division ... = I. D. or Inf. Div.

Reserve Division ...... = R. D. or Res. Div.

Cavalry Division ... = K. D. or Kav. Div.

Landwehr Division ..... = Ldw. D. or Div.

Landsturm Division .... = Ldst. D. or Div.

Replacement Division ....... = Ers. D. or Div.

Guard Infantry

Division .............. = G. I. D.

Infantry Brigade .... = I. Br.

Reserve Infantry

Brigade ............... = R. I. Br. or R. Br.

Landwehr Infantry

Brigade ............... = L. I. Br. or L. Br.

Landsturm Brigade ..... = Ldst. Br.

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

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

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

Squadron .............. = Est.

Cannons ............... = Kan.

Howitzers ............. = Haub.

Mortar ................ = Mör.

Mine Thrower ........... = Min. W.

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

composed ...... = zsgfst.

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

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

Austro-Hungarian = öst.-ung.

Riflemen .............. = Sch. or Schütz.

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

Cuban ................. = Kuban.

Coastal ................. = Küst.

Page 010

Table of Contents. XIII

Maps and Sketches.

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

A. War Leadership.

Sketch 1: The Upper Italian theater of war in summer 1915.

B. West.

Map 1: The front against France. Status on May 8, 1915. — 1:1,000,000.

Map 2: The battle at the Yser and in the Ypres salient. April to May 1915. — 1:60,000.

Map 3: The spring battle in Artois. Status on May 9, 1915. — 1:80,000.

Map 4: The front against France. Status on August 1, 1915. — 1:1,000,000.

Sketch 2: The offensive battles of the Army Detachment Stranz from April 20 to May 7, 1915.

Sketch 3: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The first attack objectives of the enemy.

Sketch 4: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The British attack on May 9.

Sketch 5: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The German positions between Angres and St. Laurent after May 12.

Sketch 6: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The situation at the 6th Army on May 15.

Sketch 7: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The artillery distribution mid-May.

Sketch 8: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The situation on June 16.

Sketch 9: The spring battle in Artois 1915. The troop distribution upon dissolution of the Lochow Army Group on June 29.

C. East.

Map 5: The front against Russia from May 13 to July 12, 1915. — Approximately 1:2,500,000.

Map 6: The operations of the Allies against Russia. Mid-May to November 1915. — Approximately 1:100,000

Map 7: The front against Russia from July 13 to end of 1915. — Approximately 1:2,500,000.

Sketch 10: The battles in Courland from April 26 to 30, 1915.

Sketch 11: Battles in Courland from May 7 to 13, 1915.

Page 011

XIV Table of Contents.

Section 12: The gas attacks of the 9th Army in June and July 1915.

Section 13: The Battle of Jaroslaw. May 14 to 20, 1915.

Section 14: The battle north of Przemysl and the fight for the fortress. May 23 to June 3, 1915.

Section 15: The Army Detachment Woyrsch. Mid-May 1915.

Section 16: The advance on Lemberg. June 13 to 22, 1915.

Section 17: The advance of the Southern Army. June 7 to 22 and May 22 to July 4, 1915.

Section 18: The battles at Stryj. May 26 to June 8, 1915.

Section 19: The Russian position on the Narew Front on July 13, 1915, according to German perception.

Section 20: The breakthrough of the Gallwitz Army Group through the Russian positions at Przasnysz. July 15 to 19, 1915.

Section 21: The course of the attack against the Narew. July 13 to 19, 1915.

Section 22: The attack over the Narew. July 22 to 25, 1915.

Section 23: The attack on Nowogeorgiewsk. August 1915.

Section 24: The advance on Brest Litowsk. June 22 to August 26, 1915.

Section 25: The advance of the Woyrsch Army Detachment over the Vistula in July and August 1915.

Section 26: The battles of the Niemen Army in July and August 1915.

Section 27: The attack on Kowno. August 1915.

Section 28: The Battle of Wilna. The Hindenburg Army Group from August 30 to September 18, 1915.

Section 29: The Battle of Wilna. The 10th Army from September 14 to 16, 1915.

Section 30: The Battle of Wilna. The 12th, 8th, and 10th Army on September 26, 1915.

Section 31: The southern offensive in Galicia and Volhynia from August 27 to September 18, 1915.

Section 32: The offensive of the Linsingen Army Group at Rowno from September 20 to October 13, 1915.

Page 012

The Operations of the Year 1915

The events in the West in spring and summer, in the East from spring until the end of the year

Page 013

I. The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

Map 1 Volume VII, Map 5 and Sketch 1 Volume VIII.

I. The Intervention of Italy.

When General von Falkenhayn, in clear recognition of the threatening military and political situation of the Danube Monarchy, decided on April 13, 1915, to launch the major relief attack in Galicia, he believed he should only temporarily abandon the realization of his offensive plans in the West. The task set by Generaloberst von Mackensen, to force the Russians to evacuate their front in West Galicia up to the Lupkow Pass, could already be considered solved by May 8 with the reaching of the Wisłok. Thus, General von Falkenhayn faced the question of whether to be content with the successes achieved in the East and now resume his plans against Serbia and in the West. The proposal of General von Conrad, to exploit the victory on the Galician battlefield by pursuing the Russians to the San, immediately found his approval, as "the opportunity to deal the enemy a blow that could not be compensated for" had to be exploited.

This decision meant for some time the abandonment of the implementation of offensive plans in the West. It was to be expected that the enemies would exploit the weakening of the German front there for major attacks, the outcome of which remained uncertain given their growing numerical superiority.

At the beginning of May 1915, there were about 97 German infantry divisions on the French-Belgian battlefield, while the enemy was estimated at 110 to 112 divisions, which on average were significantly stronger than the Germans. In terms of reserves, the Supreme Army Command behind the Western Front had about 7½ infantry divisions, as well as numerous heavy batteries, so that in the event of an enemy attack, the artillery combat strength of an army could be doubled in a few days.

1) Volume VII, p. 345 and 360/361. — 2) Volume VII, p. 419 ff. — 3) Volume VII, p. 421. — 4) p. 35. — 5) p. 56.  
† World War. Volume VIII.

Page 014

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

On the Russian front, from the Baltic Sea to Autowina, 111½ German and Austro-Hungarian^1) infantry divisions faced an estimated 114 Russian divisions. The strength of the Austro-Hungarian forces on the Serbian border totaled 234,000 men, while the Serbian army was estimated at 210,000 men^2). Against Italy, 112 battalions^3) were assigned to border protection. The forces of the Danube Monarchy, surrounded by enemies, were thus extremely strained.

From mid-March to mid-May, nine infantry divisions and three cavalry divisions from the Western Army were transferred to the German Eastern Front. Whether further forces had to be withdrawn from the Russian front for the benefit of the East was a decision General von Falkenhayn intended to make during the defense against the expected Russian attack. His main consideration was to avoid, if at all possible, the redeployment of forces from the East to restore the situation on the Western front, as long as operations against Russia continued to show promise.

Additionally, the development of the political situation in Italy, Turkey, and the Balkans could significantly influence decisions on the Western front and in Galicia. Therefore, in May 1915, it particularly captured the attention of the military leadership of the Central Powers.

The great tension of those days was vividly expressed in the exchange of opinions between the two chiefs of staff. In two letters sent in quick succession to General von Conrad on April 30 and May 2, General von Falkenhayn again urged concessions to the demands of the Italian government^4). On May 4, Kaiser Wilhelm emphasized this approach by

1) The term "Austro-Hungarian," frequently recurring in troop reports and descriptions of battles on the Eastern Front, is abbreviated as "ö.u." in this chapter for space-saving reasons.  
2) Along the Romanian border, only border protection reinforced by the Landsturm was stationed, totaling about 9,600 men.  
3) The total strength of the Serbian army was estimated at 232 battalions, 536 field guns, and about 240 heavy guns. This strength includes forces in a small detachment on the Albanian northern border, comprising approximately 5,000 men and 140 guns.  
4) Regarding the security arrangements of the Austro-Hungarian border fortifications. More details on pages 26/27.  
5) Volume VII, C. 343/344.

Page 015

Diplomatic Negotiations between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. 3

taking a similar step with his imperial ally. The Vienna cabinet declared itself ready on the same day for new, very far-reaching concessions. This concession coincided with the termination of the Triple Alliance treaty communicated by Italy to the Danube Monarchy on May 4. On May 5, the extraordinary German ambassador, Prince Bülow, reported from Rome that the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Sonnino, had informed him after learning of the Vienna offers: Just 14 days ago, everything could have been settled with these proposals; to his remark that this was still possible today, Baron Sonnino remained silent. On May 6, the news arrived in Vienna that the Italian Council of Ministers had described Austria-Hungary's proposals as "not a sufficient basis for negotiations." Emperor Franz Joseph then declared in a telegram to Emperor Wilhelm on the same day that he had reached "the utmost limit of conceivable accommodation" with the latest concessions.

The seriousness of the Italian crisis prompted a discussion among the leading statesmen and general staff chiefs of the Central Powers on May 7 in Teschen. The latest reports from Rome were somewhat more hopeful. It was said that Italy had indeed concluded a treaty with the Entente on April 26, but had reserved a four-week period for deciding whether this treaty should also come into force. Thus, there still seemed to be a faint hope of keeping Italy out of the war.

So far, General von Falkenhayn had evasively answered all inquiries from Austria-Hungary about German military assistance in the event of Italy entering the war; this possibility could only be decided in the "concrete case." Determining this stance was, apart from the military situation, which made any fragmentation of forces undesirable, primarily the effort to persuade the Danube Monarchy to the utmost possible accommodation until the end.

1) These concessions concerned, besides the cession of the largest part of Trentino, also considerable territorial cessions on the Isonzo including Gradisca, the establishment of an Italian university in Trieste, Austria-Hungary's disinterest in Albania; however, "guarantees against the establishment of a third power" would have to be created there.  
2) Volume VII, p. 343/344.  
3) In fact, the Salandra cabinet had already committed itself firmly through the treaty of April 26, but had set the condition that hostilities should not begin for four weeks. The Chief of General Staff, General Cadorna, declared on May 6 that the army would be ready to march at the earliest on May 20. (Salandra: "Intervento", p. 174–176 and p. 242.) 4) Volume VII, p. 364.

Page 016

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

to prompt actions against Italy. Now the situation had changed. On the Eastern Front, there was hope that, thanks to the great successes of the Galician operation, forces could soon be freed up. The Viennese government had indeed gone to the limits of what was possible in its concessions, perhaps even beyond. This explained why General von Falkenhayn, during the meeting in Teschen, was prepared to send German forces to the Italian border if necessary; however, their extent had to depend on the general situation when Italy entered the war. Regarding the political outcome of this discussion, Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg informed Prince Bülow in Rome on May 8 that the Viennese cabinet was ready to "ultimately approve everything." Moreover, statements by the previously oppressive former Italian Prime Minister Giolitti about the seriousness of the situation finally prompted the Austro-Hungarian and the extraordinary German ambassador in Rome, without waiting for Vienna's consent, to inform the Italian Foreign Minister on May 10 of further extensive Austrian concessions. These included the cession of all territories inhabited by Italians in Tyrol and on the western Isonzo bank with Gradisca, furthermore, for Trieste, a declaration as an "imperial free city" and a free port, as well as the establishment of an Italian university, and finally, complete disinterest of Austria-Hungary in Albania. Germany declared itself willing to guarantee the loyal execution of these offers to the Italian government. Although these concessions went significantly beyond those previously made, even beyond what Giolitti had suggested a few months earlier, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Baron Burian, subsequently expressed his approval of them to his own embassy in Rome. The question was merely whether the offers came too late, and whether the Italian government had not already committed itself too far to the Triple Alliance. Then everything depended on the internal political development in Italy, which still seemed to favor the Central Powers at the last moment; for on May 13, Prime Minister Salandra, due to strong resistance raised in the Italian parliament against the war policy, submitted his resignation. However, when it became known on the afternoon of May 16 that the King had not accepted Salandra's resignation, it was clear that the decision for war had been made.

Page 017

Exchange of Views of the General Staff Chiefs on Conducting Operations Against Italy.

Although the increasingly significant military success of the Allies in Galicia seemed unable to change Italy's stance, there was hope that it could still positively influence the politically unstable situation in the Balkans. Above all, it was expected that Romania would adopt a friendlier attitude towards the Central Powers. Furthermore, there was renewed hope of finally winning over Bulgaria. The demand to secure a connection with Turkey by defeating Serbia became more urgent due to the large landing operations of the British and French on the Gallipoli Peninsula, as raised by the Ottoman government. To secure Bulgaria's support against Serbia, both General Staff Chiefs agreed on May 12 in Pleß to inform Sofia that they were ready to immediately prepare the campaign against Serbia, given the favorable situation in Galicia and the currently favorable water levels of the Danube; however, agreement on Bulgaria's military participation was a prerequisite. The Bulgarian government was therefore informed by the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, von Jagow, of the proposal to immediately send a high-ranking officer to conclude a military convention at the German Great Headquarters, where representatives of Austria-Hungary and Turkey were also invited. However, the response to this offer was delayed due to the threatening developments in Rome. In fact, Bulgaria wanted to make its decision dependent on clarifying the general situation.

Meanwhile, General von Conrad proposed in a memorandum sent to Pleß on May 14 that if Italy's entry into the war became a reality, they should switch to defense in Galicia after reaching the Dniester-San line, but with the available forces — he estimated ten Austro-Hungarian and ten German divisions — to attack the Italians; he believed that with sufficient German and Bulgarian forces, they could simultaneously conduct the campaign against Serbia. However, General von Falkenhayn could only agree to this proposal regarding the defense in Galicia, as he considered a military success in the Balkans necessary due to the Turks' precarious situation. He therefore planned to first attack Serbia and remain on the defensive against Italy in the meantime.

1) Volume VII, p. 364/365.

Page 018

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

On May 16, he made the following counter-proposal: In Galicia, besides the German 11th Army, 17 to 18 Imperial and Royal and seven German divisions — about 35 divisions in total — should be freed up for operations against Serbia and Italy. The attack against Serbia was to be prepared immediately. Against Italy, Austria-Hungary should take over the defense in Carinthia, Carniola, and the coastal region with about 16 divisions. In Tyrol, General von Falkenhayn was ready to transfer the same task to German troops. The Imperial and Royal units and fortifications currently there would be placed under German command. How many German forces would be deployed in Tyrol could not yet be decided; in any case, they would be measured to ensure they would certainly prevent any Italian advance into Tyrolean territory.

In his response the next day, General von Conrad maintained that only 20 divisions could be withdrawn from the Galician front in total; he intended to deploy these as a unified force against the Italians to defeat their expected 30 divisions advancing in the general direction via Villach and Ljubljana toward the Danube section Vienna-Budapest. However, he did not want to relinquish control of Tyrol's defense; this would fall to the local Imperial and Royal and any available German forces under Imperial and Royal supreme command. The security against Serbia and, if necessary, against Romania would be the responsibility of the Imperial and Royal Balkan forces.

In response to these statements, General von Falkenhayn repeated his operational proposal, but now estimated the forces to be freed from Galicia at only 29 divisions. Including the Imperial and Royal Balkan Army with 20 divisions, he thus believed he could use 49 divisions against Serbia and Italy. "As to the question of how they should be deployed," — as he wrote on May 17 — "I would not like to address this before receiving Bulgaria's response."

Page 019

Contrasts in Opinions on the Conduct of Operations against Italy.

which will hopefully be the case tomorrow or the day after. In any case, it can already be said today that it would be possible either to keep Serbia in check with nine divisions and strike against Italy with 40, or to launch a short strike against Serbia with 31½ divisions, which might firmly bind Bulgaria as well as Turkey and thus Romania to us, and to at least very sensitively halt the Italian advance with 17½ divisions until the Serbian matter is resolved."

An agreement on the main issue was not reached. While General von Conrad maintained his view to "use all available forces exclusively against Italy" and considered a campaign in the Balkans "currently not feasible," General von Falkenhayn wanted to reserve his position on whether the attack should first be directed against Serbia or Italy.

Only through verbal discussions in Teschen was a certain balance of the mutual views reached on May 18: Five divisions of the Austro-Hungarian 5th (Balkan) Army were to be immediately moved to the area west of Agram, where they could be assembled by June 5. At the Serbian border, only two divisions were to remain besides border security and fortress garrisons, with their immediate reinforcement by three German divisions from Galicia being planned. Furthermore, on May 21, the Austro-Hungarian VII Corps was to be transferred to Klagenfurt, as well as two German and one Austro-Hungarian division to Marburg-Pettau. These three were to join the five divisions of the previous Balkan Army to form the new 5th Army under the command of General von Borojevic. A newly to be established German unit, the "Alpine Corps," was to be subordinated to the Tyrolean Defense Command, General of Cavalry Dankl, and the supreme command on the entire Italian front was to be transferred to General of Cavalry Archduke Eugen.

Despite these decisions, which only concerned the immediately necessary measures, the German Chief of Staff advocated initially conducting a temporally and spatially limited advance against Serbia. The forces used in this were to be later employed for the planned strike against Italy.

How much General von Falkenhayn's campaign against Serbia in

Page 020

The forefront of all considerations was, as it emerged, that he also endeavored on May 19 to create the prerequisites for its implementation. Through the representative of the Foreign Office at the great headquarters, Envoy von Treutler, he demanded further diplomatic steps in Sofia to finally obtain a clear answer from there to the inquiry of May 12 about Bulgaria's participation. In a letter addressed to Teschen on the same day, he emphasized: "That the Serbian issue can be resolved by the Württembergers of the Italian offensive, I am sure. According to all my information, the Italians will not march with their masses before the beginning of June and, according to Your Excellency's personal information, have at least four weeks to march and fight before they can become truly threatening. So this is not the case before the beginning of July. By then, however, the Serbian question can very well be decided."

Events then occurred that fundamentally influenced the decisions of the two chiefs of staff: On the evening of May 19, it became known via Teschen that Bulgaria had declined to participate in a campaign against Serbia; furthermore, the k.u.k. Army Command was informed from Vienna that the declaration of war by Italy was to be expected within 24 hours at the latest. General von Conrad then wrote to Pleß, convinced that "we must now jointly face the new, certain enemy with all our might and must not paralyze this action by an enterprise based on the possible future intervention of an uncertain third party (Romania)."

On the same day, May 19, reports of extraordinarily heavy Russian attacks on the 11th Army had arrived at the German Great Headquarters. These led General von Falkenhayn, in connection with Bulgaria's refusal, to consider it advisable to temporarily leave the focus of warfare on the Russian front and to conduct the fight both against Serbia and against Italy initially defensively.

He therefore sent an urgent request to Teschen on May 20, not to shift any further forces against Italy beyond the five divisions of the German 11th and k.u.k. VII Corps Reserve, which are now acting in Poland and Galicia, but to begin the defensive efforts there, if possible, "to prevent the Central Powers from creating new severe suffering."

Page 021

Agreement of the Central Powers on the Conduct of the Multi-Front War.

The goal, "the final defeat of the Russian offensive power in Galicia," has been achieved.

To see more clearly for future decisions, General von Falkenhayn on the same day requested information on how the Austro-Hungarian military leadership intended to conduct the strike against Italy in detail. He mentioned that, according to his estimation, "the beginning of the decisive battles could hardly be expected before about seven weeks from today," specifically east of the line Graz—Marburg—Agram. The immediate response revealed that General von Conrad anticipated an Italian advance in two directions, over Laibach—Marburg against the Danube line Budapest—Raab and over Villach—Leoben towards Vienna. He intended to comprehensively attack and defeat the right Italian wing, while the enemy's left wing would be held back by border defenses and troops to be assembled in Carinthia. The attack was to be led by the 5th Army, initially assembled with five divisions west of Agram, with three divisions at Marburg. "I expect," emphasized General von Conrad, "the incursion of stronger Italian forces across the border immediately after the declaration of war, presumably on May 23 or 24, and must reckon with the 200-kilometer stretch from the border to Marburg—Agram taking three, at most four weeks, so until about June 14, at the latest June 20... However, I am clear that the eight divisions are far too weak for the strike and that everything must be done to immediately follow them with additional forces. By June 20, with full utilization of the railways, about 20 divisions could be assembled in the area Graz—Marburg and west of Agram, which seem to me the necessary minimum for the decisive battle..."

However, General von Falkenhayn could not agree with these considerations. Given the situation in Galicia, it was by no means certain that 20 divisions would be available for the strike against Italy planned by General von Conrad in the foreseeable future. Under these circumstances, he insisted on deploying the available forces at the border for defense and went to Teschen on the afternoon of May 21 for further discussions. In a detailed discussion, an agreement was reached. Both sides now agreed that the operation in Galicia should be brought to a conclusion as quickly as possible. Since it was not foreseeable when this would be the case, the planned dispatch of three divisions each to Marburg and to the ...

Page 022

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

The border was not in question. During the discussion, it also emerged that General von Falkenhayn assessed the situation on these two theaters of war much more favorably than the Austro-Hungarian military leadership. He feared no Serbian offensive and considered the offensive capability of the Italians to be low; he expected their arrival in the Marburg—Agram line — as mentioned — significantly later than General von Conrad. Since no further reinforcements were expected for the time being, he deemed the deployment of the five Austro-Hungarian divisions advancing from the Balkans to the front line at the border urgently necessary to purely defend against the Italians at the Isonzo. He succeeded in convincing General von Conrad of this plan despite strong reasons and objections. The slow progress of the offensive operation in Galicia may have also convinced the Austro-Hungarian General Staff that a quick release of local forces for a strike against Italy was no longer to be expected. In this sense, the following telegram was sent to Pleß on May 22: “In accordance with the currently united troop contingents against Italy, I have decided, after thorough consideration of all circumstances, to temporarily observe a defensive procedure against Italy and to move the assembly of the forces ordered from the Balkan theater, the bulk of the 5th Army, and the forces marching towards Carinthia as far forward as possible, thus relocating the first deployments to the Isonzo and Villach.”

After several days of conflicting opinions, the basis for awaiting upcoming battles with Italy was established at the last hour on May 21, while also gaining clarity on the question of continuing the multi-front war: continuation of the offensive of the allies on the Galician front, defense on all other theaters of war.

On May 23, at 3:30 in the afternoon, Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary, but not on Germany. The German Reich leadership limited itself to breaking off diplomatic relations; thus, the Italian government could not expect that Italy would also encounter German imperial troops during its incursion into the Danube monarchy. As early as mid-January 1915, Prince Bülow had informed the Italian Prime Minister Salandra that in the event of a war between Italy and Austria

Page 023

Italy Declares War on Austria-Hungary.

Hungary stated that "Germany with all its might" would be found at the side of its ally¹). If Germany now merely limited itself to breaking off diplomatic relations with Italy, this was due not only to the desire to maintain the supply of raw materials across the Italian border if possible, but also to considerations regarding its relationship with Romania. The news from there did not suggest any immediate danger at the time, but Prime Minister Bratianu had told the German envoy in Bucharest, Baron von dem Bussche, as late as May 21, that maintaining neutrality would be easier for him if not Germany, but Italy declared war. As the Chancellor further communicated in response to an inquiry from General von Falkenhayn on May 21, King Ferdinand had assured the German envoy most emphatically that Romania had made no agreements with Italy, "so that Italy's actions would not result in Romania's entry." Although the situation was becoming difficult due to increasing pressure from the Entente, the King hoped to maintain neutrality. "On the other hand, Bratianu seems," the Chancellor continued, "to be conducting negotiations with Russia behind the King's back²), which he, however, denied. The results of these negotiations are not yet clear. Our victories in the Carpathians have made a strong impression in Romania. This should initially rule out Romania's entry into the war, but this possibility is by no means excluded for later. Joining us soon is ruled out³) as long as there is no internal ministerial crisis in Bucharest, for which there is currently no prospect. In any case, an action against Serbia would mean further assurance that Romania remains calm." Thus, the situation in Bucharest seemed relaxed at the time. The German Chief of Staff therefore again sought to open the route through Romania for munitions transports to Turkey. However, he was not yet successful.

At the time, reassuring news came from Greece.

¹) Telegram from Prince Bülow to the Foreign Office on January 18, 1915.  
²) Such negotiations did indeed take place. Given Bratianu's very high demands, Sazonov became suspicious and believed that Romania was deliberately making unreasonable demands to avoid an agreement with Russia and "to evade the war." Fundamentally, the Romanian government had been granted the right to occupy the Danube Monarchy territories inhabited by Romanians by Russia as early as autumn 1914.  
³) See the official Romanian White Book (published by the Central Office for the Study of the Causes of the War) pp. 178/179, 185, 207—210.  
³) Romanian envoy in Berlin.

Page 024

The battles of the Turks on the Gallipoli Peninsula, despite several serious crises, gave no cause for immediate concerns. Of the 52 divisions of the Turkish army, eleven were deployed at the Dardanelles. The sent 65,000 French and English were unable to make further progress against their tenacious defense. However, it had to be assumed that the final outcome of the struggle depended not least on the unhindered supply of German war materials. However, General von Falkenhayn, from the reports available in Constantinople towards the end of May, gained the impression that the Ottoman Empire would be able to maintain the situation at the straits further by its own strength; a postponement of the offensive against Serbia could therefore also be justified from the standpoint of the situation at the Dardanelles.

In the question of declaring war on Italy, Turkey took the same stance as Germany; the outbreak of war had to be avoided as long as possible, as the political situation in the Balkans was still unclear.

In this development of events, Italy's declaration of war initially had no decisive influence on the military situation of the Central Powers. However, the economic consequences that Italy's entry into the war had for the Central Powers threatened to become noticeable immediately; above all, it was uncertain whether it would be possible to continue to secure supplies across the Italian border.

2. The Intensification of the Economic Situation of the Central Powers and the Submarine Trade War.

In the supply of foreign raw materials, Italy had previously played an important role. A significant portion of American cotton had been imported via Genoa since England declared the North Sea a war zone. Difficulties that Italy initially posed to this transit were resolved through negotiations by the United States. However, since the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary, Italy also blocked transit and export trade to Germany. The German economy was now dependent on imports through neutral states for the supply of raw materials, apart from the already significant but overall small supplies from neighboring countries.

1) Volume VII, p. 364/365. — 2) Volume VI, p. 425 f.

Page 025

The Economic Consequences of Italy's Entry into the War.

on neutral countries, almost entirely relying on their own products and existing supplies. This extremely difficult situation had been addressed by the military administration in further implementation of the measures already taken earlier. Under the leadership of Major Koeth, who in the spring of 1915 was appointed as the successor to Dr. Walter Rathenau, who resigned at his own request, to head the War Raw Materials Department of the Prussian War Ministry, the official management of war-critical raw materials was to be systematically expanded for a long duration of the war. Based on previous experiences, the Raw Materials Department made a clear distinction between the needs of the army and the homeland and sought to increasingly limit the population's needs to the absolutely necessary level. Careful recording of domestic and occupied territories' stocks, systematic expansion of existing and development of new production sources, but above all, regulated distribution of raw material quantities according to the importance of demand were intended to meet the continuously rising requirements for arming and equipping the army. As a substitute for missing natural raw materials, artificial substances often had to be used, for the production of which German inventiveness and science earned great merits.

The nutrition of the army and the homeland also experienced further restrictions due to Italy's entry into the war. Some food and feed that had been suitable to replace other scarce nutrients in the homeland and had previously been imported from Italy were now no longer available. The closure of the Italian border was felt all the more harshly as it had already become necessary in the winter of 1914/15 to place the most important foodstuffs under state control; above all, the central management of bread grain had reminded the public of the seriousness of the situation and prompted measures that affected all sections of the population noticeably.

The blockade of overseas supplies had also already led to a serious shortage of feed; as a result, large quantities of bread grain and potatoes were used for livestock feeding. Since feeding bans were not sufficient, the Reich government had to order pig slaughtering on a large scale, which continued into May. To prevent a potato shortage in the summer, which was just

Page 026

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

The poorest segments of the population had to be put in distress, as a specially established Reich office had purchased all available potatoes. In addition, there was a serious shortage of sugar, which forced requisitions in favor of the army administration. As the oat shortage worsened, the oat harvest also had to be requisitioned. Finally, the sugar shortage led to the central distribution of raw sugar. Beyond that, it had to be expected that further interventions in the free economy would be necessary to ensure the supply of the army and the population. The supplies from agricultural areas occupied by German troops had so far significantly eased the army's food supply, and the initiated systematic cultivation of enemy fields promised further help for the army with the coming harvest, but could hardly relieve the homeland effectively.

In the Danube Monarchy, too, food difficulties first arose in October 1914, which resulted in sparing the allied combat troops. Before the war, Austria and Hungary formed a customs unit, where Hungary's agricultural overproduction fully covered the missing quantities of essential food and fodder in Austria. However, during the war, Hungary's economic situation became more difficult. Therefore, when the Hungarian government began requisitioning grain, flour, and most of the sugar at the beginning of 1915, Austria was forced to take similar measures as Germany. In lengthy negotiations, attempts were made to continue receiving supplies of food from Hungary and to relieve the Austrian economy in supplying the joint army. Nevertheless, supplies from Hungary became increasingly scarce. Likewise, Austria's food situation remained a matter of constant serious concern.

In view of this situation, it was a palpable blow to the entire economic life of the Central Powers when one of the few remaining import bridges closed due to Italy's entry into the war. This disadvantage weighed all the more heavily as Germany's overall economic situation, especially due to the rarely sufficient and increasingly difficult conditions caused by the blockade of shipping over the North Sea in recent weeks, had become extraordinarily challenging. Another significant worsening of Germany's economic situation at this time was the initiation of the submarine trade war.

1) Volume VI, p. 425/426.

Page 027

Germany Opens the Submarine Trade War.

Immediately after the outbreak of the World War, the government of the United States of America proposed to the warring powers to commit to the observance of the London Declaration of Maritime Law of February 26, 1909, which had been unanimously accepted by the powers but not yet ratified, for the purpose of regulating maritime trade warfare under international law. While the German government readily agreed to the American government's proposal, it was rejected by the enemy powers. The reason for this became apparent in the months following the state of war, as England and France took comprehensive measures to blockade and starve Germany. They used, in particular, an arbitrary handling of the right of blockade in contradiction to the London Declaration, as well as an extension of the right to search and seize neutral ships, disregarding all previous international legal customs. The measures aimed at isolating Germany were particularly intensified by the British Admiralty's announcement on November 2, 1914, declaring the entire North Sea a war zone. This severely crippled neutral trade with Germany.

In view of the dangers this posed to the overall war effort of the Central Powers, the Chief of the German Admiralty Staff, Admiral von Pohl, submitted a proposal to the Chancellor on November 7 to impose a blockade by submarines over the British Isles and the northern and western coasts of France as a countermeasure. The idea of using submarines for trade warfare had not been considered by the leading authorities of the German Navy before the war. However, already in the first months of the war and increasingly after the first submarine successes, the submarine front suggested that the most effective way to utilize this weapon would be its deployment against enemy trade. From the beginning, the prevailing view was that it would not be possible for submarines, given the expected enemy surveillance on shipping routes, to observe the forms of cruiser warfare, i.e., with surfaced submarines, the enemy-

Page 028

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

to detain merchant ships and examine their nationality and cargo. As a precondition for a trade war with submarines, the authorization to sink enemy merchant ships by torpedo fire from submerged submarines without warning was contested. The clear distinction between neutral and enemy ships, initially deemed possible, was questioned when, at the end of January 1915, British merchant ships were officially advised to fly a neutral flag to deceive German submarines. However, the German Admiralty hoped to gradually overcome the difficulties by ensuring that neutral shipping would increasingly refrain from navigating the waters around England during the unannounced conduct of the submarine war, which was presumably intended by Germany as a countermeasure against England's special band and blockade attempts. The navy expected the main effect of the submarine trade war to be the deterrence of shipping. However, the idea of conducting the trade war in this manner met with reservations from the Reich leadership, who feared complications with neutral powers, especially with the United States of America. During these disagreements, the Chief of the General Staff observed restraint. He limited himself to emphasizing the interest of land warfare in the connection of enemy channel traffic. The exchange of views between the navy and the Reich leadership on the political and international legal issues associated with the submarine trade war extended until the end of January 1915. Only on February 1 did the Chancellor, in a meeting attended by the Chief of the General Staff of the Army, agree to set aside his reservations and accede to the demands of the Chief of the Admiralty. On February 4, after a presentation by Admiral von Pohl, the Kaiser gave his approval to the submarine trade war. Through an announcement by the Chief of the Admiralty, the waters around Great Britain were declared a war zone as a "countermeasure against the violations of international law aimed at obstructing German maritime traffic by England." The submarine trade war was launched with a number of submarines ready for action.

Objections from neutral powers, particularly the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, and the United States of America, against ...

Page 029

The Submarine Trade War in Summer 1915.

Blockade measures by the Entente and the German countermeasures initially remained largely ineffective. A mediation proposal by the American government on February 21, whereby both warring parties would refrain from the new methods of naval warfare, Germany would thus abandon the submarine trade war, and the enemy powers would allow its food supply, found approval from the German Reich leadership, but was rejected by England.

The British government responded to the German declaration of the submarine trade war on March 11, 1915, by further intensifying its blockade measures. They moved, with complete disregard for the rights and interests of neutral countries, primarily in the direction of intensified obstruction of German trade through the states neighboring Germany, Holland, and the Nordic countries. Germany was to be completely cut off from the world like a besieged fortress, not only to strike its military force but to lethally affect the entire population through starvation.

Thus, the submarine trade war continued. On the occasion of the sinking of the British passenger steamer "Lusitania" on May 7, where a number of American citizens lost their lives, serious diplomatic disputes arose between Germany and the United States. The American government protested and demanded for the future that sinkings should only occur after prior stopping and searching of ships, observing all customary precautionary measures to ensure the safety of passengers. The German admiralty, however, believed it could not comply with this demand without questioning the effectiveness of submarines against the increasingly larger number of armed enemy steamers.

The Reich leadership thus attempted to balance the conflicting interests of politics and naval warfare by imposing restrictions on submarines for the sinking of enemy passenger steamers and allowing unrestricted sinkings only for enemy merchant ships.

The Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army agreed with this view, stating to the Kaiser on May 31, 1915, that the continuation of the submarine trade war should depend on whether the risk of a war with the United States could be avoided under all circumstances. This consideration also determined his stance.

Page 030

The Recruitment and Ammunition Situation until the End of 1915.

In accordance with the demands of General von Falkenhayn for the provision of new combat reserves, the army administration, as far as the replacement situation and the state of armament production allowed, continued to strive to create new units. In the spring of 1915, immediately after Italy's declaration of war on Austria-Hungary, a unit suitable for mountain warfare was assembled from Bavarian and Prussian troops at the request of the Supreme Army Command under the designation "Alpine Corps," which was expanded into a reinforced infantry division. The formation of its two Jäger brigades was carried out from the Bavarian Infantry-Leib-Regiment and three Jäger regiments, to which a number of Jäger battalions and snowshoe formations were combined. In addition to the already mentioned 14 infantry divisions established in the spring, the Western Army formed infantry brigades No. 183, 185, 187, and 192 (Saxon) during the summer of 1915, which were initially reinforced only by pioneers and signal troops, later also by a section of light field howitzers. Due to the strained replacement situation, the desired expansion of these brigades into divisions had to be temporarily postponed, as did the establishment of additional troop units in the Western Army; for it was unavoidable to undertake new formations while the existing units did not reach the planned strengths due to a lack of replacements. In the Eastern Army, the 4th Guard Infantry Division was established in early May 1915, mainly from parts of the Guard Reserve Corps, and at the end of the month, following the already mentioned establishment of the 101st, 103rd, and 105th Infantry Divisions, the 107th Infantry Division was established using the same "procedure." In October 1915, similar

1) Further details, also on the supply of the army with weapons, technical combat means, war equipment, and equipment for air forces and field telegraphs, can be found in the later published Volume IX as well as Volume II of the General Staff's "Conduct of War and War Experiences." 2) Volume VII, p. 306 ff. 3) Volume VII, p. 303 ff. 4) Volume VII, p. 304 ff. 5) Volume VII, p. 306. 6) Volume VII, p. 305.

Page 031

The Formation of New Units in the Year 1915.

Using existing command authorities and troop units, as well as some new formations, the 108th and 109th Infantry Divisions were also established.

At the same time, throughout 1915, efforts continued to expand the existing reserve and Landwehr divisions and to establish new Landwehr divisions from already existing and newly created units. By the end of 1915, the number of Landwehr divisions increased to a total of 20. Alongside this, in the summer and autumn of 1915, there was also a reorganization and expansion of a number of previously makeshift units, mostly named after their leaders. The Posen Corps was formed as the 83rd and 84th Infantry Divisions, the Jastrow Corps as the XVII Reserve Corps, whose two divisions Wernitz and Breugel became the 86th Infantry and 85th Landwehr Divisions, the Dichthut Corps as the 87th, the Menges Division as the 88th, and the Westernhagen Department as the 89th Infantry Division.

By the end of 1915, the German field army comprised a total of 159 divisions — compared to 92 divisions at the outbreak of war —, in addition, there were eleven cavalry divisions, whose number had not increased; there were also some independent brigades.

In addition to and often in connection with these new and restructured formations, there was a continuous establishment or mobile deployment of numerous smaller units, combat, stage, and Landsturm troops, columns and trains, military authorities, and service offices. These served to complete larger units that had not yet been systematically equipped or — notably the numerous foot artillery, aviation, and technical new formations — to reinforce existing field troops.

Finally, the reserve and training troops also experienced a continuous increase in response to the growing demands placed on them. By February 1915, the domestic infantry reserve battalions had been doubled and equipped with two recruitment depots each. The reserve formations of the other branches of service were also increased or strengthened. Based on very favorable experiences, the army administration continued to attach field recruitment depots to the corps or independent divisions at the front, where recruits transferred from the domestic reserve battalions received further training.

1) Including the main reserves of the fortresses, excluding the independent brigades (see "War Armament and War Economy", Volume I, Text Volume, p. 211 and Supplement Volume, Table 18).

Page 032

The Situation of the Central Powers in May 1915.

assigned recruits completed their training under experienced wartime personnel").

The constant expansion of the army organization strained the replacement situation in two ways, as each new formation added to the field army not only demanded replacements for its establishment but also for its maintenance. This strain was felt all the more as the replacement needs of the existing field troops were already extraordinarily high due to the still considerable losses. In the summer of 1915, an average of over 300,000 replacement troops per month, of which about 250,000 men were for the infantry alone, were sent to the field, a number in one month that was approximately equal to the strength of, for example, a wartime army corps or even both peacetime strengths of the German army as of 1913.

A particular difficulty for the replacement situation was caused by the ever-increasing leaves and deferments of conscripts for the war economy. As other means to address the pressing labor shortage at home were demanded, the army administration found itself compelled to comply with the requests of the war industry for efficient labor to a large extent, to ensure the massively swelling demand for armaments and thus the combat strength of the front. Thus, the number of men fit for military service deferred from army service had already grown to well over a million by the summer of 1915.

Although there was not yet any serious threat to the army's replacement supply, the time was approaching when serious disruptions in the influx of new replacement troops would have to occur. This point could only be postponed without harming the other military purposes by burdening the replacement situation as little as possible with the formation of new units. The recruit class of 1915, including the still available Landsturm I contingent, was already exhausted after a few months. By the fall of 1915, however, the class of 1916 had to be called up — significantly ahead of time. Maintaining the previous level of replacement placements was a

1) In connection with this, until May or December 1915, an infantry replacement troop school was established by the district troop institute's efforts in Warsaw. — Numerous courses at a similar educational level were held for the training of officer candidates.  
2) About one-sixth of them consisted of those on leave and deferred.

Page 033

The Personnel Replacement Situation.

Economy in meeting the ongoing replacement needs was expected, with the understanding that this cohort, even including the influx of recovered personnel and replacement troops made available through the conscription of deferred individuals and changes in military regulations¹), would last at most half a year. By the end of 1915, the conscription of the 1917 cohort had already begun.

In this unavoidable worsening of the replacement situation, the Deputy Minister of War, Lieutenant General von Wandel, in full agreement with the Minister of War residing at the Great Headquarters, Lieutenant General Wild von Hohenborn, insisted, unaffected by various demands from the front, on economizing as much as possible with army replacements. In September 1915, General von Wild explained to the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army that the army's replacement supply at the current level could only be maintained for about another year; however, the circumstances compelled "the greatest economy with the available human material," particularly "in view of the consequences that could occur if the influx of replacements dried up before all war tasks were brought to a favorable conclusion." Army and troop leaders were repeatedly reminded by the army administration to measure their replacement claims only according to truly urgent needs and to limit their demands for new formations as much as possible.

Through the unified regulation of replacement supply in their hands, the army administration, in close cooperation with the Supreme Army Command, was able to adequately address needs according to urgency. Accordingly, replacement bans were imposed over troop units that were sufficiently supplied, and eventually over entire army fronts for shorter or longer periods. The same purpose of the most economical replacement management was served when infantry troops, since the summer of 1915, were generally no longer filled to their full planned wartime strength, but only to a battalion strength reduced to 800 in the west and 900 in the east.

Just as much as the provision of the armed forces and replacement supply, the maintenance and enhancement of combat strength was

¹) By law of September 4, 1915, the re-examination of conscripts declared unfit for service during peacetime conscription was made possible, who were exempt from military service under previous legal provisions.

Page 034

The army's sufficient coverage of its enormously increasing material needs was dependent. In particular, ensuring the supply of munitions remained one of the most serious concerns of the army administration; it also had decisive importance for the further operational decisions of the Supreme Army Command. It was certain that the major offensive in the East and the expected defensive battles in the West on both widely spread theaters of war would bring with them an extremely increased consumption of munitions.

In accordance with the demands of General von Falkenhayn, the army administration had been striving with increased emphasis since the spring of 1915 to gradually reduce the mass production of gray cast iron shells, whose inferiority did not allow the artillery to fully develop its performance capabilities, and to promote the production of more efficient pressed steel and cast steel shells. This transition initially posed great difficulties, as their production was more challenging than the manufacture of simple gray cast iron munitions. Thanks to the foresighted measures of the War Ministry and the capabilities of the German industry, it was possible to overcome these difficulties quickly, so that the delivery of pressed steel and cast steel shells also increased rapidly. Meanwhile, their processing into new munitions and thus the production of munitions in general reached its limit in the available amounts of powder and explosives. Since March, the extensive expansions of the powder factories, which had been initiated in a timely manner by the army administration, had gradually become effective, forming the production of powder, and then also the production of other explosives, as the measure for all deliveries. The main difficulty was the lack of saltpeter and nitric acid. Although the production of artificial saltpeter had started in the spring of 1915 with larger deliveries, so that an immediate emergency did not occur, the performance of the new factories could only be gradually increased due to numerous obstacles.

The regulation of munitions production was now carried out in such a way that, depending on the situation, the provisions for field artillery or foot artillery were increased or restricted, or that the weapons of one type of caliber were postponed in favor of the other. For infantry munitions, due to the high artillery demand for powder production, had to relatively stand back, while the subsequent amount of explosives ...

Page 035

The Ammunition Situation.

provision of close combat materials and for other needs, particularly those of the pioneers, were required.

From May to July 1915, the monthly powder production increased as planned from 2.6 to 3.4 million kilograms, but in the following months, due to a lack of nitric acid and as a result of major disruptions caused by explosions and fires at the powder factories, it fell significantly behind the planned increase rate, so that by the end of the year, the monthly output was only 4.3 million kilograms instead of 5. Correspondingly, the following amounts of ammunition were sent to the field in the individual months:

May June July August September October November December

Inf. Ammunition Trains (approx. 2.5 million rounds each) 42 45 42 42 142 1/4 42 171 1/4 45 43 135 1/2

Field Artillery Ammunition Trains 101 150 157 142 142 1/4 171 1/4 151 48 135 1/2

Howitzer Ammunition Trains (6000 rounds each) 79 1/4 105 89 1/2 104 1/2 97 126 111 114 1/3

Mortar Ammunition Trains (2000 rounds each) 27 1/2 32 1/2 35 42 3/4 37 43 47 1/2 53

10 cm Cannon Ammunition Trains (10,000 rounds each) 9 10 3/4 12 11 13 12 14 1/4 14

These deliveries were matched by the following ammunition consumption by the field army in the summer months of 1915:

May June July August September Average Consumption

Inf. Ammunition Trains 47 43 41 32 47 42

Field Artillery Ammunition Trains 133 135 109 128 160 136

Howitzer Ammunition Trains 83 93 109 95 111 98

Mortar Ammunition Trains 34 39 42 36 45 39

10 cm Cannon Ammunition Trains 9 9 1/2 9 1/2 10 1/2 13 10

Thus, ammunition supply and consumption were approximately balanced in the months when the main battles took place, with the temporarily higher consumption being covered by still available reserves of

1) An ammunition train for field cannons contained 26,880, an ammunition train for light field howitzers 12,000 rounds.

Page 036

The chiefs of the field munitions service were covered. The supply difficulties that frequently arose, particularly in the East during pursuit operations, were mainly due to unfavorable supply conditions. Nevertheless, thanks to the efforts of domestic procurement and production sites, it was possible, albeit with a significant reduction in consumption in quiet combat sections, to adequately secure the high ammunition needs of the main battlefronts. Since the autumn of 1915, the decline in ammunition demand associated with the waning of the battles, while maintaining consumption reduction on all non-decisive fronts, allowed for the accumulation of larger reserves, which had already reached a considerable level by the end of the year. Further increases in reserve stocks were anticipated if, by spring 1916, powder production, as planned, had increased to six million kilograms, for which all preparations had been made by the military administration.

Page 037

IV. The War Against Russia in the Summer and Autumn of 1915.

A. The Front of the Commander-in-Chief East until July 2.

1. The Directive of the Supreme Army Command from April 16.

Map 18 Volume VII.

In the communication that the Supreme Army Command sent to the Commander-in-Chief East on April 16 regarding the intended operation in Galicia, it was stated that his cooperation through the longest possible deception and binding of the enemy north of the Pilica was a prerequisite for the success of the operation. When this directive was issued, the Commander-in-Chief East had at his disposal a front measuring about 750 kilometers from the Pilica to the Baltic Sea at Memel, with a total of 38 infantry divisions, all stationed on Russian soil, most densely on the right flank, while the extreme northern flank was almost unoccupied over a stretch of about 200 kilometers. The battles that followed the conclusion of the winter battle in Masuria and were particularly fierce in the foreland of the East Prussian southern border had subsided since the beginning of the month. Strength and combat power, however, especially in the infantry, were not yet fully restored everywhere, and artillery ammunition was constantly scarce. The formation of three new infantry divisions (101st, 103rd, and 105th) from contributions of existing divisions was underway.

In detail, the situation was as follows: From the Pilica east of Tomaszów to the Vistula halfway between Plock–Nowogeorgiewsk, the 9th Army was positioned along the Rawka and Bzura. Its front thus advanced 20 to 30 kilometers compared to the neighboring armies. As the successor to Colonel General von Mackensen led

Page 038

The Front of the Supreme Commander East until July 2.

Whether a decisive or even significantly better result could be achieved with the most stringent concentration of German forces remains uncertain. It repeatedly showed that the striking power of the deployed troops was insufficient for blows that penetrated deeply. Supported by its railways, the enemy could move its troops relatively quickly, supply them conveniently, and reinforce threatened positions in time, while on the German side, every man, every shell, and every ration had to cover about 100 kilometers of land from the German railway to reach the front.

3. Events with the 9th Army, Army Group Gallwitz, and 8th Army in May and June.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 12.

After the victory at Gorlice and the German breakthrough into the area north of the Njemen, the 9th Army had been waiting with the utmost attention for the moment when these successes would also affect the Russian front advancing far to the west, west of the Vistula. Diligent aerial reconnaissance, patrol activities, and monitoring of enemy wireless telegraphy, however, only revealed the picture of several movements behind the positions up to the Vistula and offered no indication that the enemy intended to retreat or significantly weaken his front. He continued to occupy his combat positions. A strong day's march behind these, aircraft had long identified heavily fortified rear installations at Grojec and Blonie, which prevented approaches against the Vistula and Warsaw and had a northern connection to the large fortress of Nowogeorgiewsk.

At the beginning of May, the transport of a Russian division became known. The necessary contributions for the formation of their own new divisions balanced what the enemy withdrew, at least. The question of whether one could not go on the offensive oneself was denied, as the forces were insufficient for a major offensive, and small local successes would not justify the inevitable casualties. Above all, there was a lack of ammunition, as the supply had been extremely restricted due to the increased demand from other fronts. By May 12, the success in Galicia had expanded so far that the enemy also before the army detachment north

Page 039

Situation West of the Vistula and Preparations for the Gas Attack.

began to yield. The following day, their left wing approached south of the Pilica to the forward position of the 9th Army north of the river. The 29th Landwehr Brigade, thus freed, was immediately claimed by the Commander-in-Chief East for the battles at the Njemen1). On May 14, the newly established Pioneer Regiment 36 was made available to the 9th Army as a gas unit. Its position seemed particularly suitable for gas release, as it faced east, which corresponded to the prevailing wind direction, and because the distance to the enemy trenches was shorter than in other parts of the Eastern Front. The experiences with the new weapon (already made before Ypres2)) suggested that with favorable wind, such an effect could be expected that the Army High Command hoped to be able to penetrate the Russian positions smoothly. At Ypres, only the forces had been lacking to exploit the surprisingly favorable local success. The 9th Army now intended to deploy a total of 2½ army corps for the operation; the only question was where the thrust should be directed and what objective should be assigned to it. On May 16, the northern wing of the Army Detachment Woyrsch had reached the same level as the right wing of the 9th Army standing at Domaniowice on the north bank of the Pilica. The simultaneous left swing that this army had executed behind the retreating enemy had, however, only reached as far as the extension of the 9th Army into southeastern Poland; thus, an encirclement of the enemy in the area west of the Vistula had not yet been achieved. Nevertheless, a general retreat of the Russians from this area became a possibility. In such a case, the Commander-in-Chief East did not want to let the 9th Army pursue, but rather withdraw troops to use them at the Njemen, where the enemy apparently attacked with strong forces at this time3), presumably to relieve a planned retreat movement in West Poland. Here, however, the enemy still stood for the time being. On May 18, the 9th Army reported that it intended to install the gas cylinders in the already so often and fiercely contested area east of the Rawka near Sumin, in the section of the XVII Army Corps. Given the high expectations attached to the effect of the gas, and to maintain the element of surprise, it was decided to forgo artillery attack preparations. With favorable wind, the gas was to be released on the morning of May 23, and if all went well, then immediately

1) p. 120. — 2) p. 35 ff. — 3) p. 120.

Page 040

The Front of the Commander-in-Chief East until July 2.

2½ army corps were to break through at Blonie. In contrast, the Commander-in-Chief East determined that "pushing forward to the Blonie position" was less important than "achieving the greatest possible tactical success by pushing southward." The main thrust of the attack was assigned to the XVII Army Corps, with divisions from neighboring sectors joining on the right and left. The Army High Command held an infantry division and a cavalry brigade in reserve. The Gallwitz Army Group was instructed to engage the enemy with its own operations to prevent them from sending reserves to the breakthrough point. Preparations were completed by May 22, but the attack had to be postponed due to east winds.

Only on the afternoon of May 30 did the weather conditions with favorable winds for the coming night become apparent. The order to prepare for the attack was given; about 12,000 gas cylinders were installed. Of the 52 heavy batteries with the army, about 20 were ready to be deployed in the entire twelve-kilometer-wide attack area. Field Marshal Prince Leopold went to the command post west of Bolimów. On May 31, at 2:30 a.m., the gas was released; the cloud moved towards the Russian positions. Half an hour later, however, the XVII Army Corps reported that the gas had apparently passed over the enemy too quickly, and assault troops had been halted by Russian fire. To advance, the infantry demanded thorough artillery preparation. The Army High Command called off the attack. Expectations had been disappointed. As early as May 28, the Supreme Army Command had stated in another context to the Commander-in-Chief East: "To carry out our operations against Warsaw, the forces currently stationed at Bzura and Rawka will suffice if the gas agent holds up reasonably well, as can be expected from its previous performance." However, it had not had nearly the effect that the troops had hoped for based on their transmitted experiences. They were only equipped with very inadequate gas protection equipment and had 56 gas casualties out of a total loss of 374 men. It was considered possible that the Russians had been warned in advance and had used protective measures. The main reason for the failure of the still little-tested combat agent was seen in the fact that strong, gusty winds had already dispersed the gas cloud, which was not dense enough due to slow release.

Page 041

The Gas Attacks of the 9th Army.

torn and just driven too quickly over the foremost enemy trenches).

The Commander-in-Chief East considered it expedient, in agreement with the Supreme Army Command, to repeat the gas attack as soon as possible; by about June 7, refilled bottles could be ready; the goal should be to inflict as many losses as possible on the enemy. To prevent another failure, he secured the allocation of ample ammunition to supplement the gas effect if necessary. The Army High Command 9 pointed out to its divisions that "not the entire success can be expected from the gas and that the path to victory is most securely paved by the determined initiative of leaders of all ranks and the death-defying bravery of the troops." The use of the gas bottles was limited to a three-kilometer-wide area at the Sucha, directly at its confluence with the Bzura. After the 22nd Infantry Division had meanwhile been "transferred to the front in Galicia," General von Pannwitz was to lead the attack only with the XVII Army Corps and ½ 5th Reserve Division from the Beseler Group. However, to create favorable conditions for the release, considerable sapper work was still necessary, delaying the execution by a few days.

On June 12, at 3 a.m., after prolonged artillery fire, General von Pannwitz gave the order to release the gas, but withdrew it five minutes later due to a change in wind direction. Meanwhile, about 4500 of the installed gas bottles, a good third, had already been emptied. Despite these discrepancies, the operation was successful. By noon, infantry of the XVII Army Corps and the 5th Reserve Division had broken into the enemy position in the Sucha-Bzura angle over a width of six kilometers and advanced up to three kilometers. 1660 prisoners, eight guns, and nine machine guns were captured. With a total own loss of 1100 men, about 350 gas casualties were counted again. However, the moral impact on the Russians seemed

1) According to a statement from a prisoner brought in later, the Russians reportedly had 1200 dead and 3100 men with other gas losses; other statements mentioned even higher numbers.  
2) See p. 123.

Page 042

The Front of the Commander-in-Chief East until July 2.

... to have been large; they had fled when they saw the gas cloud coming").

Upon the report of the result, the Commander-in-Chief East asked on the evening of June 12 about further intentions and offered the choice: either a determined continuation of the attack or the provision of strong forces for transport, considering use north of the Njemen. After the 9th Army had spoken in favor of continuing the attack, the Commander-in-Chief East limited their contributions to the 8th Cavalry Division and ordered the attack to be "vigorously continued." Gas should, however, only be released in the future with truly favorable winds.

Field Marshal Leopold Prince of Bavaria intended to extend the previous breach point southward to Humina. The fact that the enemy, according to prisoner statements, had brought about two new divisions into the attacked section was to be welcomed from the standpoint of the overall situation on the Eastern Front. It also did not influence the decision of the 9th Army. They wanted to continue the attack using the gas, from whose effect they had now gained such a favorable impression that they expected an even greater success than on June 12. However, on June 17 and again on June 19, the already prepared attack had to be abandoned due to a change in wind. Waiting for the wind with filled gas cylinders in the trench became a severe test for officers and men.

After Lemberg was taken on June 22, the Commander-in-Chief East considered the possibility of further Russian retreats also in West Poland; the 9th Army was initially to keep them in check with increased artillery fire. While the Russians then retreated further on June 24 before the right wing of the Woyrsch Army Detachment and the southern adjoining Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, they still stood before the main front of Colonel General von Woyrsch and before the 9th Army. Thus, they still held a line west of the Vistula, which in its overall course ran from Ilza via Opatow to Socha-

1) The VI Siberian Corps previously stationed there was soon withdrawn. According to the war diary of the Commander-in-Chief East on July 3, it seemed to have suffered so much from the gas attack that it was initially no longer considered for tactical use. In fact, it was transferred to the combat area near Lublin and was already deployed there again from July 5.  
2) p. 130. — 3) p. 234. — 4) p. 254.

Page 043

Weakening of the 9th Army. — Army Group Gallwitz and 8th Army.

czew represented a slightly westward-curved arc and could therefore hardly be effectively encompassed. Since this line was still about 60 kilometers away from the Vistula and had the strong reception positions of Grojec, Blonie, and Nowogeorgiewsk behind it, there was hardly any prospect of corresponding successes west of the river. The Supreme Army Command therefore recommended, after another unsuccessful preparation for the gas attack on June 28, a "ruthless" weakening of the 9th Army the following day. The Commander-in-Chief East ordered the withdrawal of an army corps as soon as the Woyrsch Army Detachment gained more ground. Although the withdrawal was made dependent on this condition and was still limited to one army corps, even though three active and three reserve divisions stood in the army's front alongside others, the leadership now had a different idea than in mid-May; they wanted to follow the expected general retreat of the Russians with parts of the 9th Army in a broad front, similar to the Woyrsch Army Detachment set up by the Supreme Army Command. The Commander-in-Chief East wanted to keep other parts for the offensive planned over Kowno, being concerned that once withdrawn, they might be claimed by the Supreme Army Command for purposes that seemed less urgent to him. When Generaloberst von Woyrsch announced on June 30 that the enemy was retreating before his right flank, the XVII Army Corps was withdrawn. Considerations about its use were still pending.

The months of May and June were significantly quieter for Army Group Gallwitz and the 8th Army than for the 9th Army, as they were increasingly weakened by withdrawals for the 10th and Njemen Armies and for newly forming divisions. At the beginning

1) In total, apart from the newly formed units, the following had been withdrawn since mid-April: 6th R.D. to Army Group Lauenstein, 29th Ldw. Br. to 10th Army, 22nd I.D. to Supreme Army Command, 8th R.D. to Njemen Army. On June 30, the following were still in the front: 35th, 36th I.D. 49th and 50th R.D. (p. 133). — 3) As emphasized by General Ludendorff in a letter from December 1931 to the Reichsarchiv. Other reports are missing. 4) p. 104 and 106. — Withdrawals were made: from Army Group Gallwitz, end of May 9th Ldw. Br. to 10th Army, 2nd R.D. to Njemen Army, end of June 3rd G.D. to 10th Army. From the 8th Army, end of April parts of the 4th R.D. to Army Group Lauenstein and b.u. Front; in May about one reinforced Br., end of June 41st S.R.

Page 044

The Front of the Commander-in-Chief East until July 2.

In June, when Przemysl was retaken, the attack on both sides of the Njemen made progress, and the new gas attack of the 9th Army was imminent, the Commander-in-Chief East also ordered the Army Group Gallwitz and the 8th Army to undertake offensive operations to "hold the enemy and cause him damage." By the end of June, they brought Army Group Gallwitz, along with some territorial gains, a total of 1500 prisoners, but also suffered significant own losses. The gains for the 8th Army were even smaller. It was also not possible to prevent the transport of enemy forces. Overall, the Russians were able to withdraw five divisions of infantry from the East Prussian southern front in June, and since the beginning of May, even 15 divisions, and redeploy them to other fronts.

Page 045

B. The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

1. The Forcing of the San Crossing at Jaroslaw from May 14 to 20.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketches 13 and 15.

According to the agreement reached by the chiefs of staff of the allied armies on May 12 in Pleß, the pursuit operation in Galicia was initially to be continued up to the San-Wisznia line and against the upper Dniester. It was expected that strong resistance from the enemy would still have to be overcome. If these sections were firmly in hand, further actions on the Galician theater of war were to be made dependent on the course of events on the eastern flank. This was of particular importance in view of Romania's uncertain stance. If the advance of the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and the German Southern Army south of the Dniester succeeded in bringing the Russian offensive directed against the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army in Eastern Galicia and Bukovina to a standstill, the focus would be on holding the San-Wisznia-Dniester section. In this case, General von Falkenhayn intended to withdraw the 11th Army for other uses and leave it to the Austro-Hungarian command to decide whether and to what extent they still wanted to pursue with their own troops (including the German 47th Reserve Division and the occupation corps). However, if the pressure exerted by the armies advancing from the Carpathian front was not sufficient to bring about a decisive change in the situation in Eastern Galicia and Bukovina, the continuation of the operation beyond the San and Dniester was envisaged, with the right wing of the 11th Army aiming towards Lemberg. General von Falkenhayn saw in such a development a desirable opportunity to deliver another blow to the Russians, which would paralyze their offensive power for a long time if they lagged behind. The Austro-Hungarian chief of staff considered, as he wrote to General von Falkenhayn on May 14, even "the vigorous joint continuation of the war against Russia to be necessary, with the minimum goal of regaining the territory

1) Volume VII, p. 426.

Page 046

of the monarchy and the territory of Russian Poland on the left bank of the Vistula to be ceded to us as compensation for the territorial cessions to Italy." However, the idea of continuing the operation in this manner was subject to the reservation dictated by the political situation, that Italy's entry into the war and the unforeseeable effects of this event on the attitudes of Romania and Bulgaria could necessitate completely different decisions. In any case, the next operational goal in Galicia, which was to be pursued regardless of the political dangers lying in the future, was the attainment and securing of the San—Wisznia—Dniester section. The main thrust was again to come from the 11th Army¹) and be directed against the "San downwards Przemysl"²). From intercepted radio messages, it was known that in this section the Russian 3rd Army of General Radko Dimitrijew had reestablished its front³). The XII Corps was stationed in and north of the fortress of Przemysl. Further San bridgeheads were occupied, at Radymno by the XXI, at Jaroslaw by the XXIV, and at Sieniawa by the III Caucasian Corps. The X and IX Corps had retreated to the northern adjoining San front and into the San—Vistula angle southeast of Sandomierz. The XV Corps was marching at Gorlice. Finally, the Russian 8th Army of General Brussilow was positioned in the line Przemysl—Dobromil and continued to occupy the Carpathian valleys running northeast. North of the Vistula, the Russian 4th Army of General Ewret had bent its southern flank further back into the area of Sandomierz. The deployment of the armies assigned against this new enemy front was completed as planned on May 13⁴). Generaloberst von Mackensen issued the attack order for the two armies under his command at 6 p.m.: "The 11th Army advances and crosses the San on both sides of Jaroslaw. The 4th Army⁵) follows on the left over the

¹) 11th Army consisted of: Guard Corps (1st and 2nd G. S. D.), X. A. K. (19th, 20th J. S. D.), XXXXI. R. K. (81st, 82nd gr. D.), 11th Bavarian J. D., 56th S. D., 119th S. D., Austro-Hungarian VI Corps (Austro-Hungarian 12th, Hungarian 39th S. D.). ²) Volume VII, p. 426. ³) Volume VII, p. 425. ⁴) Volume VII, pp. 426, 427. ⁵) Austro-Hungarian 4th Army consisted of: IX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 10th, Austrian 106th J. D.), XIV Corps (Austro-Hungarian 3rd S. D.), Kirchbach Corps (German 47th R. D., Austro-Hungarian combined Div. Stöger-Steiner), Austrian 21st S. D., Hungarian 37th and 41st S. D., Croatian 3rd Brigade, Hungarian 11th S. D., Austro-Hungarian ½ 2nd R. D.

Page 047

Deployment against the San.

River and secures the left flank of the 11th Army." Based on the available reports, stubborn resistance was to be expected. Therefore, Generaloberst von Mackensen wanted to conduct the attack systematically. From May 14 to 16, reconnaissance, deployment, and artillery targeting were to take place, with the assault planned for May 17. This was the earliest possible date, considering the difficulties of supply. The main focus of the 11th Army's attack was on both sides of Jaroslaw, where the Austro-Hungarian VI and the Guard Corps were deployed in a narrow area, with the 56th Infantry Division as army reserve behind them. To draw as strong forces as possible, including the XXXXI Reserve Corps, for the decisive attack against the San line, the defense against Przemysl was assigned to the newly formed Kneussl Corps (11th Bavarian and 119th Infantry Division). The X Army Corps, advancing exemplarily with the Guard, was tasked with protecting against the Russian bridgehead from Sieniawa, in addition to participating in the attack towards the Lubaczowka estuary.

The departure of strong enemy columns to the east, observed by aircraft on the afternoon of May 13, made it doubtful, contrary to previous assumptions, whether the Russians would still offer sustained resistance at the San. Therefore, the army high command also pointed out that "under no circumstances should the opportunity be missed to follow the withdrawing enemy immediately and thus perhaps capture the section without great sacrifices." The previous timing of operations should also be maintained in this case.

The neighboring Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army set its left wing for an attack against the west and south front of Przemysl. Its right wing, the German Beskiden Corps of General of Cavalry von der Marwitz, was to advance over Dobromil to Mosciska to cut the rear connections of the fortress.

The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was to continue the advance over the line Chyrow—Sambor—Horodyszcze.

On May 14, the movements of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and the 11th Army reached the immediate operational area of the Przemysl fortress. Thus

1) Volume VII, p. 426. 2) Volume VII, p. 428. 3) The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army consisted of: VII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 17th, Hungarian 20th Infantry Division), X Corps (Austro-Hungarian 24th, Austrian 45th Infantry Division), XVII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 11th, Austrian 26th Infantry Division), Hungarian 1st Infantry Division (Austro-Hungarian 10th and 4th Cavalry Division, German Beskiden Corps (Austro-Hungarian 33rd Infantry Division). 4) The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army consisted of: IX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 18th and 41st Infantry Division), XVIII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 44th and 44th Infantry Division), IV Corps (Austro-Hungarian 27th and 31st, Hungarian 51st Infantry Division), XIX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 29th and 34th Austrian Infantry Division).

Page 048

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

could have a significant influence on the further course of events. However, the High Command of the 3rd Army hoped to capture the southwestern front of the fortress by surprise, and the High Command of the 11th Army was also reinforced by new aerial reports on the morning of May 14, believing the enemy would not only abandon the San line but also Przemysl.

To cover the southern flank of the attacking 11th Army against the fortress, the 119th Infantry Division of Major General von Behr was advanced directly north of the San to west of Korzynitf. In front of them were still detachments of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division under Major General Ritter von Kneußl gained the eastern exits of the forest and mountain terrain northwest of Przemysl. The XXXI Reserve Corps reached the line Kaszyce-Chlopice-Morawinsko in its advance on Radymno. The enemy held forward fortification groups over the fortress area and apparently prepared positions in the hills west of Rada and forward Ostrow. The two corps assigned to the main attack on Jaroslaw advanced in sections. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps had early determined that the enemy strongly occupied the high ground south of Jaroslaw and the castle southwest of the city. Field Marshal Lieutenant von Arz wanted to lead his divisions to this enemy under the cover of darkness to attack him everywhere before morning. The corps encountered strong resistance. Only the right wing succeeded in advancing beyond Morawinsko in connection with the XXXI Reserve Corps. Meanwhile, fierce battles erupted across the entire attack front, which did not lead to a decision by evening. The Guard Corps, under the increasing impression of only a weak occupation of Jaroslaw, gradually approached the enemy. When around noon the leader of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, Lieutenant General von Winkler, reported that Jaroslaw seemed to be evacuated, the commanding general, General of Infantry Baron von Plettenberg, ordered that both divisions, if the opponent offered no stronger resistance, should take possession of the San line. However, the attack of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division against Jaroslaw unexpectedly encountered strong enemy forces. The advance also suffered from the flanking fire effect from Jaroslaw Castle, which the Allies could not wrest from the enemy despite the deployment of reinforcements from the 2nd Guard Infantry Division; the forward movement came to a halt west of the city. The 1st Guard Infantry Division under the leadership of Colonel Eitel Friedrich Prince of Prussia was Russian positions

Page 049

The Attack on Jaroslaw.

retreated over a dead arm of the San north of Jaroslaw and could only push through against the northern front of the city with their right wing by evening.

The commanding general of the X Army Corps, General of Infantry von Emmich, under the impression that the enemy was continuing the retreat, ordered the pursuit at 11 a.m. by the only available 19th Infantry Division — the 20th was marching to Lancut. They were to reach the bridge site at Nieleptowice with advance troops. However, as enemy resistance at Wola Buchowska threatened the advance on the left flank, Lieutenant General Hofmann decided to initially direct the main force of his division against this. No serious engagement occurred in the evening.

In view of the developments that the battles on May 14 had taken in the center and on the left wing of the 11th Army, the planned attack procedure envisaged by the High Command was no longer considered. On the other hand, the impression had also strengthened that the eastern bank of the San could no longer be won by a surprise success. Rather, further fighting on this side of the San was to be expected.

Before the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the enemy had retreated behind the lower Wislok and the San above Krzeszow. The right wing, where the operational focus lay, reached the San below the Wislok mouth without a fight. The reserve cavalry (½ 2nd and 11th Cavalry Division) was also drawn there. The left army wing swung to secure the flank against an enemy position identified in the forest area of the San-Vistula angle south of Sandomierz.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army had not yet reached the positions of the fortress area with its left wing. On its right wing, the Beskiden Corps reached Dobromil in pursuit. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army gained the Carpathian exits on both sides of Stary Sambor.

On May 15, the 119th Infantry Division advanced security against the northwest front of Przemysl. This freed the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division for the immediate flank protection of the now also advancing XXXXI Reserve Corps against the San; they advanced against the Rada stream. Reconnaissance revealed that the Rada position adjoining the fortress and the positions further north around Ostrow were heavily fortified. Against these, the XXXXI Reserve Corps was set for an attack in the morning hours with the target Radymno-Tuczepy. However, it did not succeed in the right wing and the center of

Page 050

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Corps, to approach the enemy's main position by evening. The left wing had to remain bent back against positions at Morawisko, as the southern wing of the neighboring s.-l. VI. Corps was fixed here. For this, it was crucial to first bring down the commanding heights around 264, the key point of the bridgehead of Jaroslaw. This was only achieved at 6 p.m. Although fierce counterattacks by the enemy prevented full exploitation of this success, it had the effect to the north that by late evening, the castle of Jaroslaw succumbed to the assault of the inner wings of the VI. and Guard Corps, thereby eliminating the threat to the flank and rear of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division. The Guard Corps could only advance to attack in the afternoon after extensive artillery preparation against the enemy reinforced from the east bank. While the main forces of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, due to the constant threat from the south, engaged in a holding battle on their right wing against the western front of Jaroslaw, the 1st Guard Infantry Division was to be deployed from the north for a decisive envelopment of Jaroslaw. This thrust of the right wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, joined by the left wing of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, initially made good progress but then stalled in Jaroslaw. Here, when the castle of Jaroslaw fell in the evening, the attack front had already solidified. Only the left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division pushed the enemy back over the San and reached the broad and deep main arm of the river west of Goryle. The immediate follow-up over this, which the General Command still hoped for, proved ineffective due to the strong occupation of the east bank overlooking the lowlands without sufficient artillery preparation.

As the Guard Corps had not succeeded in overcoming the San section the day before, and since the 19th Infantry Division faced considerable enemy forces to the north, the commanding general of the X. Army Corps, General of Infantry von Emmich, now expected strong resistance at the San. Parts of the 20th Infantry Division had already been set in motion to the east early on. When at 11 a.m. the directive from the Army High Command arrived to advance the attack in conjunction with the Guard Corps, the commander of the 20th Infantry Division, Lieutenant General Ritter and Edler von Detinger, was ordered to take possession of the lowlands of Niedebrowice. In the course of the afternoon, he drove surprised enemy detachments, which were still on the west bank, back over the San. The bulk of the division reached with

Page 051

Below Jaroslaw, the San is reached.

Beginning of Ijeszna. The 19th Infantry Division under Lieutenant General Hofmann refrained from a planned early morning assault against the strong Russian positions in the lowlands between Wisłok and San on the orders of the commanding general. General von Emmich believed that the enemy would abandon their positions opposite the 19th Infantry Division under the impression of the advance of the 20th Infantry Division and the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army against the San. Therefore, it was only to secure the attack of the 20th Infantry Division over the San against a threat from the bridgehead of Sieniawa.

The leader of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, refrained from forcing the San crossing by his right army wing on the same day, as the Army High Command 11 had responded to an inquiry: "Forcing a uniform advance on the entire front is not intended today... If a corps succeeds in crossing, this forcing will be followed by other corps." The San front of the 4th Army stretched north to the area west of Iwanow. The enemy positions, partially covered and crisscrossed by numerous streams, in the San-Vistula angle proved to be well-established resistance zones. The observation from the embarkation over Sandomierz to the eastern Vistula bank and the reinforcements over Sandomierz to the eastern Vistula bank and the reinforcements over Sandomierz withdrawn forces against the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army west of the Vistula suggested the enemy's intention to hold the San-Vistula angle and the connection to their positions on the far side of the Vistula. This also seemed to give them the possibility of an offensive from the bridgehead of Sandomierz against the flank of the armies fighting at the San. The 4th Army, on the other hand, initially wanted to limit itself to establishing a "reinforced line of resistance" and wait for the reinforcements currently in transit for their own attack.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army moved its left wing closer to the southwest front of Przemysl. The Beskiden Corps, which followed the retreating main Russian forces south of the fortress, encountered strong positions on both sides of Husztow behind the Slowtina and Buchta. In this fortified section, which protected the road and railway leading south from Przemysl, strong enemy resistance was to be expected. The Beskiden Corps

1) Volume VII, p. 421; — cf. 21st Infantry Division of the 3rd Army, Command VIII, Hungarian 37, and 41st Infantry Division of the 2nd Army.

Page 052

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

therefore decided to conduct the attack uniformly the next day. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army maintained contact with the Beskiden Corps and reached beyond Sambor with its right wing at the Dniester. Aerial reconnaissance confirmed the impression gained through the hard fighting of the 11th Army: Strong parts of the enemy were still standing west of the San. Nevertheless, the Army High Command hoped to force the river crossing on May 16. The difficulties of supply from the railway points Krosno and Przemyśl, however, necessitated limited objectives, especially as it was expected that the Russians would bring up reinforcements. Generaloberst von Mackensen therefore initially aimed only at creating a bridgehead along the line Michalowka (east of Radymno)—Ryszkowa Wola—Lubaczowka-Bach—Sieniawa, to gain freedom for further action on the eastern bank of the San.

Under the pressure of the successes achieved on the evening of May 15 west and south of Jaroslau, the enemy vacated the left bank during the night. The advancing 2nd Guard Infantry Division was already in possession of the entire city of Jaroslau by 7:30 a.m. on May 16. General Freiherr von Plettenberg had instructed the division to initially push only strong patrols onto the eastern bank. However, the division commander, Lieutenant General von Winkler, personally observed that swift and forceful action was necessary, as the enemy's defense on the eastern bank had apparently not yet taken firm shape. He therefore ordered the crossing to be forced at 9 a.m. At 2 p.m., the crossing began under the protection of artillery and machine gun fire, with the result that by evening a significant part of the division had established a foothold on the eastern bank of the San. Strong counterattacks were repelled. The 1st Guard Infantry Division, which had advanced further north to the San, had to postpone the river crossing to May 17 due to the particularly difficult, widely visible terrain, which made an artillery advance during the day inadvisable. The enemy fortifications against the section of the Guard Corps in march were, heavy tasks awaited the corps.

The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps of Field Marshal Lieutenant von Arz had also followed the enemy, who had retreated south of Jaroslau after nightly counterattacks. By 10 a.m., the right wing reached Tuczapy under heavy artillery fire from the eastern bank, and by 2 p.m., the combat front of the corps reached the western riverbank. After nightfall, the left, 12th Infantry Division, was in the area of the Guard Corps...

Page 053

Guard and X Army Corps Force the San Crossing.

corps over the San and then advanced towards Sobicin, which was heavily occupied by the enemy.

It was still questionable whether the significant partial success achieved by the center of the 11th Army on the battlefield around Jaroslaw could be expanded to achieve the goal sought by the leadership. The decision on this depended very much on the development of events on both army flanks. The XXXXI Reserve Corps of General von Francois had, as soon as the threat to its left flank was eliminated by the advance of the northern neighbor, already initiated a right turn to attack. Faced with this impending encirclement, the enemy retreated over Tuczepy on the road to Radymno. Only east of Tuczepy did the left wing of the 82nd Reserve Division encounter the northern part of the enemy's main position. After hard fighting in the afternoon, the entire attack line of the XXXXI Reserve Corps came to a halt before this. The intention of the commanding general, General of Infantry von Francois, to continue the comprehensive thrust from the north could only be met after replenishing the ammunition. To protect the right wing held at Zamoscie, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was pushed forward to the Raba. The 119th Infantry Division swung forward to Batycze. At 6 p.m., the Kneussl Corps received the message that an attack against the occupied line north of Przemysl was not in line with the Army High Command's intentions. It would mean concentrating forces in a direction incompatible with the army's tasks east of the San. Therefore, no more forces were to be used against the enemy at the Rada than required to protect the right flank of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. The 119th Infantry Division was to be held back to be available as an army reserve at any time. The Army High Command hoped that Przemysl would soon succumb to the attack of the right neighboring army and wanted to maintain the striking power of the 11th Army for the breakthrough over the San downstream from Przemysl with the aim of Rawa Ruska.

North of the battlefield of Jaroslaw, the 20th Infantry Division now faced the task of forcing the river crossing as soon as possible. In the open lowland terrain, the preparation for this was very difficult. It was only possible to cross during the night, despite considerable losses. A bridgehead was established west of Wiazownica. It was the intention of General von Emmich, after further advancing the 20th Infantry Division on the eastern bank, to also launch the 19th Infantry Division into an attack on the beyond

Page 054

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

to engage the opposing enemy. Upon receiving the report of the enemy forces marching against the crossing point of the 20th Infantry Division, he ordered the 19th Infantry Division to attack on May 17th to divert the enemy's influx of forces there.

At the San front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the river crossing was unsuccessful. North of the Vistula, a surprising setback occurred. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the Army Detachment Woyrsch, in their forward movement since May 11th, under multiple local night skirmishes against the northeastward withdrawing Russians, reached the general line: Koprzywnica—Staszów—Mircze—north of Wisłoka—Gąbin on May 16th. However, on the morning of May 16th, the Russians launched a counterattack against the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the southern flank of the Army Detachment Woyrsch, particularly targeting the inner flanks and the weakly secured gap between the two armies. The ensuing battles forced the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army to withdraw its northern flank by up to ten kilometers. This also prompted the 4th Army to hold back its left flank. Behind them, the three approaching reinforcement divisions had reached the beginnings of Debica, Radomysl, and the area east of Tarnow. General von Conrad now redirected one of these divisions (41st Infantry Division) via Szczucin to support the 1st Army. The left flank of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army reached just west of Pratkowice. On both sides of the Wisłok, the attack lines moved closer to the fort line. Further east, however, the attack against the Słotwina—Butcha section did not break through. The line of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army ran from here to Kaisersdorf on the Dniester (20 kilometers northeast of Sambor).

On May 17th, the operation of the 11th Army continued as planned. The Kneussl Corps remained in its position according to the guiding idea. The XXXXI Reserve Corps was also forced by a shortage of ammunition to postpone its attack.

1) Austro-Hungarian 1st Army consisted of: II Corps (Austro-Hungarian 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions, 1st Brigade of the Polish Legion), I Corps (Austrian 46th Infantry Division), Austro-Hungarian ½ 2nd Reserve Division. Army Detachment Woyrsch consisted of: Landwehr Corps (3rd and 4th Landwehr Divisions), Landwehr Division Bredow, Austro-Hungarian Group Kövess (Command XII, Austro-Hungarian 16th and 35th Infantry Divisions), and 7th Guard Division.  
2) Volume VII, p. 434. The army group formed from the Army Detachment Woyrsch and the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army has so far been referred to as "Army Woyrsch" (Volume VI, p. 100, footnote 1). With the withdrawal of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, the designation "Army Woyrsch" becomes obsolete again.  
3) Position course for sketch 15.  
4) p. 145.

Page 055

Expansion of the Captured San Bridgeheads.

The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps succeeded in taking Sobicin by storm at 6 p.m. after crossing more troops over the San. Simultaneously, its right wing advanced upstream on both banks to create further crossing opportunities. East of Jaroslaw, the 2nd Guard Infantry Division repelled new enemy forces. The Guard Corps initially intended not to advance further east of the San, as the frontal crossing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division had not yet succeeded. Only at 6 p.m. did parts of this division cross the river at Jaroslaw to open the way northward for the main troops. Parts of the left wing also used the bridge of the neighboring 20th Infantry Division for crossing in the evening. This division had already vigorously expanded the bridgehead taken overnight beyond Wiazownica in the morning hours, achieving a decisive success for the continuation of the operation. By 4 p.m., parts of the 56th Infantry Division, following in the second line, were able to cross the river here. Under the pressure of a brilliantly executed attack by the 19th Infantry Division, the enemy evacuated the San-Wislok corner, losing 7,000 prisoners. The division then prepared the San crossing at Lezachow.

No changes occurred at the front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. However, as the crisis at the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army beyond the Vistula intensified, the 4th Army was forced to prepare reserves at the Vistula and bring the advancing reinforcement divisions closer to the river. If forced to make further concessions, it too could find itself in a difficult situation, as an extension of enemy attacks into the area between the Vistula and San had to be anticipated.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army found it necessary to make the attack on Przemysl dependent on further ammunition supplies. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was also held up by strong enemy positions. The commander of the Beskid Corps, General von der Marwitz, therefore intended to shift the focus of the attack to his right wing to break through together with the left wing of the 2nd Army.

The High Command of the 11th Army summarized in a report to the Supreme Army Command that, with continued determination, it seemed possible to hold Przemysl and its already adjoining positions. In contrast, the expansion of the previously captured two bridgeheads and the crossing of the entire army, however

Page 056

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

if only possible after thorough preparation ... The situation would likely change significantly if the breakthrough of the 2nd and right wing of the 3rd Army succeeds."

According to this assessment, Generaloberst von Mackensen saw his next task as consolidating the strongest possible forces to expand the bridgeheads on the east bank despite the expected resistance. The 119th Infantry Division was withdrawn as an army reserve and moved to the Zarzecze–Jaroslau road. To secure against Przemysl, parts of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army remained immediately north of the San. The XXXXI Reserve Corps, to which the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was subordinated, was to initially halt the attack on Radymno.

The Austro-Hungarian VI, the Guard, and X Army Corps (with the subordinated 56th Infantry Division) were to expand their attack successes on the eastern San bank. When it became apparent that the enemy had already retreated during the night, the army command believed it was in full retreat to the northeast and ordered at 3:00 a.m. that the attack corps should follow until reaching the approximate line Wietlin–Oleschowa–Cetula–Lubaczowka-Bach. The 19th Infantry Division was to connect with the 4th Army to take the heights of Leszacz and eastward. However, reconnaissance soon revealed that the enemy had retreated under the cover of rearguards to a newly prepared defensive front in the line Wysocko–Bobrowka–Oleschowa, and that it also occupied the near edges of the forest zone south of the Lubaczowka.

The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was set to attack on both sides of the Szklo. During this rightward swing, the left wing advanced east of Sobienin at 3:00 p.m. Then the attack came to a halt. The Guard and X Army Corps wanted to launch a joint attack after the river crossing at 1:00 p.m. The 2nd Guard Infantry Division connected with the allies by evening at Malowisko and the road west of Oleschowa. The 1st Guard Infantry Division had to overcome open, difficult attack terrain up to the large forest zone west of Cetula. Its right wing stormed Huti and Buczyna in the evening. Its left wing broke into the forest zone in the afternoon, then swung right into the enemy's rear like Cetula. However, the attempt failed due to stubborn resistance. On the right wing of the X Army Corps, the regiments, immediately entering combat from a difficult advance, threw themselves

Page 057

Strong Counterattack by the Russians against the 11th Army.

The 56th Infantry Division¹) of Major General Schach von Wittenau attacked the Russian forest positions and captured them from the enemy by 3 PM. On the left, the 20th Infantry Division, with its left wing on both sides of the Lubaczowka, joined the advance and reached the forest on both sides of Terebnie by 3 PM, which the enemy voluntarily evacuated. Both divisions pushed through the forest up to the Lubaczowka bend. The right wing of the 56th Infantry Division attempted to relieve the Guard Corps by advancing on Cetula in the evening, but did not penetrate the village. North of the Lubaczowka, parts of the 20th Infantry Division cleared the river bend up to the area west of Mielniki. The 19th Infantry Division advanced beyond the bridgehead over Pesachow for cover. The overall result of the day was a significant expansion of the bridgeheads.

Thanks to the successes of the X Army Corps, the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army crossed the San. It was to advance downstream to open the crossing at Uliczszyn and take possession of Sieniawa. The Army High Command anticipated that the enemy, to prevent the deployment of additional forces of the 4th Army on the eastern bank, would advance against the army's breach point at the San. Therefore, the army reserve was moved there. To preempt the expected Russian attack from the Sandomierz bridgehead on the east bank of the Vistula, the High Command decided to deploy its two available reinforcement divisions (Hungarian 37th and Austrian 21st Infantry Division) to the left army wing for an imminent attack downstream.

The Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies made no progress, particularly due to insufficient ammunition supply.

May 19th already brought strong counterattacks by the enemy against the entire front of the 11th Army in the morning hours. Generaloberst von Mackensen concluded from this that the Russian resistance was growing; he wanted to move the 119th Infantry Division to Jaroslau and use the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division north of Jaroslau to be able to deploy them quickly as needed. However, when General von François reported the beginning of significant enemy artillery deployment against his front and the gathering of strong forces in front of his right wing at 11 AM, the 119th Infantry Division was moved south to Boratyn, and General

¹) The infantry of the 56th Infantry Division was equipped with captured Russian rifles.

Page 058

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

provided by François for emergencies. Prisoners stated that the Russian assault was intended here on the evening of May 19 or on May 20.

The k.u.k. VI Corps attacked with the intention of advancing its center on Wietlin, but gained ground only slowly against Russian forces freshly thrown into battle. Also west of the San, the enemy launched a strong relief attack along the road from Radymno at the junction of the XXXXII Reserve and k.u.k. VI Corps, which, however, collapsed around 7 p.m.

Opposite the Guard Corps, the enemy also seemed to have reinforced, particularly in artillery. Apparently, more forces were brought in by rail from Oleszyce. The Guard Corps therefore refrained from continuing the attack, also considering its own ammunition situation. The divisions prepared for defense, as did the adjacent Lubaczowka front of the X Army Corps.

Only north of the Lubaczowka was there still the intention to offensively carry out the task of the 19th Infantry Division south of Sieniawa. However, by noon, the army command had considered halting this division as well, to use it on the right army wing, which appeared more threatened at the moment. However, since it was also important to secure sufficient depth for the bridgehead, the army command refrained from the shift. The right wing of the k.u.k. 4th Army, the 10th Infantry Division, which had crossed to the southern bank of the San behind the 19th Infantry Division during the night, occupied Sieniawa, which had been evacuated by the enemy. The joint attack of this division and the 19th Infantry Division carried out in the afternoon then succeeded in expanding the bridgehead around Sieniawa.

The stubbornly resisting enemy was still close by, especially on the dominant Slawa Heights east of Sieniawa. Its fall was a prerequisite for permanently holding the bridgehead. The attack against the Slawa Heights and the southern heights was planned by both divisions for the night of May 20. Further north on the San front, the enemy had shown lively offensive activity throughout the day. Parts of the Russians, who had crossed north of Lezajsk during the night, could be pushed back over the San. Strong attacks occurred in the area of Ulanow—Nisko (about 35 kilometers northwest of Lezajsk). But everywhere, the deployment of all reserves proved successful in driving back the enemy who had advanced over the San. Preparations were now made for an imminent attack

Page 059

Expansion of the Successes at Sieniawa.

also established east of the Vistula, especially since the situation of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army was still considered critical. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army made some progress with the attack of the Beskid Corps. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was also able to advance its immediately adjacent battlefront. By May 20, the enemy behaved more cautiously than expected. In all his positions, there was intense fortification. His artillery seemed to be further reinforced. Across the entire front of the 11th Army, only isolated skirmishes occurred without changing the situation. Only the struggle for the bridgehead at Sieniawa was brought to a successful conclusion. Early in the morning, the parts of the 20th and 19th Infantry Divisions deployed north of Lubaczowka had taken control of the heights between Mielnitza and the Slawa Heights. Then the left wing of the 19th Infantry Division swung north to support the allies advancing against the Slawa Heights. After extensive artillery preparation, this stronghold also fell by morning. After such setbacks, the enemy, aided by torrential downpours, quickly disappeared into the large forests east of Sieniawa; only cavalry followed him. The positions gained were expanded for defense. On the rest of the San front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the situation could be improved again. Against their northern front between the San and Vistula, the enemy moved closer, partly in individual advances. In the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, a relaxation occurred. In fourteen days of heavy fighting, this army and the Landwehr Division reinforced by parts of the Landwehr Corps under Lieutenant General Count von Bredow succeeded in halting the Russian attack on May 19 along the line Koprzywnica—Zbielutka—Stykow. The threat of an enemy breakthrough in the gap between Zbielutka and Chybiec was eliminated by deploying parts of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the Bredow Landwehr Division as well as the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division; the Austro-Hungarian 9th Cavalry Division was positioned as an army reserve behind the army front. The southern wing of the Landwehr Corps also repelled the Russian attack along the line Stykow—Pomorzany. The advance of the left wing of the Landwehr Corps and the Kövesz Group came to a halt along the line Pomorzany—Mniszek—Gapinin. On the front of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army, nothing changed except for a local gain by the Beskid Corps. The enemy seemed to be reinforcing in front of the inner wings of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies. The course of the last few days had shown that the advance of the

Page 060

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The 11th Army east of the San and its simultaneous pressure on the western riverbank towards the southwest posed a significant threat to the Russian defensive front at the San, which was based on the fortress of Przemysl. This explained the army command's furious enemy counterattacks from the south and east on both banks of the river. To continue operations in the decisive direction to the southeast, Generaloberst von Mackensen had to be careful to free up additional forces. The Chief of Staff of the 11th Army, Colonel von Seeckt, had therefore already promised the Emmich Corps a significant extension of its combat front to the right by noon on May 19, in order to be able to release the Guard Corps for the army's disposal.

2. The Events on the Right Wing of the Army until May 19.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 17.

The German South Army¹, under the leadership of General of Infantry von Linsingen, launched an attack from the Carpathians along the entire line on May 12 in the direction of Dolina—Stryj—Drohobycz². The enemy, parts of the Russian 8th Army³, retreated without serious fighting in front of their left wing, as did the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on the left. The center and right wing of the South Army still encountered strong resistance from the Russian 11th Army⁴. While the Szurmay Group and the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division of the Bothmer Corps reached the Wolszce—Unit line, the 3rd Guard Infantry Division under Major General von Friedeburg stormed strong enemy positions west of Zawadka, partly under heavy losses, and pursued the fleeing enemy. In the 1st Infantry Division of Lieutenant General von Conta, fierce battles took place around height 927 southeast of Korzivna, which was only captured at 10° at night. The Hofmann and Gerok Corps refrained from the unauthorized frontal attack on the Russian trenches, which were still occupied in full strength, and a bypass planned in the Swica Valley towards Leopoldsdorf was not carried out.

¹ The South Army consisted of: Gerok Corps (Genbd. XXIV. R.K.: 48. R.D., Austro-Hungarian 19th S.D.), Austro-Hungarian Hofmann Corps (Austro-Hungarian 55th S.D., Austro-Hungarian 131st S.Br., Austro-Hungarian 12th Fpt. Bde.), Bothmer Corps (Austro-Hungarian 1st G.D., 1st S.D., Hungarian 38th I.D.), Austro-Hungarian Szurmay Group (Austro-Hungarian 7th H.T.P., Hungarian 40th G.P.).  
² Volume VII, C. 430.  
³ C. 189.  
⁴ C. 189.

Page 061

The Advance of the Southern Army.

The next morning (May 13), it became apparent that the enemy had also withdrawn from the right wing of the army. In pursuit, the advance troops of Corps Gerof reached Leopoldsdorf and Solotwina. Corps Hofmann, with the Austro-Hungarian 55th Infantry Division, was positioned in the evening at the confluence of Popr and Orawa, after breaking the resistance of weak rearguards on the mountains on both sides of the Tuchla—Stryj railway. From Corps Bothmer, the 1st Infantry Division captured the Orawa section south of Korostow. The 3rd Guard Infantry Division reached south of Rybnik, the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division reached the heights north of Jasionka masiowa, the Szurmay Group with the beginnings to Turza and Topolnica, and the right wing of the 2nd Army reached the heights north of Stryzli.

Based on an order received around noon from the Austro-Hungarian army command, which instructed the Southern Army to advance its left wing as far as possible in the general direction of Drohobycz during the continuation of the pursuit, General von Linsingen directed the Szurmay Group to Drohobycz, Corps Bothmer to Stryj, the Austro-Hungarian 131st Infantry Brigade of Corps Hofmann to Bolechow on Lipowice, and Corps Gerof in the Mizunka and Swica Valley over Dolina to Turza wielka. The main parts of Corps Hofmann (Austro-Hungarian 55th Infantry Division, Austrian 12th Landsturm Territorial Brigade, and an Austro-Hungarian combined Infantry Brigade Bolzano brought forward by the 2nd Army, in the process of unloading in Lawoczne) were held back as army reserve.

The pursuit on May 14 brought the Southern Army a great leap forward, although the enemy sought to create great difficulties for the advance by destroying numerous bridges in the mountain valleys. The artillery had to be brought up to the advancing infantry partly by time-consuming detours. After an early start, Corps Gerof reached the Swica section southwest of Dolina, the Austro-Hungarian 131st Infantry Brigade Braza, Corps Bothmer the line Rapyzd—Orlow Borzylaw, and the Austro-Hungarian 55th Division the area of Podbuz. The army reserve closed in south of Stole. The right wing of the 2nd Army was positioned in the evening around Stary Sambor.

The previous successes of the German Southern Army began to become noticeable for the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 7th Army1) of the General2).

1) The Austro-Hungarian 7th Army consisted of: Corps Korda (XI. Command, Hungarian 42nd Infantry Division, Hungarian 5th Infantry Division, Austro-Hungarian combined Brigade Papp, 2nd Brigade of the Polish Legion), Group Marschall (Austro-Hungarian 30th Infantry Division, German 5th Infantry Division, Austro-Hungarian 30th Infantry Division), Corps Krautwald.

Page 062

To make the cavalry of Baron von Pflanzer-Baltin noticeable. This was on May 13 and 14 before superior enemy forces (Russian 9th Army¹)) withdrawn into the fortified Pruth line with their line-side bridgeheads at Dubowt, Kolomea, Lanczyn, and Delatyn, as well as on the heights between Delatyn and Pasieczna. Their left wing, the Ljubicz group, gathered at Juta and secured in the Lomnica Valley near and northeast of Smoloda. Under the influence of the advance of the Southern Army, the enemy here retreated to Perehinsko on the 14th, following the eastern adjoining Rhemem group only as far as south of Nadworna. However, in the early afternoon hours of May 14, they advanced with two and a half infantry and one cavalry division for a concentric attack on the bridgehead of Kolomea. Although this thrust failed due to the stubborn resistance of the Krautwald group, since timely and sufficient support for the bridgehead's garrison did not seem assured due to the slow transport of the advancing III Corps²) from the 3rd Army, General von Pflanzer-Baltin saw the best relief in the immediate resumption of the offensive of his left wing. In agreement with the Southern Army, he launched the Czibulka, Rhemem, and Ljubicz groups on May 15 for an attack in a northeasterly direction. The offensive was then to be continued with the main forces over Ottynia to Tlumacz, with the left wing group against the heights west of Stanislau and on to Kalusz.

This was also entirely in line with new instructions from the Austro-Hungarian army command, which had been received by the high commands of the 7th and Southern Armies in the early afternoon of May 14. According to this, the 7th Army was to hold its eastern wing on the Pruth and concentrate its main forces on the western wing to join the general advance in a northeasterly direction. The Southern Army received a double task. With its right wing, to be assembled at Dolina—Bolechow, it was to advance in the general direction of Kalusz to make the enemy front between the Bystrzyca and the Czeszwa untenable and to defeat them in cooperation with the 7th Army. Its left wing, advancing over Stryj—Drohobycz, was tasked with securing against the Dniester line Jacyczow—Mikolajow—Kolodruby. The neighboring Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on the left was to continue its offensive on Czajkowice—Moscißta

(III Corps: east. 22nd, Austro-Hungarian 28th Infantry Division, Austro-Hungarian 8th Cavalry Division), Czibulka Corps (Austro-Hungarian 15th and 36th Infantry Divisions), Rhemem Corps (XIII Corps: Austro-Hungarian 5th Infantry Division without 9th Infantry Brigade, Austro-Hungarian 6th Infantry Division), Ljubicz Group (Austro-Hungarian 9th and 16th Infantry Brigades, parts of the Austro-Hungarian 6th and 15th Infantry Divisions).  
¹) Page 189.  
²) Volume VII, Page 431.

Page 063

The Southern Army Comes to a Halt Before New Enemy Positions.

(exclusively) continue. Immediate cooperation between it and the Southern Army seemed no longer feasible. The course of events in the following days did not meet the expectations of the military leadership. It turned out that the enemy was determined to offer the strongest resistance south of the Dniester. The relief attack of the left wing of the 7th Army - Rhemen and Litzkic groups - came to a halt very quickly on the morning of May 15 against a strong opponent in the Lanczyn-Pniow line, east of Jablonica, at Majdan and south of Perehinsko. The right wing of the Southern Army, the Gerok Corps, also encountered fierce resistance on the forest heights south and southwest of Dolina and had to wait for the artillery to arrive before considering continuing the attack. The territorial gain was greater in the center and on the left wing. The Austro-Hungarian 131st Infantry Brigade occupied Bolechow after a brief street fight and advanced to the Swica. From the Bothmer Corps, the 1st Infantry Division reached the area east and northeast of Siemiginow; the 3rd Guard Infantry Division drove out weak enemy forces in Uliczno, but by late evening stood east of it on both sides of the railway towards Stryj before strong positions. The Hungarian 38th and 40th Infantry Divisions also found the heights east of Drohobycz occupied; the Austro-Hungarian 7th Infantry Division reached Lisznia. The army reserve advanced to Stynawa nizna. The extreme right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army reached Zubaly in the evening, thus advancing significantly ahead of the Southern Army. General von Lintingen still believed he had only weak rearguards in front of him, whose resistance would be easy to break. Consequently, he assigned the corps far-reaching objectives for the 16th as well. The Gerok Corps was directed towards Nowica-Kalusz, the Austro-Hungarian 131st Infantry Brigade towards Zawadka, the Bothmer Corps against the Sulatycze-Nowosielc line, the Szurmay group towards Medenice, and the army reserve towards Bolechow. However, during the course of this day, it became apparent that stronger Russian forces stood in front of the entire front of the Southern Army in an apparently continuous, long-prepared line, extending from the positions in front of the left wing of the 7th Army from Perehinsko over Spas-Moryszyn-Gaje wyzne to Hruszow. The enemy had also made a front in fortified positions from west of Czajkowice to Husiatow before the 2nd Army. The attack of the Southern Army on this new line of resistance of the Russian 11th Army did not succeed anywhere on the 16th. Only individual positions were taken. Thus, the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division of the Gerok Corps drove the Russians out of Spas; their attempt, north of Spas

Page 064

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Attempting to envelop the assumed left flank by swinging east, they came to a halt before enemy trenches southwest of Janowka. The 48th Reserve Division under Lieutenant General von Hahn focused its attack on the left flank. Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann moved the 55th Infantry Division and the 12th Landsturm Territorial Brigade towards Bolechow. The main forces of the 1st Infantry Division advanced eastward for an attack but halted before the Russian positions at the ironworks of Morisyn. The 3rd Guards Infantry Division stormed enemy trenches on both sides of the railway to Stryj, but by evening faced a second line extending southeast from Holobutow. On the heights southeast and east of Drohobycz, the 38th and 40th Infantry Divisions advanced to close proximity to the enemy. To the left, the 7th Infantry Division was deployed against enemy positions north of the Dniestrnica.

In the following days, the Southern Army struggled in vain to defeat the enemy. Only the 1st Infantry Division achieved a significant local success. After heavy, costly battles, they stormed Lipowice and the Russian positions on the railway embankment northwest of it on the afternoon of the 18th. However, when they attempted to advance northeast together with the left flank of the now fully deployed Hofmann Corps the next day, new enemy resistance soon halted them. The left flank of the division even had to fend off stronger Russian counterattacks on both sides of the railway to Stryj.

The neighboring armies made no progress. The right flank of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army came to a halt at the Strwiaz. A sharp Russian counterattack pushed the attacking flank of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army back to the line Lanczyn—Dyl [997]—Glinik on May 16th and 17th. Simultaneously, the enemy, using ruthless manpower, assaulted the bridgehead of Kolomea, whose now reinforced garrison held firm. However, the Russians succeeded on May 19th in breaking into the trenches on the southern bank of the Pruth at Kumaniczy, from which they were soon expelled. Then a longer pause in fighting occurred on the right flank of the 7th Army. General Freiherr von Pflanzer-Baltin refrained from resuming the offensive, considering the strength of the opposing enemy.

Page 065

3. The Battle North of Przemysl from May 21 to 27.

General von Falkenhayn had recognized from the previous course of operations on the Galician front that considerable efforts were still needed to achieve the next operational goal agreed upon by the allied army commands on May 12, the San-Wisznia-Dnjestr line. On May 18, he informed Army High Command 11 that another use of the 11th Army could only be considered once the enemy had been driven from its current position. The sooner this happened, the more welcome it would be in view of the overall situation. The stalemate in the attack, which had occurred with the armies of the Carpathian front fighting south of Przemysl after initial successes since May 17, diminished the hope of quickly reaching the Dnjestr-Wisznia line and thus a rapid change in the situation in Bukovina.

General von Falkenhayn saw the most effective means to get the stalled overall operation moving again in an advance of the 11th Army to the southeast. On the afternoon of May 18, still unaware of the day's battles, he initially inquired with Army High Command 11, "why not advance the VI and Guard Corps further south or southeast to relieve the XXXXI Reserve Corps and the 11th Bavarian Division at Radymno and Przemysl and, in the further course, also the left wing of the 3rd Army southeast of Przemysl." This inquiry had crossed with a report from Army High Command 1, which expressed the general impression that the enemy was retreating before the center and left wing, but trying to hold the San from Radymno upwards as well as Przemysl. Before any further major offensive, the reorganization of supplies and the establishment of a new base on the San were necessary, which would take a few days due to the difficult road conditions and the distance from rail support. The army intended to first attack Radymno and thereby enclose Przemysl in the north. The infantry attack on Przemysl was not intended without special orders.

From the response that Army High Command 11 then gave to the inquiry itself, General von Falkenhayn saw that the advance to the southeast he had suggested was already being considered by Generaloberst von Mackensen

1) p. 139. — 2) Przylstaf and Krosno. p. 146.

Page 066

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

It was anticipated that "as soon as the army corps have gained enough space and freedom of movement to the east." Currently, however, all corps are still engaged in combat with their front facing east. Additionally, the ammunition situation needs to be improved. The Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army then emphasized in a detailed letter on May 19 the decisive importance of a breakthrough by the 11th Army on both sides of the Wisznia to the southeast. "According to the development of the last few days," it said, "it is doubtful whether the 2nd, 3rd, South, and 7th Armies will soon reach their goal unless they are relieved by a renewed breakthrough of the 11th Army... I would like to emphasize once again the importance of the issue given the rapid escalation of the military-political situation. The enemy movements reported yesterday by rail and foot march suggest that he has significantly weakened in front of the actual front of the army. On the other hand, he seems to be strengthening Przemysl and his positions there for political reasons. As far as can be judged from here, it should then be possible to leave a screen for cover against the east and north and to attempt a breakthrough thrust on both sides of the Wisznia with the assembled main forces."

In his response to this suggestion, the Chief of Staff of the 11th Army, Colonel von Seeckt, pointed out that the 11th and 4th Armies had been attacked on their entire front on May 19, most strongly over Radymno and south of it. Once the situation is clarified and sufficient ammunition is procured, the proposed breakthrough over the line Zablotsce—Radymno—Lazy would be initiated.

The Army High Command 11 intended to have the XXXXI Reserve Corps, Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, Guard Corps, and the 119th Infantry Division ready by May 22 in the approximate line Kaluszce—Malowisko, to begin the attack towards Buczow—Galicia on the 23rd. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was to cover against Przemysl, and the X Army Corps was to take over the previous front of the Guard Corps. The Lubaczowka was envisaged as the boundary against the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. This army was thus assigned another position over its already widely extended front. This could only be done by deploying its last reserves on the right wing of the army. The two reinforcement divisions on the march were therefore redirected to the right. Since a local setback had occurred at Sieniawa on the right wing of the 4th Army, this was not extended to the Lubaczowka, but only to Sady.

Page 067

Preparations for the Attack.

In the army order issued on May 20 at 6 p.m., the purpose of the new offensive of the 11th Army was determined to be "to disrupt the rear connections of Przemysl and facilitate the advance of the 3rd and 2nd Armies southeast of Przemysl." This required a pivot of the assault group to the southeast. Accordingly, the attack sectors were assigned. The k.u.k. VI Corps and the Guard Corps were to pull together to the right. The XXXXII Reserve Corps was instructed to deploy strong forces behind its left flank. The start of the attack could only be planned for May 24, as the reliefs at the 4th Army were delayed. This army intended to carry out its assigned cover to the north through its own offensive on Sandomierz. The two neighboring armies to the right, the 3rd and 2nd Armies, were ordered by the k.u.k. Army Command to break through on May 24 as well, continuing the planned attack on the fortress of Przemysl with the inner flanks and advancing through the foothills of the Carpathians "up to the railway and road on both sides of Mosciska."

Along the entire front of the allies from the middle of the Carpathians to the area north of the Vistula, a unified attack was to be initiated. It was hoped that by the pincer attack on both sides of Przemysl, the fortress could be quickly brought down and then a clear path could be created for the acquisition of the Wisznia–Dniester section.

The Russians remained calm on the entire front in the days leading up to the start of the attack. This benefited the orderly course of the relief movement and the replenishment of ammunition supplies. According to the army order issued on May 22 by the 11th Army, the artillery firing on May 23 was to be followed by effective firing on May 24 at 6 a.m. The assault was scheduled for 8 a.m. The 119th Infantry Division was to be ready as an army reserve at Dobkowice–Bratyn.

The reconnaissance flights conducted in clear weather, supported by photographic surveys, had supplemented the troops' findings about the enemy. The first Russian position, already known, north of the Rada, in the line Ostrow–Wietlin–Madywka–Cetula, was strongly fortified. Behind it, the defense zone gradually extended eastward from Rada and San towards Radymno, deeply entrenched. Thus, the bridgehead of Radymno presented a strong defensive position. Another position, also adjoining the Rada on the left flank, extended over the narrower bridgehead east of Radymno behind the Wisznia to Lasy and was retracted on the northern flank to the heights of Laszki and Tuchla.

Page 068

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

According to the current findings, the opposing Russian 3rd Army consisted of the XIII Corps (19th, 12th, ½ 81st Infantry and 3rd Don Cossack Division) northeast of Przemysl, the XXI Corps (33rd, 44th Infantry, 16th Cavalry Division) at Radymno, the V Caucasian Corps (3rd Caucasian, 43rd Infantry, 3rd Rifle, 7th Cavalry Division and three Foot Cossack Brigades) northeast of Jaroslaw, and the III Caucasian Corps (34th, 21st, 52nd Infantry and 13th Siberian Rifle Division) at Sieniawa. One had to expect stubborn resistance from the Russians. The enemy's front covered the most important road and rail junctions to the capital of Galicia: from Przemysl via Grodek, from Radymno via Jaworów, and from Jaroslaw via Rawa Ruska to Lemberg. Therefore, the main concern of the army high command was to provide sufficient quantities of ammunition for the attack. Since the supply line of the 11th Army was only completed to Strzyzow northeast of Jaslo on May 19, all troop and column vehicles and all remaining transport in the country were made available for ammunition transport with the greatest emphasis.

The XXXXI Reserve Corps wanted to focus on the front section north of the railway that cuts through Ostrow. Here on the main road to Radymno, a series of entrenchments and height 202, which dominates the river junction, formed the key point of the enemy position. The 82nd Reserve Division was to launch a decisive breakthrough against it and roll up the northern adjoining front from Torbicz. The h.u. VI Corps focused its attack on the east bank of the San against Wietlin. The Guard Corps initially wanted to deploy only the reinforced 1st Guard Infantry Division against the area north of Wietlin, between Szklo and Makowisko, while the 2nd Guard Infantry Division was positioned on the main road to Makowisko. It was later to advance over Makowisko to cover the left flank. The reinforced X Army Corps was tasked with protecting the attack northward. General von Cmmich wanted to solve this task offensively by attacking the 20th and 56th Infantry Divisions through the woods north of Oleszyce to the heights around Cetula, to hold as many enemy forces as possible here. The Lubaczowka front was to remain defensive.

The protection of the right flank of the attacking 11th Army was entrusted to the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division with the subordinate Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division. It was to adjust its left wing to the advance of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. At the same time, it was also tasked with "encircling the northern front of Przemysl."

Page 069

Speculations about Przemysl wavered. At the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, it was initially believed that the fort belt was strongly occupied. Then the impression was gained that no significant Russian forces were in the fortress. Intercepted conversations even indicated their imminent evacuation. Other reports stated that the Russians wanted to hold the fortress for political reasons. Initially, the high command of the 11th Army never intended to concentrate heavy artillery against the northern front or to carry out an attack on the fortress itself without a special order. However, when the idea of a forcible capture was considered, General von Kneussl proposed an attack on the northern front. This aspect had already been taken into account in the redistribution of heavy artillery. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was also instructed to act immediately if the evacuation of the fortress was confirmed. However, the enemy was still positioned behind the Rada in the line intended for the encirclement of the northern front of Przemysl, Mackowice—Bathzce—Walawa. It was hoped that the pressure of the main force of the 11th Army to the southwest would also bring down this position. To strengthen the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division for its new task, its right flank was relieved by cavalry. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army could only plan the start of its assigned attack on the southwestern front of Przemysl for May 28 due to the late arrival of heavy artillery. Dense early morning fog still lay over the San lowlands when, on May 24 at 6 a.m., the artillery began its effective fire on the entire attack front of the 11th Army. The infantry assault began punctually at 8 a.m. The enemy, prepared for defense, had considerably more numerous and better-supplied artillery than before. Heavy guns from the fortress area also acted against the front attacking west of the San. The XXXXI Reserve Corps stationed there faced a difficult task. But within minutes, a determined leap led the decisive battle of the 82nd Reserve Division into the entrenchments east of Tuczemp and further against the northern part of Ostrow. This impact in the north quickly overcame the front west of Ostrow. By 8 a.m., General von Francois could already report: "Heights west and northwest."

1) p. 147.

Page 070

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

captured Ostrow.” Shortly thereafter, the 82nd Reserve Division advanced into the northern part and soon after the 81st Reserve Division into the southern part of the elongated village. Under this bilateral encirclement, the defense in Ostrow completely collapsed. In the northern part of the battlefield, Generalmajor Fabarius set the next ridge line before Radymno as the target for his 82nd Reserve Division and moved his reserves along the main road. The rapid success achieved in a determined direction so shook the Russian infantry that their resistance weakened and they surrendered in masses. The tirelessly advancing infantry of the 82nd Reserve Division reached the ridges before Radymno before the Russian batteries standing there in fire could bring up their reserves for rescue. In the infantry and machine gun fire, the teams broke down. Reserves advancing on the road to Radymno reached the rear of the bravely resisting batteries. After these great successes, mainly due to the determination of the troops, the leadership of the 82nd Reserve Division gained the impression that with determined action, Radymno itself would soon fall. General Fabarius therefore ordered the continuation of the attack on the place at 9:35 a.m. Further south, the 81st Reserve Division had encountered new resistance on the heights west of Stolziszow. However, after Generalmajor von Stöcken had his previously held back right wing march northwest of Zamojce for encirclement, covered to the south by the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, the enemy defense collapsed so quickly that Russian batteries were also overrun here. Now the 81st Reserve Division wanted to advance with the mass into the southern part of Stolziszow, while the right wing had to cover this advance on the heights north of the lower, deeply cut Rada. Both divisions of the XXXXI Reserve Corps were thus set for the attack on the second enemy position zone at 10:00 a.m., only two hours after the start of the storm. Pilots had observed numerous marching columns east of Radymno retreating behind the San.

The battle at the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps initially did not proceed as successfully. Although its right wing south of the San had joined the rapid victory march of the 82nd Reserve Division. By 10:00 a.m., the Ostrow—Wysocko route was reached. Some guns had also fallen into the hands of the Hungarians here. However, the front of the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division under Field Marshal Lieutenant von Hadfy had to be covered, as its left wing remained completely tied up at the San near Adamowka. For the main attack of the VI Corps on the right bank against

Page 071

Radymno is Taken.

Bielitzin was not granted a quick success. Leaning against the San lowlands and the Szklo, the enemy offered stubborn resistance, particularly in entrenchments west of Bielitzin. The attack stalled completely here. To get the advance north of the San moving and thereby eliminate the flanking fire that was hindering the attack on Radymno, the artillery of the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division and partly that of the XXXXI Reserve Corps directed their fire northward. However, this support only affected the combat area immediately east of the San. At Bielitzin, the Austro-Hungarian 12th Infantry Division under Field Marshal Lieutenant Kestranek was still held up.

The same happened to the left neighboring southern wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division. Under the effect of enemy flanking fire from Bielitzin, it initially could not advance. However, a breakthrough was achieved further north in the middle between Szklo and Malowisko. Parts turning north soon cleared the way for the left wing attacking through Malowisko to break through the breach towards Bobrowka. The units of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division deployed here to support the 1st Guard Infantry Division were then reassigned to General von Windler on the left corps wing for unified command.

The X Army Corps had already intended to take the positions around Cetula by surprise attack early in the morning before the start of the general attack, which, according to prisoner reports, had become known to the enemy. However, this did not succeed. Made aware by this attempt, the enemy was prepared for defense against the X Army Corps. A unified attack no longer occurred. The right corps wing, the 20th Infantry Division, separated from the Guard by a swamp area, gained some ground towards Olszowa. But the left wing and the 56th Infantry Division were stuck in heavy fighting around Cetula.

Meanwhile, the attack of the XXXXI Reserve Corps on Radymno had made favorable progress. By noon, the place was in the hands of the 82nd Reserve Division, and the 81st pushed further south into the immediately adjacent village of Stolzów. During these battles, aerial reconnaissance determined that the road from Radymno via Duntowice to Zalesta Wola was covered with several side-by-side marching columns. Troops of all arms hurriedly moved over the San bridges east of Radymno. A wild confusion arose in the masses crowding there. Aircraft dropped the long-range

Page 072

Artillery these welcome targets. During the advance of the 82nd Reserve Division through Radymno, severe panic arose again among the Russian infantry, so that further batteries, which sought to escape through the city, fell into German hands. Both divisions already believed they could pursue these disbanding units. However, the enemy positioned itself in prepared positions in front of the 81st Reserve Division on the heights of the eastern Rada bank. In the Rada valley, the division organized for a new attack, while the right wing was to advance on the eastern Rada bank towards Zadarowice for flank security. By pushing the division towards Stoloshov, a noticeable gap had arisen between it and the northern wing of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, which had meanwhile occupied Zablonce. The execution of the attack proved impossible here, especially as the enemy itself launched a counterattack. The 82nd Reserve Division was still able to establish itself on the flat height east of Radymno. However, the attack front of this division, which had become quite confused in the local combat, seemed initially exhausted. Its left wing had to remain strongly bent back, as the Hungarians to the north could not follow the rapid attack course. The bridgehead of Zagrody effectively flanked any further advance of the division. Fresh reserves initially swung east against it, but encountered strong enemy defenses there at 3 p.m. Although the attack of the XXXXI Reserve Corps had come to a standstill along the entire line, General von François still hoped to advance to the San line today, possibly even further. In response to this intention reported to the army command, the approving reply came at 3 p.m.: "Since the enemy still holds east of Przemysl, a quick advance against his rear is very promising." When it soon became apparent that the Russian command had managed to reestablish their collapsed front between the Rada and the bridgehead of Zagrody, the army command decided to close the gap that had arisen between the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division and the XXXXI Reserve Corps. It was hoped that this would give new impetus to the advance of this corps against the San. At 4 p.m., the order was given to the 119th Infantry Division to join the advance of the army reserve over Zamostje-Zadarowice, with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division ordered to align its left wing at Zablonce.

Page 073

Also Great Successes East of the San.

The division only reached the line Zablóce—Zamojsc after nightfall. The gap was closed. Unified action of both divisions against the positions on the heights east of the Rada did not occur. The XXXXI Reserve Corps also postponed the continuation of its attack to the following day. May 24 had been a rest day for the corps. The infantry, advancing with fresh momentum, effectively supported by accompanying artillery, broke through two enemy defensive belts and thereby wrested the strong bridgehead of Radymno from the enemy. In doing so, 52 guns were captured and 9000 prisoners were taken.

The 39th Infantry Division, positioned on the right flank of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps in the difficult lowland terrain on both sides of the San, could not keep pace with the rapid advance of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. Flanking fire from Wietlin also hampered their further advance. It was not until 4 p.m. that the northern exit of Radymno was reached. The bridgehead of Zagrody also halted further advance here, as with the neighboring 82nd Reserve Division. The frontal attack by the Hungarians did not break through. On the battlefield of the 12th Infantry Division, Wietlin, the hotly contested redoubt west of the town was brought down at 11 a.m. with support from the 1st Guard Infantry Division. However, Wietlin itself was still stubbornly held by the enemy. Only when the division directed its main thrust through the suburb of the town towards the road Sychowic—Drejna and reached it at 2 p.m., did the resistance in Wietlin finally collapse. In the hope that the attack of the inner flanks of both divisions, slowly advancing through particularly difficult swampy terrain between the San and Wietlin, would now proceed more swiftly, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps received the order from the army high command at 3 p.m. to "gain the line east of Grabowice—Dunkowice—Lazy in connection with the XXXXI Reserve Corps and Guard Corps" today. However, this proved impossible. The army high command now emphasized that it was important to "break through from Wietlin via Zagrody to advance on the right bank of the San as soon as possible and thus facilitate the advance of the XXXXI Reserve Corps." "Above all, the VI Corps must soon be able to bring the road Radymno—Grabowice under fire." However, the Austro-Hungarian 12th Infantry Division did not succeed in making significant progress against the strong enemy position between Zagrody and Lazy in the open terrain exposed to flanking. Only directly at the San did the parts of the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division, separated by the river, reach

Page 074

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

tion the consolidation. The heavy day of fighting had brought the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps 7000 prisoners and 16 guns. With the favorable turn that the battle north of Wisłim had taken at noon, relief had also been achieved for the right wing of the Guard Corps. The General Command now placed the focus of further operations on it. In the line Dreśina—Adamowka¹), the 1st Guard Infantry Division encountered new strong resistance at 1 p.m. After breaking this, the division pushed forward against heavily fortified Lazy. The enemy responded with fierce counterattacks. Heavy fighting raged here until evening, without significant ground being gained. On the left wing, the 2nd Guard Infantry Division advanced after capturing the heights north of Makowisko to attack Adamowka—Bobrowka. But here too, the enemy launched a counterattack against the attacker at 6 p.m. Bobrowka was no longer reached. 5000 prisoners were captured by the Guard Corps during the day. After the successes of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division at Makowisko, the right wing of the X Army Corps had also advanced significantly in the afternoon. By 7 p.m., the enemy forest positions on both sides of Olchowo had fallen. In tough fighting, parts of the 20th Infantry Division pushed through to the edge of the forest, and by 10 p.m., Chodaniec was taken. The repeatedly fierce fighting around Cetula, however, no longer achieved its goal. The leadership gained the impression that strong Russian forces were still present here and also on the Lubaczowa front. Thus, despite minimal territorial gains, the attack by the Emmich Corps succeeded in holding significant enemy forces here, away from the decision point. The overall result of the day was that the 11th Army had broken through the newly established enemy front over a width of 20 kilometers and gained 5 kilometers of space. Nevertheless, the enemy managed to position itself, leaning on Przemyśl, in a westward-facing defensive position. Prisoner statements revealed that on May 22, the order was given to hold Przemyśl. On May 23, aircraft observed only limited traffic from the fortress in an easterly direction. If this was to be maintained, the 11th Army had to reckon that the enemy would continue to offer the strongest resistance on a connecting front protecting the connections from Przemyśl. A report submitted to the Supreme Army Command at 7 p.m., which also

¹) Located south of Bobrowka, north of Sło; not to be confused with Adamowka north of Rabyńmo.

Page 075

Resurgence of the Enemy West of the San.

As the general command received the message, the army high command expressed its further intentions to "exploit today's success and advance with utmost force into the rear of the enemy east of Przemyśl, ... to possibly divert the enemy's retreat over Mościska." The XXXXI Reserve Corps was to do everything "to enable the 119th Infantry Division to make the promising advance on Medyka."

Since the battles were not yet concluded in the evening, the high command could not foresee the situation that would arise the next morning. It was therefore left to the initiative of the subordinate leaders to exploit their previous successes within the framework of the given attack objectives on May 25. On the right wing of the army, this initially did not succeed. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division hoped, by proceeding in conjunction with the 119th Infantry Division, to roll up the Rada position from the north and then swing into the desired encirclement position opposite the northern front of Przemyśl. The 119th Infantry Division had reached the heights east of Zablocie during the night and wanted to advance with its right wing southward along the Rada. However, this attack did not progress by midday, while the Bavarians managed to take Drohojow by surprise. At the XXXXI Reserve Corps, the 81st Reserve Division made its further advance from Zamojsce-Stolozisko eastward dependent on the progress of the 119th Infantry Division on its right flank. Since the 82nd Reserve Division also had to repel strong attacks during the night, General von François considered a systematic preparation of the attack against the resurgent enemy necessary. Above all, the division's advance eastward seemed only possible if the bridgehead of Zagrody on the left flank had fallen.

Here, the night and morning repeated assault by the Hungarians had not yet achieved success. A relief through the center of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, which did not advance in the open terrain north of the San, was not to be expected. Therefore, Field Marshal Lieutenant Arz emphasized the left corps wing to take Łazy in conjunction with the southern wing of the Guard. This succeeded at 10:30 in the morning. However, the local battle also attracted parts advancing further south. In the gap created north of the San, the corps reserve was now redirected to the rear of the bridgehead of Zagrody.

The Guard Corps intended a leftward swing in the attack. While the left wing reached the line achieved in the morning hours

Page 076

Bobrowka was to be held, and the right was to swing forward over Lazy. Once this place was taken, the connection to the VI Corps was achieved here without strong enemy resistance. The center of the Guard Corps had to overcome significant terrain difficulties in the swampy lowlands, particularly for the artillery in its development for the attack.

In front of the X Army Corps, the enemy had evacuated the hotly contested Cetula during the night. By 3 a.m., the elevation mass projecting into the Lubaczowka lowlands east of the place had been occupied by the 56th Infantry Division. General von Emmich now intended to also prepare the 20th Infantry Division at and north of Chodanie for the advance against the upper Lubaczowka. This connection initially caused some concern at the Army High Command that the bridgehead taken so far might be threatened from the east. However, this concern was soon dispelled, as Ryszkowa Wola and Zapalow were already found free of enemies in the early morning hours. Pilots confirmed at 9 a.m. that the Russians had withdrawn their forces to the southeast. The forward movement of the 20th Infantry Division was to take place at noon.

At this time, the High Command of the 11th Army assessed the situation such that the previous good progress north of the Wisznia would also help the attack group on both sides of the San, which still encountered strong resistance east of Radymno. If they succeeded in reaching and crossing the San, for which there seemed to be justified prospects, the impact on the enemy in front of the 3rd and 2nd Armies had to be felt and force them to withdraw. This necessitated continuing the attack of the 11th Army in the chosen direction with all forces.

However, the hopes of the Army High Command were not yet fully realized. The right wing of the army did not make significant progress. During the afternoon, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division managed, under heavy fighting, to advance its left wing at and north of Andrykow. The 119th Infantry Division pushed up the heights east of Rada but soon got stuck again in front of Zadabrowie. Consequently, the 81st Reserve Division, suffering under strong artillery flanking fire on the right wing of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, could not gain significant ground. However, the 82nd Reserve Division resumed the attack against the Swiete-Grabowiec line from the left wing when the bridgehead of Zagrody fell at 4:45 p.m.

Page 077

General von François intended to move the 81st Reserve Division later behind the 82nd to take them out of the firing range of the fortress. The Army High Command agreed and directed the corps towards Stubno east of the San and to occupy Soinica to secure the right flank. The 82nd Reserve Division managed to advance to Swiete despite the onset of darkness. However, they encountered such strong resistance there that the plan to take Swiete and Soinica during the night could not be carried out. The left wing maintained contact with the Hungarians at the San near Grabowiec. Since the execution of the tasks of the XXXXI Reserve Corps proved more difficult than expected, the Army High Command was eager to regain a reserve force to be able to emphasize its intentions if necessary. Therefore, the 119th Infantry Division was ordered to remain at Zablace for the time being. The battle in the center of the 11th Army brought more territorial gains. The thrust of the corps reserve of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, which hit the bridgehead of Zagrody from the rear at 4 p.m., brought it down. Subsequently, the 39th Infantry Division advanced on the east bank of the San up to Grabowiec. The 12th Infantry Division also pushed forward after successfully concluding the battles around Lazy, pursuing the retreating enemy over the Wisznia between Duniowice and Lazy during the afternoon. The right wing of the Guard Corps was still engaged in combat north of Lazy in the afternoon. The center had already launched an attack against the heights west and north of Laszki at 1 p.m. Despite fierce and openly conducted defense and after lively local skirmishes, the enemy had to abandon Laszki at 4 p.m. The center reached both sides of the Silo up to Chartany—Zamecznik by evening. The right wing was also able to advance eastward beyond Lazy without encountering strong resistance. On the left corps wing, shortly after 2 p.m., the forces stationed there advanced from Bobrowka to attack Zagrody. Despite heavy flanking fire from the north, the western position of the place was reached by 6 p.m. The X Army Corps carried out the intended pivot of its center into the line Zapałów—Lubaczowka without enemy counteraction during the afternoon. Parts of the 20th Infantry Division also participated in the battle of the Guard around Zagrody.

1) On the Bobrowka—Oleszyce railway, not to be confused with Zagrody on the San on the battlefield of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps.

Page 078

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Since the beginning of the battle north of Przemysl, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army had not yet engaged in decisive combat. Its command area had meanwhile extended beyond the Vistula, with the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army being subordinated to it as "Group Kirchbach." On the northern riverbank, the enemy had vacated its positions in front of the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the Landwehr Division Bredow on May 22, but had already set up new resistance a few kilometers further east. After a feint operation on May 24 at the San front, the planned advance on Samborice took place on both sides of the Vistula the following days. Meanwhile, some enemy positions were overcome. The High Command of the 11th Army requested the 4th Army at 7 p.m. to relieve the parts of the German 19th Infantry Division deployed in the bridgehead of Sieniawa, in order to also bring them to the breakthrough of the 11th Army. The relief was promised for the night of May 27.

The progress of the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies to the right against the road southwards from Przemysl had been minimal so far. The demand of General von Conrad that the attack of both armies should reach the Mosciska—Przemysl road on May 25 could not be met by the troops. A breakthrough into the enemy did not occur. Serious threat to the rear connection from Przemysl from the south did not exist so far. This was largely due to the fact that strong artillery had to be deployed for the attack of the 3rd Army against the western front of Przemysl, so that only weak artillery was available for the thrust of the inner wings of both armies. Additionally, there was a shortage of ammunition due to the difficult supply conditions in the mountains. It was intended to consolidate the Besikent Corps in the left wing of the 2nd Army on May 26 under the command of General von Marwitz to achieve success. In the evening, aircraft observed the departure of enemy columns from Przemysl to the east and from Balice in front of the right wing of the 3rd Army to the northeast. Whether these movements were to be seen as the beginning of a withdrawal of the enemy to the east or to reinforce its front heavily threatened by the 11th Army was uncertain. In any case, the task for all armies remained to continue their attacks in the chosen directions with all their might.

1) On May 22, the Corps Command VIII took over the previous Corps Kirchbach in place of the Cavalry General Baron von Kirchbach. The previous commander of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, Cavalry General Dankl, was assigned to the Italian front. See p. 26.

Page 079

The morning of May 26 brought no significant change for the right wing of the 11th Army. As the 119th Infantry Division was held back by the army command, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, left to its own devices, was unable to advance beyond the Rada. At the XXXXI Reserve Corps, the 82nd Reserve Division continued in a tough, indecisive village fight around Swiete. In front of the ö.u. VI Corps, the enemy had retreated to a position east of Grabowice—Nienowice—Piaśki. At 10 a.m., they were attacked here. The enemy had also retreated in front of the Guard Corps. It was only around noon that the 1st Guard Infantry Division encountered resistance from Jaleska Wola. The 2nd Guard Infantry Division broke through at noon in the Bormarsch Mielitz Stary and Korzenica. The enemy stood here in line Luchla—Mielitz Nowy—Butkowina. General Freiherr von Plettenberg intended to advance the 1st Guard Infantry Division on Chalupki Chotyniecice under the cover of the left flank through the 2nd Guard Infantry Division.

In this situation, Generaloberst von Mackensen issued the following order to General von Francois at 1 p.m.: "Since the XXXXI Reserve Corps can no longer advance at the front, it must now attempt, under the protection of the 119th Infantry Division, which is now assigned for this purpose, to bring the 81st Reserve Division and the 82nd Reserve Division across the San. ... The overall situation urgently requires that the San be crossed today in line Barcyz—Nienowice."

General von Francois then ordered the 82nd Reserve Division at 3 p.m. to push through to the southern edge of Swiete. This goal was reached by 5 p.m. From the 81st Reserve Division, the immediately available parts were to reach the eastern bank of the San over Michalowka during the night after being relieved by the 119th Infantry Division, in order to later advance on the shortest route via Stubno—Bucow towards the road Przemysl—Moscziska and to use the long-range artillery assigned to the division against the fortress's connecting railway. During the night, the 81st Reserve Division moved between the parts of the 82nd Reserve Division located on the eastern bank of the San and the ö.u. VI Corps.

This corps had recaptured Nienowice from the enemy with the 39th Infantry Division by 7 p.m. and pursued them to Gaje. The 12th Infantry Division, following weak enemies, had reached Chotyniec. Thus, a wedge had been driven far to the southeast. Left echeloned

Page 080

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The 1st Guard Infantry Division advanced through Jaleska Wola under combat with enemy rearguards. Separated by the broad Słozówienung, the 2nd Guard Infantry Division reached the heights west of Tuchla. The lower course of the Lubaczowka was established as the army general's position after the 19th Infantry Division was detached from the front and assembled at Jarosław. No more battles took place here on this day.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army had made its attack on Sandomierz on the Vistula dependent on the advance of the German 47th Reserve Division, which was deployed further east. However, this division soon became stuck in strong forest positions. Without significant additional artillery deployment, success was not expected here. No successes were achieved on May 26 at the junction of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies either.

The allied army commands had planned the later expansion of the San-Wisznia line during their agreements on the continuation of operations on May 12. After important parts of this section had fallen into the hands of the attacking army, General von Conrad ordered on May 26 the expansion of the San line and the secured bridgeheads, adding that this "naturally should not hinder the continuation of the offensive in any way." The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was to fortify the bridgehead of Sieniawa and the line reached so far in the San-Vistula angle. The 11th Army then ordered the X and Guard Corps to expand their positions by advancing the right wing to Młyn north of the main road to Krakowiec. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was to advance north of the Wisznia over Kalników-Galazie. For General von Francois's attack group, the order was: "XXXXI Reserve Corps with the 119th Infantry Division retains the task of advancing south of the Wisznia, which now forms the border with the VI Corps, towards the Medyka-Mosciska road. Right border free." The cover of the right flank on the western San bank remained with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division and the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division. This gave General von Francois more leeway to advance the attack from the large bridgehead of the 11th Army against the connections from Przemysl. The VI and Guard Corps were to follow southeast to protect the left flank.

1) p. 139.

Page 081

The Strike Group Francois is Weakened.

In accordance with the orders he received, General von Francois intended on May 27 to deploy his three divisions as soon as possible on the eastern bank of the San for a decisive strike. However, at 11:45 a.m., he called upon the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division to relieve the troops of the 119th Infantry and the 82nd Reserve Division located on the western bank of the San. General von Kneussl, on the other hand, was of the opinion that due to the resulting extension of his division over twelve kilometers, overcoming the enemy's elevated position east of the Rada was no longer possible for him. He considered the involvement of the units subordinated to General von Francois in this task on the western San bank still necessary and approached General von Francois in this regard. However, he was convinced that the resistance on the western side opposite the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division would also collapse due to the full-force strike on the eastern bank. The Army High Command initially approved the measures of General von Francois but decided in favor of General von Kneussl after receiving his statement and ordered at 3:15 p.m.: "XXXXI. Reserve Corps is to first secure possession of Sosnica with its right wing, and advance with the left wing over Stubienko to Stubno. After securing Sosnica, the right wing is to take direction towards Bucow. The 119th Infantry Division is to follow up to Sosnica. Connection of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division via Zadobrowce to Drohojow. Under these circumstances, the decisive advance on the eastern bank could only become effective with full force once the Francois group had completed its task on the western bank. The influence of the Przemysl fortress on the course of the operation became apparent.

The attack battle of the XXXXI. Reserve Corps initiated in the meantime on both San banks remained unaffected by this exchange of opinions. The 119th Infantry Division only wrested the heights immediately south of Zamoscie from the enemy in the evening and maintained connection there with the 82nd Reserve Division. The repeated attacks of this division against the enemy, effectively supported by artillery from the fortress, had not been successful. Only when parts of the division intervened from the other San bank in the afternoon, was it finally possible to penetrate the northern part of Sosnica. The 81st Reserve Division, now deployed on the flat eastern bank between San and Wisznia, pressed forward with the focus of its left wing towards the southeast. It encountered strong resistance along the Barcza-Stubienko line. Under the pressure of the superior force, the enemy was forced to withdraw from Stubienko at 4:00 p.m. and ...

Page 082

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

also give up Stubno in the evening. The division now wanted to advance to Pozbácz to gain influence on the railway and road Przemysl—Medyka—Mosziska, but its striking power was no longer sufficient in the increasingly widening attack area. Its right wing remained at the San in front of Barzyc, while its left could still wrest Nako from the enemy in the evening.

East of the Wisznia, the Austro-Hungarian VI and the Guard Corps accompanied the advance of the XXXXI Reserve Corps with squadrons from the right wing. In the afternoon hours, the Allies took Kalników and heights south of the place after a hard fight. Further north, the line Ostran Kalników—west of Milny—height west of Tuchla was captured, where the planned defense front was to be expanded.

A serious threat loomed on the left wing of the army. Already during the night and throughout the day, strong enemy advances over the Lubaczowka had to be repelled on the entire front of the 20th and the now over eleven kilometers extended 56th Infantry Division. Particularly in front of the left wing of the 56th Infantry Division at the Lubaczowka bend east of Czernowka Wola, strong enemy forces seemed to be concentrating. The approach of considerable troops unloaded at Lubaczow was reported by aircraft at noon. The army command therefore prepared a regiment of the 19th Infantry Division, drawn from the reserve, at Piwoda for the right wing of the X Army Corps and made another regiment of the 56th Infantry Division available.

While the left wing of the 11th Army stood firm despite enemy attacks, the Russians literally achieved great success against the Lubaczowka at the bridgehead of Sieniawa. After the failure of Czech troops lost the Slawa height at night, the entire defense of the Allies completely collapsed. Numerous Austro-Hungarian batteries fell into enemy hands. Reserves were unable to restore the situation. The Russian X Army Corps, itself under the heaviest attack, was unable to provide assistance. Thus, the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army had to retreat behind the Lubaczowka and the San after several unsuccessful attempts to rebuild the defense east of the San. At 8:45 p.m., Generaloberst von Mackensen approved this order but simultaneously ordered the cessation of attack movements against Somborina to free up forces for the threatened right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. Also on the left Vistula bank, the attack of the Kirchbach group and the right

Page 083

The wing of the army division Woyrsch in the line Klimontow–Jezow–Stojhow finally came to a halt. Due to these events with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, a serious crisis had arisen for the left wing of the 11th Army. If the army wanted to continue its offensive task, its left flank could not be pressed. Therefore, at 9 p.m., the army command ordered the 119th Infantry Division to be held at its immediate disposal. This meant a further significant loss of striking power for General von François's mission. The fronts of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies had almost come to a standstill.

4. The Battle for Przemysl from May 28 to June 3.

Map 6, Sketch 14.

On May 28, a relaxation occurred at the front of the 11th Army. Under the impression of the bold advance of the 81st Reserve Division on the southern bank of the San, the enemy was retreating before the entire front of General von François. The rest of the army's front held its positions against enemy partial attacks except for a local loss at Kalniów. This allowed the army command to release forces to counter an expansion of Russian successes at Sieniawa to the western bank of the San and the left flank of the 11th Army. Parts of the 19th Infantry Division were sent to Wola Buchowska. The 119th Infantry Division was moved to Jaroslaw, where two battalions of the Guard Corps had also been shifted. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division, without its rifle unit, which remained with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, was also set in motion to Jaroslaw. Thus, by evening, sufficient reserves were ready at the junction of both armies.

Meanwhile, the enemy had retreated before the right wing of the 11th Army to the line Malhowice–Walawa. General von Kneussl followed the enemy on both banks of the San, where the focus was increasingly shifted to the eastern bank. Here, the advance troops reached the line Chalupki–Nako. However, at 9 p.m., the army command ordered the 82nd Reserve Division to halt south of Sniatyn and not to go beyond the line Walawa–Podziaci on the eastern bank. This,

Page 084

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

A measure appeared necessary to be able to fall back on the XXXXI Reserve Corps to support the left wing of the army if needed. However, General von François urged, despite the significant weakening of his forces due to the events at Sieniawa, for the quickest possible continuation of the assigned thrust against the connections of Przemysl, as he saw in the enemy's uncoordinated individual attacks a waning of their strength, which suggested an imminent evacuation of the fortress. Prisoners had also stated that strong forces would leave the fortress on May 28. Therefore, the 82nd Reserve Division was to aim for Walawa-Torki on May 29, and the 81st Reserve Division for Podbicz-Starzawa.

The High Command of the 11th Army also gained the impression that the enemy no longer intended to seriously defend Przemysl. To prevent an orderly withdrawal of their forces and resources from the fortress, it was necessary to force them into a hasty evacuation. However, given the previous course of attacks, a quick success of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army against the fortress was hardly to be expected. Given the situation, only the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was considered to bring about the rapid fall of the fortress. Generaloberst von Mackensen ordered this division to carry out the "shortened attack on Przemysl."

The fortress of Przemysl, located at the deeply incised exit of the San from the mountains, was surrounded by a ring of modern forts and intermediate works. In the south, west, and north, these were advanced far onto the surrounding high ground, while on the eastern front they lay in the widening river plain. Although the hurried demolitions carried out before the handover of the fortress to the Russians in March of the year had diminished the defensive capability of the works in some respects, they did not affect the secured accommodation in underground spaces of the remaining armored caverns and observation posts. Meanwhile, the Russians had been diligently working on the restoration of the works and the expansion of the intermediate lines, significantly strengthening the obstacles. The inner rampart of the fortress was outdated and had no resistance against modern artillery effects.

The commander of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, General von Kneussl, chose the area of Forts X and XI as the target for the attack. In two sections, two infantry regiments each were deployed under the command of Generals von Schoch and von Behr. To the right secured

Page 085

The Abbreviated Attack on Przemysl is Ordered.

only cavalry, on the left the rifle section of the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division joined. It was intended to push the infantry to the front line on May 29. The artillery under the command of Major General Ziebten was to open fire on May 30, the infantry to reach the assault position the following night and storm on the 31st. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army promised a simultaneous attack against the southwest front.

The movements carried out on May 29 and in the subsequent rainy night and the artillery's positioning proceeded without disturbance from the enemy. However, the troops gained the impression that the enemy was still willing to offer sustained resistance in their solid, partly fortified front line.

The XXXXI Reserve Corps was able to advance its right wing on both sides of the San unmolested to the southern edge of Balawa and to the same height as Dallo on May 29. At 4 in the afternoon, the 82nd Reserve Division then brought mortars and 10 cm cannons into position right behind their infantry, opening fire on the railway near Medyka. Thus, at least a disruption of the connections from Przemysl was achieved. The enemy seemed to be concentrating strong forces on the Turczan Heights opposite the left corps wing. Therefore, parts of the 82nd Reserve Division were moved behind the 81st to Stubno, which simultaneously provided support to the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps stationed at Kalników; it was brought forward again. Otherwise, the adjacent front of the VI, the Guard Corps, and the X Army Corps had only weak advances to fend off. On the left army wing, however, the enemy, to exploit their success from Sieniawa, launched strong but unsuccessful attacks against the now extended front of the X Army Corps (56th Infantry Division) up to the San. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army regrouped its right wing on the west bank of the San.

Given the operational situation, it was absolutely necessary to intensify the previously unsuccessful pressure of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies against the road east of Przemysl, to at least pin down the enemy forces located on this front. Already, strong parts of the Russian 8th Army had appeared opposite the 11th Army east of the San. Consequently, Generaloberst von Mackensen believed in view of the

3) Two Austro-Hungarian mountain cannons, one Austro-Hungarian mountain howitzer, nine field cannons, three light field howitzers, three light field howitzers, one 15 cm cannon, four 21 cm, one 28 cm, one 42 cm howitzer, two 30.5 cm mortar batteries, two, three medium and one light mine-thrower units.

Page 086

The events at Sieniawa could not be taken upon themselves, except for the XXXX1 Reserve Corps to use further forces for the decisive thrust to the south, which could have simultaneously accelerated the fall of Przemyśl. "If Przemyśl falls," Colonel von Seeckt stated in an assessment of the situation, "then at least the position before the Wisznia line is settled. It therefore seems necessary to continue the operations in the initiated manner, thus withstanding the pressure from the east against the bridgehead at Jaroslau, advancing further from the north and south against the Przemyśl—Mościska road, and taking Przemyśl."

The attack preparations of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division against Przemyśl itself proceeded according to plan on May 30. At 10 a.m., the artillery began its fire in clear weather. The assault was scheduled for May 31 at 6:15 a.m. General von François continued to strive to push his right wing forward on both sides of the San, to bring his heavy artillery further south to exert powerful effects against the connections of Przemyśl. If further progress were made towards Podziacze, he intended to also attack the Turznia height, which dominates the battlefield. However, the army command was concerned that such an attack could divert the XXXX1 Reserve Corps from its main direction to the south and recommended suppressing the Turznia height only with artillery fire from both neighboring corps. While the 82nd Reserve Division managed to advance slightly east of the San during the afternoon, its attack west of the river did not progress well. Opposite the weak Austrian cavalry riflemen deployed between the 82nd Reserve and 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, the front section from Malkowice was heavily occupied by the enemy. As this posed a threat to the left wing of the fortress attack, the army command instructed General von François at 4:45 p.m. to "advance with emphasis on the western bank while maintaining the position now reached on the eastern San bank" and to take the ridge of Malkowice. The 82nd height was taken at 8:15 p.m., and Wisznia was also named as a further target. However, decisive progress was not achieved on the western bank of the San on May 30. The Austro-Hungarian VI, Guard, and X Army Corps were able to further expand their defensive positions. The two guard battalions withdrawn to Jaroslau were moved back for the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, weakened in its combat strength, to Dunlowice. The new front on the lower Audaczowa was already forming in the after-

Page 087

Breakthrough in the Front Line of Przemysl.

strong, subjected to repeated mass attacks during the day, in which seven Russian divisions were involved. They were completely repelled, mostly in fierce close combat. The crisis seemed to be overcome here. The artillery fire against Przemysl had also begun on May 30 with the k.u.k. 3rd Army. The assault was also planned for the following day. But by 7 p.m., the infantry had already managed to take Fort VII at Pralkowce by surprise. In the attack section of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, the infantry that had moved into the assault positions in the early morning of May 31 did not yet find the effect of the artillery fire sufficient. Therefore, the assault was postponed to June 1, and the firing on the intended breakthrough point continued. The 82nd Reserve Division, which was adjacent on the left, was engaged in heavy combat west of the San in the morning, to wrest the areas "to Malhowice" from the enemy and advance south from Walawa. In this situation, at 2 p.m., an order from the k.u.k. Army Command arrived at the army headquarters, which, pointing to the worrying developments at Sieniawa and the enemy troop concentrations there, ordered the following: "The 11th and 4th Armies ensure particularly strong fortification of their battle lines and prepare all dispensable forces as reserves for defense. The 3rd and 2nd Armies continue the attack on Przemysl and against the Przemysl–Rudki line with all determination." The 11th Army Command inferred from this the certainly justified wish of the k.u.k. Army Command to regain the fortress lost in March despite brave defense by forces of their own armies. However, it believed it could not comply with this request in the current operational situation, as the sudden withdrawal of the 11th Army from the execution of the attack on Przemysl and the advance from the north into the rear of the fortress threatened to bring the entire attack operation to a standstill, — all the more so as shortly thereafter the news arrived that the Fort VII, taken by the 82nd Reserve Division the previous evening, had been abandoned again. In full awareness of his responsibility, Generaloberst von Mackensen refrained from changing his previous orders. This found its equally swift and brilliant justification through the behavior of the troops entrusted with the attack on Przemysl. The new bombardment of the attack front, lasting until 4 p.m., finally had visible effect. The last successful shot of a 42 cm mortar had shattered the remainder of a dangerous trench section on the west flank of Fort XI. Recognizing these favorable circumstances, broke,

Page 088

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The assault infantry, starting from the left wing, advanced from their position on their own initiative. The storm was fully successful. The fort line Xa to XI was taken. The surprised Russians had mostly not been able to man the breastworks in time. Their isolated counterattacks were repelled and numerous prisoners were taken. The attack, immediately carried out over the ring road, reached the heights between Fort X and Dombrowiczki by 5 in the afternoon. The first, most important step towards capturing the fortress was thus accomplished. As support, General von Kneuss was assigned the two guard battalions stationed at Dombrowice. The next day, the artillery was to prepare the expansion of the breach to the east. The advance of the subsequent 82nd Reserve Division was essential for this. The army command therefore demanded at 5:30 in the afternoon from the XXXXI Reserve Corps the deployment of all available forces to immediately "ensure the cover of the Bavarian division between Malfowice and the San." The artillery of the XXXXI Reserve Corps was to be directed against the fort line Dombrowiczki—Bolestraszice. All other tasks of the corps, except for the artillery bombardment of the railway at Medyka, were to be subordinated to this. Accordingly, reinforcements of infantry and artillery were also supplied from the east bank to the attack group of the 82nd Reserve Division fighting from the heights "at Malfowice," to be able to continue the attack with full force the next morning. At the front of the 11th Army east of the San, the expected strong enemy attacks did not materialize.

To ensure more unified combat leadership at the joint attack front of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies than before, the Beskiden Corps was subordinated to the 2nd Army. The attack was planned here for June 2.

Enemy reports revealed that the shift of Russian forces to the northeast had also led to a new division of their front. The Russian 8th Army now extended to the Lubaczowka near Nowa Grobla. In Przemysl, three infantry divisions and three landwehr brigades were assumed, as well as 18 infantry and three cavalry divisions in front of the 11th Army and eleven infantry and three cavalry divisions in front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army.

General von Kneuss made every effort to expand the breach front in the fort belt, which was of utmost value for further advance to the south, on both sides, especially to the east, by June 1, to simultaneously strengthen the pressure against the connections of the fortress. The attack of the left wing of the 11th Bavarian

Page 089

The Breach is Expanded.

The infantry division over Dumkowiczi suffered heavily from flanking fire, as the farms "at Malkowice" on the left flank had not yet been taken by the 82nd Reserve Division. During the night, the enemy launched new attacks against the large bridgehead of the 11th Army east of the San, with particular force against the Lubaczowka front. They were repelled. The unassailed right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was able to consolidate by bringing in further reinforcements. Based on this situation, which was to be intersected at 9 a.m., Colonel General von Mackensen attempted to move the reserves located on the left army wing southwards over Jaroslau on both banks of the San, to use them if necessary to support the fortress attack or the advance east of the San.

At the front of General von Kneussl, the left wing was able to advance through Dumkowiczi under further heavy fighting. At 5 p.m., the general reported that the enemy was only slowly retreating. Meanwhile, the 82nd Reserve Division, supported by artillery from General von Kneussl, had already wrested the farms "at Malkowice" from the enemy by noon and pursued them up to the height of Dumkowiczi and south of Wisznatyce. The favorable development of the situation prompted General von Francois to inquire with the army command whether the 82nd Reserve Division should now participate in the attack on the fortress. At 2:30 p.m., the decision was made that only "the effect with heavy artillery against the northern front of the fortress" and "the securing of the flank of the fortress attack" were the tasks of the division. To make this designation effective, further artillery was brought in from the east bank of the San. The good progress of the 82nd Reserve Division also had to bring significant relief to the left wing of the fortress attack. By 8 p.m., a work south of Dumkowiczi was stormed and the foreland up to Fort XII was taken.

In front of the entire front east of the San, particularly in front of the Guard Corps and X Army Corps (including the 56th Infantry Division), the enemy had further strengthened.

Since the previous artillery preparation for the fortress attack of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army had not been sufficient, the command of the 11th Army suggested at 7 p.m. to expand the advantages previously gained on the northern front of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division by allocating infantry from the 3rd Army, in case a quick success with this army was not to be expected.

Page 090

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

After repelling nightly counterattacks, the systematic bombardment of Fort X began early in the morning. At noon, the right wing of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division stormed into this fort, which had been almost completely destroyed by artillery fire, yet stubbornly defended to the last. With its fall, the foundation was laid for the continuation of the attack southward. To ensure the security of the left flank, General von Kreusik ordered at 2:30 PM that, contrary to previous orders, the right wing of the XXXXI Reserve Corps should also be advanced against the fortress. General von François had already independently ordered this. Thus secured on the left flank, the entire attack front of General von Kreusik was able to push forward beyond the village of Zurawka between 4 and 5 PM after repelling enemy counterattacks. This, however, extended the attack to a worrying width of twelve kilometers without reserves being available. As hard fighting was expected in the future, the army command enforced the deployment of additional forces from the XXXXI Reserve Corps. It also repeatedly suggested at 7 PM that infantry from the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army be brought to support General von Kreusik's attack. "If no infantry is moved into the breach of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division from there tonight, this division will not be able to exploit the success further and will struggle to hold what has been achieved." However, General von Conrad considered the storm of the 3rd Army against the southwestern front of the fortress, planned for early June 5th, as the most effective support for the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, whose success was not doubted. Moreover, during the day, signs increased that the enemy was preparing to evacuate the fortress systematically. Early in the morning, aircraft had observed columns marching east on the Przemyśl–Mosćiska road. They had been fired upon by the 10 cm guns of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. According to the pilots, the Russian artillery had weakened, with parts of it also in retreat. The enemy artillery position on the east bank of the San had been cleared. Consequently, General von François was eager to advance further southeast and later also indicate the Turzyna height. In response to his inquiry, the army command stated at 12:30 PM: "Advance on Medyka desired as soon as possible." Consequently, General von François ordered at 1:30 PM to advance the San towards Lorki–Podziacis so far that field artillery could also operate against the road from Medyka. The left corps wing felt

Page 091

Advance of the XXXXI Reserve Corps against the road to Medyka.

against the Turzyna Heights. At 7 p.m., however, the army command issued the order to attack the heights only if it would facilitate the advance on Medyka. Under no circumstances should the right wing of the army be further extended, "whose task remains primarily the capture and closure of Przemyśl." It was possible that forces of the XXXXI Reserve Corps would still be required for this. Accordingly, General von François ordered the next day that the 82nd Reserve Division advance west of the San against the fortress and "seize forts decisively wherever the opportunity arises," while on the east bank the advance against Medyka-Bucow was to be carried out under cover against the Turzyna Heights.

The rest of the 11th Army's front east of the San had gained further strength through expansion. Strong enemy troop concentrations in front of it made it likely that the Russians would soon launch a relief offensive, particularly against the flank of the 11th Army at the Lubaczowka.

However, a worrying turn of events threatened the situation anew with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. Already on June 1, enemy attacks had begun in the area between the San and the Vistula, which had been repelled except for a local setback at Rudnik. On June 2, the enemy succeeded in expanding their incursion southwest of Rudnik. Here, the allies were pushed back to their second position, so that the German 47th Reserve Division also saw itself forced to withdraw its right wing, which was positioned in the woods east of the Leg Stream. In the evening, the front also seemed to waver at Lezajsk. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division was sent there. Generaloberst von Mackensen pointed out to the command of the 4th Army the serious consequences that further retreat would have for the attack on Przemyśl and for the operation planned after the fall of the fortress. No progress had been made on the inner flanks of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd and 2nd Armies either.

The further attack on Przemyśl, however, proceeded much more favorably than the command had assumed. By the afternoon, the works adjoining the breach on the right and left had also fallen. General von Kneussl immediately ordered the continuation of the attack against the enemy positions south of Zurawica. The victorious advancing troops soon gained the impression that

1) p. 202.

Page 092

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The Russian defense weakened, and they reached the desired next elevation line without encountering significant resistance. The evening aerial reconnaissance confirmed the continuation of the enemy's departure from the fortress and numerous fires, particularly at the Przemyśl station. The evacuation of the fortress seemed to be in full swing. Therefore, General von Kneussl ordered at 8 p.m. to advance further to the core fortifications and, if possible, to penetrate the city itself, as Major General von Behr had already intended. The artillery opened fire on the core fortifications. The fall of the fortress was only a matter of a few hours.

Indeed, the cavalry of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division found the works IX a and IX abandoned by the enemy at midnight on June 3. The other adjacent works north of the San were also occupied by cavalry of the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army by morning. At this time, based on reports from his right wing section, General von Kneussl assumed that the enemy would no longer hold the inner fort line. Therefore, he renewed the order at 4 a.m. for the right section under Major General von Schöch to advance into the city center. The left attack section under Major General von Behr, from whom no reports had yet been received, was to immediately advance eastward past the fortress over the San to capture the enemy withdrawing from the fortress if possible. At 5:15 a.m., however, the Army High Command received the report from Major General von Behr that Przemyśl had been occupied by his troops at 3 a.m. A guard battalion made available to General von Behr had advanced through the inner fortifications during the night and found the city abandoned by the enemy. General von Kneussl received this report only at 6 a.m., simultaneously with an aerial report that the last Russian infantry had been observed an hour earlier near Przekpana east of Przemyśl and from Torit marching towards Medyka. Further east, long infantry and vehicle columns moved south of the main road to the east. General von Kneussl now set all his troops on the shortest route over Przemyśl in pursuit. Parts of the XXXXI Reserve Corps located on the west bank of the San had also joined the advance of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division. At 4:45 a.m., the 82nd Reserve Division had reached the area between Zurawica and the San.

1) Total ammunition consumption of the heavy artillery during the attack on Przemyśl in the section of General von Kneussl: 7067 shots.

Page 093

Przemysl Falls.

occupied the forts abandoned by the enemy and advanced further towards the San east of Przemysl. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Cavalry Division of the 3rd Army entered the city shortly before 7 in the morning. As the inner wings of the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army threatened to converge in and around Przemysl, it was necessary to make arrangements for the continuation of operations. At 8 in the morning, the Army High Command ordered the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division to advance to the eastern belt of the fortress and the XXXXI Reserve Corps to reach the San south of Bolestraszyce as well as the Forti—Turzna line. The Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army began a rightward swing of its left wing through Przemysl. By noon, the Austro-Hungarian X Corps entered the city south of the San. In the evening, the lines of the allies stood on and on both sides of the heights of Siedliska. The boundary between the two armies was agreed to be the Medyka—Bucow line. Up to this point, the XXXXI Reserve Corps swung forward at Medyka. Forti and Popdzacza were free from the enemy. The left wing of the corps prepared for an afternoon attack against the still occupied Turzna Heights. At 3 in the afternoon, it was stormed after a hard fight. The enemy still held at the Wisznia and in Starzawa. The expected large counteroffensive against the front of the 11th Army further north did not materialize. The situation with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was still tense. At Lezajsk, the enemy that had broken in could not be completely thrown back over the San. An attack seemed to be preparing against the new front southwest of Rudnik. The German 47th Reserve Division of Lieutenant General von Besser on both sides of the Leg was already heavily but unsuccessfully attacked. The reserves of the 4th Army were exhausted on the extended front. Following a suggestion from Colonel General von Mackensen, the Austro-Hungarian High Command decided to immediately assign the left wing corps of the 3rd Army, the X Corps, to the 4th Army.

Considerations.

The operations of the allies in West Galicia from mid-May to early June had proceeded differently than the leadership had originally planned. The main carrier of the offensive was supposed to be the 11th Army, covered on the left flank by the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, to force the crossing over the San in the area of Jaroslau, thus outside the tactical range of the Przemysl fortress, to prepare for the initially uncertain case of a continuation of the ope-

Page 094

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

To be able to advance beyond the river with their right wing towards Lemberg. The capture of the fortress, whether by surprise or by planned attack, was the task of the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army. However, this army was also to initially focus on cooperating with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army in the area southeast of Przemysl.

The objective for the 11th Army was certainly that Colonel General von Mackensen should concentrate as many forces as possible in the center for the advance over the San at Jaroslaw and also assign his weakly held right wing only defensive flank protection against the fortress. The first impetus for a change in this task came on May 18 from the suggestion of General von Falkenhayn to break through from the bridgehead taken at Jaroslaw to the southeast on both sides of the Wisznia. Certainly, this was by no means intended as an attack by the right wing of the 11th Army against the northern front of the fortress, but rather to cut their rear connections and relieve the allied armies on the right, whose offensive had almost come to a standstill. However, as much as Colonel General von Mackensen was also eager to place the main focus of the thrust in a southeasterly direction towards Mosciska, it was unavoidable that his right wing now came into close contact with the fortress. Initially, it was believed that it would be possible to limit the closure to their northern front. However, the strong resistance encountered by the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division assigned to this task made Colonel General von Mackensen consider the involvement of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, reinforced by the 119th Infantry Division, desirable. From the limited progress of the right neighboring army both against Przemysl itself and in advancing eastward, it then became apparent, albeit not inevitably, but understandably, that the decision was made to quickly bring down the fortress by attacking its northern front. To ensure success, the army commander believed that at least indirect support from the XXXXI Reserve Corps could not be dispensed with. As a result, a significant part of the original strength of the thrust against the rear connections was lost. To compensate for this and sharpen the delivery of other objectives, consideration of the precarious situation into which the left neighboring army had simultaneously fallen forbade it. To relieve the northern flank of the 11th Army, even significant parts had to be withdrawn from the Francois strike group.

Page 095

Thus, the final result fell short of the initial intention emphasized by the army command and also pursued by General von François himself, to encircle the fortress by advancing southeast and thereby capture the garrison along with the rich war material. However, this was offset by the decisive fact for the continuation of operations that the obstacle, which had previously hindered the direct cooperation of the 11th Army and its right neighboring army, was finally removed. The shortening of the front freed up forces for other uses. Besides this operational advantage, the fall of Przemysl also represented a new, highly significant moral success for the allied armies.

5. The Russian Southwestern Front from Mid-May to Early June.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketches 13 and 14.

By mid-May, the Russian Southwestern Front under General Ivanov, organized into five armies, was prepared for new battles between the Pilica and the Romanian border:

4th Army (General Ewetz: XIV, XVI, Grenadier, XXV, XXXI Corps): 10 infantry divisions, 5 Landwehr brigades, 2½ cavalry divisions;

3rd Army (General Radko Dimitrijew, from May 20 General Lösche: IX, X, XIII Caucasian, XXIV, XXI, XII Corps): 20½ infantry divisions, 5 Landwehr brigades, 5¾ cavalry divisions;

8th Army (General Brussilow: VIII, XVII, XXVIII, VII Corps): 10¾ infantry divisions, 1 Landwehr brigade, 1¼ cavalry divisions;

11th Army (General Schtscherbatschëw: XXII, XVIII Corps): 6¾ infantry divisions, 1 Landwehr brigade;

9th Army (General Letschitzki: XI, XXX, XXVIII Corps, 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Corps, XXXII Corps): 9 infantry divisions, 6 Landwehr brigades, 8 cavalry divisions.

1) During the battles around Przemysl, the attacking troops of General von Kneussl captured over 8300 prisoners. They also seized the guns stored in the forts, mostly destroyed, as well as a large depot of unusable captured guns.  
2) Volume VII, p. 435/436.  
3) Map 18, Volume VII, shows the front line and army boundaries. The composition of the individual armies contains some changes compared to Map 18.

Page 096

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Already on May 14, the 3rd Army and the right wing of the 8th were attacked. On the night of May 16, the XXIV Corps of the 3rd Army had to abandon the bridgehead of Jaroslaw and retreat behind the San in the Lubaczowka estuary–Wielin section. On May 16, General Iwanow ordered a stubborn defense of the entire front; at the heavily threatened San line, it was to be combined with a counteroffensive. For this purpose, the transfer of the two left wing corps (XXI and XII) of the 3rd Army to the 8th was ordered, with the 3rd being reinforced by the newly arrived 8th Division of the XV Corps from the northwest front. The 8th Army was to advance with parts from Przemysl into the flank of the enemy facing the XXI and XII Corps on the San. The leadership at the focal point of the battle on the southwest front thus passed to General Brussilow.

However, on May 16 and 17, a new setback occurred for the 3rd Army: the German 11th Army pushed back the XXIV and XIII Caucasian Corps and crossed the San itself at Jaroslaw and below. General Iwanow was therefore forced to support the 3rd Army with a consolidated group (3rd Caucasian Rifle Division in army reserve at Lemberg, V Caucasian Division from the northwest front, and a cavalry division), initially assembled in the area south of Lubaczow. He ordered the enemy to be pushed back over the San.

Although the 8th Army supported this counterattack by advancing particularly against Jaroslaw, it failed on May 19; the XXIV Corps was even pushed in at the Lubaczowka. Into the gap that arose between this and the III Caucasian Corps, General Radko Dmitrijew had to quickly insert the 77th Infantry Division and a large part of his cavalry (7th, 11th, 16th Cavalry Division, 3rd Don and 3rd Caucasian Cossack Division). To further support his left wing, the V Caucasian Corps (3rd Caucasian Rifle Division and two Kuban Foot Cossack Brigades) was also deployed on May 20.

Meanwhile, the position of the 8th Army south of Przemysl in front of the 3rd Army was also partially pushed in. General Iwanow saw the situation as so serious that he decided to evacuate the fortress on the night of May 21. However, as the pressure from the Allies increased, the situation of the 3rd Army stabilized, and the evacuation was initially postponed. As reinforcements, the 20th Infantry Division from the Caucasus and the 3rd Guard Infantry Division were brought to the southwest front.

Page 097

The Counterattack of the Russian 3rd Army.

and the II Caucasian Corps was brought in from the Northwestern Front. Initially, the command over these forces was retained by the army leadership; the 20th Infantry Division was combined with the 3rd Guards Infantry Division to form the XXIII Corps. However, on May 24, the Allies resumed their attacks on the San Front and, during the course of the battles, pushed the XXIX Corps (composed of one division each from the XIV and XXIV Corps) behind Lubaczowka and the V Caucasian into the line Bobrowka—Lazy; the right wing of the 8th Army (XXI Corps) also had to retreat. To its left, the XII Corps barely held east of the San.

As a result, the Russian army leadership was compelled to make the II Caucasian Corps available to the Southwestern Front. With the transfer of the V Caucasian Corps to the 8th Army, its right wing now extended to Lubaczowka. Meanwhile, the continued attacks by the Allies and the precarious situation on the left wing of the 3rd Army prompted General Brussilow to order the withdrawal of his right wing to the line south of Lubaczowka—Mosziska and thus also the abandonment of Przemysl for the night of May 27. However, on the orders of the army leadership, this measure was revoked, and the new commander of the 3rd Army, General Lösch, achieved a significant local success north of Lubaczowka through a counterattack against the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. Nevertheless, it could not be prevented that the German 11th Army north of Przemysl expanded its breakthrough in the decisive direction to the east: the right wing of the 8th Army had to retreat to the line Zagrody—Mlyny—Kalników.

Still, the Russian leadership did not abandon the attempt to restore the situation and seize the initiative. General Iwanow decided, in agreement with the army leadership, to transition the entire front to the counteroffensive on the night of June 1. For this purpose, the 8th Army was reinforced by the army reserve (II Caucasian, XXIII Corps), the right wing of the 3rd Army by the XIV Corps (a division from the 4th Army), and the 4th Cavalry Corps. The 4th Army was transferred to the command area of the Northwestern Front, allowing General Iwanow to devote his full strength to the planned offensive. However, this was only implemented by the 3rd Army on both sides of the San and even here stalled after some partial successes of the 4th Army. In the combat area of the 8th Army, the fortress of Przemysl had to be abandoned after stubborn resistance on the night of June 3, and the front was withdrawn to the line Starzawa—Siedliska.

Page 098

6. The Advance of the Southern Army against the Upper Dniester from May 20 to June 3.

While the assault group of Generaloberst von Mackensen successfully completed its assigned task within the framework of the overall operational action by establishing a solid front on the eastern bank of the San and capturing the fortress of Przemysl, the German Southern Army also managed to fight its way close to its next assigned operational target, the upper course of the Dniester.

General of Infantry von Linsingen, after the unsatisfactory outcome of the attacks begun in mid-May against the positions of the Russian 11th Army south of the upper Dniester, was eager to quickly resume the offensive. Having concluded from the heavy fighting of recent days that simultaneous, uncoordinated attacks at several points along the front were unlikely to achieve a decisive success, he decided to form a new assault force and deploy it at a suitable point for a breakthrough. For this purpose, on May 20, the reinforced 95th Reserve Infantry Brigade of Corps Gerok and the visible 12th Landsturm Territorial Brigade of Corps Hofmann were to be ready in Bolechow, and the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division was to be ready at Uliczno, whose sector the Szurmay Group was to take over.

However, as the 38th Infantry Division, in conjunction with the 40th, succeeded in wresting the heights east of Drohobycz from the enemy early on the morning of May 20, it was initially left with the Szurmay Group to exploit this success, and only when the follow-up of both divisions came to a halt before a new Russian position the following day was it withdrawn and positioned northwest of Uliczno.

Based on extensive reconnaissance, General von Linsingen intended to deliver the decisive blow to break through the enemy front at Stryj. He tasked this on May 23

Page 099

Unsuccessful Attack of the Southern Army.

Corps Bothmer, to which the army reserves were made available. It was to attack comprehensively with strong wings on both sides and, after capturing Stryj, roll up the fronts to the north and south. Corps Gerok was to take Dolina; the parts of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division stationed east of the Czeczwa were withdrawn behind the river to the area of Spas, as their right flank was threatened by the strong detachment of the 7th Army and Russian troop concentrations near and south of Krasna. Corps Hofmann was to advance eastward on the left bank of the Swica towards Sokolow, while Group Szurmay, with a strong right wing, was to storm the enemy positions near and from Zydaczow and roll up the enemy to the north. The attack was to begin at dawn on May 26, with May 24 and 25 used for the strongest artillery preparation. General von Falkenhayn attached particular importance to its rapid execution up to a full decision, in view of Italy's entry into the war.

However, the Southern Army again encountered such stubborn resistance everywhere that significant successes were achieved nowhere. The division Puttkamer (reinforced 95th Reserve Infantry Brigade and Austrian 12th Landsturm Territorial Brigade) deployed on the right wing of Corps Bothmer east of the Lipowice—Stryj railway was unable to take the particularly strong Russian position here on May 26 despite extraordinary efforts and suffered heavy losses. The 38th Infantry Division (German composite Brigade Kumme and Hungarian 75th Infantry Brigade) attacking towards Stupnica penetrated the forests west of Holobutow but soon came to a halt before new, heavily barricaded trenches on the Holobutow—Gaje woyzne line. The continuation of the attack on May 27 also yielded no better results. The enemy was even able to retake a position southeast of Turza mala captured the previous day from Corps Gerok in a counterattack. The attempt to break through the enemy front at Stryj with a comprehensive attack by both wings of Corps Bothmer had to be considered a failure for the time being. Its repetition on the right wing in the difficult mountain forest between the Stryj and the Stryj offered little prospect of success. On the other hand, more favorable conditions seemed to prevail for the left wing. It was therefore to attack again after reinforcement by a brigade of the 1st Infantry Division as well as heavy and heaviest artillery. In the meantime, the infantry had to work closer to the enemy with saps. On the evening of May 29, the Pächern Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division was ready behind the 3rd Guard Infantry Division. Early on the 31st, it was to attack the enemy front at Zawadow un

Page 100

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Break through Holobutow and take Stryj. An event occurred that threatened to completely call the attack into question. Already on May 28, Corps Hofsmann had to withdraw its center to the left bank of the Swica due to strong Russian counterattacks. On the night of the 30th, attacked again along the entire front and broken through south of Bolechow at 4 a.m., the corps abandoned its positions and retreated to the ridges on both sides of Bolechow. Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofsmann believed he could not even hold this line securely with his severely shaken troops and requested reinforcement by five to six battalions during the day. General von Linsingen faced the question of whether to withdraw these forces from Corps Bothmer and thus abandon the decision sought at Stryj or to carry out the intended attack regardless of the situation at Corps Hofsmann. He decided on the latter, on the suggestion of General Count von Bothmer, considering that it was by no means certain whether the enemy would continue to attack at all, and if he did, whether he would succeed. He ordered Corps Hofsmann not only to hold its positions but to regain the lost ground through attack. Corps Gerok, which had to bend its left wing back to the northern exit of Kniaszoluka due to the events at Corps Hofsmann, was instructed not to join the retrograde movements of its neighbor but to halt the enemy through counterattack and support the ordered advance of Corps Hofsmann as much as possible. General von Linsingen reported to the Austro-Hungarian high command that the enemy, according to a just-received report from the 7th Army, was making movements to the west, and that the Southern Army could only continue its offensive successfully if the 7th Army bound the opposing Russian 9th Army through attack. General von Conrad then ordered the 7th Army to attack with its left wing "to absolutely prevent any withdrawal of enemy forces." Late in the evening, General von Pflanzer-Baltin informed the Southern Army that his left wing would advance over the Pasieczna—Slinik line on May 31. The bold decision of General von Linsingen was met with complete success. After 1¾ hours of artillery preparation, increasing to the strongest drumfire, the reinforced 3rd Guard Infantry Division broke out of their trenches at 5:45 a.m. on May 31 and captured all enemy positions from Quitliby to southwest of Stupnica in the first assault. Over 5000 prisoners and eight guns fell into their hands. Hot on the heels of the fleeing enemy,

Page 101

The Breakthrough of the Southern Army at Stryj.

The right attack group pushed through Stryj up to the eastern and northern edges of the city, where hastily brought in Russian reserves initially halted them. The far right wing of the division took Bratkowce. The left attack group drove the enemy back over the railway to Zaplatyn and over the Niezachowka stream, but could not achieve the day's goal, the line Dobrany—Brigidau. On the right wing of the 38th Infantry Division, the Kummer Brigade, which had followed the retreating enemy to Stupnica, was hit south of this village by a Russian mass attack, which could only be repelled after prolonged, particularly bitter fighting. On the left wing of the division and in front of the Szurmay group, the enemy held their position with great tenacity. Only a stronghold southeast of Gaje could be wrested from them by the 40th Infantry Division by evening. No change occurred on the right army wing. The continuation of the enemy offensive feared by the Hofmann Corps did not occur. The left wing of the 7th Army advanced with 24 battalions of the Schönburg group¹) into the area on both sides of Manajow and south and west of Majdan, where they encountered stubborn resistance and suffered heavy losses. In the afternoon, a fierce Russian counterattack from Majdan forced the entire group to retreat to their starting positions.

An order received from Teschen at 2 p.m. outlined once again the task assigned to the right army wing. Accordingly, the Southern Army was to "secure further advances against the Dniester at Kolodrub and Mikolajow and continue the attack in an easterly direction." The 7th Army was to join from the left wing, which was directed towards Stanislau.

Meanwhile, the left wing of the 7th Army, which had been pushed back to its starting positions, had to fend off heavy Russian attacks, especially east of the Dyl and southwest of Majdan. The enemy also probed with stronger forces in the gap between the Lomnica and Jeczowa valleys, which existed towards the right wing of the Southern Army. The impact of the breakthrough at Stryj on June 1 was not yet noticeable among the enemies opposite the Gerok and Hofmann Corps and the 1st Infantry Division. The Russians still held their positions strongly here. However, the left army wing was able to make further, in part very considerable, progress. The 3rd Gar-

¹) Field Marshal Ljubicic was meanwhile replaced by the commander of the Austro-Hungarian 6th Army Corps, Field Marshal Lieutenant Prince Schönburg.

Page 102

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The infantry division pushed the enemy back on the right bank of the Stryj to the heights at Strzałkow, left of the river from the railway embankment north of Stryj to the northeast, and fortified Dobrzany in the evening. The enemy had already withdrawn from the 38th Infantry Division during the night. Advancing over Brigidau—Kamfko, the division reached Königsaau at 2 p.m. At the same time, the 40th Infantry Division, still engaged in heavy fighting, reached the line Lasowzy—Slonisko. However, the enemy held its position firmly in front of the 7th Infantry Division. As the further advance of the 38th Infantry Division seemed to offer the possibility of completely cutting off parts of the northern flank of the Russian 11th Army, this division and the left flank of the 7th were deployed at noon on Horucko. Shortly thereafter, the 2nd Army reported that the right flank of the 14th Infantry Division (five battalions and 1½ batteries) stationed at Woloszca, as well as the Austro-Hungarian 1st Cavalry Division under Major General Freiherr von Leonhardi, had been ordered to advance on Medenice to block the retreat of the enemy in front of the 7th Infantry Division. General von Linsingen, like these forces temporarily subordinated to him by the Austro-Hungarian army command, also directed the army order from 11 p.m. towards Horucko. The 38th and 40th Infantry Divisions, which were attacking new enemy positions in the line Hofeszberg—Opary in the evening, were to continue their advance northward. The army high command hoped that the right flank of the Russian 11th Army would be destroyed by the next morning. Then the 38th Infantry Division was to be advanced southeastward to attack across the Stryj, with the Szurmay group following folded left under cover against the Dniester.

However, the encirclement of the Russians did not succeed. The 38th and 40th Infantry Divisions did push the enemy back northward in the early morning hours of June 2nd, but the 7th Infantry Division allowed them to withdraw just in time unhindered, and the Leonhardi group only arrived west of Zady at 2 a.m., much too late to intercept the enemy south of the Dniester. The Szurmay group was now tasked with quickly clearing the southern bank of the Dniester of the enemy, securing it with a brigade of the 7th Infantry Division and the infantry of the Leonhardi group from Nadiatycze to the Bystrzyca estuary, and taking possession of Mikolajow as well as the crossing of Kolodruby. The rest of the 7th and the 40th Infantry Division were to be assembled at Medenice—Hofeszberg. The 1st Cavalry Division was deployed over Medenice—Krynica to Derzow to get into the enemy's rear.

Page 103

The Center of the Southern Army Turns Southeast.

However, this directive was not executed. The Russians had once again made a strong front south of the Dniester. Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay deployed the majority of his forces, including the entire Leondardi group, for an attack, but was only able to wrest Horuck from the enemy that day. General von Linsingen disagreed with this use of the 1st Cavalry Division; he ordered its advance on Derzow once more. The division could only be withdrawn from the front after nightfall; consequently, it only reached the area around Krynica, where the 71st Infantry Brigade of the 7th Infantry Division, tasked with securing the Dniester on both sides of the Stryj—Lemberg railway, had also arrived.

The command of the 2nd Army objected to the extensive deployment of the 1st Cavalry Division to Derzow. They wanted the southern edge of the swamp area (Wielkie Bloto) from Serziskow to Bialin secured by the 1st Cavalry Division, as they had no more forces available for this. However, the Austro-Hungarian military command decided to keep the division with the Southern Army and assigned the 2nd Army the task of securing the southern edge of the Wielkie Bloto up to the area of Woloszcza. The 38th Infantry Division had marched southeast in the morning, assuming that the 40th Infantry Division had reached Horuck. They reached Woynia via Kawko. The left wing of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division captured Lisatycze and Woynicz on the afternoon of June 2 and entered Lesjawor at night. Their right wing and the left of the 1st Infantry Division (Hungarian 76th Infantry Brigade) made only slight progress on the eastern bank of the Stryj. The enemy still stood in full strength before the Hofmann and Gerok corps.

On June 3, the situation to the right of the Stryj remained unchanged. Although retreating movements behind the enemy front were observed by aircraft to a greater extent than before, the enemy stubbornly and successfully resisted the attacks of the left wing of the 1st Infantry Division, reinforced by the 95th Reserve Infantry Brigade during the night, and the right wing of the Guards. The left wing column of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division and the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division pushed the Russians further northeast and then crossed the Stryj at Kawyczat and Chodowicze to roll up the parts of the enemy still holding south of the river from the north. The Hungarians thus moved into the gap between the previously separately fighting parts of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division. They prepared in the evening to attack the heavily fortified Gelsenhofer Heights; the right wing of the Guards advanced fighting to Ruda and secured its left flank.

Page 104

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

by occupying Wolica and Cuculowce. This made it possible to move strong forces to the right bank of the Stryj, where, according to the directive of the Austro-Hungarian military command, the focus of the operation lay. The 1st Cavalry Division engaged the enemy at the Niezwadowka sector and advanced south around Bilczevi las towards Derzow. The Szurmay Group, with the 71st Infantry Brigade on its right flank developing against Rudniki, unsuccessfully attempted to take the Russian positions south of the Dniester. The infantry of the Leonhardi Group was even pushed back to the eastern edge of Jady by a counterattack. Although it had not yet been possible to drive the enemy from the southern bank of the Dniester and secure the crossings at Mikolajow and Kolodruby, the High Command of the Southern Army believed it could look forward with justified hopes to the continuation of the offensive on the right bank of the Stryj in an easterly direction.

7. Operational Considerations and Decisions.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 14.

The capture of Przemysl and the associated territorial gain posed the question to the allied military commands of how the operations should be continued. For some time, before this result came within reach, General von Falkenhayn, in view of the slow progress of events on the Galician battlefield in the second half of May, had been considering the mobilization of reinforcements. The decision on where to obtain these forces was not easy. The three divisions newly formed in the area of the Commander-in-Chief East — 101st, 103rd, 105th Infantry Division — had just been sent (from May 24) at the urging of General von Conrad to southern Hungary, to be used from there as needed against Italy or Serbia. The Austro-Hungarian Chief of Staff opposed General von Falkenhayn's wish to now bring these divisions to the battlefield north of the Carpathians, arguing that he did not consider an attack by the Serbs on Syrmia or Bosnia to be out of the question. Therefore, there was no choice but to further weaken the front of the Commander-in-Chief East. Already on May 23, General

¹) See p. 18, 103 and 122/123.

Page 105

Considerations on the Deployment of Reinforcements on the Eastern Front.

von Falkenhayn explained to General Ludendorff, who was summoned to Pleß for a verbal discussion, that major operations in the area of the Commander-in-Chief East were currently out of the question). The desire to maintain the current front line had to be reconciled with the necessity of withdrawing additional troops for the disposal of the Supreme Army Command. In accordance with the proposals made by General Ludendorff, on May 25, Field Marshal von Hindenburg communicated that the general war situation absolutely required the provision of army reserves on a large scale. For this purpose, five divisions were to be gradually freed from his command area). Thus, these forces were not immediately available for the Galician theater of war. The Supreme Army Command initially reserved only the withdrawal of a division to be stationed on June 3 by the 9th Army, the Commander-in-Chief East designated the 22nd Infantry Division for this purpose — and about the newly forming 107th Infantry Division, whose formation in Thorn was to be completed in early June.

Withdrawing forces from the Western Front seemed questionable given the still tense situation there). Nevertheless, General von Falkenhayn decided on June 1 to take the risk of deploying the XXII Reserve Corps (without the 85th Reserve Infantry Brigade) provided by Army Command 4 and the temporarily withdrawn 8th Bavarian Reserve Division from the front to the east). Thus, it was finally possible to make a total of fourteen and a half infantry divisions available as reinforcements for the continuation of the offensive operation on the theater of war north of the Carpathians.

There were initially differing views on the point of deployment. General von Falkenhayn expected less impact from a direct reinforcement of the troops fighting in Galicia than from their indirect support through the deployment of fresh forces at the front north of the Vistula in the command area of Colonel General von Woyrsch. After verbal consultation with his Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Colonel von Heyde, he expressed himself on this matter on May 28 in a letter to the Commander-in-Chief East as follows:

"... The situation in Galicia is not very promising. Given the low offensive power of our allies and the enemy's daily increasing superiority, we are facing the danger of a complete standstill there sooner or later, which is now a concern for us after Italy's intervention

Page 106

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

is even more concerning than it has been so far. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the immediate reinforcement of our troops there is not advisable. Only by using an extraordinary amount of blood and ammunition could success be considered. However, we have every reason to be economical with both. It is more feasible to consider an operation against the parts of the enemy front weakened by the withdrawal of units, to bring relief in turn. Since the Narew front plays no role in this connection, any offensive there can easily be broken by weaker forces at the swamp section, as General Ludendorff also mentioned in his discussion with me, only the Vistula front south of the Pilica is in question. In my opinion, there is no doubt that an operation by three to four fresh divisions could break through the enemy Russian line there, bring it to a complete maneuver, and probably reach the right Vistula bank downstream of the San estuary simultaneously with the enemy. This would also make the San line untenable for the Russians. The deployment of the four divisions could occur relatively quickly and surprisingly...

The Commander-in-Chief East agreed with these statements on the same day in a factual sense, but declared himself unable to provide new forces beyond the assignments already imposed on him.

From the written statement of the Army High Command Rojrchy, which arrived on May 29, it emerged that, with a reinforcement of three infantry and one cavalry division, a breakthrough over Ditrowice against the bridgeheads of Dembnow and Jozefow to the Vistula was considered possible, but the continuation of the thrust beyond the river to effectively relieve the Galician front, considering the expected flank threat from Iwangorod, was seen as doubtful. Lieutenant Colonel Heye also represented this standpoint the following day in a discussion in Pleß. Contrary to the view of General von Falkenhayn, the head of the operations department, Colonel Tappen, considered the deployment of reinforcements with the previously victorious 11th Army absolutely necessary from the command area of Generaloberst von Woyrsch. He emphasized that the Russians in Galicia, although they had significantly increased in number, were already greatly demoralized under the paralyzing impression of their previous defeats and could be decisively struck here most easily. In

Page 107

Colonel General v. Mackensen Requests Deployment of Reinforcements at 11th Army.

He also saw the deployment of reinforcements at any other location as an "irreparable loss of time." A third possibility was considered by the Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff. Although he had acknowledged the necessity to "paralyze the offensive power of the Russians through further strikes in Galicia" in a discussion with General von Falkenhayn on May 21 in Teschen, he stated in writing on May 23 that the desire to "settle accounts with the Russian forces as extensively as possible" must find its limit in the most urgent demand "not to allow the Italians to advance into those areas, the loss of which would vitally affect the monarchy and make the conduct of the war altogether impossible, thus deciding the war in favor of our opponents." In this fundamental position, General von Conrad was not averse to refraining from far-reaching operations on the battlefield north of the Carpathians and to be content with achieving and securing the previously sought operational objective, the San-Wisznia-Dniester line. At the moment, it seemed most important to him to immediately support the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, which had gotten into a difficult situation due to the successful counterattack of the Russians at Sieniawa. Even in the event of continuing the offensive over San and Wisznia, he promised himself the greatest success if emphasis was placed on the advance of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, as he believed that the Grodek fortress would pose extraordinary difficulties to an attack. Therefore, in a discussion with General von Falkenhayn on May 30 in Pleß, he suggested the deployment of reinforcements at this army. On the same day, Colonel Tappen was sent to Army High Command 11 in Jaroslaw to obtain its opinion. Colonel General von Mackensen and his Chief of Staff shared the same view as the Chief of the Operations Department, despite the currently undecided battle situation on the San and Wisznia front. In his written statement of May 31, the Commander-in-Chief of the 11th Army argued against the deployment of reinforcements at the Bojowitsch Army Division, stating that an offensive there would come to a halt at the latest after a successful crossing of the Vistula in front of quickly assembled Russian forces and thus would have no effect on the Dniester front. It was then literally stated: "A thrust over Jaroslaw will bring about the intended effect more quickly. He has with a fortified

1) From unpublished war memories of the current Lieutenant General a. D. Tappen. — 2) p. 10.

Page 108

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

River barrier, but only to reckon with the enemy facing the 4th and 11th Armies. This is indeed numerically superior to the former. However, the troops of the 11th Army compensate for this with efficiency and can also be reinforced like the 4th Army by troops that will be freed upon the imminent fall of Przemysl and by divisions made available domestically. A thrust over Jaroslau in the general direction of Rawa Ruska is promising if the 4th Army protects the left flank of the 11th and the right flank allows neighboring armies to break the enemy standing along the Grodeker Seemeerfe out of his position. Both will be achievable with the pre-assigned and the newly anticipated forces, provided that the leader of the 11th Army may exert direct influence on both neighboring armies."

When Colonel Tappen returned with this statement from Generaloberst von Mackensen on the evening of May 31 in Plesz, it was already known there that the first forts of the Przemysl fortress had been stormed and that the Southern Army had taken Stryj. General von Falkenhayn saw in this promising signs of a favorable development of events in Galicia. He decided on June 2, following the suggestion of Colonel Tappen and the position of Generaloberst von Mackensen, to deploy reinforcements with the 11th Army. The Commander-in-Chief East received orders to dispatch the 22nd Infantry Division (from June 2 from Lodz, the 107th Infantry Division from June 5 from Thorn). The deployment of reinforcements from the Western Front also began on June 2. The Austro-Hungarian Army Command was informed that starting June 4, four and a half infantry divisions along with heavy artillery would arrive via the railways over Debica and Jaslo to Rzeszow. "These divisions," it was stated, "are to serve to carry out operations against the enemy located east of the San to a decision sufficient for our purposes." The Army High Command 11 was drafted in almost the same wording.

To the Southern Army, whose left wing repelled the enemy against the Dniester on June 2, the following telegram was sent: "The brilliant course of the operations of the Southern Army yesterday and today will hopefully have significant consequences. They could be further enhanced if it proves possible to soon bring a column to the northern Dniester bank and advance downstream from there."

Page 109

The Operational Plan of the High Command of the 11th Army.

On June 3rd at 8:30 in the morning, immediately after the capture of Przemyśl, the Army High Command 11 presented its intentions for the continuation of operations to the allied army commands. It initially proposed the dissolution of the k.u.k. 3rd Army concentrated in the area of Przemyśl. The X and XVII Corps were to be transferred to the k.u.k. 4th Army, the German Beskiden Corps to the k.u.k. 2nd Army, and the incoming reinforcements were to be assigned to the 11th Army. Generaloberst von Mackensen requested joint command over all three armies. The initial plan was to advance parts of the 11th Army from the bridgehead northwards to facilitate the crossing of the San by the right wing of the 4th Army at Sieniawa. After the arrival of reinforcements, the continuation of the 11th Army's offensive was planned in deep formation from the line Starzawa—Molodynja via Starzyska—Rawa Ruska north past the Grodek section to encircle it. The 2nd Army was to cover the right flank of the 11th Army by advancing from the line Chłopczyce—Moszcza against the line Komarno—Janow, while the same task fell to the left flank of the 4th Army. This was to advance with two corps on Rudka (20 kilometers north of Lubaczow)—Narol Miasto, with two corps covering the Tanew section, and with the rest covering the San-Vistula triangle.

The allied general staff chiefs agreed in a discussion on the afternoon of June 3rd in Plesz with these intentions of the Army High Command 11 and also agreed that the Southern Army should continue the attack with its main forces in a southern direction against the right flank of the enemy facing the beleaguered k.u.k. 7th Army. On June 4th, the new orders were issued. They essentially stated: "Generaloberst von Mackensen with the 11th Army and the still incoming troops continues the thrust south of the Tanew to decisively defeat the enemy facing him. The 2nd Army joins this advance on the right and subsequently takes over the protection of the right flank, the 4th Army the protection of the advance in the northern flank... To ensure the success of this operation, the 4th and 2nd Armies are placed under the orders of Generaloberst von Mackensen for the duration. The Southern Army advances south of the Dniester against the right wing of the enemy forces facing the 7th Army, to finally defeat the enemy south of the Dniester in conjunction with this. It also takes over the security at the Dniester."

Page 110

8. The Battles on the Right Wing of the Army from June 4 to 13.

The order contained in the instructions of the Austro-Hungarian Army Command from June 4 for the German South Army completely aligned with the intentions of its leader, General von Linsingen. He had already reported to the Army Command in Teschen on June 3 that his army would attack the next day along its entire front – with the left wing from the line Strzałow–Chodowice–Potrowce – in a southeasterly direction to roll up the enemy before the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army. He had requested the subordination of the left wing of this army under his command. In his rejecting response, General von Conrad stated that the 7th Army was currently being heavily attacked by the enemy and needed all its forces, but that after repelling the enemy's advance, it would forcefully engage in the South Army's offensive.

After a fourteen-day battle pause, the Russian 9th Army had resumed its attack against the center of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army on June 2. While it had only temporarily reached the southern bank of the Pruth east of Kolomea and near Lanczyn, it had managed to establish a firm foothold south of Sadzawa. Through continued advances, it sought to gain ground here on June 3 towards Mühlbächen. The leader of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, General of Cavalry Freiherr von Pflanzer-Baltin, mobilized all available army reserves to the Czbulla group, which was striving to block the enemy incursion in fierce defensive combat. As the situation significantly escalated in the afternoon, an offensive by the left wing of the army had to be temporarily abandoned.

Thus, the South Army was initially left to fend for itself. The withdrawal of forces from the front opposite the Gerok and Hofmann corps to the north, observed by aircraft on June 3, also gave hope here for a quick weakening of the enemy resistance. General von Linsingen therefore instructed both corps in the army order issued late in the evening to "turn any beginning retreat of the enemy into a rout through rapid and vigorous pursuit." The Bothmer corps was to continue its comprehensive attack against the enemy's right wing south of the Dniestr, allow the Austro-Hungarian 1st Cavalry Division to advance over Snjatyn to Kretow, secure the Szurmay group on the Dniestr from Nadiatkow to Kolodrub, and achieve with the Hungarian 40th Infantry Division Derzow.

Page 111

The Advance of the Southern Army to the East.

Indeed, the enemy abandoned his positions south of Stryj early on the morning of June 4 and retreated eastward. The corps of Gerok and Hofmann, as well as the 1st Infantry Division, followed him in a broad front without initially encountering serious resistance. However, the enemy sought to prevent further advances by the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division, which had taken the Gelsendorf Heights at dawn, and the 3rd Guards Infantry Division, which pressed from Ruda to Nowosielce against his retreat routes, at all costs. Against the left flank of the Guards, he launched a deeply echeloned mass attack from Zablotowce, which was repelled but succeeded in allowing the Russian forces retreating north of the Swica to escape into the bridgehead of Zurawno. For further pursuit, General von Linsingen assigned Kalusz as the day's objective to the Gerok Corps and Wierzchnia to the Hofmann Corps. The Bothmer Corps was to quickly seize the Dniester crossing at Zurawno, while the 1st Cavalry Division, which had reached Lowcze by morning on its march to its original target Rechow, was now to cross the Dniester at Holeszow. The 40th Infantry Division, detached from the Szurmay Group's line of battle, was to reach Hnizdzcow today, while the rest of the Szurmay Group was to take over the Dniester security between Zydaczow and Terszów.

However, these daily objectives were not achieved anywhere. Oppressive heat and heavy dust on poor roads made the marches extremely strenuous. The Gerok Corps encountered stronger enemy forces east of Holyn in the evening, and the Hofmann Corps at Radowna and Zawada. From the Bothmer Corps, the 1st Infantry Division reached the Swica near and upwards of Lachowice. The Hungarian 38th and the 3rd Guards Infantry Division drove the Russians before them into Zurawno but could no longer seize the bridgehead; the left wing of the Guards took Zablotowce, and their right attack group, which had previously been engaged against the heights south of Stryj, was withdrawn to Ruda. The 1st Cavalry Division bivouacked in Zablotowce and Hnizdzcow; their reconnaissance units assigned to Zydaczow encountered enemies south of the Dniester everywhere. Against the parts of the Szurmay Group remaining west of Stryj, the enemy continued his demonstrative advances, and Horucko fell back into his hands; in the afternoon, he advanced on both sides of the road to Stryj. Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay feared a stronger attack and deployed parts of those marching to Hnizdzcow

1) p. 197.

Page 112

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The 40th Infantry Division was ready for defense. But here too it was only a deception. It had been delayed so long that it only reached the area of Lejzavori at midnight. General von Linsingen had already issued the order to the 7th Army at 5 a.m. to join the advance of the Southern Army from the left flank. Although the enemy had continued his heavy attacks south of Sadzawka throughout the night and had broken through here at 4 a.m., and although General von Pflanzer-Baltin now saw himself forced to also rely on the reserves of the groups Marschall, Krautwald, and Rhemen to restore the situation, he initially directed the groups Rhemen and Schönburg to attack in a northeasterly direction, based on the news that the right flank of the Southern Army intended to reach Kalusz today. While a relief attack led by the inner flank of the groups Czbullka and Rhemen on the northern Pruth bank in the direction of Lanczyn failed due to strong Russian resistance and the Rhemen group otherwise gained only little ground, the Schönburg group advanced to the line Maniava—south of Perehinsko. However, here they encountered such stubborn resistance the following day that they were unable to make further progress. A Russian counterattack west of Majdan even pushed the attacker back a bit. Meanwhile, the situation of the Czbullka group had further deteriorated. The enemy continued to bring new forces into the fight and was able to expand his breakthrough despite desperate resistance from the defender. By June 5, he had gained a foothold in Modiatyn. General von Pflanzer-Baltin had already made all available forces of the other groups available to Field Marshal Lieutenant Czbullka, besides the army reserve. He did not consider further weakening of the army's eastern flank appropriate. A quick relief from the now stalled offensive of his left army flank was also not to be expected. It could only be achieved through the favorable progress of the Southern Army's operations. In this situation, General von Pflanzer-Baltin therefore saw the need in the early afternoon hours to request, if possible, to intervene with parts of the southern flank directly in the direction of and over Bohorodczany. General von Linsingen had designated the line Majdan (northwest of Stanislau)—Bukaczowce as the day's objective for his army on June 5. He expected a decisive success from an advance into the rear of the enemy opposing Pflanzer's army and therefore ordered the Gerok Corps on the morning of June 5 to "advance through

Page 113

The Center of the Southern Army Crosses the Dniester.

no regard for the remaining wing of the 7th Army to prevent the fastest advance towards Stanislau." This directive was also expressly maintained upon the arrival of General von Pflanzer-Baltin's request for immediate assistance. However, the Gerok Corps was no longer able to break the enemy resistance east and north of Holyn on June 5. The Hofmann Corps also initially made no progress. It was not until the afternoon that it was able to take the Russian positions on the heights on both sides of Zawadka and gain ground to the east in immediate pursuit. As a result, the enemy withdrew further south on both sides of the Lomnica during the night. However, on the western banks of Nowica, Kalusz, Kopanica, and Tomaszowce, the Gerok and Hofmann Corps encountered new stubborn resistance the next day, the suppression of which lasted in part until the early morning hours of June 7. South of the Swica and the Dniester, the 1st Infantry Division followed the retreating enemy on June 5 and 6 to Dolzka and Slope. The 38th Infantry and 3rd Guard Infantry Divisions entered the stubbornly defended Zurawno on the evening of the 5th and advanced in extremely bitter, costly street fighting to the Dniester. Parts of both divisions followed the fleeing enemy at dawn on June 6 on foot over two makeshift bridges he had not destroyed in time to the opposite bank, where heavy fire from the hills forced them to dig in. In the afternoon, the enemy's counteraction subsided, and the enemy seemed to be withdrawing. The allies climbed the steep heights and established themselves on both sides of Bakowzin. The left wing of the Guard fought for the crossing at Holeszow at noon. In the afternoon, the 1st Cavalry Division completed the river crossing at Zurawno. On June 7, the offensive by the Gerok, Hofmann, and Bothmer Corps was to continue southeast towards Stanislau, Jezupol, and Halicz. The protection of the left flank of the Bothmer Corps was to be taken over by the 40th Infantry Division, which had been brought up to Humara in the last two days and was now to advance via Zurawno to the Nowosielce railway station. Reconnaissance to the north up to the Rohatyn—Chodorow railway was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division. While the right wing of the army advanced south of the Dniester during the day with lighter fighting to Majdan, Kudlatowka, and down the Swica section to Wojnilow, the subsequent right march of the 38th Infantry and 3rd Guard Infantry Divisions to the southwest was delayed, as there was still heavy resistance on both sides of Nowosztyn

Page 114

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

had to be broken. Consequently, the Hungarians only reached Bukaczowce and Czerniów. The Guard pushed their stubborn opponent back over the railway to Szehdyrow and over Czerniów by evening in difficult forest battles. They were then to be relieved by the 40th Infantry Division and march on Sadzynow today. However, since this division only counted 2000 rifles — it had left four battalions for security against Szybaczow in the Zurawlow—Szybaczow line — and was also very exhausted from the strenuous marches of the last few days, the immediate involvement of the Guard seemed questionable in view of the undoubtedly still combat-ready enemy. It was therefore postponed to the next morning. West of the Stryj, the Szurmay group began clearing the southern Dniester bank on June 6; they worked their way up to the enemy's main position Dementa—Ugartsberg by the evening of the 7th. Their right wing drove the enemy out of Turady and Iwanowce. On the other hand, the parts of the 40th Infantry Division that remained south of Szybaczow, caught in the flank by stronger enemy forces from Molotow, retreated to the Ruda—Szybaczow line. According to captured prisoners, these forces belonged to the Russian VI Corps, which was supposed to have been unloaded in Mikolajow on June 4, coming from the front west of Warsaw1). General von Linsingen considered the reports of stronger enemy forces south of Szybaczow to be exaggerated. He did not believe in a serious Russian advance against his left flank and considered its security by the weak Szurmay group to be sufficient. His gaze was directed southeast, where the intended destruction of the enemy standing before the 7th Army promised great success. If the intended strike succeeded, the army would indeed have to continue advancing relentlessly; for since noon on June 6, the Russian 9th Army had been trying to escape the impending danger by retreating to the Dniester. General von Pflanzer-Baltin immediately took up the pursuit and with the Szibulka, Rhemen, and Schönburg groups reached the line Altmaczyn—Hanynlowka—Horocholina by the evening of June 7. The Korda and Marschall groups had also already gained the northern Pruth bank at Nepolokoutz and Zablontow.

In the course of June 8, General von Linsingen had to convince himself that the operational intention he had in mind was no longer

1) In fact, the Russian 11th Army had received the VI Corps and the 3rd G.I.D. from the Northwest Front at the beginning of June.

Page 115

The Russian Counterattack at the Dniester.

was to be realized. Before the entire 7th Army as well as before the right wing of the Southern Army, the enemy retreated hastily and without a fight to the Dniester. The divisions of General von Pflanzer-Baltin followed up to the line Uście—Gwozdziec—Ottynia. The Gerok Corps reached Stanislau and Jammica in the evening. Only on the heights west of Jezupol and southwest and west of Halicz did the enemy resist in reinforced positions against the troops of Field Marshal Lieutenant Hofmann and General von Conta. However, against the divisions of the Bothmer Corps and the Szurmay Group standing on the northern Dniester bank, the Russians advanced with strong forces and numerous artillery.

Fortunately, the ordered relief of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division by the Hungarian 40th Infantry Division had not yet been fully carried out on the morning of June 8; four Prussian battalions were still in the front line at Hrebenow and Czeremchow. As the opposing enemy was constantly reinforcing, it seemed inadvisable to withdraw them now. Two more battalions had to be sent to Holeszow as flank protection upon news of the withdrawal of the security forces south of Zydaczow. Under these circumstances, a withdrawal of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division to Zydaczow was temporarily out of the question. It had to be completely abandoned soon, for against morning the Russians launched an attack on the entire front after strong artillery preparation. While they remained under German defensive fire at Hrebenow and Czeremchow, they managed to break through the weak Hungarian battalions securing up to Bortniki in the first assault and advance over Molodynce on both sides of the railway to the southeast and south towards Holeszow. As simultaneously on the opposite wing the 38th Infantry Division was pushed back into the line Rozara—Wizniow, the German center also had to be withdrawn to Nowoszyn in the afternoon. The gap between it and the 38th Infantry Division was closed by the 1st Cavalry Division. General Count von Bothmer expected a continuation of the enemy offensive for the next day.

In the angle between the Dniester and Stryj, however, the situation could be restored during the course of June 8. The enemy, whose strength had been overestimated by me, returned to his bridge fortifications; the previous security line Zuwadow—Sniatynow was reoccupied. West of the Stryj, the Szurmay Group had stormed the Russian trenches on both sides of the Lemberg railway and the village of Horochow during the night, but in the afternoon they launched a strong counterattack up to and beyond their starting positions.

Page 116

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia

General von Linsingen did not consider the situation on his northern flank to be threatening for the time being. He no longer trusted the enemy's offensive power, believing instead that today's attacks were only meant to cover the withdrawal of his main forces to Rohatyn. This view was reinforced by an aerial report, according to which strong columns had been observed marching from Bursztyn and Chodorow to Rohatyn in the afternoon. The army command seemed to attach no particular importance to the repeatedly reported appearance of the Russian VI Corps, previously used on the front west of Warsaw, before the Szurmay group. It refrained from continuing the offensive in a southeasterly direction, as there was no longer any prospect of intercepting the Russians retreating before the 7th Army east of the Dniester. Instead, it intended to swing its right wing to the northeast and north, to advance it after crossing the Dniester between Usieczko-Zielone and Halicz against the inner flanks of the Russian 9th and 11th Armies. This expressed a new operational idea in the use of the Southern Army within the framework of the overall operation, which aimed at concentrated cooperation with the armies of Colonel General von Mackensen in the northeastern part of Galicia. For this purpose, the Gerok Corps was deployed to Jezioryt, the Hofmann Corps to Slobódka, and the 1st Infantry Division to Bursztyn. The main forces of the Bothmer Corps were to push back the opposing enemy, while the Szurmay group, too weak for its own attack, was to defend itself for the time being. However, this new operational intention was not carried out. As General Count von Bothmer had expected, the enemy continued its advances against the northern flank of the Southern Army with far superior forces on June 9. Before dawn, it managed to break through the weak left wing of the Szurmay group — which numbered only 2400 rifles — at Medenice and Sitowia and to throw it back in disarray to the south and southwest. General von Linsingen, who immediately went to the battlefield to prevent a catastrophe through personal intervention, gained the impression that if the enemy attack continued, which was also doubtful, Stryj with its railway line, the only railway line available to the Southern Army, would be extremely threatened. He therefore requested the temporary assignment of a division to Drohobycz from the Austro-Hungarian army command and the 2nd Army. General of Cavalry von Böhm-Ermolli followed the reinforced Austro-Hungarian 4th Cavalry Division, strengthened by infantry and artillery, under Major General Berndt to Dobromyl, where it was to arrive in the afternoon.

Page 117

The Southern Army Abandons the Advance to the Southeast.

General von Linsingen, however, did not consider these preparations sufficient for the reliable securing of his left flank, given the condition of Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay's troops. This seemed assured only if the enemy was thrown back over the Dniester, which could only be achieved by deploying stronger forces. Reserves were not available. The divisions of Bothmer's Corps, deployed on the northern bank of the Dniester, had also been engaged in fierce defensive combat since early morning and urgently needed support themselves. Under these circumstances, there was no choice but to refrain from continuing the offensive of the right wing of the army in a northeasterly and northerly direction and to focus on defending what had been achieved, in order to free up his main forces for a counterattack to the northwest. On the morning of June 9, General von Linsingen ordered the Gerok Corps, which was engaged in an attack on the heights north of Stanislau, to immediately withdraw to Wojnilow and be ready to continue the march there the next morning. Remaining weak security forces were to be relieved during the course of June 10 by the 5th Cavalry Division, previously used with the 7th Army Group Marshal, which, along with the German officer of the group command Marshal, had already been made available to General von Linsingen at his request by the Austro-Hungarian Army Command on June 8 and was advancing from Zablotow via Ottynia towards Stanislau. The Hofmann Corps, attacking between the Szybicz and Lomnica, was to dig in where it stood and relieve the 1st Infantry Division on the left bank of the Lomnica; this division was to march to Zurawno. General Count von Bothmer was also given command of the troops fighting between the Dniester and Stryj, and Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay was ordered not to retreat any further and to use the Berndt Group offensively. General von Linsingen reported his orders to the allied army commands with the addition: "Intention: Flanking march and final destruction of the enemy attacking from the north, then offensive north of the Dniester." In a second radio message, he pointed out the extremely precarious condition of the 7th and also the 40th Infantry Division, which were no longer capable of sustained defense, let alone offensive use, and the need for the deployment of a German infantry division.

General von Conrad, still unaware of these intentions and orders, had expressed in a directive to the 11th, 2nd, Southern, and 7th Armies on the early afternoon of June 9 that the Russian advance against and over the Dniester would neither affect the army's attack

Page 118

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The Mackensen group still affected the actions of the eastern wing of the Southern Army and those of the 7th Army over the Dniester near and downstream of Halicz, where the enemy apparently retreated behind the river everywhere. However, it was necessary to limit the Russian advance over the Dniester and prevent any impact against the right flank of the 2nd and the left of the Southern Army. For this purpose, the 4th Cavalry Division was initially set in motion towards Dobropolany. Furthermore, the 2nd Army was to quickly provide a division on its right wing as an army reserve. However, after General von Conrad received reports from the Southern Army in the afternoon about the cessation of the offensive of its right wing and the intended flank attack in a northwesterly direction, he found himself compelled to issue new instructions to the 7th Army. On June 9, it had made further progress in the previous advance direction to the northeast and stood in the evening with the Korda Corps east of Kosmacz, with the former Marschall group, whose leadership had been taken over by Field Marshal Lieutenant Kaiser, at Jasionow Polny, with the Krautwald Corps southwest of Horodenka, and with the Zibulka, Rhemann, and Schönburg groups attacking enemy rearguard positions on the heights between Obertyn and Ottynia. The 7th Army now received orders to swing north with its main forces and continue its offensive over the Dniester at Buczacz—Maryampol; the right wing (the Korda and Kaiser groups), however, was to move between Pruth and Dniester and from Jalezyczki to west of Liczkowce. While the higher command was striving to locally limit the setback on the left wing of the Southern Army through vigorous intervention and to restore the situation by regrouping the forces, the Böhmer Corps faced an equally severe crisis. Until the afternoon, it had managed to repel the Russian masses, who repeatedly stormed against the trenches of the Allies on the northern Dniester bank, without regard for losses. Also on this side of the river, the particularly threatening advance of strong enemy forces aiming at Zurawno had been intercepted by deploying the last German reserves at the northern edge of Mlyniska. However, by 6 p.m., the 1st Cavalry Division deployed at Wizniow was broken through and thrown back in complete disarray to the Dniester. At the same time, the neighboring 38th Infantry Division on the right also gave way and retreated to the southern bank at Kozara and Starawies. Against the thus exposed flank of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division and against the bridge at Zurawno, superior enemy forces advanced irresistibly. Forces that could have been thrown against them.

Page 119

The Bothmer Corps retreats over the Dniester.

were no longer available. Thus, the Guard and the remnants of the 40th Infantry Division (around 700 rifles) had to be withdrawn to the positions from the evening of June 6, just north of the river. Since the 1st Infantry Division, which had been on the march since noon, could not be present before the next morning — only one battalion arrived completely exhausted in Zurawno late in the evening — and since it seemed doubtful whether it would be possible to hold back the Russian advance on the right bank of the Dniester for long, the heavily pressured Guard could not be withdrawn by Bothmer from the northern bank during the night and until the 3rd Guard Infantry Division without disturbance by the enemy to behind the Swica in the area of Tarnawka. To the right of it, the 1st Infantry Division was to deploy, with both divisions resuming the attack to the northwest the next day. The 38th Infantry Division was assigned the security on the Dniester from Swidowa to the Swica estuary. General von Linsingen approved these measures.

The right wing of the Szurmay Group had only laboriously resisted the enemy's superiority until the afternoon. It retreated to the line Stare Selo—Zarika by evening and reestablished the connection to the left wing, which had been able to hold north of Königsau. The 4th Cavalry Division, arriving only in the evening at Dobrowlany, was ordered to clear the area between Tysmienica and Bystrzyca of the enemy and then to advance against the rear of the Russians standing in the line Hofeszberg—Opary. During the night, the enemy remained quiet. On June 10, it occupied the left bank of the Dniester vacated by the Bothmer Corps and cautiously felt its way into Zurawno. In the Dniester—Stryj corner, it advanced during the day to beyond the line Zurawno—Potkowce. The Szurmay Group faced it at close range in the morning, in front of the 4th Cavalry Division it held the line Lipowice—Hruszow. This hesitant behavior in the initiation of the new operation of the Southern Army was surprising. The German 5th Cavalry Division arriving in the afternoon and north of Stanislau and the Hofmann Corps were subordinated by General von Linsingen to the General of Cavalry Freiherr v. Marchtaler with the order to immediately go on the offensive in case of retrograde movements of the enemy. The parts of the 19th Infantry Division left behind by the Gerok Corps were left to the 5th Cavalry Division until the next morning, as the enemy, according to an intercepted telephone conversation with the 7th Army, with one infantry and cavalry division each.

Page 120

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

The artillery division seemed to plan a raid on Stanislau. An intense bombardment of the city and the northern villages in the afternoon could be seen as preparation for this. The Gerok Corps arrived exhausted at noon in and south of Wozniolow. It was to leave a brigade of the 19th Infantry Division as an army reserve there, march the half of the 48th Reserve Division to the Bothmer Corps at Tarnawka, and secure the rest of the 19th Infantry Division and the 38th Infantry Division, now only numbering 1100 rifles, on the Dniester from Kurylow to the Swica estuary.

The Bothmer Corps had to reach the road Zurawno–Noweislow with advance troops by June 10 and proceed northwest over this line the next morning, but in case of enemy attack on the Szurmay Group, immediately strike the enemy in the flank. Field Marshal Lieutenant Szurmay was to attack on both flanks, holding his positions in the center. The purpose of the operation, as emphasized by General von Linsingen in the army order issued at 5 p.m., was a final settlement with the enemy before the Szurmay Group and the capture of the Dniester crossings. The deployment of strong reserves behind the right flank of the Bothmer Corps was deemed necessary for this.

Due to the severe exhaustion of the troops, the ordered movements were slow to start. Only on the morning of June 11 did the right wing of the 1st Infantry Division penetrate the rubble heap that Zurawno had become. At the same time, the remaining parts of the Bothmer Corps crossed the road leading from there to Noweislow and advanced northward under constant skirmishes with weaker enemy detachments. While the 1st Infantry Division swung into a strong bridgehead drawn in a semicircle around Mynsifta by evening, the Guard worked its way to the heavily barricaded railway line running east from Jydaczow to approach the fortress-like village of Rogozno; the half of the 48th Reserve Division followed as corps reserve. The 1st Cavalry Division, which had spent the night at Noweislow, crossed the Stryj at Potokrowce and attacked the enemy in the morning, who retreated over the right flank of the Szurmay Group to Czulowce by evening.

On the left flank of this group, the 4th Cavalry Division had already pushed the Russians back somewhat during the course of June 10, then

The reinforced 95th R. J. Br. was still assigned to the 1st S. D. (p. 197); the leadership of the 48th R. D. was taken over by Lieutenant General von Oppeln-Bronikowski on June 8.

Page 121

The Flanking Attack of the Bothmer Corps on Zydaczow.

However, given the strength of the enemy, they had to limit themselves to holding the line Wroblowice—Hruszow. To get the offensive moving here again, the 2nd Army combined the Bernh Group with the Hungarian 51st Infantry Division, which had been positioned behind their right flank since noon on June 10th (by order of the Army Command), under the command of Field Marshal Lieutenant von Kornhaber. He was tasked with "defeating the enemy in the area of Tynow (just east of Hruszow)—Litvnia—Dparv and then quickly advancing on Mikolajow to flank and encircle the enemy before the Szurmay Group and to shift the retreat to the Dniester." The 51st Infantry Division reached the line Glimme—Byhow on the afternoon of June 11th, from which they were to advance on Litvnia the next morning.

On June 12th, the Bothmer Corps continued the attack. The 1st Infantry Division found the bridgehead of Mlyniska evacuated and advanced under cover along the Dniester together with the right wing of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division against the stubbornly defended Rogozno, which only fell into German hands the following day after bitter, costly fighting and with the involvement of parts of the corps reserve. The left wing of the Guard worked its way up to close proximity to Zydaczow over the course of the two days and repelled an enemy counterattack. The 40th Infantry Division, once again subordinated to the Szurmay Group, relieved the 1st Cavalry Division, which had advanced on the western Stryj bank, and took Iwanowce. Szurmay's center gained the northern edge of Derzow and Bilczeif las, his left wing wrested Bilcze, Hofeszberg, and Dparv from the enemy. The Kornhaber Group, on the other hand, did not achieve the decisive impact intended for it. It encountered the strongest resistance at and north of Litvnia, which it could not break.

Meanwhile, there had also been fierce fighting on the right wing of the army. On the morning of June 11th, the enemy, as expected, advanced over the Bystrzyca Nadwornianska to attack Stanislau, but was bloodily repulsed. In return, the 5th Cavalry Division withdrew over the Worona section the following day and followed the Russians withdrawing on Jezupol and over the Dniester to the area of Jamorowce on the 13th. In the following days, General von Linsingen intended, as he reported to the combined army commands on the afternoon of June 13th, to continue clearing the right bank of the Dniester of the enemy and to establish crossing points.

1) p. 220.

Page 122

At the same time, the disorganized units were to be reorganized, and the combat strength, which had fallen to about 20,000 German and 25,000 Austro-Hungarian rifles and carbines, was to be replenished by the arrival of reinforcements. Then he wanted to cross the Dniester in a northerly direction. General von Conrad agreed with these intentions the following day. "It will," he added, "initially be the task of the Southern Army to reliably bind the enemy forces in front of it even after reaching the Dniester and to prevent any withdrawal against the thrust of the 2nd, 11th, and 4th Armies as well as against the 7th Army." The main forces of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army had, according to the new instructions from the army command, turned north from their previous northeastern advance direction on June 10. While the Schönburg Group reached the Dniester at Maryampol by the evening of the 13th, in connection with the right wing of the Southern Army, and the Rhemen and Czibulka Groups pushed the Russian XXX Corps back into the bridgehead of Nizniow, the Krautwald Corps came to a halt before strong enemy positions south of Czernelica and found itself compelled on June 13 to assist the Kaiser Group, which had established a foothold on the northern Dniester bank at Zawa and Zaleszczyki on the 10th and 11th, but had since been exposed to heavy Russian counterattacks. The Korda Corps, entrusted with protecting the right flank of the army, had moved east between the Pruth and Dniester and stood in fierce resistance on the heights beyond the Russian border. Its two cavalry divisions, combined into a corps on the northern flank, advanced another 20 kilometers eastward over Rzawiency.

9. Mackensen's Offensive on Lemberg in June.  
Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 16.  
a) Deployment and Preparations.

While the Southern Army struggled with varying success for control of the Dniester line in the first half of June, the three armies under Generaloberst von Mackensen made preparations to continue the offensive on Lemberg that had been ordered to them. From the observations of the aerial reconnaissance conducted after the fall of Przemysl, the overall impression on the evening of June 3 was that the enemy was withdrawing his defeated troops in the direction of Lemberg, while simultaneously bringing in new strong forces by rail and on foot marches approximately in

Page 123

Deployment for the Offensive of Army Group Mackensen on Lemberg.

the line Mosciska—Krakowiec—Lubaczow led up. Here, behind the front still held by the enemy at the time, a second fortified position was identified. Another strong barrier position was formed by the established line of the Bereska (Grodel Position) and as a continuation northward, the ridge over Niemirow to Narol Miasto protecting Lemberg. Behind this spatially deep-layered defense zone, the railway Chodorow—Lemberg—Rawa Ruska formed a favorable cross-connection, while six railway lines branched off from it as feeder lines to these new battle fronts. The railway situation was considerably more contested on the side of the allies. Into the area of the three attacking armies of Colonel General von Mackensen, only the railway over Sanok led, on which transports to Przemysl became possible in the following days, and over Rzeszow, which was completed from June 3 to Jaroslau. On this latter railway, the transport of reinforcements for the 11th Army and the supply of army needs had to be carried out. The condition of the roads and paths, deeply rutted due to heavy use and covered with tough mud due to frequent thunderstorms, added to the difficulties. It was therefore necessary to first create a solid base for the new offensive of the allied armies. Only then, and after carrying out troop movements from the Austro-Hungarian 3rd to the 4th Army, could operations begin. The next few days were thus used for assembling the newly joining forces behind the front of the 11th Army and organizing the three armies into their future battle fronts.

In addition, it was necessary to align the still unfinished combat operations east of Przemysl with the new operational concept. For this purpose, the previous left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was to advance to Mosciska, with the Beskiden Corps advancing to Hobbynia on the left, and the Austro-Hungarian XVII Corps advancing to Czerniawa. The deployment of this latter corps to the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was only to take place after its sector had been taken over by the Beskiden Corps. The XXXXI Reserve Corps had to swing in line to Wisznia in the line Ciezanow—Starzawa. In the movements required for this, the Beskiden Corps was already on June 4 facing a strongly fortified enemy position, which then ran from the Sieczna bend over the heights on this side of the Wisznia to Starzawa. The tenacious defensive struggle of the Russians showed that it could not merely be about rearguard actions. On June 5, the Austro-Hungarian XVII Corps and the XXXXI Reserve Corps joined forces in front of this front. In doing so, progress was made in the battle at Starzawa. There lay the rear guard

Page 124

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Attack to roll up the enemy position from the north. On June 6, Starzawa and the position south of it succumbed to the assault of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. Czerniawa was reached in the pursuit. This also advanced the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian XVII Corps, which climbed the Buczki Heights southwest of Czerniawa. However, the right wing of the corps stalled in front of Josefofka. Multiple strong counterattacks by the Russians failed. On June 7, the replacement of the XVII Corps by the Besziden Corps and the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was ordered. The initial intention to maintain the pressure from the north through the XXXXI Reserve Corps was abandoned by Generaloberst von Mackensen, as he now assessed the combat strength of the opposing Russians as low. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, supported only by the artillery of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, was to attack in the direction of Hodynice-Czerniawa. The main thrust was directed against Josefofka. However, it did not break through on June 8. The Besziden Corps also achieved only some local successes. On June 9, repeated bloody assaults against Josefofka failed to bring down this stronghold, which also supported the adjacent fronts on both sides. Therefore, Generaloberst von Mackensen decided to halt the attack at the line reached so far and to resume it only with the start of the general offensive. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division was relieved by the Besziden Corps and withdrew from the front as an army reserve. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army also had to cease its partial attacks, as it had to withdraw forces from its front to protect its right flank against the Russian advance over the Dniester. Thus, it was not possible to achieve the desired starting position for the major offensive near Mosciska in the area east of Przemysl.

In the northern flank of the 11th Army, not everything went according to the wishes of Army Command 11. The enemy advances against the northern front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army continued. A strong Russian attack was expected. The situation remained tense here until the arrival of the two reinforcement corps (X and XVII) sent by the 3rd Army. This posed a threat to the Rzeszów-Jaroslaw railway and thus to the entire deployment. Therefore, from the reinforcements rolling towards the 11th Army, the first arriving 22nd Infantry Division was positioned as support behind the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army on June 4.

1) p. 210. — 2) p. 202.

Page 125

The Attack Preparations.

However, larger enemy attack operations no longer disrupted the deployment. Rather, Generaloberst von Mackensen was able to describe the prospects for a new offensive as favorable as early as June 7. In front of the 11th and 4th Army, parts of the enemy had been withdrawn to the southeast against the South Army, and further withdrawals from the front line to the east were observed. The enemy apparently organized for defense in depth. On June 10, Generaloberst von Mackensen issued the attack order for the 13th.

Reconnaissance and preparations on the entire front of the 11th Army had already begun on June 6. On June 12, a partial advance by the 56th and 119th Infantry Divisions, consolidated under the command of General von Behr, was to precede the general offensive over the lower Lubaczowka towards Sieniawa, to facilitate the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army's crossing of the San. The main assault group of the 11th Army, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, the Guard, and XXII Reserve Corps¹), had the task of breaking through in a northeasterly direction. The X Army Corps was initially to join the attack only with its right wing, covering the left army flank until the Behr Corps could also advance eastward. On the right army wing, the XXXXI Reserve Corps was to overcome the broad Wisznia section, thereby facilitating the advance of both the VI Corps and the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. Army reserves included the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division, the 5th Bavarian Reserve Division, and the 88th Reserve Infantry Brigade of the XXII Reserve Corps. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division was to follow at the disposal of the Mackensen High Command behind the right wing of the 4th Army.

The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army had already received the directive from Generaloberst von Mackensen on June 6, "to keep their left wing as strong as possible, to envelop and roll up the entire occupied Grodek front from the north, while the advance of the 11th Army south past the mentioned front would make it impossible for them to hold out longer against the enemy." Accordingly, General of Cavalry von Böhm-Ermolli emphasized his left army wing. Here, the Austro-Hungarian IV and the Beskiden Corps were to be united on June 13 under the command of General von der Marwitz. The other corps were then to join their attack in stages. Opposite the right wing of the 2nd Army, the enemy had already over the

¹) The 43rd (without 85th R. J. Btl.), 44th R. D. and 107th J. D.

Page 126

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

To halt the Dniester's advancing actions of the Southern Army, strong forces were gathered in the area around Litwinia for a counterattack. As a flank attack against this, a special combat group under Field Marshal Lieutenant von Kornhaber was formed with the 2nd Army, which was to throw the enemy by June 12, and then rejoin the 2nd Army with the start of the general offensive on June 13.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army of General of Infantry Archduke Josef Ferdinand was to immediately follow the advance of the left wing of the 11th Army on Sieniawa on June 12, crossing the San between Sieniawa and Ulanow with the strongest possible forces in the direction of Rawa Ruska–Narol Miasto and taking over the cover of the left flank at the Tanew section. For the opening of the offensive over the San, the German 22nd Infantry Division had already been subordinated to the army on June 9 to deploy it on the right wing with the Austro-Hungarian XVII Corps. The corps command ordered the division for June 12 to make a frontal attack over the San on the Lubaczowka estuary–Lezachow route. The division commander, Lieutenant General Dieffenbach, however, requested to also attack the strong support points identified in the Lubaczowka–San angle from the south, whereupon his division was assigned the area up to east of Manasterz. The division was then to be relieved by the XVII Corps on the night of June 14 and follow the left wing of the 11th Army. Furthermore, Colonel General von Mackensen pointed out to the 4th Army the necessity of a simultaneous frontal attack against the San front. In further advances to the east, he anticipated an offensive thrust by the enemy against the left flank of the 11th Army. "Against this possibility, it is necessary to cover the advance of the 11th Army," Colonel von Seeckt stated in a letter to the High Command of the 4th Army, "for if it must divert its own forces early, its striking power to the east will falter." The 4th Army should therefore initially allocate as few forces as possible for the offensive task at the Tanew section. Archduke Josef Ferdinand intended to accompany the advance of the 11th Army to Sembor and the XVII and IX Corps and from there to Cieszanow through the XVII Corps. Two more divisions were to follow in the second line.

The High Command of the previous Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army took over the leadership of the Kirchbach Group on the western Vistula bank, from which an independent Austro-Hungarian 1st Army was formed again.

Page 127

b) The Breakthrough Battle of Lubaczow from June 12 to 15.

The advance of the inner wings of the 11th and s.-u. 4th Army in the river bend of Sieniawa on June 12 achieved the desired success. The left wing of the 56th Infantry Division swung forward in the early morning attack over the Lubaczowka and held against enemy counterattacks south of the Kotowka Forest during the morning hours. Thus covered on the flank, the 119th Infantry Division under Major General von Behr, advancing deeply over the Lubaczowka, carried its attack northward over several positions. Relief attacks by the Russians from the woods to the east and west were repelled. The 22nd Infantry Division encountered significant resistance in the river bend north of Manasterz, which was only broken by a frontal attack and encirclement from the east around noon. The division then drove the enemy back to the heights southeast of Sieniawa. By 5 p.m., Sieniawa was also occupied. These successes made it possible for the previously unsuccessful crossing of the allied troops over the San to succeed. At Sieniawa, they joined the German battlefront. The 22nd Infantry Division had to forgo the immediate execution of the attack against the Slawa Heights, as its artillery deployed on the western bank of the San could not be in place in time. The bridge built by the allies at Lezachow was not completed until the evening. Against the deep right flank of the 119th Infantry Division at the Kotowka Forest, heavy Russian counterattacks began in the evening, which could be countered by timely shifting of forces from the left to the right wing. However, the division was so heavily engaged in the night combat that its immediate relief by the s.-u. 11th Infantry Division, which had arrived behind the front, was not possible.

In the early morning of June 13, the 11th Army launched a frontal breakthrough. The Guard Corps, positioned in the center of the main assault group, achieved a great success. The 2nd Guard Infantry Division under Lieutenant General von Winkler succeeded in wresting Tucholka from the enemy by 9 a.m. Advancing, the division took Kobylinica Ruska by 2 p.m. and seized the heights to the north. By 5 p.m., the enemy finally mounted a counterattack. Under the impact of these rapid successes, even the initially stubborn resistance from the 1st Guard Infantry Division ...

Page 128

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

mattet. This threw the Russians over the Szklo depression in the morning hours. In the evening, it reached the connection to the neighboring division south of Kobylnica Ruska. Continuing the attack of the Guard Corps into the night against the enemy reported in a strong position on the heights on both sides of Wielkie Oczy seemed inappropriate and was omitted. Even so, the deep breakthrough already had a favorable effect on the course of the battle at the connection fronts.

The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps had broken into the enemy's position at Jagrebla and Jalazie. But only the 12th Infantry Division managed to push further and thus initiate an encirclement from the north. It was not until around 3 in the afternoon that resistance also collapsed in front of the 39th Infantry Division. Both divisions then worked their way through to the eastern edge of the large forest zone, where they now encountered new enemy positions at 6 in the evening. The XXXXI Reserve Corps, after initial successes on both sides of the Wisznia near Oltrow and further north, engaged in heavy, fluctuating combat. It was only when the 81st Reserve Division broke through Malnow at 8 in the evening that relief came for the heavily struggling 82nd Reserve Division in the Wisznia depression. The evening storming of the Aufowa Heights north of Malnow created a connection to the allies to the north. To the right, contact with the Beskiden Corps of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on the Wisznia was maintained. Its attack overcame the enemy stronghold of Jozefowka. Further advances on both sides of the stream depression to the east were, however, prevented by Russian counterattacks. Even an encirclement initiated from the north only brought the heights on this side of the place into the possession of the attacker.

On the northern wing of the main attack group, the advance of the XXII Reserve Corps under the leadership of General of Cavalry von Falkenhayn encountered particular difficulties, as the enemy positions flanked each other skillfully. The main target of the attack for the 43rd Reserve and 107th Infantry Division was the village of Mielkis Nowy, which had been expanded on several fronts. It was only when the rapid success of the height near Tuchla and the advance of the 107th Infantry Division eliminated the mutual flanking effect of the enemy against the attack on Mielkis Nowy that the village was stormed around noon. As the combat area expanded upon entering the large forests, the 44th Reserve Division was inserted into the center. Darkness halted the right wing of the corps advancing in the mountain forest of Panska Niwa. The left wing was fixed in the evening at the Czerwianka, while the enemy position continued to the northwest.

Page 129

Great Success on the First Day of Attack.

The X Army Corps initially attacked only the 20th Infantry Division. They encountered strong resistance when advancing over the exposed swamp area. By midday, the right wing, supported by the 107th Infantry Division, gained ground. Simultaneously, the enemy was also pushed back over the Lubaczowka. In the afternoon, the 20th Infantry Division pushed across this river to the stream section on both sides of Olszówka. This created space for the deployment of the 19th Infantry Division, which was brought up in the second line. In a difficult maneuver to the flank, they overcame the wide Lubaczowka depression and continued their attack into the night. At 3 a.m., Wulka Szapalowka fell.

At the front of Corps Behr, the battle north of the Lubaczowka concluded only in the early hours of June 13. The enemy retreated. The relief of the 119th Infantry Division by the allies was completed by 11 a.m. The division attempted to swing south through the Rotowka Forest for a flanking effect but encountered the enemy in the forest. Thus, they only managed to advance the inner wings of the 56th and 119th Infantry Divisions east of the forest.

Against Sieniawa, the Russians launched several attacks during the night of June 12 to 13, which were apparently only meant to cover their retreat to the east and north. By 7 a.m., the 22nd Infantry Division had occupied the Glawa Heights. In the evening, they were relieved. The line of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army extended the bridgehead to Piskorowice (ten kilometers northwest of Sieniawa).

Thus, the new offensive operation achieved a promising initial success on the first day. The tip of the breakthrough wedge of the Guard advanced far to the east, close to the intermediate position determined by reconnaissance at Krakowiec – Wielkie Oczy – Lutowisce – Lubaczow. As the enemy was already moving reserves back to the Grodek–Magierow position behind the front, Army Command 11 no longer expected sustained defense in the intermediate position ahead. It hoped that the breakthrough's progress would bring this about. Colonel General von Mackensen ordered: "The Guard Corps will continue its successful and decisive advance to the heights of the Wielkie Oczy section tomorrow." The center of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was directed at Krakowiec, as was the XXXXII Reserve Corps at Sarny. North of the Guard Corps, the XXII Reserve Corps was to push further through the forests and establish the encirclement of Bucznik initiated by the Guard from the north. The X Army Corps had maintained the connection with the corps

Page 130

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Behr intended to maintain his concentric attack in the Kotowka Forest and to advance his right wing on Oleszyce. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was deployed eastward towards Cewkow and northward towards Krzeszow on the San. The right neighboring army was ordered to "continue the attack or begin it emphatically." Under the impact of the breakthrough of the 11th Army, the enemy had already retreated before the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army during the night of June 14 to the general line Strwiaz—Bonow. They swung right and proceeded to attack this position.

The enemy also confronted the right wing of the 11th Army, the XXXX1 Reserve and Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, only on June 14 in positions on both sides of the Krakovice Gees. In fierce preliminary battles, the XXXX1 Reserve Corps advanced to the heights on this side of the Szilo. The intention of the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division to relieve General von François's corps south of the Gees failed, as they themselves encountered the enemy. The Austro-Hungarian 12th Infantry Division also faced a difficult frontal attack north of the Gees. The crossing over the Szilo lowland was opened to them by their left wing advancing with the Guard Corps. They then reached up to the eastern edge of the large Gees and at night up to Swidnica.

The Guard Corps unexpectedly encountered particularly strong resistance at Wielkie Oczy. It was not until 4 in the afternoon that the divisions could launch their assault. The 1st Guard Infantry Division under Colonel Sitel Friedrich Prince of Prussia overcame the Berzenitz and extended this success northward. Then the left wing of the division also pushed through Wielkie Oczy. The planned encirclement of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division from the north failed due to the strength of the Bucznik massif. Only after relief by the 1st Guard Infantry Division could their right wing penetrate into Wielkie Oczy at 7 p.m. after a hard fight and then connect with the right neighbor. Thus also encircled from the south, the Bucznik fell. Meanwhile, the left wing did not advance significantly further, especially since the situation in the forest zone further north was unclear. Here, the two southern divisions of the XXII Reserve Corps had followed the enemy retreating to the Ladova Nima height. After a difficult march, the 43rd Reserve Division of Major General von Runckel took possession of the position there at 7 p.m. The 44th Reserve Division pushed into the area south of Lutowka in the dark, with parts of it swinging towards Lutawice. There, the 107th Infantry Division also arrived after driving back enemy rearguards from section to section.

Page 131

The Offensive Continues to Push Through.

had thrown in at 6 p.m. into the battle. By 8 p.m., the village and the heights further east were taken by storm. North of the Lubaczowka, the X Army Corps faced fierce battles on both sides of Olszanka. When the right wing of the 20th Infantry Division broke through at the Lubaczowka and flanked to the left, the enemy abandoned their position by noon. The attempts of the 19th Infantry Division to extend their nightly success at Wulka Zapałowska to the east and north met with strong Russian resistance, and progress was only made by noon. In the afternoon, the entire front of the X Army Corps advanced slowly despite the heavy fighting. By evening, the connection to the XXII Reserve Corps at the Lubaczowka and the northern forest edge south of Lipina was reached. The 56th Infantry Division under Major General Schach von Wittenau also broke through the Lubaczowka front and pushed the enemy further north into the forests. Its left wing advanced northwest to support the right wing of the 119th Infantry Division. This reached the southern edge of the Kotowka Forest by evening at Ropa. The left wing of the division, however, along with the adjacent combat front of the allies, made only slow progress in heavy forest fighting. Therefore, the command of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army deemed a relief by advancing north of the Kotowka Forest towards the Czarnie Heights necessary. For this, they requested and received the German 22nd Infantry Division. This division moved east of the Slawa Heights into the battle line to attack the following day. Down the San River, little ground was gained. By noon, Generaloberst von Mackensen, under the impression of the Russian retreat in front of the 2nd Army's front and based on reports of marches from the Krakowiec—Lubaczow line to the east and northeast, had given the order to pursue to the Grodek position. However, the further course of the day showed that the enemy in front of the 2nd Army had only retreated to a strong position ten kilometers back and intended to hold before the 11th Army as well. According to prisoner reports, 19 divisions were positioned. Also, in the section north of Szklo and on both sides of the Lubaczowka, a breakthrough into the position had been achieved so far. The attack of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, which began on June 15, brought only some local successes west of Borowno at the northern flank, with the Beskiden Corps fighting in conjunction with the XXXXI Reserve Corps. However, they did not lead to the intended encirclement from the north.

World War VIII Volume.

Page 132

The left wing of the XXXXII Reserve Corps reached Morance early at the marshy Szczan. However, the crossing over a dam east of the Krakowiec Lake failed. Further south, after fierce fighting, the Russian positions still held west of the Szczan-Albichtee were breached. In the evening, the right wing was also able to penetrate the enemy's trenches west of Bonow. From the 8th and VI Corps, the 12th Infantry Division pushed the enemy back over the Lipowiec section. The bulk of the 39th Infantry Division was also moved north around the Krakowiec Lake. While its left wing was able to maintain contact with the 12th Infantry Division, the decisive advance of its right wing to the southeast was unsuccessful.

The Guard Corps also continued its attack deep into the enemy's defense system on June 15. The 1st Guard Infantry Division encountered strong Russian positions at the Lipowiec Brook. Supported by its neighboring division from the north, it was able to break this resistance by 6 p.m. and connect with the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, which advanced 20 kilometers beyond Bielke Oczy to Luzki. The XXII Reserve Corps also pushed the enemy back from section to section in the rugged terrain. Despite the greatest marching difficulties, all three divisions reached the Sanadowka section in the afternoon. They had thus significantly expanded the breakthrough of the Guard to the north.

The X Army Corps advanced its 20th Infantry Division along the Lubaczowka. It first encountered resistance at the Przerwa section, which was overcome by encircling from the east bank of the Lubaczowka by 7 p.m. The division then reached Zawadowka with its right wing. The positions east of Lipina had already been stormed by the inner wings of the 20th and 19th Infantry Divisions by 10 a.m. The latter continued to push the enemy further west in open terrain from position to position towards Oleszice and into the woods north of it. The bulk of the 19th Infantry Division then also turned east. In the evening, the X Army Corps encircled Lubaczow, protected by stream valleys, in an arc.

The Behr Corps was still far behind. The 56th Infantry Division attacked the enemy still holding south of Molodynce around noon, relieving the 119th Infantry Division, which was under pressure at the Kotowka Pass. Supported by troops of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, it stormed the strong positions there. In

Page 133

The enemy retreats to the Grodek-Magierow position.

The joint attack of both divisions succeeded in the evening in driving the enemy from his positions around Molodzycz. At 4 in the afternoon, the High Command of the 11th Army ordered that the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division, which had meanwhile been advanced to secure the deep left flank of the X Army Corps, be directed to Oleszyce-Zabiala and combined with the 56th Infantry Division on the left into a corps under the command of Bavarian Lieutenant General Freiherr von Stein. The 8th Bavarian Reserve Division reached Oleszyce with its largest parts. The 119th Infantry Division was to become the army reserve. On the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the 22nd Infantry Division, advancing north of the Kotowka Forest, broke through the enemy positions at 11 a.m., simultaneously with the Austro-Hungarian 11th Infantry Division fighting in the forest. Both divisions advanced significantly beyond the Czarna Heights. The rest of the 4th Army's front east of the San pushed north to the enemy-occupied high positions on both sides of Cieplicze. The Mackensen High Command assessed the overall situation of the 11th Army in the afternoon as very promising. At 6 p.m., Colonel von Seeckt issued the following directive to the corps chiefs of staff: "The pursuit law is progressing well across the entire front of the three armies. The situation has changed in our favor since yesterday, as the enemy has again thrown parts of his main forces against us, thereby giving us the opportunity to defeat him in open field. We will therefore find less resistance in the main position prepared by him and may be able to penetrate it with him. In this sense, the pursuit in the combat zones must be continued relentlessly." To further concentrate the forces of the 11th Army for the breakthrough attack on Magierow, its boundary with the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was shifted to the left towards the forest crest of Rubyn, which simultaneously enabled this army to encircle the Grodek position north around Lake Janow. Before the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, the enemy retreated to the Grodek position on June 16. The army followed along the entire line, with the left wing reaching Sądlo. The right wing and the center of the 11th Army also continued the pursuit relentlessly. Driving the enemy's rearguard before them, the four southern corps reached the line Sądlo-Niemirow and northward despite great marching difficulties. A longer assault battle was required to occupy Niemirow. The commanding general of the XXII Reserve Corps, General v.

Page 134

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Cavalry from Falkenhayn intended, during its advance, to swing parts northward to engage in the battles of the X Army Corps at Lubaczow to protect its left flank. The Army High Command did not allow this, as it considered the pursuit to the east more important.

The X Army Corps also managed to overcome the resistance it found in the naturally strong and heavily fortified position at Lubaczow. The 20th Infantry Division was set to attack from the south, the 19th Infantry Division from the west. Shortly after noon, the positions were stormed. On the heights south of the Solotwa, the enemy set up new resistance. The attack was transferred to the 19th Infantry Division, but could not be carried out due to the advanced time of day. The 20th Infantry Division marched eastward towards Sieniawa. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division was moved forward to close the gap between the XXII Reserve Corps and the X Army Corps. In front of the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division, the enemy still held positions north of Oleszyce at the forest edge behind it. The division prepared for a comprehensive attack on both sides. Its left wing crossed the stream section at Zabiala around noon. In the late afternoon, the 56th Infantry Division appeared on the battlefield northwest of Zabiala after a difficult march on deep sandy forest paths. Meanwhile, the Bajon had already taken the enemy positions north of Oleszyce. Both divisions were now to jointly attack the Kubaszyna Forest the next day on the orders of General von Stein. This necessitated a left swing of the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division. During the night, it took possession of Dachnow. Through this bold advance, the enemy in the Kubaszyna Forest was surrounded on three sides. Thus, even though the left wing of the 11th Army had not fallen significantly behind compared to the center and the right wing, there was a well-founded prospect that after overcoming the Russian resistance, it would soon join the advance to the east in a staggered formation on the left.

The right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army reached the forest edges south of Cewkow. Here the enemy still held. Further west, the army advanced over Cieplice. The Army High Command intended to advance northward only after expecting an enemy attack on the eastern bank of the San. Chief of General Staff von Mackensen pointed out that the advance to the east by an enemy attack did not raise the fear of such a deployment...

Page 135

The Attack on the Grodek-Magierow Position.

Cieszanow was set as the next target, with staging against Tarnogrod. Upon the news that retreat movements had also been initiated by the enemy on the west bank of the San, the 4th Army was informed: "Accordingly, the advance ordered for this evening appears facilitated to the east, and the attack of the parts standing in the San-Vistula angle is promising and necessary."

Reports from aircraft received on June 16 clearly showed the picture of the general enemy retreat into and behind the Grodek-Magierow position, which continued northwest to the Tanew section. Prisoners generally reported a great shortage of ammunition among the Russians and highlighted the tremendous moral impact of the German artillery. The replacement of the infantry was said to have deteriorated due to short and inadequate training, especially since the training depots lacked rifles. Generaloberst von Mackensen pointed out to the subordinate command authorities that "defeated troops" had occupied the new positions. The corps had to decide independently whether a quick access or a planned attack was appropriate. "That a quick decision is advantageous and necessary will be clear to every position." The focus of the operation remained in the center of the 11th Army. This was also expressed by the transfer of further heavy artillery from the left army wing to the Austro-Hungarian VI and the Guard Corps.

c) The Breakthrough through the Grodek-Magierow Position and the Capture of Lemberg. June 17 to 22.

On June 17, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army advanced against the Grodek position. It was already successful in penetrating the town of Grodek. However, General von Böhm-Ermolli planned the main breakthrough thrust on his left wing between Kamienobrod and Janow.

With the 11th Army, this day was also marked by sharp pursuit behind the retreating enemy. Only in front of strongly fortified heights of the general line Majdan-Lake-Magierow-Dobromilce Heights did the advance of the corps come to a halt. On the left army wing, the Stein Corps reached the heights south of Cieszanow, after the enemy had timely withdrawn from the impending attack in the Kubaszinja Forest. To maintain the connection with the left neighboring armies, these heights were initially only to be crossed. The heights south of the Swidnica were further advanced eastward by parts of the division of the left flank of the X Army Corps. In view of the strength of the height positions, from which the 11th Army now ...

Page 136

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

across the entire front, extensive artillery preparation was deemed necessary before the infantry attack began. Due to significant logistical difficulties, the heavy artillery had mostly not yet arrived. Therefore, Generaloberst von Mackensen ordered at 10:30 p.m.: "June 18 is to be used for reconnaissance, deployment, and artillery calibration. Assault planned for the morning of the 19th."

In front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the enemy, under the influence of the success of the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division at Dachnow and a night advance by the Allies west of Cewkow, abandoned their positions east of the San. The right wing of the 4th Army occupied Cieszanow. Behind it, the German 22nd Infantry Division remained as a reserve for the 11th Army. Additionally, the line Ułazow—Tarnogrod, the Tanew, and the heights of Krzeszów on the San were reached.

On June 18, the two armies of the attack front moved closer to the enemy positions under preliminary skirmishes. The Stein Corps also reached the same level as the other corps of the 11th Army after partially heavy fighting near and east of Rudka, while the left wing of the 56th Infantry Division, which had crossed the Brusienka, was forced to deeply echelon against strongly fortified flank positions northeast of Cieszanow. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army reached the Birowa—Tanew section. Generaloberst von Mackensen did not allow an advance beyond the Birowa to Narol Miasto to avoid jeopardizing the security of the 11th Army's flank by a potential setback. In the San-Vistula corner, the enemy seemed to retreat to their last bridgehead in the Rozwadów—Sandomierz line.

On June 19, the armies launched the decisive attack.

The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, whose task was to "push the enemy standing before it eastward, thereby rolling up the enemy Dniester front," achieved only local progress against the Dniester and in the area between it and the Wereszyca as well as in Grodek. However, on its northern flank, the 35th Reserve Division of the Beskiden Corps, under the leadership of Lieutenant General von Schmettau, broke deeply into the enemy positions at Stawki after deploying the entire heavy artillery of the corps.

The attack of the 11th Army brought decisive successes. Its four southern corps had set out to break through against the Lemberg—Rawa Ruska road with the intention of dispersing the enemy forces." The X Army Corps, Stein Corps, and the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division, under the command of the General of Infantry

Page 137

summarized uniformly by Emmich, had to cover this attack northward against Rawa Ruska. The XXXXI Reserve Corps attacked due to the swampy lowlands on both sides of the Majdan-Gees with the main focus on the northern flank and gained the heights east of the Sopfina Forest. When further progress could not be achieved, General von Francois deployed his reserves in the center at 5 in the afternoon. Here, a breakthrough was achieved by 7 in the evening, after which the heavy attack on the eastern shore heights of the Majdan Lake also succeeded further south. For the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, its difficult advance in rugged mountainous terrain initially focused primarily on gaining the Horodysko Massif. This succumbed at noon to the assault of its two divisions when the encirclement through the Sopfina Forest became effective. In swift forward movement, the 12th Infantry Division reached the connection to the Guard Corps at Kunin, while the right corps wing, deeply echeloned, reached the area west of Zabelnia, which the enemy held stubbornly. Of decisive importance for the intended separation of the Russian forces was the advance of the Guard Corps, as here the shortest route to the road and railway Zolkiew—Rawa Ruska could be reached. The attack of the 1st Guard Infantry Division on the right initially did not penetrate the heavily intersected terrain, whereas the 2nd Guard Infantry Division under Lieutenant General von Winckel early on took the heights of Mazury dominating the entire attack field and simultaneously advanced further south. The wedge driven forward from the center of the corps towards Magierow then exerted a flanking pressure on the entire corps section. By noon, the enemy resistance had collapsed everywhere. The commanding general, General Freiherr von Plettenberg, soon decided to continue the breakthrough beyond Magierow. Through strong marches and fighting against Russian rearguards, it was possible by evening to push over the railway and the road near Nordowin. Deep echeloning protected both flanks, as the rearguards could not follow quickly. Soon after noon, the 119th Infantry Division had been made available to the Guard Corps. It no longer engaged in action. The XXII Reserve Corps had placed its main focus on the right wing to maintain the connection with the Guard Corps. The frontal attack initially remained unsuccessful. Only when at 10 in the morning the rapid advance of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division

Page 138

made noticeable, the 43rd Reserve Division succeeded in breaking into the enemy position. To relieve the heavily struggling center, the command was forced to also deploy the 107th Infantry Division of Major General von Moser on the left corps wing for the breakthrough. But even before they engaged, the southern flank of the enemy east of Wysiecz Castle was torn open, and by early afternoon, they gave way along the entire line. In the follow-up, the right wing north of Lawrykow was able to connect with the Guard, while the left remained fixed south of Rawa Ruska.

General von Emmich had positioned a division composed of parts of the 19th and 20th Infantry Divisions under the leadership of Lieutenant General Hofmann behind the right wing of his defensive front, to potentially expand the success of the XXII Reserve Corps northward. By 4 p.m., this division was advancing on both sides of the Niemirow—Rawa Ruska road, while the right wing of the 20th Infantry Division, in line with the advance of the 107th Infantry Division, sought to push eastward. The enemy retreated under the pressure spreading from the south. The X Army Corps was able to advance to the Manasterz—Dobrinice line by evening. The Stein Corps faced strong Russian positions grouped around the Butszna Forest Heights. On the left wing, there was close combat contact at Rudka. The 2nd Army was expanding its new positions. Three divisions stood as reserves on the eastern bank of the San.

As the success of the breakthrough at Magierow became apparent towards evening, Colonel General von Mackensen reported to the Austro-Hungarian army command that he did not intend to cross the Zolkiew—Rawa Ruska road eastward, but would "continue to pursue the enemy, who had mostly withdrawn northward, and shift to the left."

On June 20, accordingly, the Guard Corps was to close up on the main road, while the corps of the 11th Army to the south and north of the road were to continue on both sides of Zolkiew. North of the Guard Corps, the XXII Reserve Corps was to push its right wing to the road, but otherwise remain in the left echelon to maintain connection with the Emmich group, whose left wing was to swing north around Rudka. General von Conrad agreed with the basic idea of this arrangement but pointed out that in connection with the attack of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army against Lemberg, a swing of parts of the 11th Army against the northern front of Lemberg might still be necessary.

Page 139

The Enemy Retreats to Lemberg.

However, such support was not needed by the right neighboring army. Already during the night, individual local breaches in the actual Grodek position had been expanded to significant territorial gains. Consequently, the enemy had retreated eastward along the entire line before dawn. The pursuit led the 2nd Army to the Dniester at Mikolajow and to the Szczerz-Stawczanta section, which the enemy held in connection with Lemberg, as well as directly in front of the city's west front, protected by makeshift works. On the northern flank, the advance of the Besikzent Corps aimed at Kulikow.

The enemy had also retreated on both sides of the breakthrough point of the Guard Corps before the 11th Army. The XXXXI Reserve Corps encountered new, very strong positions on the heights around and south of Gliniec by mid-morning. The attack had to be postponed to the following day, as the right corps wing and the heavy artillery were only ready to engage in the evening after an extremely difficult march through forested mountains. The k.u.k. VI Corps also soon encountered new enemy resistance and had to fend off even more vigorous counterattacks. Only its extreme northern wing managed to reach the great strength in connection with the Guard Corps. This extended its front northward at Dobrocin. An intended advance of the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division against the Zolkiew-Mosty Wielkie road proved impractical, as the enemy had almost closed its front again before the Guard Corps. The XXII Reserve Corps reached a line forward of Apogorzilisko without resistance. Here, only enemy cavalry seemed to be facing them. Marching columns moved eastward from Rawa Ruska. The X Army Corps also advanced without combat towards Rawa Ruska. A composite detachment was sent there. The Stein Corps encountered heavily fortified Russian positions during its northward pivot east of Rudka. Effectively supported by the artillery of the 20th and 56th Infantry Divisions and reinforced by parts of the latter division, the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division succeeded in encircling the enemy from the south. Around 10 in the afternoon, it gave way at the Buskano Heights. Through skillful expansion of the encirclement movement, the heights further north were also taken in a sharp assault in the evening. The k.u.k. 4th Army approached the section on both sides of Zukow with its right wing.

On June 21, the k.u.k. 2nd Army gained only a little ground eastward. However, it was of decisive importance for the outcome of the battle that the Besikzent Corps of General von der Marwitz

Page 140

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

With the full combat strength deployed, the breakthrough into the strong elevated position leaning against the northern front of Lemberg, west of Kulików, was achieved. This secured the desired impact against the northern front of Lemberg.

In the 11th Army, only the two southern corps remained in the attack. The XXXXI Reserve Corps advanced with great difficulty on the rain-soaked, steep forest paths through Słwarzawa Nowa and towards Gliniów. The enemy held this position stubbornly to cover Zółkiew. The XXXXI Reserve Corps was reinforced from the army reserve with the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, to which the 11th Cavalry Division was assigned, also did not break through. Before the Guard Corps, XXII Reserve, and X Army Corps, the enemy had retreated further north under cavalry cover. At Corps Stein, there was still combat contact.

In the area of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, only local battles took place. The fate of the Galician capital was sealed the following day. During the night of June 22, the Beskiden Corps had been able to expand its breakthrough north of Lemberg towards Kulików. Supported by this strong pressure affecting the northern front of Lemberg, the other corps of the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army managed to penetrate the works of the west and northern front by midday and advance through this wide breach towards the city itself. The enemy had abandoned Lemberg. The pursuit was conducted up to the line Czystki–Zapytnow, further north it came to a halt before Russian rearguard positions at Remenow and Zoltance. On its southern flank, the enemy was now forced to retreat to the approximate line Dornfeld–Krotoszyn. A thrust through Lemberg into the rear of this position aimed at Bobrka was intercepted by the Russians.

Meanwhile, the right wing of the 11th Army had also gained freedom of movement and followed the enemy who had retreated over Zółkiew during the night. The XXXXI Reserve Corps pushed its lines under combat against rearguards up to and beyond Zółkiew and through large forests north to the Zeldec section. The 11th Cavalry Division, sent by the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps to Mosty Wielkie, was unable to advance beyond Turynka despite support from the following Hungarian 39th Infantry Division. At Zameczek, the Austro-Hungarian 12th Infantry Division covered the left flank and maintained contact with the Guard Corps. Opposite the northern front of the 11th Army, the enemy continued to entrench.

Page 141

The Capture of Lemberg.

from Rawa Ruska and beyond the Rata. Only at the extreme left flank of the army were there still local skirmishes.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was instructed to immediately follow the enemy, whose retreat west of the San was considered likely, and, if he should still hold the bridgehead of Sandomierz, to attack on both sides of the San. Also on the left bank of the Vistula, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the Woyrsch Army Detachment were to immediately pursue if necessary.

10. Considerations.

With the fall of Lemberg, the third phase of the Galician offensive was successfully concluded. The expansion of the strong Grodek—Magierow position and the fortification of Lemberg, pursued with all means, could not prevent the new defeat of the Russian armies deployed to defend the capital of Galicia. The hoped-for separation of enemy forces seemed to have been achieved. A large part had sought connection to the Russian Northwest Front stationed in Poland.

In this third phase of operations, the 11th Army was also assigned the decisive task of breaking through the enemy front within the overall action. The attempt to force such a breakthrough against the naturally strong and particularly resilient lake position west of Lemberg would have promised little success. Therefore, rightly, the right wing was not directed at Lemberg as previously planned, but the entire 11th Army was directed further north towards Solkiew—Rawa Ruska. Similar to the forcing of the San crossing at Jaroslaw, Generaloberst von Mackensen formed a powerful wedge of attack by concentrating strong forces towards the center, which brilliantly accomplished its task. The immediate securing of the flanks was achieved by deep echeloning behind both wings. In their rear, operational flank protection fell to the neighboring armies on the right and left.

For the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, gathered in a confined space, the offensive solution to this task was straightforward by frontal engagement of the Grodek position, with the freedom to envelop and roll up the position to the north. The situation was less favorable for the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 4th Army on the left, which was still spread out west of the San. Nevertheless, Generaloberst von Mackensen rightly demanded significant participation from them as well.

Page 142

Forces advancing eastward, so that the 11th Army would not have to divert more troops than absolutely necessary for flank security purposes. This intention was not fully achieved. It was already unfortunate that the left wing of the 11th Army had to carry out the eccentric thrust in the river bend of Sieniawa one day before the start of the general offensive to open the crossing over the San for the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. Of the three divisions that preceded this, two—the 56th and the 22nd Infantry Divisions—cooperated with the left neighboring army throughout the entire operation, while the third, the 119th Infantry Division, eventually moved through and was no longer deployed on site. A division of the army reserve, the 8th Bavarian Reserve Division, also had to be used alongside the X Army Corps to protect the left flank. This significant loss of striking power did not have adverse consequences for the continuation of the operation, as after the vigorous breakthrough of the army center at Magierow, the offensive was no longer continued eastward but gradually swung northward. In this maneuver, the forces staggered backward for flank protection were quickly able to engage in the new front.

Reviewing the overall operation from Gorlice to Lemberg, the offensive of the Allies advanced more than 300 kilometers eastward in seven weeks through numerous enemy positions, carefully expanded with the involvement of the local population, amidst constant heavy fighting culminating in four massive breakthrough battles. The combat losses of the 11th Army amounted to about 87,000 men, including 12,000 dead. What the troops and supply formations accomplished during this time in relentless advance, mostly in scorching heat on mud-covered roads, deep sand, or the worst mountain paths, and the hardships endured in the enemy-evacuated land offering little shelter, can be worthily placed alongside their combat activity and leadership. Particularly perilous areas with extremely poor water conditions had to be traversed in terms of health. From the San onwards, cholera and typhus appeared, and the Galician dysentery spread. Nevertheless, due to prudent and thorough sanitary measures and the selfless dedication of the medical personnel, the health condition of the armies was such that the course of military operations remained secured.

The bloody and especially the other losses of the Russians were much heavier. More than a quarter of a million prisoners of war,

Page 143

New Crisis with the Southern Army.

224 guns, over 600 machine guns were left solely in the hands of the 11th Army. The loss of the Galician capital, where the Tsar himself had celebrated as the "Liberator of Galicia" just a few weeks earlier with festive pomp, meant a severe moral loss for the Russian people and their ruler, the extent of which was unforeseeable even in political terms.

II. The Battles on the Dniester Front from June 14 to 22.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketches 17 and 18.

The successful course of Generaloberst von Mackensen's offensive on Lemberg had meanwhile also made itself felt in the course of events on the Dniester Front. Initially, however, the Southern Army faced a new serious crisis when its left wing was hit again by a counterattack of strong Russian forces on June 14. Northwest of Bortniki, Russian guards broke over the Dniester and threw the 1st Infantry Division of the Bothmer Corps back onto the road leading from Zurawno to Szydlaczow; by deploying the corps reserve and with the help of the right wing of the 3rd Guard Infantry Division, it was possible to retake part of the lost ground by evening. West of Stryj, however, the right wing of the Szurmay Group had to be bent back halfway to Tejszarow after further resistance. West of the Lemberg railway, Bildze was lost. The Kornhaber Group on the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was also temporarily forced to abandon its positions. While the enemy limited itself the following day to holding the ground gained against the Bothmer Corps, it continued its attack on the Szurmay Group with undiminished force and pushed them back in fierce fighting to the line Tejszarow–Letnia. Stryj was once again seriously threatened. General von Linsingen found it necessary to bring in additional forces to support his left wing. On the afternoon of the 15th, two battalions of the Bothmer Corps were sent to assist the Szurmay Group. Furthermore, General von Gerok received orders to relieve the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division during the coming night with the half 19th Infantry Division held back as an army reserve in Wozniłow and to set them in motion towards Rudn.

The two Hungarian battalions were to be used for a counterattack at Wolica, where the enemy had attacked again and gained ground on the morning of June 16. In every further advance of the Russians

Page 144

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

On both sides of the Lemberg railway, in the direction so threatening to the Southern Army towards Stryj, General von Linsingen dispatched two battalions of the Bothmer Corps and three batteries of the 38th Infantry Division to Wolica, placing these forces under Major General Gentner. The abandoned positions could be reoccupied in the evening.

The enemy, under the influence of General Mackensen's offensive, refrained from continuing his attacks south of the Dniester. Calm prevailed along the entire front of the Southern Army. On June 17, the 38th Infantry Division, under General Count von Bothmer, relieved the 40th in their positions on the west bank of the Stryj. Field Marshal Lieutenant von Kornhaber moved the bulk of the 51st Infantry Division to the right bank of the Dniester and launched an attack at dawn on the 18th as part of the offensive task assigned to the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. The left wing of the Southern Army – the Szurmay Group and the 38th Infantry Division – joined in. The enemy retreated to the Dniester under weak resistance and abandoned the southern bank entirely the next day. Only the bridgeheads of Zydaczow and Woloczyn remained strongly held. Against the latter, the 38th Infantry Division advanced, gaining ground slowly. The Szurmay Group followed on both sides of the Lemberg railway to the Dniester and positioned the 40th Infantry Division to the right of the 7th, replacing General Gentner's group, which withdrew to the Bothmer Corps. On June 20, the 51st Infantry Division crossed the river at Kolodruby and rejoined the right wing of their army, advancing against the Szczerzec sector. Upon receiving this news, General von Linsingen ordered the Szurmay Group in the afternoon to join their left neighbor's advance over the Dniester, to seize Zydaczow and Woloczyn and then also cross the river. Additionally, he intended, as he had already informed the Army Command Office on June 17, to force a crossing over the Dniester again on both sides of Zurawno between Buczaczowce and Holeszow, as conditions there seemed more favorable than further upstream. In the following days, the necessary regrouping of the army was carried out. The Szurmay Group left the Southern Army on the evening of June 20 and joined the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. Opposite the Marschall Group, the enemy continued to hold their strong bridgehead positions around Halicz-Jezupol.

Page 145

The Battles of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army at the Dniester.

The Austro-Hungarian 7th Army also had to endure hard and varied battles in these days to hold the Dniester line. Its left wing was able to wrest the bridgehead of Nizniow from the enemy on June 15. However, General von Pflanzer-Baltin was forced on the same day to withdraw the Korda Corps, attacking eastward between the Pruth and Dniester, to the line Bojan—Horoszowa, as an intercepted Russian order indicated an enemy advance over the Dniester below Zaleszczyki was to be expected. The river security in the gap between the Korda Corps and the Kaiser Group was assigned to half of the 8th and 10th Cavalry Divisions, with an army reserve formed behind them at Zastawno from a brigade each of the 8th and 5th Cavalry Divisions and parts of the Krautwald Corps. However, the enemy's attack did not come from the north as expected, but against the front of the Korda Corps, which had roughly established its new positions by the night of the 16th. It had to fend off repeated mass assaults by the Russian XXXII Corps around the 3rd Cavalry Corps in the following days, which was only possible with the use of the army reserve. The four cavalry divisions now united north of the Korda Corps (Hungarian 5th, Austro-Hungarian 6th, 8th, and 10th) were grouped under Field Marshal Lieutenant von Benigni and reinforced by forces hastily brought from the left army wing, as new reports indicated Russian attacks from the northern Dniester bank were also to be expected. — Meanwhile, the enemy occupied the Dniester loop west of Uście Biskupie on the 20th and launched a concentric attack from here and from the large forest area east of Raranczev the following day. The defender had to retreat to the heights west of Dnuth; here, on June 22, he repelled all enemy assaults.

On the left army wing, after the capture of the bridgehead of Nizniow, only weaker parts of the Schönburg Group remained on the Dniester stretch from Ostra to Maryampol. The main forces of its western wing had been directed by General von Pflanzer-Baltin over the Dniester against the line Potok Złoty—Ropotiec, to force the enemy to abandon his positions south of the river at Czernelica through a threat to his rear. General von Rhemen had been entrusted with the unified command of the operation. Already on the night of June 16, the Czbulla Group had moved into the river loop south of Kolomea to Turb. During the day, parts of the Schönburg Group and the Rhemen Corps also crossed at and south of Ostra. Losses were heavy, extremely hampered by the terrain.

Page 146

the attackers waited for the stubbornly resisting enemy until the evening of June 18 over Kosmierzyn and on Koropiec. The next day, the offensive was to be continued with full force and with parts turning east and west to force the enemy to evacuate the Czernelica bend and the northern bank of Nizniow upwards. Due to heavy counterattacks by the Russians, which began on June 19, General von Rhemen was forced into defense and had to give up Kosmierzyn again. As the further reinforcement of the Benigni group had meanwhile become urgent, General von Pflanzer ordered on the 20th the cessation of the offensive over the Dniester and moved the dispensable forces here to the right wing of the army.

The offensive of the German Southern Army, which began on May 12, had very soon suffered from being assigned a double task, which pointed in two different directions. It was to reach the upper Dniester in connection with the left neighboring Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and thus the western Galician front of the Allies, i.e., to advance northwards, and on the other hand to exert operational pressure in an eastern direction to bring the Russian 9th Army's offensive, directed against its right neighboring army in the area between Dniester and Pruth, to a standstill.

This double task, although the Southern Army initially had a not insignificant superiority in units (9½ infantry divisions) over the opposing Russian 11th Army (6¾ infantry divisions), made it difficult to form a focal point. After fairly easily achieved, spatially considerable initial successes, which were explained by the voluntary retreat of the enemy, the progress of the advancing army on a broad front was small from the moment it encountered stubborn resistance. Only when General von Linsingen concentrated the forces of his left wing closely at the end of May, thereby consciously accepting the sparing of the right and the risk of a setback there, did the thrust on Stryj pave the way for a decisive turn of the situation. However, since this success was not expanded with all available force northwards to expel the enemy from the southern Dniester bank, the focus was rather placed on securing the army lines for the purpose of cooperating with the right neighboring army between Stryj-Usci in an eastern, almost southeastern direction, a serious danger arose for the insufficiently secured left wing of the army. It manifested itself after a few days, when the

Page 147

The Result of the Offensive of the Southern Army.

The Russians had received reinforcements in the heavy and costly setback north of Stryj and near Zurawno. Although this could be balanced again by the vigorous countermeasures of the army leader and the bravery of the troops, it resulted in a complete standstill of the army's offensive on the entire front for a longer period. The fact that the Russians eventually abandoned the southern Dniester bank occurred under the impression of the failures of their neighboring front in the area west of Lemberg. A decisive impact on the course of the offensive of General Mackensen, as envisaged by the group of Linsingen on June 8, albeit only temporarily, was denied to the two armies of the allied right wing until the fall of Lemberg. Indirectly, however, they contributed to its success by tying down strong enemy forces on their front.

12. The Allied Army Commands during the Operation on Lemberg.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 16.

General von Falkenhayn had, shortly after issuing the decisive instructions on June 4 for the continuation of the offensive in Galicia¹), made a brief visit to the German Western Front²). The impressions received there seemed to have reinforced his view that the extensive depletion of the Western Front of army reserves, which had occurred since mid-April, could only be sustained for a limited time. A withdrawal of forces from the eastern theater of war might therefore become necessary sooner than previously assumed. Shortly after his return to Ples, he reminded General von Conrad in a letter dated June 12 of "the immediate execution of reinforcement work on the Dniester-Wisznia and San lines with all conceivable means." He cited as a reason the fear "that the development might not be far enough advanced if we were forced by the situation to withdraw significant forces from Galicia. Such a situation could arise unexpectedly, although he currently had no indications for it."

General von Conrad initially stated in his response that all orders for the strongest establishment of the San line, as far as it was already in their possession, and the lower Wisznia line had been made

¹) p. 203. — ²) p. 77. World War. Volume VIII. 16

Page 148

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

while the connection to the upper Dniester and the Dniester line itself would first have to be fought for. Moreover, he emphasized that the compulsion to transport strong forces from Galicia to another theater of war could certainly arise for both Germany and Austria-Hungary in the foreseeable future. However, he hoped that the current joint offensive by the Allies in Galicia would be continued with full force until the decisive defeat of the Russian army.

General von Falkenhayn, as evidenced by his response on June 13, agreed that the common goal must remain "primarily the decisive defeat" of the opponent. However, he simultaneously pointed out that "the operations in Galicia have been severely hampered by various incidents," and expressed doubt "whether it will be possible to continue them until the decisive defeat of the enemy." "The enemy will try to evade the blow, and we cannot pursue him indefinitely." However, on June 13, his view began to align with that of General von Conrad. From the reports of the high commands of the 11th and the Southern Army on the stubborn battles of the day, he gained the impression that the Russians were determined to defend themselves with all their might. This also increased his hope for the success of a decisive strike. On the evening of June 13, he proposed in a letter to General von Conrad to transport the German divisions still in Syrmia, whose continued presence on the Serbian border no longer seemed necessary to him, to the Galician theater of war and to assign them to the Southern Army, "so that it receives the necessary forces to facilitate the advance of Mackensen's army eastward over the Dniester."

General von Conrad was pleased to find agreement with his own view that "the main decision against the Russian army in Galicia must be sought with all force." Assuming that "the enemy would accept this decisive battle at the latest along the general line Beresina—Naglow—Karol," he also considered the bringing of strong forces from the south over the Dniester particularly important for success. However, he declared that leaving at least one German division in Syrmia to prevent a Serbian incursion was indispensable and was for the immediate transport of the general command of the X Reserve Corps and the 101st and 105th J.D.

1) G. 222 and 215/216. — 2) C. 198. 101., 103., 105. J.D.

Page 149

Proposal by Colonel von Seeckt to Turn North.

The infantry division is ready for the Southern Army. The orders for this were issued on the afternoon of June 14.

On June 15, the Chief of Staff of the 11th Army, Colonel von Seeckt, presented an assessment of the situation to the German Supreme Army Command, outlining how Generaloberst von Mackensen envisioned continuing the overall operations on the Galician battlefield after the hoped-for and desired breakthrough of enemy positions west and northwest of Lemberg. The thrust of the 11th Army was to continue eastward until the majority of the Russian forces in Galicia were separated from the main body of their army. Encircling significant forces on the northern bank of the Dniester through comprehensive maneuvers east and north of Lemberg was considered unlikely by Colonel von Seeckt in the event of an early enemy retreat, but he hoped to be able to divert strong forces with strong pressure against the roads leading north from Lemberg in an eastern and northeastern direction. With this, he saw the task of the 11th Army on this side as likely completed. The further pushing back of the enemy in Galicia to the northeast and east was to fall to the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army and Southern Army. For the entire left wing, the 2nd, 11th, and 4th Armies, Colonel von Seeckt proposed turning north. "The goal of this operation," the letter stated, "would then be the advance of the 2nd and 11th Armies between the Bug and Vistula towards the Brest Litovsk—Warsaw line, while the 4th Army advances on both sides of the Vistula. This would bring about the decision against the Russian western and northwestern front."

Here, for the first time, the great operational idea was expressed, which would later, albeit under changed circumstances, become reality. General von Falkenhayn was still very reserved towards it at this time, as his marginal note to the last sentence of Colonel von Seeckt's letter proves: "A nice idea! But?" The doubt expressed here by the leader of the overall operations about the possibility, after the conclusion of the operations currently underway in Galicia, of initiating and carrying out a new, far-reaching offensive on the eastern battlefield, arose mainly from concern about maintaining the resistance capability of the German western front, against which new heavy attacks seemed to be impending at several points." General

Page 150

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Falkenhayn even considered, albeit only temporarily, the idea of diverting the two divisions completing their move from Gymnien to Galicia to the Southern Army to the western theater of war. A doubt expressed by Seeckt in his assessment of the situation also made him concerned about whether the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army would be able to continue covering the left flank of the 11th Army during the ongoing operation. On June 16, he felt compelled to inform the Commander-in-Chief East that he should not count on two divisions just freed up in his command area by deploying Landsturm formations for his purposes. The letter stated: "The pressure on the Western Front is now so strong and the necessity to effectively support the left flank of the 11th Army during its decisive advance to the east can become so compelling that the deployment of the divisions at one point or another may become unavoidable."

A similar view on the continuation of operations on the eastern theater of war as Colonel von Seeckt was independently held by the Chief of the Operations Department, Colonel Tappen. On June 18, he proposed to General von Falkenhayn to advance between the Bug and Vistula towards Warsaw against the strong Russian forces located there, in order to end the war with Russia or at least completely break its resistance. He believed that solving this task would not require all the German forces currently deployed in Galicia, and suggested withdrawing two army corps to the western theater of war after the completion of the current operation, to make necessary replacements with the 6th Army. General von Falkenhayn himself hoped to be able to go significantly further in reducing the German eastern forces. "His Excellency agrees," it says in a private diary of Colonel Tappen, "but still wants to bring three corps to Gaede to clear Alsace. Whether these three goals can be achieved simultaneously still needs to be examined." If the agreement noted here by General von Falkenhayn referred not only to the withdrawal of forces to the west but also to the continuation of operations in the east according to Colonel Tappen's proposal, it is hardly to be assumed that the Chief of the General Staff of the

1) Diary note of then Colonel Groener. 2) C. 128. 3) From unpublished war memoirs of the current Lieutenant General a. D. Tappen.

Page 151

The Army Commands Agree to the Shift Northward.

The field army was supposed to plan a decisive offensive between the Bug and Vistula against the main mass of the Russian army. For with a reduction of forces by five army corps, he could hardly consider such a far-reaching operation as promising success.

On the evening of June 18, the German Kaiser, accompanied by General von Falkenhayn, went to the 11th Army. During the train journey from Jaroslaw to Radyminu, on the morning of June 19, Generaloberst von Mackensen reported on the favorable progress of the offensive. Whether the idea of initiating a new operation in the area between the Bug and Vistula was discussed, and what position General von Falkenhayn actually took, could no longer be determined. In any case, the 11th Army Command itself, in view of the favorable course of the battles northwest of Lemberg, was eager to adapt the movements of the armies under its command to the new operational idea that was emerging. When it became apparent after the major breakthrough success at Magierow on the evening of June 19 that the majority of the enemy opposite the 11th Army had moved north, Generaloberst von Mackensen decided not to continue his army's advance eastward beyond the Lemberg—Rawa Ruska road, but to gradually shift the pursuit northward while consolidating forces.

On the late evening of June 19, Colonel von Seeckt presented General von Falkenhayn with a hastily sketched plan for the shift northward at the Jaroslaw train station after his return from Radyminu. The German Chief of Staff approved the basic idea and the orders given, but reserved final approval.

General von Conrad immediately joined the decision of the 11th Army Command, leaving only the question open as to whether parts of the 11th Army should initially be used for a comprehensive advance against the northern front of Lemberg in coordination with the 2nd Army. The next day, June 20, it became clear that this was not necessary. In line with his operational guiding idea, the 11th Army Command also responded to a suggestion from the commanding general of the XXII Reserve Corps, whose right wing connected with the Guard Corps on the railway line in the morning.

1) Diary note of Generaloberst von Pletten. — 2) G. 232. — 3) Letter from Generaloberst von Seeckt dated June 27, 1931, to the Reichsarchiv. — 4) G. 233.

Page 152

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Zolkiew—Rawa Ruska had been reached, attempting to prevent the enemy from retreating by an advance to the east. "The usefulness of an actual partial success receded against the operational thought"). After his return from the Galician theater of war, General von Falkenhayn had a meeting with General von Conrad in Plesz on the afternoon of June 20. In this meeting, he took the position that regardless of the battle situation before Lemberg, whose capture was the task of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, the 11th and 4th Armies should advance north between the Bug and Vistula. General von Falkenhayn argued against this, stating that a separation of the tasks of the armies under Generaloberst von Mackensen seemed premature. He proposed that the decision on the continuation of operations on a large scale should be made only after the expected fall of Lemberg. Consequently, the following directive was initially agreed upon for all armies: "The operations currently underway so successfully are to be carried out by Generaloberst von Mackensen with the 4th, 11th, and 2nd Armies until the capture of Lemberg. At the same time, the dissolution of the enemy retreating northward by attack, wherever he positions himself, is to be completed. The Szurmay Group is now subordinated to the 2nd Army command"). The Southern Army is to cross the Dniester and advance against the area east of Lemberg. The 7th Army advances over the Dniester and secures the right flank of the army and the unconditional possession of Czernowitz." The directive was issued on the evening of June 20. It was nothing more than a repetition of the tasks already assigned to the individual armies, with which they were still occupied at the time. The motives of General von Falkenhayn for this formulation of the directive are evident from a simultaneously dispatched telegram intended only for Generaloberst von Mackensen and his chief of staff: "The directive has been formulated because Your Excellency should initially retain full freedom of action with all forces under your command, while on the other hand, the Supreme Army Command must reserve the right, considering the overall situation, to issue new directives, if necessary, with a reduction of forces there. After carrying out the operations according to the above directive, it will certainly not be missed to withdraw German divisions from the 11th Army for use in the West. Conditions special circumstances no others archive.)

1) Letter from Generaloberst von Seeckt dated July 26, 1927, to the Reichsarchiv. — 2) G. 238.

Page 153

The Instructions for the New Operation.

Measures, then the intention is: 2nd Army separates from Army Group Mackensen to clear Galicia of the enemy with parts of the current Southern Army and 7th Army and to cover the right flank of the 11th Army. 11th Army (without the divisions to be detached) and 4th Army under Your Excellency's command advance further downstream." Following this, General von Falkenhayn was ready to join General von Conrad's proposal for the continuation of operations after the fall of Lemberg, which aimed to detach the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army from the command area of Generaloberst von Mackensen and involve it in the downstream advance. If he now intends to reduce the 11th Army by four divisions, the difference from the operations proposal made by Colonel von Seeckt on June 15 becomes clear. It seems that General von Falkenhayn, in the planned advance of the 11th and 4th Armies between the Bug and Vistula, did not envision the initiation of a new operation with far-reaching goals, but only a spatially limited pursuit, as also expressed in the directive itself with the words, "to complete the dissolution of the enemy retreating northward by attacking wherever he positions himself." Consequently, the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army had no reservations about returning to the Commander-in-Chief East his limited right of disposal over the two divisions to be detached from the front in his command area, as requested on June 20. He believed he would not need them on the battlefield between the Bug and Vistula. On June 22, before the news of the fall of Lemberg had reached him, General von Conrad, in line with his previous view, approached General von Falkenhayn with the following operational proposal: "2nd Army might take Lemberg today. Of the agreed tasks, one is then fulfilled, the other, pursuit by the 4th Army and 11th Army northward, still to be fulfilled. My proposal: Generaloberst von Mackensen carries out this task with the 4th and 11th Armies. The latter will be reinforced by the Beskiden Corps with the 4th and 11th Armies to cover the Dniester downstream

Page 154

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Surawno, to close off Halicz from the north and advance over the lower Gnila Lipa up to and including Rohatyn. The 7th Army retains its previous tasks.

General von Falkenhayn agreed with this proposal. However, he did not prescribe a final objective for the Southern Army. The further they advance, the better it is. He also considered the attachment of the Beskiden Corps to the direction of Kaminoka Strumilowa unnecessary, as it might not be essential. For the continuation of operations, he requested the fastest possible expansion of the railway lines Stryj—Chodorow, Przemysl—Lemberg, and Jaroslaw—Rawa Ruska.

Despite his agreement with the operational proposal of General von Conrad, the German Chief of Staff maintained the intention to transfer four divisions from the area of the 11th Army to the western theater of war. Corresponding orders were issued on June 22. The 8th Bavarian Reserve Division was to begin its transport from the area of Jaroslaw on June 26, with the 56th Infantry Division and the XXXXI Reserve Corps to follow around June 28. The measure was justified by the fact that "given the current situation, in conjunction with the losses inflicted on the Russians since the beginning of this operational phase, a reduction of German forces in the southeast is possible without impairing the tasks still to be solved and is necessary with regard to the situation on the Western Front." General von Falkenhayn informed General von Conrad orally about the impending transport during a meeting in Teschen on the afternoon of June 22. For several days, he even considered the intention, already expressed to Colonel Tappen on June 18, to transfer three more corps from the 11th and Southern Army to the west, "to clear Upper Alsace of the enemy."

1) The proposal of General von Conrad also did not prescribe a final objective for the Southern Army, but rather envisaged an advance over the lower Gnila Lipa. Rohatyn was only indicated as the last boundary of the Southern Army's advance area.  
2) On the two railways considered for the previous Mackensen Group, the Przemysl—Mosciska line was completed on June 19. The completion of the Jaroslaw—Lubaczow line was expected by June 24.  
3) p. 94.  
4) p. 609. Colonel Groener writes in his private diary on June 23: "Order for the transport of the four divisions from Galicia on June 22. The Russians are very early due to the operations." During the lecture on the occasion of General von Falkenhayn, he had to return to the west and clear Upper Alsace of the French.

Page 155

13. The Battles of the Southern Army at the End of June.

The commander-in-chief of the Southern Army, General von Linsingen, had already reported to the allied army commands on June 17 that he intended, after the arrival of the two divisions made available to him on the 14th, rolling in from southern Hungary to Stryj, to force the Dniester crossing anew on the night of June 21 to 22 on both sides of Zurawno. The instructions arriving from Teschen on the evening of the 20th assigned the army the further operational task of advancing "towards the area east of Lemberg" after completing the river crossing. Contrary to the wishes of General von Conrad, to cross with the left wing of the Southern Army at Wolcniow, General von Linsingen held firm at the position he had chosen at and behind Zurawno, as he hoped that the Southern Army would be able to break through the defensive position established by the Russians behind the Gnila Lipa and roll it up from the south, as well as threaten Halicz from the north and the enemy in front of the 7th Army on its right flank. However, the forcing of the Dniester crossing was to take place only on the night of June 22 to 23, as only slightly more than half of the reinforcements had been unloaded in Stryj so far. General von Conrad agreed to this and also approved the further operational intention to advance over the lower Gnila Lipa. His new instructions arriving on June 22 were in this sense. The German Chief of Staff particularly emphasized that it was important to "advance the thrust of the Southern Army with the greatest possible acceleration on the northern Dniester bank, even if only at one point, to damage the enemy retreating from south of Lemberg."

Although on June 22, a third of the infantry and half of the artillery of the 101st and 105th Infantry Divisions were still missing, General von Linsingen, in view of the overall situation, especially the evening's news of the capture of Lemberg, refrained from postponing the attack again and left it at the plan already made in the morning.

Divisions, whose transport has already been ordered, three corps from the 11th and Southern Army to Alsace." On June 25: "General von Falkenhayn says that it has been his view from the beginning to leave the reinforcement of the 11th Army only for the short breakthrough in Galicia, but then to withdraw it back to the west immediately." On June 26: "I agree with General von Schönborn that no further forces should be withdrawn in Galicia."

Page 156

The order issued on the 22nd, according to which the Dniester crossing was to take place early the next day. His suggestion to have the left wing of the 7th Army participate by advancing from the area of Maryampol to the northwest could not be granted, as the forces here were too weak for an offensive use and the tense situation on the rest of the army front did not allow for their reinforcement. Only deception measures were agreed to by General von Pflanzer. The Marschall Group (5th Cavalry Division and Austro-Hungarian Corps Hofmann) was to bind the strong enemy forces standing in the bridgehead of Jezupol—Halicz from the 22nd onward through demonstrative advances. The Corps Gerok (Austro-Hungarian Brigade Bolzano and Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division), Kusch (General Command of the X Reserve Corps with the 101st and 105th Infantry Divisions), and Bothmer (3rd Guard Infantry Division and 1st Infantry Division) were to unexpectedly throw their infantry across the river between Ostrow and Holeszow during the night to crush the enemy's resistance at dawn with overwhelming artillery fire. The left wing of the army, also under General Count von Bothmer (48th Reserve Division, Hungarian 38th Infantry Division, and Austro-Hungarian 1st Cavalry Division), was tasked with securing the flanks of the crossing troops, especially against Zydaczow, following the group Szurmay of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army. However, things did not go as planned. It took days of bitter fighting to reach the next desired goal. The infantry of the three corps crossing during the night of June 22nd to 23rd encountered extremely strong resistance everywhere and was only able to gain a foothold at a few points on the north bank. Even during the day, it was not possible to significantly expand the breach points. However, the enemy, apparently influenced by the unfavorable course of the battles around Lemberg for him, evacuated the bridgeheads of Zydaczow—Wolczimio and the left Dniester bank during the night and withdrew to the east. In the pursuit immediately taken up, the 48th Reserve Division advanced to the west of Chodorow, and the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division further north to Ostrow. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Cavalry Division maintained the connection to the right wing of the 2nd Army, which reached the line Wybtynowka—Lopuszna. The group Szurmay, separated from the front, was gathered around Mikolajow the next day and moved north on the 25th.

Page 157

The Southern Army Crosses the Dniester.

Even during the night of June 24, the corps of Gerok, Kosch, and Bothmer were unable to bring stronger forces to the northern bank, as the enemy sought to prevent the construction of bridges and footbridges through continuous artillery fire. At daybreak, massive Russian counterattacks began, which the few crossed battalions of the allies could only fend off with great difficulty and at the cost of heavy losses. Under these circumstances, the 3rd Guard Infantry Division refrained from further crossing attempts at Holeszow, where only a few companies had been able to establish themselves on the northern bank, and crossed with the main force behind the 48th Reserve Division east of Bortniki, to force the stubborn defender to retreat through a flank attack over Bortniki. The enemy opposed the advance of the left army wing and the neighboring Austro-Hungarian V Corps to the east at the lake and stream section between Bortniki and Bobrka.

Although the rising Dniester rendered the fords unusable and the bridge sites remained under heavy enemy fire, it was finally possible the following night to bring the bulk of the infantry of the Kosch Corps and the 1st Infantry Division to the opposite bank. During June 25, the enemy was driven from the heights west of Butaczow and northeast of Zurawno. Holeszow fell into the hands of the Guard. However, their main force could not take Bortniki. Larger successes were also denied in the northern adjoining parts of the Bothmer Corps.

The next day, the Kosch Corps had pushed the enemy behind the Swirz section. The three German divisions of General Count von Bothmer advanced fighting to the line Stryhorow—Chodorow. For the further attack against and over the Gnila Lipa, General von Linsingen made the 48th Reserve Division, which had become dispensable on the northern flank, available again to the Gerok Corps, whose crossed parts were still heavily pressed by the enemy.

On the night of the 27th, the Russians evacuated the bridgehead of Jezupol—Halicz; during the day, they also retreated behind the Swirz section in front of the Bothmer Corps and the right wing of the 2nd Army, which was reached everywhere by the allies and crossed by the Kosch Corps north of Butaczow under heavy fighting. Opposite Halicz, according to aerial reports and other information, the Dniester bank could only be weakly occupied, and the former garrison of the bridgehead was shattered during the retreat over the Stryta. General von Linsingen therefore ordered the Marschall Group, to which he reassigned the Bolzano Brigade, to cross the Dniester immediately with strong forces.

Page 158

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

and to roll up the Gnila Lipa position from the south. Otherwise, the offensive was to be continued in a northeasterly direction, with the left wing towards Narajow.

Already in the morning hours of June 28, the army, following the enemy who had withdrawn during the night, reached the entire front of the Gnila Lipa. On its eastern bank, General von Linsingen encountered only weak rearguards, believing the main enemy forces to be in continuous retreat to the east. Therefore, he urged his corps to cross the river and attack the enemy within the day, before they could establish themselves in fortified positions. However, these proved to be so strong and stubbornly defended that the crossing was unsuccessful at any point. Only in Rohatyn did parts of the 1st Infantry Division penetrate. In the Marschall group, the Dniester crossing succeeded only at Halicz, but not further downstream; the 5th Cavalry Division was stuck opposite Maryampol.

The army command intended to shift the focus of the attack to the right wing, which was to be reinforced by the Austro-Hungarian 1st Cavalry Division and the Kosch Corps. The former was to reach the area of Butaczowce by the evening of the 29th, the latter on the road over Bursztyn Halicz. However, since the strong enemy resistance was not yet broken on this day and the eastern bank of the Gnila Lipa could only be taken in places, the planned shift of the Kosch Corps could not yet be realized. In the Gerok Corps, the newly arrived 48th Reserve Division engaged to the right of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division. It filled the gap that had previously existed for the Bolzano Brigade. On June 30, the Kosch and Bothmer Corps were able to capture the eastern river heights in fierce fighting and hold against powerful enemy counterattacks, but a decisive success was not achieved on this day either.

Thus, the Southern Army had not yet succeeded in exerting operational influence on the course of events with the neighboring armies of Generaloberst von Mackensen to the left. However, through the persistent continuation of its attack, it had completely paralyzed the enemy's freedom of movement and inflicted heavy losses on them. Nearly 60,000 prisoners, 24 guns, and over 100 machine guns remained in their hands in the months of May and June. Their own bloody losses in June alone amounted to about 25,000 men, and the number of missing was about 11,000.

1) The losses of the Southern Army in May have not been determined.

Page 159

The Battles of the Southern Army at the Gnila Lipa.

The Austro-Hungarian 7th Army had to fend off strong Russian breakthrough attempts at Dobronowz and Dunth in the last third of June and expected new attacks against the Krautwald group at Zaleszczyki.

14. The Pursuit after the Capture of Lemberg until the End of June.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketches 16, 24, 25.

Based on the instructions given after the fall of Lemberg, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was to continue the pursuit of the enemy eastward with its left wing in the direction of Busk, while the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, under the command of General Field Marshal von Mackensen, were to advance northward between the Bug and Vistula. This was to create an ever-widening gap between the 2nd and 11th Army during the movements. The allied army commands assumed that the previously sought separation of enemy forces into an eastern and northern group had succeeded. According to the reports available on June 23, the Russian 3rd Army was positioned with its left wing north of Rawa Ruska, facing south. There, the Russian 8th Army joined, encircling Lemberg in a large arc to the east. Although strong breakthroughs were noted in the defeated enemy formations, it was already apparent that the operational goal of this separation had not yet been fully achieved. The high commands of the 2nd and 11th Army were rightly concerned about their inner flanks. Their views differed on how these should be covered. The Austro-Hungarian army command decided, at the request of the 11th Army, that the coverage along the Bug down to Kaminotka Strumilowa was initially the task of the 2nd Army. From there, the 11th Army itself, through the Beskiden Corps assigned to it, after its detachment from the 2nd Army, had to ensure the protection of its right flank.

In the advance area between the Bug and Vistula, aerial reconnaissance identified a fortified defensive position between Hrubieszow and Józefow. A position extended along the northern bank of the Rata over Narol Miasto and north of the Tanew swamp area. While the armies of General Field Marshal von Mackensen took the front northward, the necessary regroupings had to be made under

1) p. 247. — 2) Promoted to this rank on June 22.

Page 160

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

Simultaneous consideration of the tasks imposed on the 11th Army was carried out. The center and left wing of the 11th Army as well as the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army were not disturbed by the enemy. Rather, the Russians completely abandoned the San-Vistula angle in front of the left wing of the 4th Army on June 23. Also on the left bank of the Vistula, the allied troops were able to follow the enemy retreating beyond Sandomierz. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army advanced there to the Russian position in the Zawichost line (on the Vistula)—Darow, with the right wing and center of the Woyrsch Army Detachment reaching the northeastern edge of the large forest area southwest of the Baltow—Sienno—Iza line. The rest of the front up to the Pilica remained unchanged.

Difficulties in regrouping the forces arose on the right wing of the 11th Army northeast of Lemberg. Here, on the heights around Zoltance, the XXXXI Reserve Corps and the northern wing of the Beskiden Corps were still embroiled in heavy fighting, which significantly delayed the extraction of the last parts of the XXXXI Reserve Corps and the relief of the Beskiden Corps south of the Zoltance—Kamionka road. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, whose southern wing advanced to Dawidowka on June 23, therefore decided to expedite the relief of the Beskiden Corps by deploying the Kresja Group) east of Lemberg and, to enable the extension of the army northwards, also to transfer the Surmay Group) from the right to the left army wing. However, these measures could only gradually become effective. On the other hand, the pursuit operation between Bug and Vistula could not be halted due to the binding of the right wing of the 11th Army. Consequently, the center and left wing of the 11th Army advanced over the upper Rata to the recognized Russian position on June 25. The enemy evaded the planned attack for June 26 and retreated under disjointed rearguard skirmishes. The 11th Army pushed through the woods south of Uhnow with its center and was able to advance its left wing, effectively supported on the flank by the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, up to the heights southeast of Narol Miasto. Its right wing initially remained tied down at Zoltance. Only on June 27 could the Beskiden Corps, in conjunction with the Kresja Group now deployed on the northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, join the advance. On this day, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army captured the ridge west of the Gnila Lipa and reached Zadoworze with its left wing and the area south of Kamionka. Here, the Beskiden Corps joined with Siche-

1) 13th and 31st Infantry Divisions of the Austro-Hungarian IV Corps. — 2) See p. 154.

Page 161

The Breakthrough through the Russian Army Front is Achieved.

movements against Kamionka. The 11th Bavarian Infantry Division and the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps advanced as flank protection against Mosty Wielkie and Belz. Only the three army corps of the left wing of the 11th Army – the Guard Corps, XXII Reserve Corps, and X Army Corps – could carry the pursuit further northwards beyond Uhnow–Belzec. The enemy still held the road junction Narol–Miatlo, crucial for securing their retreat. Their previous movements indicated two directions, an eastern one in front of the right wing of the army and a northern and northeastern one in front of the left wing. The gap in front of the Guard Corps seemed to be filled only by Russian cavalry. The advance of the three western corps of the 11th Army on June 28 to the Huczwa lowlands west of Zerniki and beyond Tomaszow necessitated a further extension of the forces entrusted with flank protection on the right wing. Therefore, the 119th Infantry Division was inserted into the section of the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division. Both divisions were placed under the command of General v. Kneussl. East and west of Sielec, the enemy offered stubborn resistance to secure the withdrawal of their forces retreating to Sokal and behind the Bug. On the northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, the Kress group reached the Bug at Kamionka Strumilowa on this day. Elsewhere, the army advanced to the Gnila Lipa and into the area west of Sliniany. Behind this section and northward behind the Bug, the enemy apparently stood in a strong position. The reconnaissance results confirmed the impression that the desired separation of the enemy had now been achieved. The Russians withdrew in two groups both east behind the Bug and north to Zamosc. The 3rd Army entered the operational area of the Russian Northwestern Front. Thus, the offensive that began on May 2 in Western Galicia and continued persistently for nearly two months found its culmination in the breakthrough through the enemy army front. Field Marshal von Mackensen sought to exploit this now clearly recognized situation for the continuation of the pursuit and as a possible advantage. He decided to make the Russian position on the Tanew section untenable by advancing his left army wing northwest towards Zamosc and the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 4th Army on the left.

1) The XII Corps had mostly turned east towards Sokal. In front of the German army were the rest of the XII, the XXIII, and II Austro-Hungarian Corps and the 2nd Cavalry Corps, in front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army the XXIX, XXIV, X, III Austro-Hungarian Corps.

Page 162

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

thereby regaining full freedom of movement. The emphasis of the operation between Bug and Vistula was now on both sides of the Tomaszów—Zamość road, where 4½ divisions of the 11th Army (XXII Reserve and X Army Corps including the 22nd Infantry Division) were deployed in a narrow area, with the 107th Infantry Division positioned as army reserve behind them. Accordingly, the 11th Army also intended to continue its advance northwest on June 29. Meanwhile, it soon became clear that its right wing, from which seven infantry divisions and a cavalry division were already being used for securing the Bug or against it, would have to be directed even more to the northeast and allocate further forces for the task of flank protection. This threatened to stall the entire pursuit operation of Field Marshal von Mackensen. It was therefore high time that decisive measures were taken to relieve the 11th Army of the concern for its right flank.

In the instructions issued by the Austro-Hungarian command on the evening of June 22, the 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army were tasked with pursuing the enemy retreating north. A far-reaching operation was apparently not yet considered. Again, as in mid-month, it was the Chief of Staff of Field Marshal von Mackensen, Major General von Seeckt, who now suggested expanding the pursuit task into a new decisive offensive. On June 24, he presented the allied commands with a detailed assessment of the situation, in which he initially described the "actual war aim on the eastern front as the imminent complete subjugation of Russia." He then continued:

"The southern Russian front is defeated. The northwestern half is undefeated. It can only be defeated if it is forced to abandon its strong front and is enveloped from the south while retreating. How sensitive this pressure is to the enemy is proven by the fact that the newly occupied front position of the 4th and the left half of the 11th Army alone causes the enemy to advance north, abandoning its position in the Vistula-San triangle also against the 1st Army and Boryslaw. This invites even more to carry out a thrust on the right bank of the Vistula east of Ivangorod with strong force. It will throw the entire Russian northwestern front.

1) Promoted to this rank in Lemberg.

Page 163

Gen. von Seeckt Proposes Decisive Offensive between Bug and Vistula.

In themselves, the forces of the 4th and 11th Armies, if not further weakened, will suffice. They would still grow if parts of the 1st Army were freed for use on the right bank of the Vistula. A prerequisite for the strength of the thrust is that it can be carried out without diverting forces to cover its right flank. One must consider the likely countermeasures of the enemy, who will hardly be ready to go behind the Bug. He will withdraw parts from the front or the right wing and immediately oppose them in a position between the Vistula and Bug, approximately in the Swangord—Wlodawa line. He will also throw available weak forces against the right flank of the advance, exploiting the railway connections via Brest Litowsk and Kowel. This development must be secured against. The Army High Command has already recognized this necessity at the outset by directing the left wing of the 2nd Army to Kaminoka Strumilowa. I believe it is necessary to already consider the further deployment of the 2nd Army in this direction. The Besieden Corps is not sufficient for this if the advance of the right wing of the 11th Army extends over Belz to Hrubieszow and Cholm. If necessary, it must be induced to bend into a broad extension without the force of the front. It is therefore requested to consider whether the 2nd Army should not join the advance in a northerly direction in echelons from the left wing in the general march direction of Wladimir Wolynsk. If the presumed influence from the east remains, this march direction already results in its continuation in bypassing an enemy position leaning on the Bug at Wlodawa and later covering against Brest Litowsk. For the final evacuation of Galicia and the continuation of operations against the Russian 8th and 9th Armies, the forces of the 7th and the now reinforced Southern Army should suffice, perhaps with the addition of the V Army Corps and Group Szurmay, while the 2nd Army with IV, XIX, and XVIII Army Corps turns north against the Radziechow—Krystynopol line. The border between the two main groups would approximately form the Lemberg—Brody railway.”

“While Generaloberst von Conrad, from June 23 to 26, was on a business trip in the Lemberg area, initially refraining from commenting on this plan, General von Falkenhayn immediately declared his agreement. However, he added that

Page 164

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

it could not yet be said whether the planned operation would take place, because the conditions east of Lemberg were still not clear and the conditions for the deployment of all German troops to the right of the Vistula were not yet foreseeable. If it occurred, a new agreement of the army commands would bring the necessary instructions. However, there was no doubt that the major operation was already being prepared. General von Seeckt therefore familiarized the general staff chiefs of the corps with the basic idea of his plan in a letter dated June 26. In a simultaneous submission to the Austro-Hungarian army command, the special importance of the railways for the future operation on the inner line was pointed out. The 11th Army would arrange everything achievable in its area for the restoration and commissioning of the railways and requested the same from the 2nd Army for its area. Essentially, it was about the rapid development of the connections Sambor—Lemberg—Rawa Ruska—Jaroslau—Przemysl—Lemberg and the immediate following of operations behind the army advances. A wagon park near Lemberg was necessary.

On June 27, Generaloberst von Conrad sent his proposals for the continuation of operations to General von Falkenhayn. He assumed that the Russians, who were retreating not only in front of the 11th Army and the right wing of the 4th Army to the north, but also in front of the 2nd and the Southern Army to the northeast, would set up new resistance in the line Gnila Lipa—Bucz—Kaminoka Strumilowa. General von Seeckt's proposal to continue the offensive of the 11th and 4th Armies northwards between the Bug and Vistula had been fully adopted by Generaloberst von Conrad. He expected this, in connection with the ongoing attack of the Austro-Hungarian army, to initially further bend back the left wing of the Russian Vistula front still standing at Zaniowost. As an indispensable prerequisite for a decisive success in the area between the Bug and Vistula, Generaloberst von Conrad also saw the securing of the thrust in favor of the 11th Army. Using parts of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army for this, as General von Seeckt had suggested, seemed to him, however, not advisable due to the associated weakening of the front directed eastwards in Galicia. He therefore intended to use the three divisions of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army after completing their current task

1) Behind the 11th Army, the expansion of the railways over Przemyśl to Mosciska and over Jaroslau to Lubaczow was completed on June 26.

Page 165

Gen.-Colonel von Conrad Suggests Cooperation of the Front of the High Command. East at. 259

to bring west of the Vistula by rail via Lemberg, "in order to — along with secure cover in East Galicia against the east — still have forces advance over Sokal—Radzichow and be ready to intervene northwards or to cooperate with the eastern front as needed." Since this regrouping would only be possible in a few days, he suggested not dispatching the XXXXXI Reserve Corps to the western theater of war, if at all possible, but rather tasking it with securing the right flank of the 11th Army. Furthermore, General-Colonel von Conrad, extending beyond the supplement of General von Seeckt, proposed a new operational idea by suggesting the cooperation of the front of the High Command East, "to strike the main Russian force and push the enemy back behind the Vistula." For this purpose, he recommended an attack from the area of the Army Group Gallwitz, which was to be reinforced by contributions from other front sections, in a general direction towards Siedlce. He envisioned, as he wrote, that operation "which was initiated by us at the beginning of the campaign, but at that time could not break through due to the Russian superiority and the absence of the German thrust on Siedlce." General von Falkenhayn's view initially differed in some points from these proposals of the 8th Austro-Hungarian General Staff Chief. His position is evident from the draft of an operations order, which he sent to Teschen on the morning of June 28 with the addition that it would be appropriate to issue this order to the armies immediately, should General-Colonel von Conrad approve it. General von Falkenhayn was indeed in agreement with the retention of the XXXXXI Reserve Corps within the 11th Army1). However, since this had already been withdrawn to Jaroslaw at the time, it was initially not considered as flank protection for the 11th Army. For this purpose, the German Chief of Staff considered the immediate advance of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army against the Bug line Busk—Sokal necessary. To its right, the Southern Army was to continue its advance over the line Brzezany—Krasne (south of Busk) eastwards without delay and secure its right flank against the section of the lower Lota Lipa. To support it, the deployment of the last German division still in southern Hungary, the 103rd Infantry Division, via Delatyn and Stryj to Stanislau was envisaged. The Austro-Hungarian 7th Army was also to advance with a strong left wing over the

1) G. 248.

Page 166

This advance to the line Buczacz—Podhajce, otherwise holding their positions from Bojan (east of Czernowitz) to north of Horodenka. The task of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the Woyrsch Army Detachment, as seen by General von Falkenhayn, was initially to push the enemy further back and over the Vistula line. Overall, he had aligned with the proposals of General von Seeckt. He refrained from commenting on the later planned regrouping of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army and the operational involvement of elements of the Commander-in-Chief East. The existing differences of opinion were resolved through verbal discussions between the two Chiefs of Staff on the afternoon of June 28 in Pleß. General von Falkenhayn acceded to all the wishes of Generaloberst von Conrad. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army was initially to advance only to the upper Zlota Lipa (including Dunajow) and to Buß—Kamionka Strumilowa (including) with strong reserves on the northern flank to secure the Bug line up to the confluence of the Rata. Thus, it was considered of lesser importance as flank protection for the 11th Army. Instead, Generaloberst von Conrad maintained his intention to lead the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, specifically, after breaking through the Russian position south of Kamienna towards Tarlow, to advance over Lemberg and then over Radziechow—Sokal, ready to turn left or right as needed. The advance of the Southern Army over the Gnila Lipa was initially to proceed only to Zlota Lipa down to Dunajow. Generaloberst von Conrad refrained from bringing the 103rd Infantry Division from Southern Hungary, as he still deemed it indispensable on the Serbian front. The 7th Army was to continue securing the right flank and the provisional possession of Czernowitz. Overall, this meant that the eastward-facing defensive front was only envisaged as a spatially limited advance. The Woyrsch Army Detachment remaining on the left bank of the Vistula was to take over the entire front there up to the Pilica, exploiting any withdrawal of Russian forces for an attack and following them to the Vistula. On the evening of June 28, orders were issued to all armies in this sense. In an accompanying letter to General von Seeckt, the head of the Austro-Hungarian Operations Office, Major General Metzger, justified the measures envisaged for the immediate flank protection of the 11th Army: "... The reinforcement of the covering troops against the two armies of the Russian Southwestern Front is intended particularly for the purpose of ...

Page 167

General von Falkenhayn Agrees to the Envelopment Offensive.

to form an army designated to advance east of the Bug, as the protection of the eastern flank of the 11th Army is only possible offensively in the long run. A purely defensive flank protection along the Bug, Lipa, Dniester line is reliably not feasible with further advances of the 11th and 4th Armies and could not be achieved by merely stretching the 2nd Army, which has very limited strength, all the more so as it is assumed here that the enemy will bring troops from other front sections via Kowel—Wladimir Wolynsk and via Dubno—Brody to close the gap at the junction of my 3rd and 8th Armies, but also to make the 8th Army capable of attack."

The discussion of the general staff chiefs of the allies in Pleß on the afternoon of June 28 further created unity in the view that the participation of parts of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief would be decisive in achieving a major operational success against the main Russian forces in Poland. In choosing the starting point and direction of an offensive from the German eastern front, for which various possibilities were considered, General von Falkenhayn kept a free hand, as he first wanted to hear the opinion of Field Marshal von Hindenburg. In addition to the attack against the lower Narew recommended by Colonel General von Conrad, he also considered an advance along the Pilica to beyond the Vistula as well as a simultaneous operation at or after Nowogeorgiewsk. In this sense, he sent an inquiry to the Eastern Commander-in-Chief on June 28 and requested his opinion.

15. The Russian Southwestern Front in June.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketches 16 and 17.

The short pause in fighting after the fall of Przemysl had been used by General Ivanov to form new reserves, which were to gather at Lubaczow, Lemberg, and Rohatyn. However, as early as June 12 and 13, new attacks began against the front of the 3rd and 8th Armies. Despite severe losses, which for the XXIV Corps alone amounted to about 70 percent of combat strength on June 12 and 13, the armies offered the most stubborn resistance. But when the 3rd Army was pushed back in fierce fighting on June 14 to the line east of Lesajsk—Lubaczow, General Brussilov took action on the night of June 16.

Page 168

The Summer Campaign of the Allies in Galicia.

his 8th Army back into the long-prepared Grodek position in line southwest of Werchrata–Magierow–Grodek–south of Lubien.

In view of the threatening accumulation of enemy forces north and east of Jaroslau, the commander-in-chief of the Southwest Front had already formed a special group on June 15 at the breaking point of the 3rd and 8th Armies from units partly designated as army reserves under General Olochw (XXIX, II, and V Caucasian, XXIII Corps, 4th Cavalry Corps). It remained subordinate to the 3rd Army and was to maintain the right wing of the 8th Army as well as the connection to it. The other corps of the 3rd Army (XV, IX, XIV, X, III Caucasian, XXIV) as well as the 8th Army were tasked with holding their positions to the utmost. The 11th Army was to hold the Dniester section from Zaleszczyki to Sniatyn. Following it was the 9th Army, which had gradually retreated to the line Halicz–Sniatyn with its right wing corresponding to the movements of the 11th Army since June 5, to cover the river defense up to Chotin, while its left wing was to become offensive again in the area of Czernowitz.

Already on June 16, the Olochw group was attacked and, like the left wing of the 3rd Army, forced to retreat to prepared positions on the northern bank of the Tanew during the night of June 17. A few days later, on the night of June 20, the 8th Army also had to evacuate the Grodek position under the pressure of the German 11th Army and the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and retreat to the positions of Lemberg. The gap that had arisen between the two Russian armies was covered only by cavalry. By order of Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich, the right wing of the 3rd Army also retreated behind the San without a fight by June 23 and joined the 4th Army at Zawichoßt.

Meanwhile, the fate of Lemberg had been decided. Already on June 20, the supreme commander had ordered the evacuation of the city and also the rest of Galicia. When the XXVIII and VIII Corps were thrown from their positions at Koltiew during the night of June 22, General Brussilow began the retreat to the line north of Rawa Ruska–north of Zolkiew–Bobrka on the morning of June 22. On the same day, General Ivanov issued new instructions for the Southwest Front: the 3rd Army and the Olochw group were to cover the Austro-Hungarian Southern Front Lubin–Wladimir Wolynsk in close connection with the 4th, the 8th and 11th Armies, retreating eastward, to the enemy

Page 169

The Russian Southwestern Front.

to prepare as much as possible to stay and to finally bring it to a halt in the line Bełz—Bucz—Złota Lipa. The 9th Army was to adapt its right wing to the movements of the 11th Army and, by offensively exploiting its partial successes achieved in recent days between the Dniester and Pruth, to unfold the retreat operation of the Southwestern Front. The 3rd Army and the Olochow Group transferred to the Northwestern Front on the night of June 25.

The following days led to further withdrawal of the fronts. By the end of June, the 8th Army (XII, XXVIII, VIII, XVII, VII Corps) under continuous enemy pressure reached the line Sokal—Kamionka—Olesinany; to the south, the 1st Army (V, XVIII, XI Corps) joined in the line Gliniany—Rohatyn—Bursztyn, which, after a successful counterattack on June 14 and 15, initially held its front but then also had to retreat. The 9th Army (XXII, XXXIII Corps, 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Corps, XXXII Corps) had refrained from offensive activity due to considerable reinforcement of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army and held the Dniester line Bolszowce—Uście Biskupie and from there the national border to Bojan.

After withdrawing from the Southwestern Front, the Olochow Group, heavily pressed, had to retreat to the line Grabowice—Krylow by June 29. The gap to the left wing of the 3rd Army, which moved to the area of Zamosć, was covered only by a reinforced cavalry division. On June 29, the Guard Corps XXXI Corps, returned from the Narew Front to Cholm (previously with the 4th Army west of the Bug), was made available to the Olochow Group.

In agreement with the 4th Army, which had to withdraw its left wing to Józefów, the 3rd Army (including the Olochow Group) was instructed to hold the line Urzendow—Krasniów—Grabowice—Krylow—area north of Sokal. At the disposal of the commander of the Northwestern Front, the II Siberian Corps from the 1st Army and the 13th Cavalry Division from the 4th Army were withdrawn to the area of Cholm.

Page 170

C. The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

I. The decisive meeting on July 2 in Posen. Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 19.

The more the attack in Galicia grew into a major decisive battle, the more the Eastern Commander-in-Chief felt the need to participate, as far as his own forces allowed. However, these were by no means sufficient for larger offensive operations unless the supreme army command at least provided the necessary ammunition; they also shrank more and more due to allocations to the Galician front and by withdrawing units for new divisions. The diversionary campaign to Lithuania and Courland and the gas attacks of the 9th Army were the utmost that could be achieved under such conditions. After carrying out the last, still pending allocations, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief could only count on about 34 divisions along his approximately 850-kilometer-long front, which mostly counted only nine battalions, while about 50 Russian divisions with 16 battalions faced them.

After Italy entered the war, General von Falkenhayn requested the Eastern Commander-in-Chief's position on May 28 regarding the continuation of overall operations against Russia, with the view that the Russians would soon focus their efforts solely on regaining Libau on one hand, and not losing Warsaw as well as Eastern Galicia with Przemysl and Lemberg on the other. The fronts lying "between these focal points" would be ruthlessly stripped of forces by the enemy and were already in the process of doing so. Therefore, heavy fighting at the mentioned locations was to be expected. However, the Chief of General Staff hoped that Libau could be held for a longer time. Against Warsaw, he thought of advancing further with the help of the then impending gas attack. He wanted to bring relief to the situation in Galicia by attacking elsewhere indirectly. He explained that the Narew Front played no role in this connection; any offensive there could easily be brought to a standstill with weaker forces.

Page 171

Therefore, as General Ludendorff had already stated¹), only the attack south of the Pilica is in question. He asked for a position on this plan and inquired whether it was possible to free up four divisions from the Narew front for this purpose. The Commander-in-Chief East fully agreed with the operational implementations but had concerns about the release of further forces than already agreed upon, as the front would already be so thin that it could only be held with strongly fortified forward lines and rear positions.

On June 1, General von Falkenhayn requested that the 9th Army not be reduced in its strength in the near future, as "in case of urgent need" all dispensable forces must be relied upon to use them "in the south." The war diary of the Eastern Command also noted that a total of nine Russian divisions²) had now been transferred from their own front to the Galician front. The focus of the fighting had thus shifted to the southeast. The Commander-in-Chief now saw his task as holding on with as few forces as possible and supporting the decision by releasing troops. Giving up the Schawlen area and Libau was not yet necessary for this³).

On June 2, General von Falkenhayn reported that the attack south of the Pilica was no longer in question, as the enemy's resistance in Galicia was waning. However, he suggested the following day to support the local fighting by repeating the gas release at the 9th Army and perhaps also through operations "north of the Vistula," which he considered promising, as the Russians were generally suffering from a lack of ammunition. The Commander-in-Chief East assessed the prospects based on previous experiences as not so favorable and therefore replied on June 4: "The armies under my command attack as much as possible. However, since I have to continuously release forces due to the overall situation, I currently have no sufficient reserves for an effective attack except with the 9th Army and north of the Njemen." General von Falkenhayn, who did not consider these explanations convincing, refrained from a rebuttal. Soon after, the situation north of the Njemen seemed to improve so favorably that the Commander-in-Chief East still had the possibili-

¹) Discussion from May 23, 1915 (p. 122). ²) III. lauf. Corps (21st and 52nd Div.), 3rd Guard, 8th, 51st, 62nd, 63rd, 77th, and 13th Russian Div. The Baltic provision contained eleven to twelve divisions as of June 2. In fact, there were ten (after the withdrawal of two returned); information was often available. ³) p. 124 ff. ⁴) G. 135.

Page 172

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

... (promised a great success there). Thus, on June 11, General von Falkenhayn agreed that the two divisions desired for the decisive offensive north of the Njemen, unless unforeseen events occur, would be withdrawn from the units to be brought up to the 9th Army.

Since then, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief has been primarily concerned with the idea of the operation against the current and future operations north of the Njemen, where he had in mind as a further goal a "Bormark north past Kowno." When he reported to the Supreme Army Command on June 20 that he had to postpone the gas attack of the 9th Army and therefore wanted to deploy two divisions from the 8th Army and the Gallwitz Army Group instead of the 9th Army north of the Njemen, General von Falkenhayn had "no objections given the current situation." The Eastern Commander-in-Chief believed himself to be in full agreement with him and had to be further encouraged in this when he learned on June 25 that Field Marshal von Mackensen was now to "attack" the retreating enemy between the Bug and the Vistula to the north, "wherever he found him," and that General von Falkenhayn had even spoken to the navy about the possibility of later actions against Riga, intending to use the support of the Baltic Fleet. This went beyond the plans previously held by the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, who had considered Mitau as the target for the left wing.

In this situation, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief received the inquiry prompted by the proposal of Colonel General von Conrad from General von Falkenhayn on June 28. It stated: The pressure exerted from Eastern Galicia must soon be felt on the left bank of the Vistula. The Woyrsch Army Division was to advance against the Vistula above the Pilica estuary. "His Majesty assumes that the troops under Your Excellency's command can also participate in the operation in extension of the directive from April 16." In addition to the already planned operation against Kowno, "as a special measure, vigorous support for the ruthless denuding of the front currently held by the 9th Army and an advance with full forces, whether along the Pilica over the Vistula or against a point on the lower Narew line, could be considered. The enemy would not derive any significant benefit from the weakening of the Bzura and Rawka positions.

1) G. 126 f. — 2) G. 128. — 3) G. 261. — 4) G. 103 and Volume VII, G. 362.

Page 173

New Plans of the Supreme Army Command.

can advance as long as the movement between Bug and Narew continues. On the other hand, this movement would be facilitated in an invisible way by a timely, even weaker thrust near the Pilica or over the now probably soon passable Narew lowlands near or below Nowo Georgiewsk. Incidentally, there may also be other front positions where troops can be made available for this superior purpose." In the west and southeast, however, this is ruled out. On the other hand, the Supreme Army Command might "perhaps be able to make some Landsturm regiments and some, albeit immobile, artillery available for deception purposes on the exposed fronts."

This presentation of the Supreme Army Command did not surprise the Commander-in-Chief East, as his war diary states, insofar as he had always kept the support of the overall operation in mind. He agreed with the recommended "ruthless weakening" of the 9th Army. That he had not yet decided on this himself was due to the fact that a change in the weather was still expected to bring further success of the gas attack and thus direct support of the assault group in the south. However, he was not yet sure about the direction in which the new offensive operation should be launched. On the same June 28, General von Gallwitz was in Lötzen. His chief of staff, Colonel Krafft, had previously developed "points of view for the attack on fortified positions" in increasing form. Now General von Gallwitz himself presented the plan of an attack against the area of Przasnysz, with subsequent advance on Ciechanow. The Commander-in-Chief East still considered this direction of attack to be operationally ineffective, as it did not hit the depth of the Russian deployment; it also led against one of the strongest points of the enemy front and then into the area of effect of the large fortress Nowogeorgiewsk, so it had to be particularly difficult. On June 29, he replied to General von Falkenhayn: "A possibly decisive participation of the troops under my command within the overall situation was envisaged by me as soon as I received knowledge of the order of the Mackensen army through Your Excellency's telegram. An advance of the 9th Army against the Vistula is not intended by me,

1) Nowice is actually on the Bobr, not on the Narew. 2) This presumably meant the front of the 10th and Njemen Army. 3) von Gallwitz, p. 264.

Page 174

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

since he would have to overcome three prepared positions, the last of which runs from the Vistula north of the Pilica estuary via Piaseczno—Nadarzyn—Blonie. The withdrawal of additional forces of the 9th Army is therefore ordered from July 2. I have also refrained from reinforcing and launching an offensive of the Gallwitz Army Group. Whether the thrust will occur in the Osowiec area, the Kowno area, or even further north, I make dependent on the surveys already ordered. I will report my final decision as soon as possible. I request information on how many Landsturm regiments I can count on and when they would arrive."

Instead of the attack at Kowno and north of the Njemen, as General Ludendorff later wrote, an attack via Osowiec—Grodno, perhaps even via Lomza, could also be considered, as it had already been planned following the winter battle. Such an offensive could have a decisive effect, leading "on the shortest spatial route into the rear of the Russian army retreating from East Galicia between the Vistula and Bug." Precisely for this reason, however, "serious resistance in the tactically already very strong and presumably also heavily occupied line Osowiec—Grodno" was to be expected, and it was therefore very questionable whether the attack over the broad swampy lowlands of the Bobr could have prospects of success. Before the Eastern Commander-in-Chief made a final decision, he consulted the chiefs of staff of the armies in question for the attack (Gallwitz Army Group, 8th, 10th, and Njemen Army) on June 30 in Lößn, to hear about the attack possibilities in their sectors. Colonel Count von Schwerin explained for the 8th Army that the attack at Osowiec was not possible due to the terrain conditions; he recommended the offensive on Lomza and westward. However, this interim solution was not further discussed; rather, Lieutenant General Ludendorff decided in favor of the offensive in the Njemen area and the simultaneous execution of the intended surprise attack against Kowno.

1) Memories, p. 114. — 2) Communication from Major General a. D. Count von Schwerin from summer 1931 to the Reichsarchiv. 3) According to a communication from General Ludendorff from December 1931 to the Reichsarchiv, the Bobr area is known to be partly deep sandy, partly swampy, and predominantly pathless forest area, unsuitable for the deployment of larger troop masses based on the experiences of the spring battles. General von Gallwitz held the same view (p. 278 f.), while General Count Schwerin, in a letter from summer 1931 to the Reichsarchiv, assessed the conditions favorably and believed that a major offensive against the Nowogrod—Lomza front was also feasible.

Page 175

Memorandum of General Ludendorff.

Attacks. The 10th and Njemen Army were to be reinforced not only by the 41st and the 3rd Infantry Division already in the Njemen area, but also by a Guard Division (newly formed 4th Guard Infantry or 1st Guard Reserve Division) and by the XVII Army Corps.

After the meeting, a telegram from General von Falkenhayn arrived, stating: The operation against Kowno, if carried out promptly, would undoubtedly be of great significance for the overall situation if successful. However, he could not yet see how an operation north of Osjowiec would particularly promote the purpose outlined in his telegram of June 28. He anticipated a visit from the Kaiser to the 9th Army in the coming days; during which the differences of opinion in Pojsten should be clarified in a personal discussion. Meanwhile, the Austro-Hungarian liaison officer with the Supreme Commander East, Major von Fleischmann, on behalf of Generaloberst von Conrad, also pressed for the thrust over the lower Narew into the rear of Warsaw towards Siedlce.

On July 1, Lieutenant General Ludendorff set out his views in the following memorandum:

"The Eastern Army has the order from April 16: — "Deception and binding of the enemy north of the Pilica" — primarily fulfilled by the offensive north of the Njemen. The Russians have moved nine infantry and nine cavalry divisions there. The 10th Army has held the enemy in front of it with its advance; however, the offensive operations of the Gallwitz Army Group and the 9th Army have not prevented the enemy from transporting forces away. — The distribution of forces on both sides is shown in the annex.

The Eastern Army faces forces everywhere that are equal or superior in number and strongly entrenched, which must be broken through; only the northern flank has operational freedom. The Eastern Army must also continue to contribute to the decision initiated by the operations in Galicia. It can free up for deployment elsewhere:

3rd Reserve Division from July 3;

XVII Army Corps with 36th Infantry Division from July 3, with 35th Infantry Division from July 8;

1st Guard Reserve Division (its replacement is to be carried out by Landsturm regiments, freeing up not possible before July 10)."

1) G. 270.

Page 176

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

Appendix: Mutual Force Distribution on July 1, 1915.

German1) | Russian

Inf.Div. | Cav.Div. | Inf.Div. | Cav.Div. | Remarks

9th Army............... | 10\*) | 1 | 10 1/4 | 0 | \*) incl. XVII. A. C.

Army Group Gallwitz | 9 1/2\*\*) | 0 | 8 1/4\*\*\*) | 0 | \*\*) incl. 3rd G. D.

8th Army............... | 5 1/2 | 0 | 7 1/2 | 0 | \*\*\*) without II. Sib. C.

10th Army............. | 7 | 2 | 10 1/2 | 3

Njemen Army....... | 7 | 5 1/2 | 9 | 10

39 1/2 | 8 1/2 | 45 1/2 | 13

Remark: The German infantry divisions consist mostly of three regiments of three battalions, the Russian ones of four regiments of four battalions; the number of squadrons of the German and Russian cavalry divisions is the same.

1. A deployment of three divisions2) within the framework of the Woyrsch Army for a river crossing south of Iwangorod leads to an immediate, but probably only frontal support of the assault group. An offensive activity of the Eastern Army thus ceases.

2. A reinforcement of the 9th Army (two divisions3) would not be effective enough to influence the overall situation. The Russians have prepared numerous positions here that would need to be breached.

3. The Army Group Gallwitz, reinforced by the XVII Army Corps, could push the Russians back to the Plonsk-Pultusk line in heavy fighting. This should be followed by the attack on Nowogeorgiewsk. The operations are promising if the heaviest artillery can be made available for the attack on Nowogeorgiewsk. The operation is part of the overall treatment, but does not support it in the most effective direction.

4. This is essentially located at Osowiec. After thorough examination of the conditions, it is to be noted that an infantry attack over the Bobr south of Osowiec and on Gonionds4) is possible; however, it would need to

1) Since April (see p. 104), the 22nd I. D. had been transferred; new formations included 4th G. I. D., Div. Bedmann, and Abt. Libau. Among the infantry divisions were six each with the 9th Army, the Njemen Army, and Army Group Gallwitz, five with the 8th Army, and two active or reserve divisions with the 10th Army. All other units were only considered for participation in decisive offensive operations in further lines due to their composition.  
2) For the use of the fourth division see p. 272.  
3) Only two divisions, as the XVII A. C. already belonged to the 9th Army.  
4) Place immediately south of Osowiec.

Page 177

Memorandum of General Ludendorff

to succeed in a single thrust, otherwise the infantry will find itself in a difficult position in the swampy terrain. Digging in is not possible due to the high groundwater. Effective artillery support for the infantry attack is out of the question. The security of the operation is not guaranteed. If it fails, it will lead to a severe setback. In the event of success, the troops can at best hold a more or less advanced bridgehead south of Osjowiec after the fall of Osjowiec. A continuation of the offensive towards Białystok is not possible; the forces are insufficient, as it is certain that the Russians will concentrate forces there. In the context of the overall operation, this provides relief for other forces, but it does not lead to an immediate tactical cooperation that would crown a truly decisive operation. Without disregarding the advantages, the undertaking is not recommended, as its success is not guaranteed. The effort is too high compared to the potential success.

5. A reinforcement of the 10th Army and an offensive just south of Kowno and across the Njemen is only indicated if a planned operation against Kowno is successful. Whether this is the case depends on contingencies beyond military influence. An operation cannot be based on this. It must be emphasized that the planned coup against Kowno would be significantly supported by the addition of the heaviest artillery. This could also lead to the capture of Kowno if the other conditions are not met.

6. The deployment of the freed forces with the Njemen Army, possibly with a simultaneous attack on Kowno, can achieve full tactical success here; a failure, as possible with the operation at Osjowiec, is excluded here. To what extent the tactical success will lead the Njemen Army eastward, or towards Wilna, remains to be seen. The fact that the Russians have moved significant forces to the area north of the Njemen as soon as they felt a threat here makes it likely that they will bring reinforcements from the north of their 2nd Army against the Njemen Army again. This will relieve another part of the overall front as well as any potential operation at Osjowiec. If the capture of Kowno also succeeds, a major strategic success will be achieved in the further course.

The deployment of the forces to be freed here can therefore take place:

1. in the area south of Iwangorod or 2. with the Njemen Army.

Page 178

The deployment south of Ivangorod means an immediate, but only frontal increase in forces of three divisions for the main decision east of the Vistula. The fourth division would have to remain at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief East to be prepared for all circumstances, as it is quite possible that the Russians might still muster a strike against the 10th or the Niemen Army through a shift in forces. After the transfer of the three divisions, the Eastern Army would have to be active and could only advance where the Russians voluntarily retreat before it.

If the divisions are assigned to the Niemen Army, the 7½ infantry and 5½ cavalry divisions of the Niemen Army will be enabled for the offensive. The actual offensive increase in forces is considerably greater for the beleaguered army than with a deployment of the four divisions at Ivangorod. Even if seemingly far from the main decision, this will be more influenced by the deployment of forces north of the Niemen than by the immediate reinforcement.

The strengthening of the Niemen Army and its offensive with a simultaneous attack on Kowno therefore appears as the most effective activity of the Eastern Army within the framework of the overall operation."

With this memorandum, the Commander-in-Chief East returned to the proposals already made on May 20. Like then, he initially thought only of immediate support for the offensive of Field Marshal von Mackensen through a tactical success on his own front, not of a large-scale operation that, in conjunction with that offensive, could ultimately lead to a campaign decision against Russia. In his opinion, the forces were not sufficient for such a goal. Since the prospects for tactical success at the point where the strongest operational impact was expected, at Osowiec, were not very favorable, he advocated for the attack at Kowno and northwards, which was supposed to "bring relief at another point of the overall front." Only if the capture of the strong fortress of Kowno succeeded, did he hope for "a major strategic success in the further course."

Similarly, Ludendorff states in his memoirs, p. 114: "If Kowno, the key to the Russian Niemen defense, had fallen, the way to Vilna and into the rear of the main forces of the Russian army was open. It then had to make a tremendous leap backward. If the Niemen and 10th Army could receive even slight reinforcements in time and a column from the north could flank via Vilna, the summer campaign of 1915 would end with a decisive breakthrough of the Russian army."

Page 179

View of General von Falkenhayn.

General von Falkenhayn, who had a discussion with Field Marshal von Mackensen in Rawa Ruska on July 1 and gained the impression that everything was progressing well there, arrived in Posen via Plesz on the morning of July 2. His view was as follows: The situation in the West seemed relaxed after the failure of the French-English attacks, but one had to be prepared for a repetition of similar breakthrough attempts. They could force the main focus of warfare to be quickly shifted back to the Western Front. Meanwhile, the strained situation of Turkey increasingly demanded active intervention against Serbia. How long the Austro-Hungarian military command would manage on the Italian front with the forces deployed there remained uncertain, although all attacks had been repelled so far. Despite the great successes in Galicia and the currently favorable prospects of Mackensen's army group, it seemed necessary to continue the offensive against Russia with spatially and temporally limited objectives, so that the Supreme Army Command could always be in a position to quickly redeploy strong forces to another front if necessary. The possibility of an early conclusion to the Eastern operation, which had already lasted two months, was therefore urgently desirable. The large-scale deployment of weapons necessary for this seemed most safely and quickly achievable through the coordinated cooperation of the Mackensen and Hindenburg army groups in the area between the Bug, Vistula, and Narew. Based on these considerations, General von Falkenhayn firmly rejected an offensive over Kowno and northward, as the Eastern Commander-in-Chief apparently wanted to propose; he also had doubts whether any effect could be achieved on this path that would benefit the main operation. The experiences made in the spring (February/March) with a similar attempt seemed to argue against it. Even then, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had harbored very far-reaching hopes, which were not fulfilled. A local tactical victory was not sufficient, "especially not if, as in the present case,

1) Diary entry of Colonel General von Plesßen from July 2, 1915. 2) Evidence for the view of General von Falkenhayn given below is not contained in the files. It can only be derived from subsequent notes, especially the later correspondence with the Eastern Commander-in-Chief and the work written by the General after the war (p. 97 ff.). However, it is not very likely that what is summarized there was discussed in full and in all details on July 2. 3) Report of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief to the Kaiser from January 9, 1915, Volume VII, p. 11.

Page 180

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

The danger was to scatter in an eccentric direction and merely lead to greater expansion.” The Supreme Army Command needed a success that would have a rapid and decisive impact on the struggle between the Bug and Vistula. However, General von Falkenhayn did not expect such a success from the operation over Kowno, even if a significantly greater increase in forces for this section of the front could be made possible than he considered permissible given the overall situation, and if it were possible to continue the offensive of the left wing of the army in the direction of and over Wilna against the enemy's rear connections. “The Russians had long recognized the dangers of operational encirclement ... and learned to apply countermeasures. Their use facilitated their numerical superiority, their more efficient railway network, and the ruthlessness with which they could and, as experience showed, did abandon ground whenever it seemed expedient to them.”

Now the Mackensen Army Group had received the order on June 28 to advance against the Russians between the Bug and Vistula; the operational direction of the Commander-in-Chief East had initially been left open. In the meantime, however, General von Falkenhayn had decided (in the sense of the Lornaschen Plan) on the offensive from the area of the Gallwitz Army Group against and over the lower Narew, with further objectives of a thrust east past Warsaw. He had abandoned earlier concerns about this operation over the “swamp intersection” of the Narew, as the lowland “would probably soon be passable everywhere.” The German Chief of Staff envisioned as the ultimate goal to compress the enemy masses in Poland through simultaneous pressure from the south and northwest and, if possible, cut off their retreat. A decisive victory over these notable enemy forces was intended to so increase and expand the already apparent disruptions of the Russian army in Galicia that it would be incapable of offensive activity for a long time; such an effect seemed to him the highest that could be achieved with the available means in the foreseeable future, to achieve “a fully satisfactory success for the purposes of the Supreme Army Command.”

In accordance with this view, the Chief of the General Staff gave a lecture to the Kaiser in the Royal Castle in Posen and recommended “the cooperation of Hindenburg's forces in favor of the operation

1) von Falkenhayn, p. 197. — 2) p. 260. — 3) p. 259. — 4) Diary entry of General Tappen from July 2, 1915. — 5) pp. 200 and 267.

Page 181

The Decisive Meeting in Poland.

on the eastern bank of the Vistula from the area of Przasnysz and not from Kowno.” The Kaiser shared this view. Given the overall situation and the specific conditions of the Russian theater of war, he was also of the opinion that the attack over the Narew offered far better prospects than at Kowno. After the presentation by General von Falkenhayn, the Kaiser received Field Marshal von Hindenburg and Lieutenant General Ludendorff. The Commander-in-Chief East presented the overall situation in the East and his intentions in accordance with General Ludendorff's memorandum in the presence of General von Falkenhayn. It was the first time since winter that he had the opportunity to present his views on the major operations to the supreme warlord. He proposed the offensive of the reinforced Njemen Army with a simultaneous attack against Kowno; however, in response to the Kaiser’s objections, he conceded that it was “more a matter of feeling whether to attack at the Narew front or north of the Njemen.” He believed he was acting for the benefit of the whole by temporarily abandoning resistance to the intentions of the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army to avoid further unwanted friction, in order to resume his own plan at the appropriate time.

Then the Kaiser elaborated on his intentions, “with which” — as Colonel General von Plessen noted at the time — “the decision for the offensive from the area of Przasnysz was made.” In any case, due to proximity, the impact is more tangible and quicker than it can be from Kowno.”

A written order clearly outlining the task of the Commander-in-Chief East was not given, and thus opinions on the outcome of the meeting differ in some details.

1) Diary entry of Colonel General von Plessen, who attended the presentation, from July 2, 1915.  
2) von Falkenhayn, p. 98. These words first appear in a telegram from General von Falkenhayn to the Commander-in-Chief East dated October 8, 1915. General Ludendorff confirmed the event with a communication from December 1931 to the Reich Archives. However, it remains unclear whether the words were spoken by the Kaiser or by Field Marshal von Hindenburg (cf. von Hindenburg, p. 127 f.).  
Apart from the diary entry of Colonel General von Plessen, only the following documents were available in those days: General Ludendorff delivered his presentation in a memorandum dated July 1 and in a telegram on July 2 to His Majesty and the Field Marshal. “His Majesty decided in accordance with item 2.” — In an evening telegram from the Obersten ...

Page 182

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

In particular, the Commander-in-Chief East seems to have interpreted the task of Army Group Gallwitz more narrowly than was in line with the intentions of General von Falkenhayn. Accordingly, he came to a different conclusion regarding the exposure of the front west of the Vistula only for the allocation of forces for the Narew attack than the Supreme Army Command might have wished. These differences of opinion were not openly expressed; rather, General von Falkenhayn essentially accepted what the Commander-in-Chief East considered correct.

The 8th Army was to join the attack of Army Group Gallwitz. Furthermore, as General von Falkenhayn wrote after the war, "the attention of the Commander-in-Chief was drawn to the necessity of temporarily involving all forces otherwise available at his front" in the Narew operation. Until this was carried out, "all operations not directly serving security purposes, even in the north, should be postponed. On the other hand, it would be advisable to make preparations that would allow a rapid shift of troops from the Narew Group to the north for a later attack."

The Army Command stated: "In confirmation of today's discussion, His Majesty expects that the planned operation against a part of the Narew Front will be conducted. The sooner the attack becomes noticeable to the enemy, the more effective it would be in terms of the whole." – In the war diary of the Commander-in-Chief East, it is only stated that the "deployment of available forces with Army Group Gallwitz" should take place.

1) General Ludendorff wrote in 1919 (Memoirs, p. 115) that the Kaiser had ordered the continuation of the offensive in Poland, whereby Army Group Gallwitz was to "break through the enemy in front of it and advance against the Narew, while the 9th Army and General von Woyrsch were to advance against the Vistula." In contrast, General von Falkenhayn mentioned nothing in his somewhat later published book (p. 99) about the 9th Army and the Army Detachment Woyrsch advancing against the Vistula. The Commander-in-Chief East had the directive for Army Group Gallwitz to attack the Russian positions on both sides of Przasnysz on the Narew and to proceed against the Bug by relieving Army Group Mackensen. The withdrawal of forces located at the Vistula and in the south, as far as it did not endanger the attack, was part of the implementation. Given this precisely thought-out formulation, it is at least doubtful whether "shifting the enemy masses" was mentioned at all when the order was given, thus intended, whether it was stated as the goal of the attack, or whether it could only have been referred to as the "relief of Army Group Mackensen."

2) von Falkenhayn, p. 98.

Page 183

The Decisive Meeting in Posen.

were suitable for paving the way against the Russian connections. It would then probably be expedient to direct the thrust over the middle Njemen in a southeasterly direction, instead of setting it in the vast areas north of the river. It is certain that such indications were in line with the decision made by the Kaiser and his Chief of General Staff. However, according to the introductory words chosen by General von Falkenhayn, if at all on this occasion, they were probably more presented as wishes or suggestions of the Supreme Army Command in a somewhat indefinite form. On the other hand, it is also certain that the Commander-in-Chief East did not interpret the indications as a binding order, but believed himself entitled to act differently in the relevant matters at his own discretion.

2. Execution of the Attack.

a) Preparations.

Map 6 and Sketches 19, 20, 21.

Since the decision for the Falkenhayn plan had been made, the Commander-in-Chief East faced a task to which he was internally resistant, whose success he did not see as tactically assured, and which seemed to offer him no prospect of decisive operational effect even in the best case. Under the first impression of that decision, he sent the 10th Army the message on July 2 that the Supreme Army Command had ordered to refrain from the intended attack on Kowno. However, he could not bring himself to completely abandon the attack prepared north of the Njemen. Rather, he wanted to continue it alongside the Narew operation as far as possible, in order to divert from this on the one hand, and on the other hand to

1) What documents General von Falkenhayn had for his presentation is not known; the files provide no clarification. 2) Major von Fleishmann reported on the night of July 3 about the intended attack at Przasnysz to Teschin: "In any case, based on the mutual balance of forces in this area, there is hope of advancing the offensive to Siedlce, as long as the Russians do not retreat at the Narew due to the events at Lublin." Furthermore, it is stated in a daily record of the 8th Army Command: "The Russian artillery deployment is not sufficient to prevent the attack."

Page 184

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

The Supreme Army Command planned an operation over the central Njemen. The 41st Infantry Division was to remain with the Njemen Army.

Lieutenant General Ludendorff informed Army Group Gallwitz on the afternoon of July 2 that the main attack was to be conducted in their sector, and that the XVII Army Corps would be assigned for this purpose. The other two divisions intended for reinforcement (3rd Infantry and a Guard Division) were already there. Heavy artillery was to be supplied by the 9th Army.

General von Gallwitz had previously had about seven divisions in his 150-kilometer-wide sector between the lower Vistula and Szkwa; however, only seven were available for the task at hand. Approximately 8 1/4 Russian divisions seemed to be opposing. East of the Szkwa, the right wing of the 8th Army extended in a 70-kilometer width to the Bobr below Diswiece, which, with a total of four divisions, included some additional powerful divisions. However, about six active Russian divisions, including the Guard Corps, faced this front section.

In the evening, Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann, who had stayed behind in Lötzen and was informed by telephone about the results of the Potsdam meeting, communicated to Army Group Gallwitz that if the Supreme Command East considered the execution of the breakthrough with the target of Siedlce; in this direction, they should proceed "by the nearest route" from the left wing. Such an attack led via Ostrolenka over the Narew. "The bold idea," — wrote General von Gallwitz after the war — "to advance directly deep into the enemy's rear — Siedlce was 140 kilometers from my front — occupied me intensely." For such a far-reaching enterprise, the reinforcement by the proposed XVII Army Corps alone seemed insufficient, especially considering the "extremely impassable" terrain between Orzyc, Omulew, Rozoga, and Szkwa with the river barrier lying just behind it.

1) G. 270, Memorandum of General Ludendorff; there, however, perhaps somewhat narrowly, only nine and a half divisions are counted.  
2) 4. G. T. G., and 1. G. R. D.; 2nd, 3rd, 26th, 37th, and 86th I. D. (this, former Div. Bernis of Corps Gunter, consisted mainly of replacement units).  
3) Of about 11.5 Russian D.  
4) Hoffmann, I. S. 272. Record from July 2.  
5) von Gallwitz, S. 268.

Page 185

The Choice of Attack Direction.

Narew near Ostrolenka and Nowogorod was less suitable. General von Gallwitz was in agreement with his Chief of Staff, Colonel Marquard, "of the opinion that before such a deep thrust, a reckoning with the opponent facing Przasnysz, the Russian 1st Army and especially its core, the 1st Siberian Corps, must take place, and from this a development further west would be preferable for tactical and terrain considerations." This view corresponded to the attack plan against the area of Przasnysz, which General von Gallwitz had already presented to the Commander-in-Chief East on June 28 and which was then included in General Ludendorff's memorandum. He now found the approval of the Commander-in-Chief East, who, given the difficulty of the task, considered it questionable to bind an experienced army leader too much in execution. On the morning of July 3, Lieutenant General Ludendorff informed the Gallwitz High Command that "the goal of Siedlce should initially be set aside, a tactical success must absolutely be in the foreground," as it was a prerequisite for any further operational impact. The army group should "advance towards Pultusk," was communicated to the 9th Army on this day, which was to provide further reinforcement with ½ XI Army Corps (38th Infantry Division). Thus, General von Gallwitz had a total of ten attack-capable divisions, which was considered sufficient by the Commander-in-Chief East.

The instructions of the Commander-in-Chief East for the upcoming operations were: "1.) 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army remain in the advance in a northerly direction. Army Detachment Woyrsch covers against Iwangorod and Pilica estuary and will follow in this direction if the enemy retreats. — 2.) 9th Army is initially to cover Poland left of the Vistula while holding the left wing on the Vistula in case of need, abandoning the connection with Army Detachment Woyrsch. If the 2nd Russian Army retreats, the 9th Army is to follow and achieve the closure of Warsaw-Nowogeorgiewsk from the left Vistula bank. — 3.) The main focus of the army lies with the Gallwitz Army Group. After the reinforcements arrive, it is to break through and defeat the Russian 1st Army and continue to exert decisive pressure against this line of the Russian north through an advance towards Nowogeorgiewsk—Szkwa estuary.

1) von Gallwitz, p. 264. 2) Date of issue not certain, but presumably before July 5.

Page 186

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front

to extend the western front. A further march over the Narew with the main forces towards Siedlce and an attack on Nowogeorgiewsk is to be considered. — 4.) 8th Army strengthens between Szkwa and Pisa to join the operations of the Gallwitz Army Group on command. It maintains its positions otherwise. — 5.) 10th Army covers in its previous extended position the left flank of the Eastern Army between Rajgrod Lake and the Njemen west of Kowno. The 10th Army cannot count on reinforcements. — 6.) Njemen Army is to attack the Russian 5th Army and thereby also relieve the 10th Army." On July 4, Lieutenant General Ludendorff arrived at the army headquarters in Soldau to discuss the situation and intentions with General von Gallwitz. There was "unanimity about the procedure to be followed, with General Ludendorff favoring the advance against the Narew line Pultusk—Rozan (not Ostrolenka). He secured ammunition in masses." The attack day was initially set for July 11. On July 5, General von Gallwitz issued the basic instructions for the attack. They corresponded to the already mentioned Marquardt memorandum on attack procedures, which among other things demanded a vigorous approach to the breakthrough. The heavily fortified Przasnysz was initially to be bypassed to bring it down more easily after taking the high ground to the west and east of the city. This resulted in two separate sections over a total attack width of about 36 kilometers, with Przasnysz in the middle. In them, three corps with a total of seven divisions were to attack in the first encounter, with an eighth division following behind the center). The troops of the neighboring sections, including two active divisions east of Orzyc, were to tie down and distract the enemy with their own operations and join the attack. When on July 6 the transport of three Russian corps from northern Poland became known, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief also assessed the attack prospects more favorably. "The Russian now has hardly any forces left to counter a breakthrough frontally and by flanking attack," it says in his war diary. The following day he remarked, however

1) von Gallwitz, p. 269. 2) See p. 283. 3) Guard Corps at Lomza, II Siberian Corps south of Przasnysz, VI Corps in front of the German 9th Army, where also the VI Siberian Corps had been brought up in recent days; all for use in southern Poland and Galicia.

Page 187

Preparations for the Attack at Przasnysz.

Concerns about whether the attack might be too broad“). General von Gallwitz, however, stuck to his plan; he considered “the number of assault troops to be sufficient; even though the enemy positions were magnificently fortified, the occupation was no longer particularly dense after the withdrawal of the II Siberian Corps.” Nevertheless, he decided to deploy a Landwehr brigade from neighboring sections behind the right, and an active division behind the left attack wing“).

An offensive operation by the 10th Army and a new gas attack by the 9th Army were meanwhile intended to distract the enemy and tie down his forces; further operations, especially the offensive of the Njemen Army, were still pending. For the attack against Kowno, even if its execution was initially not feasible, at least preparations were to be resumed and the next available unit sent there. Moreover, the planned attack for the right wing of the 8th Army meant the most direct support for the Gallwitz Army Group.

On July 9, the Commander-in-Chief East reported to the Supreme Army Command in response to their inquiry: “According to the instructions given to me on the 2nd of the month in Posen, the group reinforced by XVII Army Corps, 38th Infantry Division, and all available artillery will attack on both sides of Przasnysz and break through the Russian position. The right wing of the 8th Army will support the Gallwitz Group's offensive by attacking between Szdna and Pityk. The attack cannot begin before July 12 ... I have had to postpone the operation against Kowno because troops are not currently available.” Following this conclusion, General von Falkenhayn inquired about the use of the 41st Infantry Division, as the forces assigned to the Narew thrust seemed too weak to him. On his behalf, Major General Lappen arrived at the Commander-in-Chief East in Lötzen on July 10. The assault group aimed at the Przasnysz area was further reinforced by the 50th Reserve Division of the 9th Army, so that it now counted 10½ divisions. The 9th Army had thus given up a total of four divisions instead of the originally planned two.

1) von Gallwitz, p. 270. 2) Ldw. Br. of Colonel Count von Pfeil and Klein-Ellguth from XVII R. K. (previously Corps Suren) and Division Falk formed from troops of Corps Eben. These operations of all other armies (except Army Group Gallwitz and 8th Army) will be described in detail later. 4) Promoted to this rank on June 26.

Page 188

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

b) Breakthrough through the Russian Positions from July 13 to 15.

Sessions 19, 20, 21.

At the front of the Army Group Gallwitz, the days since July 2 had quickly passed with preparations for the attack. Its start had finally had to be postponed to July 13. Since the foremost Russian line was at some points up to 1000 meters away from the German front, the troops had needed time to advance — according to the views and combat conditions of the time — in nightly spade work to the storm distance of about 250 meters. The reinforcement divisions had therefore already had to move into their sections on July 8 and 9 and had since then worked their way forward against the enemy. Deceiving the enemy about the attack intentions thus became almost impossible, especially since the camouflage of the inevitably extensive other movements and attack preparations was already extremely difficult due to the short duration of the summer nights.

The enemy seemed to be in perhaps reduced strength, but otherwise unchanged in its previous positions. It lay in widely branched and deeply structured defense installations, which were arranged in groups but connected with continuous obstacles and seemed to be carefully expanded. Three position systems were to be distinguished. The front consisted of three positions, of which the third, running on average three kilometers behind the first, was formed only by a series of support points; in its center, the town of Przasnysz was fortified. In the line Ciechanowo—Krasnefeld lay a coherent second position system, which was connected to the first by the blocking position Ciechanowo—Przasnysz.

The heights close behind the German positions offered the artillery good observation possibilities. The attack led west of Przasnysz over richly structured and often covered terrain, which east of Grudusk (heights 175 and 179) showed height differences of up to 50 meters; in the attack section of the left wing, the terrain generally showed simpler larger forms, but was more heavily wooded. On fields and meadows stood excellent grain or high summer grass. Only a single major road, which ran diagonally to the attack direction from Mlawa via Przasnysz and Makow to the crossroad Pultusk—Rozan, traversed the attack area; otherwise, one had to rely on pure natural paths.

In the early morning of July 13, the German attack troops were ready as follows:

Page 189

The Deployment for the Attack at Przasnysz.

First Encounter:

Troops | Width | Artillery

north of Grudusk:

Gen. of Inf. von Plüskow (Gen. Comm. XI. A. C.) | 38th Inf. Div. 86th Inf. Div. | 11 km | 33 Battalions, including ten heavy field guns (15 cm), one mortar (21 cm).

eastward to the road junction north of Mchowo:

Gen. of Inf. von Pannwitz (Gen. Comm. XVII. A. C.) | 1st G. Res. Div. 36th Inf. Div. | 11 km | 46 Battalions, including eight heavy field guns (15 cm), three mortars (21 cm).

eastward to the Orzyc:

Lt. Gen. von Watter (Gen. Comm. XIII. Württ. A. C.) | 26th (Württ.) Inf. Div. 3rd Inf. Div. 4th G. Inf. Div. | 17 km | 44½ Battalions, including ten heavy field guns (15 cm), three mortars (21 cm).

total | 7 Divisions | 39 km | 123½ Battalions, including 28 heavy field guns (15 cm), six mortars (21 cm).

Second Encounter:

behind the right wing: | attached Ldw. Brig. Pfeil. 50th Res. Div., arriving from Mlawa station.

behind the center: | 35th Inf. Div. of the XVII. A. C.

behind the left wing: | attached Inf. Div. Fall (parts of the 2nd and 37th Inf. Div.).

Page 190

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

The total number of about 500 guns¹) with around 400,000 shots was roughly equivalent to the deployment that had brought success at Gorlice, but by equipping the heavy field howitzer batteries with 1,000 shots against only 600 at Gorlice, it gained even greater strength. This artillery, whose deployment was led by Colonel von Berendt as "General of the Foot Artillery," was to fire as inconspicuously as possible, so that on July 13, after daybreak, as soon as observation was secured, the effective fire could begin. In the "instruction" given by General von Gallwitz, the long-time inspector of the German field artillery, to his troops, it was stated: "Well-aimed, lively, and very observed point fire. Large ammunition use in a short time, but no drumfire that excludes observation. The moral effect is lost if little is hit. Temporary increase of fire to strong fire waves to force the enemy to occupy his trenches in anticipation of the attack. Just before the storm, maximum fire increase, sudden advance on agreed signal, then advance. Artillery must provide the infantry with the necessary fire protection until the breakthrough. Immediately behind the last grenade, the first man of the assault column must be in the enemy trench."

General von Gallwitz wanted to personally lead the attack of the Plüskow and Pannewitz corps west of Przasnysz; his office was set up in Dzierzgowo behind Grudusk. The Plüskow Corps had the task of attacking a section of the Russian front that slightly protruded, Grudusk (inclusive) - Pandlowo - Koscielne (exclusive); this was a width of about seven kilometers. The Pannewitz Corps was to conduct the "main attack against the front Beroza (exclusive) - Height 154 east of Olziewic (inclusive)"; this was a width of 4.5 kilometers. At 8 a.m., the infantry of both corps was to begin the assault and, if possible, reach the high positions on both sides of Czernice Borowe on the same day. On the eastern flank, Lieutenant General Freiherr von Bülow was independently active and also had command over Division Fall. He was to attack the ten-kilometer-wide line Dłutowo - Stegna to break through the enemy front between Murawko and Orzyc; the line Bartniki - Dęm.

¹) The official Russian account from Korolów mistakenly arrives at a much higher number, apparently calculating the batteries as having six guns. In fact, with very few exceptions (26th Inf. Div.), only four guns are found. (See Meurer: "The Breakthrough of Gorlice" p. 33.) — In the past, even less was found; it merely corresponded to the density of Colonel Maxen, which also could no longer be found.

Page 191

The Orders for the Attack at Przasnysz.

biny was named to him as a further target. In the other parts of the attack front, the enemy was initially to be held down and pinned. The neighboring sections, especially the corps Surén to the west, were to deceive the enemy with smaller operations and increased fire activity and were to be ready to advance later in connection with the assault group.

Overall, it was estimated that in front of the seven attacking German divisions in the first wave (each with nine battalions), there were about three Russian divisions (each with 16 battalions), and it was assumed that west of Przasnysz were parts of the I. Turkestan Corps, at Przasnysz and east the I. Siberian Corps, known throughout as combat-ready troops.

For the continuation of the attack after the first breakthrough, General von Gallwitz ordered the corps Plüskow and Pannewitz: "In exploiting the successes achieved to continue the breakthrough, I do not want to restrict the commanding generals, but I request that they remain steadfastly straight within the strictly maintained combat zones. Careful consideration will be needed as to whether the attack on the second or third enemy position requires systematic preparation, which seems permissible for a staggered approach. The more the enemy has suffered with the removal of the front line, the less his resistance will be in the next positions." Furthermore, General von Gallwitz intended to regulate the approach depending on the results of the attack from case to case; only after the removal of the positions of Sczernice Borowe and Bartniki—Dembinyn should the attack be directed from the northwest and northeast simultaneously against Przasnysz, which remains particularly important as a road junction. He also considered the possibility that the enemy, after breaking through his front lines, would retreat in such disarray that his rear sections could be overrun with rapid action. Even against Przasnysz, a coup de main can promise success if the Russians can no longer manage to gather sufficient forces to occupy the works."

In poor weather and rain, the effective firing began on July 13 at 4 a.m. across the entire attack front; difficult observation seemed to impair the result. General von Gallwitz allowed the two corps on the right wing to delay the start of the assault by up to an hour.

In the corps Plüskow, to whose support the heavy batteries of the 50th Reserve Division had also been advanced, it seemed

Page 192

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Artillery effect sufficient. The infantry advanced as planned at 8 a.m. and made good progress. The 38th Infantry Division under Major General Schultheiß initially captured Grunduß, located in front of the enemy's main position, and took about 600 prisoners. Meanwhile, Lieutenant General von Bernitz with the 86th Infantry Division had taken the prominent high ground northwest of Pawlowo Koscielne. General von Plüskow believed he faced only a weak enemy, but they fought well. He expected the enemy to hold the "main position" on the 20 to 30 meter high, partially wooded heights north of the Grunduß—Czernice Borowe road. The attack on this line was to be conducted in coordination with the Gallwitz High Command, systematically under new artillery preparation. By noon, the Plüskow Corps had already reached the northern edge of those heights.

At the Pannwitz Corps, the start of the attack was postponed to 9 a.m. due to initially insufficient artillery effect. Then the 1st Guard Reserve Division under Major General Albrecht and the right wing of the 36th Infantry Division of Lieutenant General von Heinricius also broke through the forward Russian lines north of the Wengierka in the first attempt and worked their way against the gently rising forest heights of Czernice. The left wing east of Osowiec remained — as ordered — waiting. At 12 noon, General von Pannwitz designated the southern edge of the forest north of Czernice—Olszewice as the next target.

The Watter Corps, which had set out at 8:42, also had good initial successes. On the right, the 26th (Württemberg) Infantry Division under Lieutenant General Wilhelm Duke of Urach took the fortifications of Osowiec. More stubborn resistance was encountered in the center by Lieutenant General von Staabs with the 3rd Infantry Division at the village of Szla and in the forest east of it, while further east the 4th Guard Infantry Division under Major General Count von Schweinitz and Krain Baron von Bodenhausen climbed high positions south of Jednorozec. As they advanced further, the enemy resistance became entangled in the numerous forests across the entire width of the corps front.

To the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, who had arrived with his close staff in Willenberg, General von Gallwitz was able to report at 1 p.m.: "The second enemy position from the heavily fortified ridge at Bialuty to the forest northeast of Czernice Borowe and to the point 150 north of Chojnowo is in our possession. Almost a thousand prisoners, some guns, and machine guns were captured."

Page 193

The First Day of the Attack at Przasnysz.

taken. The enemy apparently completely surprised. The third enemy main position is also to be attacked.” This was located about two kilometers south of the Grudusk—Czernice road, to which it approached at Chojnowo. The report further stated that the Watter Corps was in possession of Szla, but fighting was still ongoing in the forest east of the place; on the left flank of the corps, the Falk Division was moving into the front.

At 3:30 in the afternoon, the attack of the right wing was newly regulated. The Plüskow Corps received the high ground immediately south of the Grudusk—Czernice line as the day's objective; the trailing Pfeil Brigade was made available to it to cover the flank during further advances. The Pannwitz Corps, which was later to be tasked with swinging southeast against Przasnysz and thus significantly extending its front, was assigned the 35th Infantry Division, thereby reuniting the XVII Army Corps.

During the course of the afternoon, the advance slowed down. The movement of the artillery required time, and the strength of the infantry advancing from line to line began to wane. General von Plüskow had temporarily halted his 38th Infantry Division south of Grudusk to wait until the 86th Infantry Division reached the Grudusk—Czernice road. At 1:30 in the afternoon, he knew from the 38th Infantry Division that the enemy held Lysaftowo; the others were, according to patrol reports, “in full retreat” towards the third position south of the main road. When the road was reached in the afternoon by the 86th Infantry Division, the commanding general ordered a new attack. After initially good progress, however, the enemy artillery fire intensified; the enemy seemed to have settled again. From Lysaftowo, he attacked the flank of the 38th Infantry Division. Laboriously, the German infantry continued to advance and in the evening, after the deployment of the Pfeil Brigade, took the strong positions of Piszczoli Gorne. However, the German artillery effect suffered from continuous rain and poor observation. Thus, the attack against the Russian third position, otherwise from Lysaftowo and at the southern edge of Czernice, came to a halt. Artillery firing and assault were postponed to the morning of July 14.

Meanwhile, the Commander-in-Chief East suggested using the still fresh 35th Infantry Division to take the apparently only weakly occupied Przasnysz by coup de main, encircling from the south. At 5:30 in the afternoon, General von Pannwitz, who had previously deployed this division between the 1st Guard Reserve and 36th Infantry Division ...

Page 194

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

had determined the artillery division, the order to pivot against the road Laguny–Przasnysz–Mchowo. At this time, however, the 1st Guard Reserve Division had not yet reached the road Czernice–Chojnowo. It was only at 7 o'clock that it could begin the attack against the strong positions between Dzielin and Chojnowo, and only at 7:30 was the 35th Infantry Division under Major General von Hahn in the front line to the left of it. It was already getting dark when the 1st Guard Reserve Division took Chojnowo at 9 o'clock in the evening; the strong position northeast of the place could only be wrested from the enemy in a devastating attack by the 35th Infantry Division at 10 o'clock. Thus, despite all the dedication of the troops, they could not advance beyond the line Chojnowo–German starting position at Mchowo and were still about five kilometers away from Przasnysz.

The 8th General Command had the impression at 3 o'clock in the afternoon that the enemy was retreating everywhere and only offering resistance with rearguards at some points. However, progress was slow due to rain and forest vapors. The enemy seemed to be receiving reinforcements. The line Bartniki–Dembinin, set as a further target by General von Gallwitz, was still on average three kilometers in front of the foremost front when the fighting also ceased here after 10 o'clock in the evening. On the left flank, the division of Lieutenant General von Fall had moved into the front line; the wide meadow depression of the Orzyc offered protection to its eastern flank.

The overall result of the first day of attack did not quite meet the high expectations of the morning and midday hours, although the breakthrough into the enemy positions west of Przasnysz had reached a depth of up to six kilometers, east of the place up to 4½ kilometers. The two front positions of the Russians were breached at two points over a width of 15 kilometers each, and the third position was reached at many points; at Czernice, all Russian battery positions were taken. Nevertheless, only 5400 prisoners, five guns, and about 20 machine guns could be reported as booty; for the enemy had only weakly occupied his positions, had withdrawn his small number of artillery, and had found time to bring it to safety in time; he apparently intended to hold the third position.

The operations of July 13 were also successful in the neighboring sections.

In the corps Surén, which adjoined the corps Plüskow to the west, the 85th Landwehr Division under Lieutenant General Clissow

Page 195

The Continuation of the Attack at Przasnysz.

Rocq von Breugel stormed the Russian first position and west of the railway towards Ciechanow over a width of about six kilometers. As further advance at this point seemed possible only with the deployment of new forces, Lieutenant General Curien intended to attack on his eastern flank the next day to directly support the main attack.

In the 8th Army, the 75th Reserve Division under Lieutenant General von Seydewitz stormed the heights south of Lipnitzi on July 13 at the eastern bank of the Orzwa and captured 1800 prisoners; further east, the 10th Landwehr Division led by Lieutenant General Clausius broke into the Russian lines at Krusza and also captured 600 prisoners. The attacks were to be continued at both locations the next day.

Behind the Russian front, German aerial reconnaissance had so far detected only insignificant movements of reserves; no larger closed formations were identified on a day's march backward. The surprise of the enemy seemed successful; prisoners also confirmed this view.

For July 14, General von Gallwitz ordered the continuation of the attack; above all, it was important to get Przasnysz into hand. The Plüskow Corps and the XVII Army Corps were to take the strong Russian third position south of the Grundwulf—Czernice road as well as near Chojnowo and east, then the XVII Army Corps was to turn further against Przasnysz; the 50th Reserve Division was to follow behind the right flank on Grundwulf. The Watter Corps was to reach the Bartnitze—Dronzczewo road, ready to assist against Przasnysz later if needed. The order further stated: "If the enemy retreats at night, all corps will relentlessly follow in their combat zones." These ran against the second line of Russian defenses, specifically for the Plüskow Corps on Opinogora and east, for the XVII Army Corps on Zielona and east to Bogate, for the Watter Corps east of the Wengierka.

The battle continued through the night in certain areas. The divisions of the Plüskow Corps had mostly already reached their first objective given for July 14. At dawn, the attack continued along the entire breakthrough line. Soon, however, it became apparent that only rearguards were resisting. Aircraft, which had been on the move since 3 a.m. and advanced deep into the rear area, found the roads, especially the main road Przasnysz—Makow—Pultusk, covered by southward-moving vehicle columns; magazines went up in flames. The enemy was in full retreat; even

† World War. Volume VIII. 19

Page 196

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Przasnysz was cleared. Initially in combat development, but soon in marching columns, the German corps followed in a broad front. General von Gallwitz sent them the directive as early as 9 a.m.: "The pursuit idea must remain the guiding principle in the next operations. Enemy rear guard positions must be attacked and overrun without delay." The barrier position along the Ciechanow–Przasnysz road was taken without delay. At noon, General von Gallwitz reported to the Eastern Commander-in-Chief the further intention: "Advance of the army against the last fortified section Ciechanow–Bogate–Krasnosielc, which is to be attacked." Meanwhile, the enemy had also begun retreating before the entire western wing of the army group. The corps Dickhuth and Surén followed. East of the Orzyc and in front of the 8th Army, the Russians still held.

In dull and rainy weather and consequently muddy roads, the three corps of the German breakthrough front approached the Russian second line of defense in the early afternoon hours. Some advanced positions were taken. General von Gallwitz, who led the two corps advancing west of the Wengierka, considered postponing the execution of the attack to the next morning, but then allowed the corps to begin when they wanted to take the Russian positions in the evening before the enemy brought up reinforcements. However, the attempts had to be abandoned because the artillery did not achieve sufficient effect under unfavorable observation conditions. At nightfall, the attackers were positioned everywhere close to the enemy positions, ready to attack. Behind the corps Plüskow, the 50th Reserve Division had moved up, and at the XVII Army Corps, the 36th Infantry Division had been withdrawn as a reserve.

The attack of the corps Watter also came to a halt after insignificant individual successes against the stubborn Russian resistance. The enemy stubbornly held his fortified positions from Bogate to Drozdowo on the western bank of the Orzyc. The corps had gradually swung to the southeast and extended its left wing with landwehr, as the enemy on the right bank of the Orzyc in front of the corps Eben and in front of the 8th Army always remained in the old positions.

On the western wing of the army group, the corps Surén had been able to follow the retreating enemy. In doing so, the 85th Landwehr Division had approached the positions of Ciechanow. The fighting continued here into the darkness. Further west of the corps Dickhuth, they had reached the line running over Plonsk to Wyszogrod on the Vistula...

Page 197

The Second and Third Day of the Breakthrough.

The Russian second line of defense had been approached up to eight kilometers, but in some places, it was still further away.

Overall, the attack by Army Group Gallwitz had advanced 10 to 15 kilometers in two days. The spoils had increased to 7,100 prisoners, and the own losses were moderate at 2,700 men. It turned out that the battle had so far been mainly against the 11th and 2nd Siberian Divisions. However, it was also necessary to reckon with the full strength of the 1st Siberian Division held in reserve, as well as reinforcements that were advancing by rail and foot according to aerial observations. A possibly heavy new attack was imminent; however, there was no doubt about its outcome after the previous successes.

The infantry of the German attack corps moved closer to the enemy positions on July 15th under the cover of darkness; at dawn, the artillery began firing. It turned out that they faced quite strong positions, well protected by obstacles. The attack task seemed not much inferior to that which had been solved on July 13th after the most thorough preparation by completely fresh troops; however, the forces were not sufficient to carry it out across the entire front. General von Gallwitz pointed out to the two western corps, 11 and 17, that the enemy was bringing up reinforcements, and that it was therefore necessary to attempt a breakthrough through the enemy position at one point today if possible. Since this area around Zielona seemed to be the least fortified according to aerial reconnaissance, he wanted to strike here.

General von Plüskow prepared the incursion on his left flank in the area west of Zielona, General von Pamewitz on his right flank east of the mentioned place. While the artillery concentrated its fire on these positions, the aircraft reported further deployments of Russian reinforcements at Nasielsk and northwards, which were marching on Pultusk and Ciechanow. Under these circumstances, General von Gallwitz instructed the corps that, now that they had the last enemy position in front of them, it was no longer a matter of deep penetration, but of quickly swinging in to unroll the Russian lines. Major General Albrecht rapidly expanded the incursion in the area of the 1st Guard Reserve Division with the help of parts of the 36th Infantry Division to the east. This division itself was inserted between the 1st Guard Reserve and the 35th Infantry Division to

Page 198

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

To break through towards Wenzewo on the way to Pultusk. A little later than the XVII Army Corps, the 86th Infantry Division under Lieutenant General von Wernitz also succeeded west of Zielona after a hard fight; it was soon expanded to the west. Parts of the 50th Reserve Division had already participated here; now this entire division was inserted to break through to Kolaczkowo. Meanwhile, at 5 p.m., further west, the 38th Infantry Division under Major General Schultheiß broke into the stubbornly defended Russian position at Diponieg; the enemy retreated from here to Ciechanow. At 6 p.m., General von Gallwitz ordered the two western corps: "If the rolling up of the enemy position has led to the enemy clearing the entire line," the Plüskow Corps should proceed south to Gontyn—Garnowo, the XVII Army Corps should turn southwest to Karniewo—Makow, the 50th Reserve Division should fill the gap between them towards Stary Golynin. To the Commander-in-Chief East, he could report at 6:15: "The fortress-like last enemy position Ciechanow—Krasnosielec has been broken through after a heavy battle at Zielona over about seven kilometers, five large strongpoints taken." However, he also had to draw attention to emerging difficulties in the supply of ammunition. On the outer flanks of the two corps, north of Ciechanow and at Bogate, the enemy still offered stubborn resistance, against which, in the spirit of General von Gallwitz, the Plüskow Corps turned right, the XVII Army Corps turned left, while in the direction south only the 50th Reserve Division under General of Cavalry Baron von der Goltz continued; here the entire Russian 30th Division of the IV Corps, which had arrived by rail, was identified as a new opponent. The unloading at the Warsaw railway continued, and new enemy forces marched on the road Rozan—Makow. General von Gallwitz therefore repeatedly urged vigorous pursuit and rolling up of the parts of the Russian front still holding at Bogate. He wanted to "personally reap the immediately beckoning fruits of victory" and hoped, above all, through the cooperation of the Plüskow and Surén Corps, to perhaps still intercept the Russians at Ciechanow. Despite the fatigue of the troops, movements and battles continued partly deep into the night, but without reaching the set goals. The Plüskow Corps reached the road Ciechanow—Pultusk only at the road junction Pomorze with a detachment set to interrupt the Warsaw railway, but remained with

Page 199

The Breakthrough through the Last Enemy Position.

The 38th and 86th Infantry Divisions were still on average three kilometers away; the 50th Reserve Division, which had only managed to regroup with difficulty, had advanced almost as little, up to Kolaczbowo. At the XVIII Army Corps, the 1st Guard Reserve Division only advanced with forward units beyond the position taken in the afternoon; the pursuit of the 36th Infantry Division, which was turning around Krasne, came to a halt at night before Wenzewo, with the enemy still holding at Bogate. This was compounded by the fact that the German attack on the east bank of the Wengierka had fallen about two kilometers short.

The four divisions of Lieutenant General von Watter faced an opponent who held firm in strong positions everywhere. The general planned attack ordered for July 15th led only to local successes. From the right wing and the center of the corps, the Russians still held the forest areas east of Bogate and the west bank of the Orzyc, near Krasnosielec, in a very strong bridgehead position. The German left wing reached the river southeast of Dronzbezno. Further north, Landwehr troops continued to secure with the front facing northeast, as the enemy still stood before Corps Eben and to the east. However, on this day, the 8th Army yielded to the attack of the 10th Landwehr Division in the protruding arc of Kruszla, allowing progress towards Nowogrod.

The western wing of the Gallwitz Army Group had also gained ground behind the retreating enemy. The left wing of Corps Dickhuth and Corps Surén had followed up to the Russian second line of defense, which stretched from Wyszgorod over Plonsk to Ciechanow. Here, the left wing of Corps Surén, the 85th Landwehr Division, had been fixed since the evening of the previous day; it was too weak to carry out the attack against the elevated positions of Ciechanow. Success was expected from the further advance of Corps Plüskow.

c) Continuation of the Attack up to the Narew.

Sessions 19, 20, 21, 22.

The Commander-in-Chief East, who had returned to Lötzen on the afternoon of July 15th, was very satisfied with the successes of the Gallwitz Army Group. As General Ludendorff expressed to General von Gallwitz over the telephone in the evening, not

1) from Gallwitz, p. 283. (Cf. p. 277, note 2.)

Page 200

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

It was believed that the attack would penetrate the Russian defensive network so quickly. The question arose as to which direction the operation should continue. Within the overall situation in Poland, the purely frontal retreat of the Russians to Wyszogrod—Plonsk—Makow had not yet meant anything decisive. To the left of the lower Vistula, their front had long been pushed back by the German 9th Army up to the height of Wyszogrod; it only became untenable when the Narew line itself fell. Nevertheless, since the beginning of the month, there had been signs that the Russians also wanted to retreat to the left of the Vistula, initially into the Grojec—Blonie position, which offered a completely secure connection to the Narew line in the strong corner pillar of Nowogeorgiewsk. Reconnaissance, intercepted radio messages, and prisoner statements consistently gave the impression that the systematic evacuation of the area west of the Vistula was being initiated. Extensive destruction measures seemed to be underway; villages were going up in flames; the population, it was said, would be deported. Two Russian corps (VI. Siberian and IV.) had been withdrawn; the positions in front of the southern wing of the 9th Army were to be significantly weaker than before. Thus, it had to be expected at any time that the enemy would retreat in front of the 9th Army. Whether he would then try to continue holding the Grojec—Blonie position as before and the Narew line in the north, or whether he would retreat further under the pressure of the offensive of the Mackensen Army Group, which was to be continued between the Bug and Vistula after a temporary standstill, it was always important that the thrust of the Gallwitz Army Group hit as deeply as possible into his rear, so that it would advance eastward in further attacks. In contrast, General von Gallwitz intended to advance with his main forces in the direction of Pultusk—Rozan; the Eben Corps was to cover against Ostrolenka, which, as he hoped, would be attacked by the 9th Army. In a teleconference on this issue, General Ludendorff, after the enemy positions had now been penetrated in their entire depth, wanted the decisive attack to be directed more against Ostrolenka and to give up ground on the Vistula for it. General von Gallwitz considered such an extension of the attack too broad; given the current situation, Rozan was the easiest point to attack. An advance to Ostrolenka would bring us forward.

1) The Bug Army already attacked on this day (July 15); see p. 387.

Page 201

The Question of Further Attack Direction.

a more secure position and in front of the undefeated troops of the IV Siberian and V Corps. When he finally posed "the specific question" of whether he should attack Ostrolenka, "the Field Marshal, who was with Ludendorff, immediately gave him freedom of action; the latter also relented." The decisive factor was that even now, the primary goal was the tactical success, the conquest of the Narew line. However, General Ludendorff also wanted to give the Gallwitz High Command, in which he had confidence, as much freedom as possible in its decisions. Thus, it remained with its intentions.

After the movements concluded on the evening of July 15, General von Gallwitz assumed that the Russians would establish themselves in the line Nowogeorgiewsk—advanced positions from Pultusk—area of Bogate—Orzyc and try to hold this significantly shortened line compared to earlier. He ordered the continuation of the attack in a southern and southeastern direction. The left wing of the XVII Army Corps was to "only engage" the enemy in the strong positions of Bogate, primarily to allow the pivoting of the German right wing to take effect. On July 16, the enemy held close to the extended front of the corps and in front of the right wing of the Surén corps, its prepared second line of defense; the striking power of these German troops was in no way sufficient to forcibly expel them here. However, he had evacuated the town of Ciechanow, threatened by encirclement, at night. The 86th Infantry Division of the Plüskow Corps could also report artillery as spoils of their nightly night attack. Further east, the enemy was retreating under rearguard actions. The corps, however, advanced as ordered initially in a southwesterly direction, against the retreat routes of the enemy withdrawing from Ciechanow, managing to shoot down an attacking Russian cavalry brigade, and only resumed the decisive thrust direction against Pultusk in the afternoon. Meanwhile, the enemy resistance had been able to strengthen again in connection with the still-held positions north of Golymin on one side and from Bogate on the other. By evening, the left wing of the corps again reached east of Somyn, subsequently meeting the Plüskow Corps, whose center, remaining on the Pultusk road, had reached Stary Golymin, while its two wings were somewhat lagging.

The day was much more difficult for the XVII Army Corps and the

1) from Gallwitz, p. 283. 2) Communication from General Ludendorff from December 1931 to the Reich Archive.

Page 202

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Corps Watter. The latter was able to initially continue the maneuver initiated the day before towards the southeast against only weak resistance from the Russians. The situation also temporarily appeared so favorable that General von Pannwitz wanted to redirect his corps eastward to outflank the opponent of Corps Watter. However, in the afternoon, they encountered very yielding new resistance on both sides of Krasne; it seemed that the enemy had received further reinforcements. It was only late in the evening that parts of the 36th and 35th Infantry Divisions managed to penetrate the northern part of the stubbornly defended location. South of Bogate, despite fierce Russian resistance that lasted into the night, successes were also achieved; parts of the 35th Infantry Division crossed to the eastern Wengierka bank. Corps Watter encountered equally strong resistance, attempting to force the Orzyc crossing at several points simultaneously. The 26th Infantry Division could only reach the river with its left wing south of Podos. The 3rd Infantry Division took the crossing at this location after heavy, costly fighting but had to relinquish it again against newly appearing Turkestan battalions; it was only in the evening that it remained definitively in German hands. The 4th Guard Infantry Division and the right wing of Division Falk could only reach the river on both sides of Krasnosielc and had to fend off heavy counterattacks here in the afternoon, with the heavily fortified location of Krasnosielc forming the mainstay of the Russian resistance. Between the upper Orzyc and Pissa, however, the enemy abandoned his defensive front, held for months, on the night of July 16 and retreated over almost 60 kilometers in width. The left wing of Division Falk had crossed the Orzyc southeast of Dronzdzewo by noon in a broad front and was positioned on the eastern bank northeast of Krasnosielc by the evening of that day, ready to strike the Russians still holding at this location in the flank and rear the next morning. Corps Eben and the right wing of the 8th Army had also set out from their positions to pursue and had followed the enemy to halfway to Siedlce. Much was gained, yet the hoped-for greater territorial gain after breaking through the last prepared position of the enemy was temporarily achieved in the least operationally effective direction, against the northern front west of Pultusk. In the direction of Rozan, no progress was made over the Orzyc, and to exploit the situation between Orzyc and Pissa here, the striking power of the German divisions following only in thin lines was in no way sufficient. At the actual

Page 203

The First Stagnation in the Offensive.

On the offensive front, difficulties became noticeable. Although in the four days since July 13, only two of their divisions had moved slightly more than 30 kilometers, or 1½ days' marches, from their original positions, it became apparent that the artillery ammunition needed in very large quantities to overcome each new resistance was no longer coming forward in sufficient quantities due to difficult road conditions. It was also always the same ten divisions that had now been attacking for the fourth day without interruption, while their front had meanwhile extended from not yet 40 to 50 kilometers. Fresh troops, which could give the attack new impetus and enable the formation of a focal point at an operationally decisive location, were lacking and were not yet in sight. It is to be assumed that if they had been present, the supply difficulties would have increased even more.

For reinforcement, the Commander-in-Chief East could only fall back on the 9th Army, which since July 10 still counted two general commands with six divisions, including the 5th and 49th Reserve Divisions, otherwise replacement troops and militia, and some landsturm. Even if the enemy of this army might still be considerably superior in infantry, there was currently no danger at their front. The longer and stronger the Russians remained at the Rawka and Bzura, the greater the result of the operation at Pullnuff\* had to be. However, the Commander-in-Chief East had not yet intended to move all essential parts of the 9th Army to the breakthrough front Narew, but had assigned them the task of following the retreating Russians to turn against the Grojec—Blonie position and Nowogeorgiewsk and later against Warsaw. As the progress of the Gallwitz Army Group also made the retreat of the enemy more likely for the 9th Army, he decided on July 16, if the enemy retreated here, to move forces of this army to the right bank of the Vistula. At noon, he ordered the newly formed 83rd Infantry Division from militia and landsturm troops of the former Posen Corps to assemble in the direction of Wyszogrod for crossing the river and to prepare the division forming the southern flank for transport. Later, he decided to also prepare rail transport for the 83rd Infantry Division to move them to Willenberg behind the eastern flank of the Gallwitz Army Group. The four divisions remaining with the 9th Army¹) and

¹) 5th and 49th R. D., 84th S. D. (newly formed from parts of the Posen Corps) Div. Westfernagen. The last two divisions consisted mainly of militia.

Page 204

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

storm had also continued to prepare for pursuit and attack against Nowogeorgiewsk and Warsaw. When the Supreme Army Command inquired the next morning "whether more troops should be moved to Gallwitz," these orders could be referred to. Immediately thereafter, all ordered movements began, as the enemy had already begun the expected retreat before the 9th Army during the night.

Before the Gallwitz Army Group, the enemy used the darkness to once again evade the German pressure on broad sections of the front. Resistance was only offered north of Pultusk and northwest of Rozan. These fortified bridgeheads of the Narew line seemed to be held; reinforcements were brought against them. At 8 a.m., General von Gallwitz regulated the further advance of his corps. He intended to close off the northern front of Nowogeorgiewsk—Bzura with the right wing, and to advance with the center against the Narew section Pultusk—Rozan. For this, the Plüskow Corps, to which the 1st Guard Reserve Division was also assigned, was directed at Pultusk, the XVII Army Corps against the Narew between Pultusk and Rozan, the Watter Corps against Rozan; the Falk Division was to withdraw to the Eben Corps during further advances, which would then again have two active divisions and twelve Landsturm battalions. It was to close off Ostrolenka with its left wing. This command regulation for the left army wing somewhat took into account the view of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, who wished for the focus to be shifted further east, but weakened the striking power in the breakthrough direction Pultusk—Rozan. The army headquarters was moved forward to Lejtsna southeast of Przasnysz.

During the day, the Litzthum and Surén Corps reached Wyszogrod—Nowe Miasto to the north, the Plüskow Corps with the center to just before the heavily fortified enemy positions of the northwest front of Pultusk. The temporarily held hope of perhaps achieving the goal with a coup here had to be abandoned after the reconnaissance results now available. On the left wing of the corps, the 50th Reserve Division encountered fierce resistance at the road junction of Karniewo. In a line running from here northeast to the mouth of the Wengierka in the Orzyc and further over the 70-meter-high fortified heights southeast of Podos (Height 171) to Jednoroiec, the enemy had settled again. In the attack against him, they pushed

Page 205

The two active divisions of the XVII Army Corps advanced on both sides of the road to Makow. The 36th Infantry Division reached this place in the evening, while to its right, the 1st Guard Reserve Division at the northern edge of the forest east of Karniewo, despite support from the 50th Reserve Division, did not break through, and to the left, the 35th Infantry Division turned across the Orzyc against the flank of the enemy standing before the Watter Corps; it was able to inflict heavy losses on the retreating parts and captured 1200 prisoners alone. The Watter Corps itself was held up at the Orzyc bridges destroyed by the enemy and therefore could only work its way to the new Russian positions southeast of Podosz by evening. In agreement with the army high command, the decision for the next day was expected from the 35th Infantry Division, which was to attack the flank and rear of the enemy. The enemy seemed to have received further reinforcements, which he threw into battle as they arrived. At the Eben Corps, only the Fall Division advanced well. Otherwise, this corps and the right wing of the 8th Army could make only slight progress in the forest and swamp terrain east of Ostrolenka with many obstructed sandy paths. General von Scholz wanted to resume the attack east of the Pissa the following day. On the morning of July 18, the enemy had evacuated his positions in front of the left wing of the Plüskow Corps, the XVII Army Corps, and the Watter Corps; contact with him was mostly lost. It gradually became apparent that the Russians had retreated in one move to the fortified area of Pultusk and Rozan and between the two places against the Narew. The army order from the morning of July 17 had already taken this possibility into account. Thus, the German troops now followed up to the northwest and north front of the positions of Pultusk and Rozan. Between the two places, they initially remained about six kilometers from the Narew. On the left wing, the strength of the Eben Corps was not sufficient, despite the retreat of the Fall Division, to push the enemy further back against Ostrolenka. Also, on the entire remaining front of the army group and with the 8th Army, there was a standstill, or only insignificant progress was made. Meanwhile, the booty had risen to about 24,000 prisoners, but the number of only 110 officers and only 14 guns in total was remarkably low. On the other hand, their own bloody losses in the partially very stubborn battles that followed the first breakthrough had increased to about 20,000 men.

Page 206

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

On July 18, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief received the following telegram from General von Falkenhayn: "His Majesty has taken particular pleasure in the reports of the great successes achieved in recent days under Your Excellency's leadership by the armies of Gallwitz, Scholtz, and Below. At the same time, His Majesty expressed confidence that the thrust against the Narew would not come to a halt at this section, but rather every effort would be made to advance it as quickly as possible towards the lower Bug." For the newly resumed offensive of the Mackensen Army Group, it was of utmost importance that no standstill occurred. Everything now depended on the success of quickly crossing the Narew in the direction intended by General von Gallwitz, Pultusk—Rozan, where, according to the General's view, Rozan was the "easiest point to tackle" and also represented the more operationally effective direction. Any delay would benefit the enemy, who — as indicated by the targeting of his radio stations — was now constantly bringing in new forces. His XXI Corps from Galicia was identified as a new enemy at Rozan, the III Siberian Corps was supposed to be advancing from the Njemen Front, and it could easily free up additional forces from the area west of the Vistula, where, besides the German 9th Army, the Woyrsch Army Detachment had also been moving against Iwangorod since July 17. Meanwhile, the difficulties of the operation had grown to the point that a temporary standstill had to occur before the Narew line could be overcome. Bringing up ammunition and the heaviest artillery required a lot of time with increasing distance from the railway. By this day, July 18, the main railway line from Mława to Warsaw had been converted to German gauge and restored up to Ciechanow; field railways from Mława to Przasnysz and from Willenberg to Ostrolenka were under construction.

In General Ludendorff's memorandum of July 1, it was stated: The Gallwitz Army Group "could push the Russians back to the Przasnysz—Pultusk line in heavy fighting." This goal was achieved in six days of struggle, even significantly exceeded on the flanks. The "Przasnysz Pincer" had torn open the Russian first line of defense over a width of 40 kilometers, the "Hammer of Bie" had also struck the decisive hole in the Ciechanow—Krasnosielc line of defense. The Russian front was breached to a depth of 30 kilometers.

Page 207

The enemy was thereby forced to abandon his heavily fortified installations from the lower Vistula to the Pilsa, which had been built over months of work, and also to withdraw the previously stubbornly defended front west of the Vistula1). Whether the same result would have been achieved if the attack had been launched from the beginning with the operational goal of Siedlce, focusing on the left flank towards Ostrolenka, cannot be determined retrospectively. The battle against the I. Siberian Corps, considered the core of Russian resistance, would certainly have been easier, as it would not have been met frontally in its particularly strong defensive positions at Przasnysz, but its flank would have been gained, forcing it to fight in open field with a shortened front. However, according to the responsible authorities, the terrain conditions ruled out such an operation.

d) Enemy Measures.

Sketches 19, 20, 21.

The attack by General von Gallwitz hit the right flank of the Russian 1st Army (General Litwinow), which had to defend the approximately 60-kilometer-wide area between Orzyc and Vistula with six divisions2).

When the German attack broke out, the enemy was by no means as surprised as was assumed on the German side. He had already learned of the arrival of German reinforcements at Chorzele on July 6 through prisoner statements. In the following days, his ground and air reconnaissance noted, among other things, an increase in artillery, wagon trains, and the construction of supply railways; he concluded from these signs that a German attack was imminent. Almost every night, individual prisoners were taken. In the process, the German XVII Army Corps, previously stationed at the Rawka, was identified as a new opponent. On the night of July 11, it was finally determined that the Germans were approaching closer, and the width of the German attack was correctly assessed by the high command of the Russian 1st Army. It expected the attack to begin on July 12. On this day, the German artillery's firing made such a strong impression that July 12 was highlighted as a "day of battle" in the records of some units. However, their own defensive preparations were made too late.

1) For loot and losses, see p. 299.  
2) The book by Korolíow, "Przasnysz," primarily served as the basis for the depiction of events on the Russian side.

Page 208

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

The Russian positions on July 13, as before, were occupied along the 40-kilometer-wide attack front by only two divisions: the 2nd Siberian of the I Siberian Corps to the east, and the 11th Siberian of the I Turkestan Corps to the west of Przasnysz, which together counted 32 battalions and about 100 guns. As a reserve, the 1st Siberian Division of the I Siberian Corps had been moved forward to Mlava on the night of July 12 and thus stood a strong day's march behind the front; behind the 11th Siberian Division, a Turkestan brigade had been provided as a reserve. Further forces were sought to be freed in more westerly sections.

On July 13, the 2nd Siberian Division east of Przasnysz vigorously defended against the attack of four German divisions. In the area of Przasnysz itself, ½ of the 1st Siberian Division was inserted, west of the city the defense of the 11th Siberian Division was already withdrawn early into the intermediate position of Czernice before the attack of initially five German divisions. However, the resistance began to collapse here as well in the afternoon despite the deployment of the Turkestan brigade; parts retreated in dissolution. Meanwhile, the leader of the I Siberian Corps ordered the retreat into the second line of defense running over Krasnosielc—Podos to Bogate, and around midnight General Litwinow ordered the retreat of the entire army. They were to hold a specified line running approximately over Ciechanow to Wyszogrod on the Vistula. The infantry of the 11th Siberian Division had shrunk from 14,500 to about 5,000 rifles, and the 2nd Siberian Division had probably lost a third of its strength. According to the Russian view, the advantage of the situation was not sufficiently exploited by the Germans on this day. Only because the Germans had repeatedly halted their attack was it possible to organize the heavily shaken Russian troops for new resistance through the overwhelming artillery fire. In this context, the procedure of the Plüskow Corps, which continued the attack without interruption on the night of July 14, is presented by the Russians as particularly effective and therefore exemplary.

By the evening of July 14, the I Siberian Corps (2nd Siberian Division on the right, 1st on the left) was ready for new defense from northeast of Krasnosielc, where it connected to the correspondingly bent-back western wing of the 12th Army, to west of Bogate. Here, the 30th Infantry Division of the IV Corps, brought up by rail, was already arriving, and the 14th Cavalry Division was positioned behind the front. To the west, the finally weakened I Turkestan Corps joined, whose left flan-

Page 209

Measures of the Russians.

held the positions around Ciechanow. Thus, on July 15, a total of about five Russian divisions, two of them severely shaken, were in prepared positions against eleven attacking German divisions. However, ammunition was scarce; the reinforcements that had arrived initially came without columns. The Russian right wing was somewhat more densely occupied than the left. Against this, the German breakthrough at Zielona succeeded mainly thanks to systematic preparation by the German artillery, which was more than three times superior in number. As a result, the Russian account reports that the 11th Siberian Division, which was particularly hard hit here again, had ceased to exist as a combat unit.

While the front of the Russian 12th Army, adjoining east of the Orzyc, was systematically withdrawn on the night of July 16, the commander-in-chief of the 1st Army hoped to restore the situation at Zielona with units of the ½ 40th Infantry Division (IV Corps) that had meanwhile arrived. He ordered the general attack of the I Siberian and I Turkestan Corps, but had to weaken this order again soon due to the news coming in from the front. The troops of the I Turkestan Corps could no longer hold; the shortage of ammunition for guns and rifles increased. However, the army commander was forced to order a retreat at noon, to shift the resistance further backward, supported by advancing new reinforcements. The battles of July 17 then led to the decision to abandon the entire right bank of the Narew and to hold only the bridgehead positions in front of Rozan, Pultusk, and Nowogeorgiewsk. The ammunition situation had become more desperate from day to day.

All in all, the Russians managed to offer considerable resistance to the far superior enemy in tough fighting. On July 13, including reserves, about 100 German battalions and around 600 guns were ready to attack, opposed by only about 50 Russian battalions with 150 guns; gradually, however, the German superiority had significantly decreased due to the arrival of enemy reinforcements.

According to the Russian view, the German advance was significantly slowed down by the lack of sufficient reserves and the therefore necessary repeated turning against still standing parts of the enemy. For the first days, particularly for the withdrawal of the Plüskow Corps on July 15 westward against Ciechanow, this may

1) I. Siberian Corps, ¾ I. Turkestan Corps, 30th Division of the IV Corps, 14th R.D. 2) p. 291 ff.

Page 210

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Judgment applies; however, later the already mentioned concern arises that ammunition and supply reinforcements would probably have stalled even more than was already the case.

e) The Attack over the Narew.

Sessions 19, 20, 21, 22.

With the approach to the fortified Narew line, the Gallwitz Army Group faced a new task. It was necessary, in view of the defensive readiness of the enemy, to force a crossing over a river whose defense could rely not only on some permanent works but also on field fortifications that had been expanded over months of work. The Narew itself, without the smaller river loops, was a strong natural obstacle on the approximately 100-kilometer stretch between the Bug estuary above Nowogeorgiewsk and the bridgehead of Ostrolenka. In the summer of 1915, it was about 80 to 150 meters wide, had sandbanks in places and also some bush-covered islands, and had a low water level after a dry spring. Pronounced fords were rare and variable in their location. On foot, the river could be waded through in many places; however, bridges were necessary for artillery and vehicles. The lowland accompanying the watercourse in varying widths was almost everywhere dry and passable as the German troops approached.

For the Gallwitz Army Group, it was necessary to overcome the extensive installations of Pultusk and the smaller ones of Rozan with the large fortress of Nowogeorgiewsk on the right flank, but if possible, to simultaneously carry out the crossing over the river outside these two places. Pultusk, with its two old forts near the local bridge, had been expanded into a spacious weapons site by about ten kilometers of advanced, deeply structured defensive installations; at Rozan, which also had some old forts, the distance of the new installations from the bridge site was only about three kilometers. At both places, the heights of the western right bank approached the river flowing from north to south, while on the east side they were several kilometers away. The east-west running river chalk between both places showed less pronounced height differences and was widely accompanied on both banks by a broad, simply wooded lowland. A similar picture was also offered by the area above Rozan, at Ostrolenka, and towards Lomza.

1) Further on the question of force deployment p. 371 f.

Page 211

Intentions and Preparations.

The Gallwitz High Command had been dealing with the question of how the Narew crossing could be forced for several days and had instructed the Eben Corps to probe the northern tributaries to further bind the resistance; however, an effect was not to be expected soon. On the evening of July 18, General von Gallwitz issued an order for the attack on the Narew front. General von Plüskow was to attack the "northern part of the bridgehead" of Pultusk with four divisions, including 56 batteries (18 heavy and 10 heaviest artillery), and with the 86th and the "available parts" of the 38th Infantry Division to the west, with the 50th and the 1st Guard Reserve Division east of the road from Ciechanow, here "mainly the part leaning on the Narew." The attack of the XVII Army Corps was to "first aim at creating efficient crossings and securing them" between Pultusk and Rozan. It was said to be "conducted in such a way that the bridge strike can occur simultaneously and surprisingly at two points under the protection of previously prepared strong artillery, while at several other points only demonstratively" on "possible crossing points appearing Gostkowo and Lachy," but the cooling was to bring confirmation first. A division was to be assigned to each crossing point. The corps batteries of three divisions, including 39 batteries of which eleven were heavy and one heaviest artillery, were designated against Rozan and were to lead the main attack against the western front. The attack on the two fortresses was to be initiated by the corps and carried out according to the progress made; General von Gallwitz wanted to determine the timing for the attack of the XVII Army Corps himself. The neighboring corps, the XVII Reserve Corps and the Eben Corps, were to engage the enemy in front of their front and thus cover the flanks of the attack. On July 19, the situation on the right wing of the army group remained unchanged. The center moved closer to the indicated positions and the Narew without significant fighting. At the High Command, the idea of breaking through the river between Pultusk and Rozan and thereby bringing down Pultusk in particular came more and more to the fore. General von Plüskow intended to lead the main attack against Pultusk from the northwest. General von Gallwitz, however, placed special emphasis in accordance with his instructions that also on the northern front

1) Three or twelve kilometers east of the Orzyc mouth. 2) World War. VIII Volume. 20

Page 212

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

at Chmielewo on the Narew advanced work was to be attacked to cross the loop bending far north there and to seize Pultusk from the rear; he wanted the main focus of the attack to be shifted more to the east. To enforce this view, the Chief of Staff of the Army Group, Colonel Marquard, was to meet with General von Plüskow tomorrow. However, the change required shifts in the attack front and thus time. The decisive attack now directed against the northern front could therefore only begin on July 22, one day later than intended. Meanwhile, to tie down the enemy, artillery fire was to begin on July 20, and the attack against the northwest front was to be launched on the 21st. The intended supply of 42 cm guns would likely have to be abandoned, as they could hardly arrive in time due to the lack of load-bearing bridges.

The XVII Army Corps, which received orders in the morning to take possession of the terrain north of the Narew in its section extending east from the Orzyc estuary, remained almost everywhere far enough from the river itself that Russian cavalry could hold on the north bank, especially in the river depth east of Lachy. The enemy was estimated on the south bank.

The Watter Corps, which also received orders in the morning to approach the Narew south of Rozan, deployed a battalion, a cavalry regiment, and a battery, which remained opposed to the enemy resistance until capitulation. The artillery of the corps began with parts to fire against the installations of Rozan; two heaviest guns were still expected as reinforcement. The Russians responded weakly to the fire, the bulk of their artillery seemed to have been withdrawn across the river; they entrenched in the extension of the northern front of the fortress on the eastern Narew bank. Lieutenant General von Watter therefore considered it questionable whether they would defend the installations west of the river at all, but also prepared to defend them in stubborn combat. In such a case, he intended to bring down one part of the enemy front after another in a siege-like attack and hoped to achieve the goal with the least own losses. On July 20, artillery fire was to begin early to first take out an advanced Russian position on the Pultusk road.

Everywhere from Rozan to west of Nowogrod, the enemy had retreated to the Narew on the night of July 19 across the entire front. The corps consequently moved up close to the river. It found the fortifications on the right bank at Ostrolenka evacuated and occupied them by midnight. The enemy seemed weak here. The

Page 213

Approaching the Bridgeheads and the River.

However, Corps Eben did not have sufficient striking power to take advantage of this opportunity; its request for reinforcement with heavy artillery was rejected in view of the tasks still to be solved before Pultusk and Rozan. The right wing of the 8th Army also reached the Narew at certain points. In front of its center, the enemy still held a larger bridgehead northwest of Nowogrod, further east in its previous positions. In anticipation of the 83rd Infantry Division rolling towards Willenberg, General von Gallwitz intended to soon pull the active troops of Corps Eben to the right to force the Narew crossing also between Rozan and Ostrolenka. The Commander-in-Chief East promised further reinforcements with the Menges Division, which General von Gallwitz requested behind his right wing to Mlawa, as well as the airship Z 12, which was to attack the enemy unloading stations. He also ordered the 8th Army to pull a division with strong artillery to its right wing after reaching the Narew bank, to act against Ostrolenka or to cross the river at the Rozoga mouth. He also demanded a closer approach of the right wing of the Gallwitz Army Group to the Narew and the positions of Nasielsk, where the enemy seemed to be evacuating his XXVII Corps. General von Gallwitz now had a total of 17½ divisions; on the other hand, the battles had resulted in a loss of about 20,000 men, for which only 3,000 replacements had arrived so far. For the supply of the troops during further advance, he requested the continuation of the field railway from Prasznitz to Rozan and the construction of a full railway to Ostrolenka to connect to the Russian railway network. On the morning of July 20, parts of the artillery of Corps Watter opened fire against the positions of Rozan. These lay as if dead; no artillery shot was fired from the Russian side, raising doubts as to whether everything had been evacuated. The 26th (Württemberg) Infantry Division reported that it intended to storm the enemy height position 132 advanced on the southwest front; about 600 prisoners were the result. This success seemed a good start and raised hopes for further progress. In a telephone conversation that General Ludendorff had with the Supreme Army Command that morning, the con-

1) Previously in the West.

Page 214

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

expressed assurance that the attack "would smoothly come over Narew and Bug," but reinforcements were not necessary here¹).

General von Gallwitz had already suggested to the XVII Army Corps to send parts over the Narew at Lachy as soon as possible. However, General von Pannwitz had ordered his right 36th Infantry Division to move east from the area just east of the Orzyc estuary behind the 35th Division, to cross the river bend at Ostrolęka, which juts out the furthest against the enemy, on the left flank of the corps. But here the enemy was still on the right bank, which he attacked with stronger forces, coming from the east south of Rozan, with weaker parts also advancing from the south west of Lachy, over the river, and pressing the right flank of the corps, especially the XVII Army Corps. Further Russian forces simultaneously advanced west of the Orzyc estuary and from the northern front of Pułtusk against the left flank of the Plüskow Corps.

This led to a series of partially stubborn battles. General von Plüskow moved the bulk of the 38th Infantry Division as a reserve from his right flank behind the left; he also believed he could not do without the cooperation of the 42 cm guns against Pułtusk now. At the XVII Army Corps, the situation looked serious at times; in the afternoon, General von Pannwitz had already deployed his last reserves and requested reinforcements. Only in the evening did the situation appear restored everywhere; however, the large river bend south of Rozan remained in enemy hands, with about one Russian infantry division and one cavalry division involved in the fighting here, with somewhat stronger forces at Pułtusk. The own losses were considerable; at the Plüskow Corps, the 1st Guard and the 50th Reserve Division together made about 1000 prisoners, but also lost about 600 men each. Additionally, the 86th Infantry Division of the Plüskow Corps, from 10 battalions, which had three cholera cases, had to be withdrawn from the front, and losses due to dysentery occurred.

All in all, the previously high hopes were somewhat dampened by the day's events; it had shown that overcoming the Narew line would pose greater difficulties than expected. The enemy had increasingly shifted the focus of his defense to the Pułtusk—Rozan area. South and east of Pułtusk, the I Turkestan Corps seemed to be positioned, in Pułtusk

¹) Handwritten note by Gen. von Falkenhayn from July 22.

Page 215

Russian Counterattacks.

Even the IV Corps, northeast of it on the Narew, the 14th Cavalry Division, and further back the I Siberian Corps, at Rozan the newly arrived XXI Corps, at Ostrolenka the IV Siberian Corps, while the XXVII Corps seemed to be advancing towards Bialystok. Thus, there were at least ten, partly very fresh enemy divisions that had to be dislodged from strong positions. Further heavy fighting was therefore to be expected.

After the day's vicissitudes, the three German assault corps initially focused on Albeney for July 21. General von Gallwitz noted, "that engaging the Narew front by the weak XVII Army Corps, before we held the flank positions, offered no prospect," so there was no point in leaving parts of the corps in a vulnerable position in the Narew bend"). He had them evacuated from Gostkowo to south of Rozan during the night.

But even on the flanks of the army group, greater successes were initially not to be expected. Although the commanding general of the XVII Reserve Corps, Lieutenant General Surén, had underestimated the garrison of Nowogeorgiewsk after the withdrawal of the Russian XXVII Corps to such an extent that he wanted to attempt a coup de main with his Landwehr divisions, at least against the positions of the northern front. General von Gallwitz had initially agreed to this"). In view of the strength of the fortress, he then doubted the success of such an undertaking; he considered it more appropriate, given the overall situation, to move the 85th Landwehr Division of the corps eastward behind the right flank of the Plüskow corps. This also nullified Lieutenant General Surén's plan. At the same time, the Commander-in-Chief East made the general command of the III Reserve Corps, previously belonging to the 9th Army, available for unified leadership of the attack on the large Russian fortress. On the left flank, General von Eben wanted to carry out a feint operation on the Narew south of Ostrolenka on July 21, to then force the crossing at this location on the 22nd. But this plan also became obsolete, as General von Gallwitz ordered the main forces of the corps to be deployed north of Rozan. Thus, the last combat-ready parts of the army group were drawn to the actual breakthrough front, which thereby — without the forces still expected by rail (83rd Infantry Division and Division Menges) — reached a strength of twelve divisions.

1) von Gallwitz, p. 294. — 2) Communication from Lt. Gen. a. D. Kabisch (then Chief of Staff of the XVII R. K.) from summer 1931 to the Reichsarchiv. More details about the attack on Nowogeorgiewsk f. C. 375 ff.

Page 216

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

At the 8th Army, the 75th Reserve Division had reached the Narew, which carried very little water here, at the Szkwa estuary on July 20, and the 10th Landwehr Division had reached just before Nowogrod. The army reported that it had prospects of crossing the river at these two points and requested reinforcement of its right wing by a division. In view of the difficulties that had been shown to the Gallwitz Army Group, the Commander-in-Chief East temporarily considered continuing the 83rd Infantry Division, which was rolling towards Willenberg, to Kolno, but then abandoned this idea as it would have meant a dispersion of forces. He had firm confidence that the attack of the Gallwitz Army Group must succeed.

On the morning of July 21, General von Gallwitz viewed the situation more calmly than under the impression of the evening news, but he believed he had to reckon with a repetition of the Russian attacks. On the other hand, he was clear that a prompt continuation of their own attack, which the Commander-in-Chief East repeatedly urged, was necessary. However, the preparations had not progressed far enough at either the Plüskow Corps or the Watter Corps to ensure full success by July 22. Therefore, General von Gallwitz agreed that the attack at the Plüskow Corps should be postponed to the morning of July 23 but then carried out as far as possible in one go to the bridgehead. Also, before Rozan, General von Watter wanted to take further measures on July 22 to carry out the attack against the inner line on July 23. As the enemy between Pultusk and Rozan, where he also stood with parts on the right Narew bank as before, was now behaving calmly, the XVII Army Corps should also attack again by forcing the crossing on the night of July 23, this time not again in the arc of Ostrykol, but further west in direct connection to the attack of the Plüskow Corps. Additionally, on the same night, the Eben Corps also wanted to fight for the crossing in the area north of Rozan, as did the 8th Army at the Szkwa estuary. Thus, the general attack on July 23 was in prospect in the entire 75-kilometer-wide area from Pultusk to Szkwa. The Gallwitz Army High Command had been relocated to Krasne on July 21.

When General von Gallwitz, on the morning of July 22, directly inquired of General von Falkenhayn about the situation and intentions

Page 217

Preparation for the Attack on Pultusk and Rozan.

reported, he concluded: "In any case, we face the outcome of the operations with great confidence." On the evening of this day, the troops were ready in the following new formation:

General von Beseler assigned the Dichhuth Corps and the 14th Landwehr Division of the former Suren Corps in front of the northern front of Nowogeorgiewsk from the positions of Naiselsk, against which feigned operations were to be carried out on July 23 to divert the enemy's attention.

Group Pultusk with the now united XVII Reserve Corps (86th Infantry Division and Landwehr Brigade Pfeil, behind it 85th Landwehr Division), 50th and 1st Guard Reserve Division (these two under the command of the commander of the 50th Reserve Division, General Freiherr von der Goltz, combined) for the attack on Pultusk.

XVII Army Corps (36th and 35th Infantry Division), on the right wing extended by the 38th Infantry Division, which arrived south of Szelkow, to the Narew crossing at Zambki and east of Gostkowo (near Romny).

Corps Watter with 26th and 3rd Infantry and 4th Guard Infantry Division in front of Rozan. Here, the result of the afternoon's partial attack against the northwest front fell short of expectations.

Corps Eben with 2nd and 37th Infantry Division and the 83rd Infantry Division, predominantly consisting of Landsturm, advancing from Willenberg to the Narew crossing between Rozan and Ostrolenka. That this could take place the following morning had become unlikely according to reconnaissance results.

As army reserve, the Menges Division was advancing from Mlawa to Ciechanow, and thus, however, behind the operationally less effective right wing of the attack section.

Against Pultusk, General von Plüskow had set the XVII Reserve Corps to attack west of the Pelta, east of the Pelta up to the Narew at Chmielewo the Goltz Group. The artillery had been pushed forward as far as possible, but the rearmost batteries were still four to five kilometers from the enemy's foremost line. The effective firing, beginning on the morning of July 23, from more than 200 guns (about 80 of them heavy howitzers with 42 cm) was sharply concentrated against the intended breach point, one of which lay between the road from Stary Golynin and the Pelta,

Page 218

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

while the main attack was to take place on the road from Makow and eastwards. After breaking through the advanced positions, the attack was to be continued without interruption, in order to capture the inner defensive line and the bridges on the same day. Russian artillery barely responded. At 8 a.m., the 1st Guard Reserve Division under Major General Albrecht was the first to break into the northern front on the road from Makow, soon followed to its right by the 50th Reserve Division under General von der Goltz, and at 9 a.m. by the 86th Infantry Division of the XVII Reserve Corps under Lieutenant General von Bernitz, in whose area the 42 cm battery had been active. However, it took hours before the entire northern front was captured. It was not until after 11 a.m. that progress was made on the road from Stary Golynin, and only after 12 p.m. was the large earthwork of Chmielewo on the ridge above the Narew in the hands of the 1st Guard Reserve Division. General von Gallwitz ordered this division to halt so that it could immediately cross the river and, if possible, reach the road to Wyszków behind Pultusk by evening. Furthermore, the success achieved was to be exploited to the utmost to quickly capture the town and the crossings. All other considerations had to be set aside.

However, it was not easy to achieve the set goal, as from the previous artillery setup only two flat-fire batteries, a 10 cm and a 13 cm battery, equipped with very few rounds, could act against the inner defensive line and the bridges located an average of six kilometers behind the front position. Thus, a completely new artillery deployment was necessary. The attack by the 85th Landwehr, 86th Infantry, and 50th Reserve Division also did not gain ground with the hoped-for speed. Parts of the 50th Reserve Division suffered significant losses, while others, in rolling up the Russian positions, captured many prisoners but also lost time. Observations of the extensive forest areas hindered rapid pursuit behind the enemy, whose retreat, according to air reconnaissance, was bottlenecked at the bridges of Pultusk, where the German artillery could not effectively engage. The aircraft themselves were not equipped at the time to conduct their bombing seriously. The attack movement came to a halt in the evening before the inner defensive line, which, in conjunction with the two permanent works, directly covered and appeared strongly fortified the town of Pultusk and the crossing points. Forces capable of reigniting the attack were lacking, as the division Menges (Landwehr and replacement troops) assigned to the XVII Reserve Corps in the meantime was

Page 219

Execution of the Attack on Pultusk and Rozan.

25 kilometers of marching, partially following a 40-hour train journey, left the troops so exhausted that their involvement on this day was no longer expected. Thus, General von Plüskow reported to General von Gallwitz at 8 PM: "In view of the great exertions and the approaching darkness, the assault must be postponed tonight. The position is to be breached at dawn." Meanwhile, the 1st Guard Reserve Division had brought infantry to the southern bank of the Narew at Chmielewo and Grojno. However, a bridge was not expected to be completed until 3 AM, so the division could only then advance to the rear of Pultusk. This threat — General von Plüskow believed — would likely be evaded by the enemy through timely evacuation of the western bank.

In the area of the XVII Army Corps, the crossing of the Narew by the 38th Infantry Division, which had only driven the enemy from the northern bank in the late afternoon, was unsuccessful at Zambski. However, further east, the 36th Infantry Division under Lieutenant General von Heineccius, whose infantry partially waded through the river, had already reached the southern bank early on the morning of July 23 and advanced from there. By noon, the right wing of the 35th Infantry Division also managed to secure the southern bank, while infantry of the 38th Infantry Division crossed in the area of the 36th and then created space westward. The construction of bridges progressed slowly due to Russian counteractions. The 36th Infantry Division suffered such heavy equipment losses that they had to rely on the bridge train of the 35th, delaying their construction again; the 38th Infantry Division could only begin construction at Zambski in the evening.

Nevertheless, by the end of July 23, they had established a firm foothold on the southern bank of the Narew along the 16-kilometer stretch from Chmielewo to Binduza and had begun constructing four bridges, including the 1st Guard Reserve Division. The apparently not very strong enemy still stood close by, holding a curve from Ostrolenka to the right.

At Rozan, General von Watter had intended on July 23 to fully occupy the positions of the northwest front. But this partial goal was not fully achieved. As the enemy positions did not seem storm-ready everywhere, some heavily fortified installations north of the Pultusk road were taken; with very few own losses, 1100 prisoners were captured. The approximately 1½ kilometers further back, likewise...

Page 220

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

if a strongly fortified Russian second position was to be taken only on the following or the next day. "I agreed in the hope," wrote General von Gallwitz later, "that in the meantime the successes of the neighboring corps would assert themselves and that greater bloodshed could be avoided at Rozan." He calculated on the one hand with the night evacuation of Pultusk and further advance of the XVII Army Corps, on the other hand with the still pending Narew crossing of the Eben Corps, which was to be forced in the early morning of July 24 between Rozan and Ostrolenka.

In the 8th Army, the operations planned for July 23 against the Narew had brought no result.

On the night of July 24, the expectations of General von Gallwitz were fulfilled. The Russians evacuated Pultusk and Rozan. Parts of the 86th Infantry and 50th Reserve Division had already moved into Pultusk during the night. By 5 a.m., the report was in the hands of the High Command, and by 6 a.m., the news followed that the advance troops of the 3rd Infantry Division had also entered Rozan. In both places, the bridges were destroyed, except for a military bridge and a footbridge just north of Rozan, which were under such heavy enemy fire that they could not be used for the time being. The Russians had set Rozan itself on fire during their retreat, similar to other places before; only about a third of the houses could still be saved. Pultusk, on the other hand, showed only minor damage.

General von Gallwitz himself later judged the success: "The famous Narew Line was taken after careful preparation, but finally after a short battle. What had not been considered about this problem in military literature and strategic tasks! It was something worth experiencing. Admittedly, eleven days had passed since the attack at Przasnysz, too much for the map distance. But what had the Russian piled up in works in this area to defend it? he mostly had!" About 37,000 prisoners and 49 machine guns, but only 14 guns were the total booty since July 13, of which 8,500 prisoners, 49 machine guns, but not a single gun from the period since July 18. In the fortified bridgeheads of Pultusk and Rozan, however, only 3,600 prisoners were made together. The enemy had mainly

von Gallwitz, p. 300.

Page 221

Crossing the River and Outcome of the Battles.

The infantry managed to hold out alone until they were crushed by the mass deployment of German artillery. Despite all efforts of the brave German troops, who alone suffered about 3,000 casualties on July 23, the Russians succeeded in withdrawing the forces deployed in the bridgeheads back across the river in a short summer night without significant loss of prisoners and without any loss of equipment.

3. The Continuation of the Attack against the Bug.

a) Influence of the Supreme Army Command¹).

General von Falkenhayn saw promising signs of the ripening of the great success hoped for between the Vistula, Narew, and Bug in the favorable course that the operations had taken since mid-July not only with Army Group Gallwitz but also with Army Detachment Woyrsch²) and Army Group Mackensen³). "General von Falkenhayn brings good news. Everything is progressing in the East. In the West, the enemy is calm... Falkenhayn says it seems as if the campaign will now be decided in the East!" — so wrote Generaloberst von Plessen in his diary on July 19. In such hope, the German Chief of General Staff had decided to bring in two more divisions from the West⁴). So far, all allocations from other theaters of war had been assigned to Army Group Mackensen. However, since further relocation seemed disadvantageous due to long transport routes and difficult supply conditions, General von Falkenhayn inclined to assign the two divisions to the 9th Army, so that they could advance between Iwangorod and Warsaw over the Vistula into the rear of the enemy still holding at the Narew. He then agreed to the proposal of Generaloberst von Conrad, who advocated deployment with Army Group Gallwitz. General von Falkenhayn therefore informed the Commander-in-Chief East on July 20: "Given the course of recent events, it is highly foreseeable that the decision in the battle against the Russians will fall in the area south of the Narew. Therefore, the deployment of even the last battalion, which is not absolutely necessary elsewhere, is justified and required. His Majesty has consequently ordered the deployment of the 54th and 58th Infantry Divisions as well as the Mortar Battalion No. 1 from the Western theater of war. The trans-

Page 222

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

port begins on July 20th1). Information on the intended use and the usual unloading stations was requested. When this telegram reached the Commander-in-Chief East, it was 2:30 in the afternoon2). The enemy had evacuated the fort on the west bank of the Narew at Ostrolenka the previous evening, and the Gallwitz Army Group reported the first success against Rozan as well. However, the severity of the subsequent Russian counterattacks over the Narew between Pultusk and Ostrolenka was not yet recognized. The staff was still full of hope to quickly overcome the Narew line. To the left of the Vistula, the 9th Army was advancing against the Grojec-Blonie position3), the right wing of the Woyrsch Army Detachment4) was approaching the fortress of Iwangorod from the south. On the front from Lomza over Ostrowiec and Rowno to Schaulen, the situation was essentially unchanged; in the far north, the left wing of the Njemen Army had come close to Mitau5).

The Commander-in-Chief East, in contrast to the Supreme Army Command, was still of the opinion that the thrust over the lower Narew would remain operationally ineffective, and that the sooner, the better all available forces should be deployed at the Njemen, the retreat of the Russians on the left bank of the middle Vistula might have reinforced this view. Therefore, he had already assigned the surplus third brigade of the Menges Division to the 10th Army the day before, to push further forward against the Njemen and Kowno, according to a diary entry by Major General Groener from that time, he was thinking of a "breakthrough at Olita". Only a success in the Njemen area seemed to promise operational impact now. The decision on the use and unloading stations for the divisions rolling in from the west was to be reserved by the Commander-in-Chief East until the beginnings reached the Vistula the day after tomorrow; by then he expected to have a clearer view of the further outcome of the attack on the Narew. Here he pushed sharply forward, thus also meeting the wishes of the Supreme Army Command. In this, General Ludendorff, in a telephone conversation with Major General Tappen, requested to postpone the decision on the deployment of the two western divisions until the morning of July 22nd, and expressed the conviction that the Gallwitz and Scholtz armies would smoothly

Page 223

Discussion with the Supreme Army Command.

to cross the Narew and the Bug and exert the effect on the battles at Lublin demanded by the Supreme Army Command¹). Therefore, there might now be an opportunity to deploy the new divisions against the Russian Njemen Front.

However, the events of July 20 had significantly reduced the prospect of quickly crossing the Narew²). It seemed that the enemy was withdrawing forces from the 9th Army and thereby strengthening its Narew Front. Thus, the Commander-in-Chief East now considered a sharp attack by the army possible and necessary. He gave the order in the evening to break through the enemy positions on the left bank of the Vistula to cross the river above Warsaw³). He aligned with the thoughts of General von Falkenhayn⁴). He considered cooperating with the left wing of the Woyrsch Army Detachment and possibly also approached the Supreme Army Command in this regard⁵). In addition, he now made the first arrangements for the encirclement of Nowogeorgiewsk.

On the morning of July 21, the decision of General von Falkenhayn arrived. Even if the not entirely satisfactory course of July 20 at the Narew Front had already raised slight doubts in him as to whether the high hopes he had attached to the overall operation in recent days would be fulfilled, he had to be even more thoughtful that the offensive of the Mackensen Army Group was meanwhile threatening to come to a standstill due to unexpectedly stubborn resistance. If that happened, the success of the entire operation was in question. Therefore, the most urgent requirement seemed to him to keep the attack on the Narew Front in motion. He informed General Ludendorff: "Since the situation between the Bug and the Vistula urgently demands relief through the thrust from the north, I can to my

¹) In the draft of Gen. von Falkenhayn from July 20 to a letter to Gen. Ludendorff, which has not been amended, it says: "At least Tappen told me, you had — in deviation from your and the Field Marshal's view in Posen — thought that the forces of the Gallwitz and Scholtz armies would be completely sufficient to safely advance over the Narew and the Bug so far that their impact on the events at Lublin would be assured."  
²) P. 308 f. — ³) P. 336. — ⁴) G. 315.  
⁵) General Ludendorff had already suggested in a conversation with the Austro-Hungarian Army Command on July 18 the possibility of such a measure and the advance of the Woyrsch Army Detachment over the Vistula (P. 397 f.) requested by the O.H.L. to Gen. Ludendorff (Records of the War Archives Vienna).

Page 224

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Regret alteration of the general operational plan in the sense of the local suggestion, not to consider deploying the divisions coming from the west against the Njemen Front.“

Meanwhile, the enemy had evacuated the Grojec position in front of the 9th Army during the night. At the Njemen Army, the entire southern flank was now advancing, 3400 prisoners were reported, Schallen was retaken. At 12:45 PM, another message from General von Falkenhayn to General Ludendorff in Lötzen arrived, stating: “Even for the case you mentioned in yesterday's telephone conversation with Tappen, that Group Gallwitz was advancing well, in my opinion, unfortunately, no deviation from the highest orders should occur now.”

Then, at 12:45 PM, Field Marshal von Hindenburg himself addressed the Supreme Army Command: “We also intend to break through the Narew line under all circumstances. However, since it was possible to achieve this goal without deploying the new units and their use further east would then become more effective, General Ludendorff informed me of his intention to postpone the final determination of the deployment point until the beginnings of the divisions cross the Vistula.” In response, General von Falkenhayn elaborated his view: Due to the situation in the Balkans, time was pressing. However, it is not to be assumed that the Mackensen Army Group, after the achievements and efforts it has already made, will “advance quickly on its own,” nor would the cooperation of the Woyrsch Army Detachment and the 9th Army suffice. “So it remains only to do everything possible to make the Narew assault group as strong as possible, so that it quickly forces a decision, and therefore the allocation of the two fresh western divisions to it has been made. — This does not prevent, as soon as clear signs of collapse and yielding of the enemy between the Vistula and Bug become apparent, strong forces from the Narew assault group being thrown onto the Njemen to pursue the success initiated by Your Excellency.” The prerequisite is only “accelerated advance from railway lines at the East Prussian border over the Narew.” According to the view of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, they also formed the precondition for the unhindered progress of the Gallwitz Army Group.

The Eastern Commander-in-Chief now decided to assign the 54th of the two advancing infantry divisions to the left flank of the

1) Communication from Gen. Ludendorff from December 1931 to the Reich Archive.

Page 225

Disputes with the Supreme Army Command.

Army Group Gallwitz, to assign the 58th to the 8th Army, to now also advance on the previously only thinly occupied front section east of Ostrolenka. As things stood, he shared the view of General von Falkenhayn. "It must," it says in his war diary, "be necessary to carry out the Narew operation once begun. However, it is doubted here that the Narew operation can lead to a decision. The decision lies with Kowno, taking this fortress and advancing towards Wilna." It was feared, as was repeatedly discussed and emphasized in the staff, "that the Russian, with his great skill in retreat, would pull his head out of the noose at Narew by sacrificing rearguards"¹).

On July 22, Field Marshal von Hindenburg presented his intentions to the Supreme Army Command: "According to His Majesty's orders, I am placing the greatest emphasis on operations against the Narew. Since Narew has not yet been crossed, the new infantry divisions will be unloaded at Puppen and Kolno to reinforce the Narew strike group. After crossing the Narew, the right wing Gallwitz will take the fortifications at Zegrze with the weakest possible forces, attack Nowogrojeweńsk from the north and northeast, including it. The 9th Army is to break through the Russian position forward of Warsaw, then cross the Vistula above with parts and attack Warsaw. Close cooperation between the 9th Army and the right wing Gallwitz is essential in the battle for Warsaw and Nowogrojeweńsk and will be kept in mind by me, as well as freeing parts of the 9th Army for the offensive to the east. The 10th Army²) continues to advance with its weak forces. The Njemen Army³) carries out its tactical success. I still reserve the decision as to how far it will be advanced towards Wilna. — I dutifully point out that I still expect a decisive success and a quick and decisive relief from Mackensen from a reinforcement of the 10th Army and the capture of Kowno."

July 23 brought the already described⁴) advances of Army Group Gallwitz against Pultusk and Rozan and the Narew crossing between both places. Furthermore, Field Marshal von Hindenburg was able to report to the Kaiser in the evening a complete victory of the Njemen Army⁵). The booty taken there since July 14 amounts to about 27,000 Ge-

¹) Communication from Colonel von Baldow from summer 1931 to the Reichsarchiv. In July 1915 also Major von Fleischmann to the Supreme Army Command (Files of the War Archives Vienna). ²) p. 473. ³) p. 461. ⁴) p. 313. ⁵) p. 462.

Page 226

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

captured and 23 guns. According to General von Below's report, "the main body of the Russian 5th Army fighting at Schaulen has been dispersed." However, there was a lack of forces to further expand this success, as the entire concern of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief was now primarily focused on continuing the Narew operation. After crossing the river, it was supposed to take a more eastern direction. Depending on the need, one could then force the Bug crossing in the area of Wyszkow with the right wing and thus get directly behind the Russians still holding at Warsaw, or — staying on the right bank of the Bug — head towards Brest Litowsk and thus strike at the depth of the Russian connections. A corresponding order was already given at noon to the Gallwitz Army Group and the 8th Army after the first reports of successes achieved at Pultusk.

The decision of the Supreme Army Command received the following day, July 24, aligned — as far as the continuation of the Narew operation was concerned — with what the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had already ordered. It stated: "After taking note of Your Excellency's intentions, His Majesty has ordered: The rapid continuation of the operations of the Narew assault group in a generally southeastern direction is necessary. The more it succeeds in emphasizing the left wing, the better it will be. The unloadings at Kolno and Puppen already indicate this. The measures against the fortresses of Warsaw, Nowogeorgiewsk, and Zegrze are to be adapted to the guiding thought, therefore, for the time being, as few forces as possible should be deployed against them. The capture of the fortresses is currently of no value compared to the significance of the thrust to the southeast. — Your Excellency's intention to deploy parts of the 9th Army after breaking through the position at Blonie—Nadarzyn across the Vistula aligns with the plans of the Supreme Army Command. Unfortunately, a reinforcement of the 10th Army is currently not feasible, which also answers the final sentence of the telegram. It will be of great importance for the overall operations if the Niemen Army soon advances with at least stronger cavalry against the Russian rear connections in the area of Wilna."

Thus, the agreement with the Supreme Army Command was restored in the measures to be taken immediately. However, the relationship had been strained by the sharpness of the preceding instructions.

Page 227

The Continuation of the Attack against the Bug.

conflicts experienced an undesirable escalation; the deeper underlying contradictions were not resolved.

h) The Battles of the Army Group Gallwitz and the 8th Army from July 24 to 26.

Maps 6 and 7, Sketches 21 and 22.

The order from the Eastern High Command, which reached General von Gallwitz on the afternoon of July 23, stated: "After forcing the Narew, the right wing of the Gallwitz Army is to take Dembe, Zegrze, and Benjamino and attack Nowogeorgiewsk." The bulk of the army is to continue its march along the line Wyszkow—Ostrow and the road Ostrow—Lomza to the Ruz-Bach. — The right wing of the 8th Army is to advance along the Ruz-Bach." According to a later report from General von Gallwitz to the Supreme Army Command, the march of the Gallwitz Army Group was to open the way for him. Since the battle for the Narew crossings was still in full swing when this order arrived, General von Gallwitz initially gave only the Plüskow Corps the new directive to take Pultusk and then head towards Wyszkow. He ordered the XVII Army Corps to establish a firm foothold on the heights south of Zambki and, with the 35th Infantry Division, to force the Narew crossing in the salient of Ostrolenka.

When it became clear on the morning of July 24 that the enemy had already evacuated the bridgeheads of Pultusk and Rozan, the army order regulating the march against the Bug followed. The Beseler Group (Dichthuth Corps and 14th Landwehr Division, to which the Pfeil Brigade withdrew, and twelve heavy and heaviest batteries used on the Narew front) was to take Nasielsk and concentrate against the northern and northeastern front of Nowogeorgiewsk. In the area of Pultusk—Rozan, only the bridge at Chmielewo (1st Guard Reserve Division) and those at Zambki and Rondo (38th and 36th Infantry Divisions) were usable until the morning of the day, and only in the afternoon was a fourth bridge at Pultusk completed; Russian fire, which still lay on the crossing points, had repeatedly delayed construction. The movement was to be continued in the following formation: The XVII Reserve Corps (85th Landwehr and 86th Infantry Division, now with the 1st Guard Reserve Division instead of the Menge Division) had

1) Connection to G. 315. — 2) G. 309 and 375 ff.  
World War. Volume VIII.

Page 228

The Eastern Commander-in-Chief's Attack Against the Russian Narew Front

To advance on both sides of the Narew southward and southeastward, with the left wing on the road to Wyzkow, and to take over the coverage against Warsaw. The Plüskow Corps (now 50th Reserve Division, Menges Division and 38th Infantry Division), the XVII Army Corps (36th and 35th Infantry Division) and the Watter Corps (as before 26th and 3rd Infantry and 4th Guards Infantry Division) were directed towards Wyzkow (exclusive)—Ostrow. The Eben Corps (as before 83rd, 2nd and 37th Infantry Division with only light heavy artillery) was assigned the section of the Ostrow road (exclusive)—Lomza lying west of the Ruz Creek as its objective.

[Translation continues with detailed military movements and positions]

Page 229

says, while the right wing gained ground, a shift occurred, which more and more led to purely frontal pressing behind the gradually eastward retreating enemy; operational impact was hardly to be hoped for. In the afternoon, General von Gallwitz inquired extensively by telephone with General von Eben about the prospects of crossing the river north of Rozan and considered attempting it now more at Ostrolenka, as General von Eben had originally intended); but here too the enemy had meanwhile strengthened, and a new attempt at this point required such extensive regrouping of troops and ammunition that it could only be undertaken on July 27. However, this seemed too late. Thus, General von Gallwitz agreed to General von Eben's proposal, who — although unable to guarantee the outcome — in agreement with Lieutenant General von Falk commanding at Kaminotka, hoped that there, even if in tough fighting, they would gradually reach the goal. "We must absolutely get through," it says in the record made at the Gallwitz High Command about this conversation, "it is of utmost importance for the operation."

In the mistaken assumption that General von Eben would now cross at Ostrolenka, the 8th Army was ready to join this plan with its own right wing. By the morning of July 25, seven Narew bridges were completed by the Gallwitz Army Group in the Pultusk—Rozan area, with another started kilometers south of Pultusk and at Rozan. However, the enemy had meanwhile had time to settle again and further strengthen. At the front from Nowogeorgiewsk to Lomza, including both places, up to 17 Russian divisions) now seemed to stand, most densely just in front of the part of the German front where the Narew had already been crossed. At the same time, new delays in supply, especially in the delivery of ammunition, became noticeable; the routes from rail and field railway points had become longer, the few existing roads were completely worn out and often impassable due to heavy traffic and new rain showers. Thus, a shortage of ammunition arose at the fighting front, which hindered the rapid continuation of the un-

1) p. 309. 2) According to a situation map, the 63rd I. D., I. Turk. Corps, IV Corps, 2nd I. D., XXVII Corps, I. Sib. Corps, XXI Corps, IV. Sib. Corps, V Corps were listed, as well as some individual brigades and three cavalry divisions. — In fact, the enemy even counted 20 infantry and three and a half cavalry divisions.

Page 230

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

became all the more obstructive as the demands of the infantry for strong artillery preparation grew. Complaints about ammunition shortages began; it had to be conserved. The Eben Corps had already reported on July 24 that to cross at Ostrolenka, it first had to fetch the ammunition prepared at Raminonta.

General von Gallwitz had entrusted the leadership of the attack between the Narew south of Pultusk and the Pultwy-Bruch to General von Plüskow. The day passed here with skirmishes against the new Russian positions and other attack preparations. North of the Pultwy-Bruch, the XVII Army Corps advanced and approached the railway running along the eastern edge of the lowland Wyszkow-Ostrolenka, where the enemy had apparently made a strong front again. At the Watter Corps, the bridges of Rozan were still under Russian fire. The infantry was firmly in the foreland of the Narew lowland, but the entire artillery was also on the west bank by evening. "For the divisions of the corps, it was initially about setting up the captured positions," it says in the corps' war diary on this day. The Eben Corps also failed to achieve any further success. The situation of the troops, heroically won east of the river but also reinforced by battalions, became increasingly difficult, as despite all efforts, it was not possible to silence the Russian artillery machine gun fire; it came from forest positions that could not be scouted and therefore could not be fought down with limited ammunition. Thus, the losses at this one point rose to almost 1000 men. An additional difficulty was that the water depths of the fords changed due to the impact of heavy Russian shells and rain, so that almost every connection to the east bank was eventually interrupted.

In the 8th Army, the 75th Reserve Division succeeded in bringing a company across the river east of the Szkwa estuary; further progress was also prevented here by strong enemy counteraction.

The hope that after overcoming the Narew at and east of Pultusk, progress would be swift and thus the crossing further upstream would be facilitated, seemed not to be fulfilled. In a telephone conversation that General von Gallwitz had with the Supreme Command D (1), General Ludendorff wished for more emphasis behind the XVII Army Corps to gain space to the east between Bug and Narew.

1) According to von Gallwitz, p. 307.

Page 231

Between Narew and Bug. Russian Counterattack.

In contrast, General von Gallwitz himself considered the forward push and maneuvering of the corps Watter, reinforced with four divisions, southward against the Bug to be desirable. Therefore, it was important for him to also bring his left wing over the Narew. Since progress at Kaminofa was stalled, he suggested to General von Eben once more to attempt the crossing at Ostrolenka in the area of the 37th Infantry Division, and made the advancing 54th Infantry Division available to him. With this reinforcement, General von Eben believed he could solve the task; he set the 54th Infantry Division on Ostrolenka for July 26.

At the 8th Army, General von Scholz hoped to force the crossing in the area of the 75th Reserve Division by sharply consolidating the troops at the break of the next day. Meanwhile, the 58th Infantry Division had also arrived behind it. Thus, at the border of the two armies in the Ostrolenka–Szkwa estuary area, the striking force of a total of four attack-hungry divisions was now ready.

In the Gallwitz Army Group, the attack was to be continued on July 26 across the entire front. On the right wing, the Plüskow Corps was to lead the main thrust by breaking through the Russian position at Pniewo on the road to Wyszkow. However, before this could happen, a general Russian counterattack began at about 8 a.m., covering a width of 60 kilometers. Its left wing hit the 85th Landwehr Division west of the lower Narew, its right the 4th Guard Infantry Division north of Rozan. In sometimes bitter struggles, it was possible to repel the enemy everywhere, take about 3000 prisoners, and gain local advantages at certain points in the pursuit. Overall, however, the Russian thrust, seemingly carried out with considerable manpower and ammunition, had significantly strained the German troops. The 50th Reserve and the 1st Guard Reserve Division had also lost another 1500 men; generally, the forces of the troops were very exhausted, the artillery was short of ammunition. General von Plüskow reported that a new attack was not possible before sufficient ammunition supplies arrived. At the Watter Corps, the Russian advance had only hit the southern wing and was easily repelled. Subsequently, it was possible to advance further in the woods east of Rozan. On the left wing, the 83rd Infantry Division of the Eben Corps participated, which in-

1) Communication from Gen. Ludendorff from December 1931 to the Reich Archive.

Page 232

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

between the 4th Guards Infantry Division had been moved across the river. The bridgehead on the eastern bank of the Narew at Rozan had thus been extended in a three-day battle to a depth of about three kilometers, although also to the north. This — it was hoped — would benefit the 2nd Infantry Division at Kamionka, which was still struggling under the most difficult conditions to cross. Despite serious losses, Lieutenant General von Falk did not want to give in here, but continued to reinforce the parts that had crossed, although these did not gain significant ground forward.

New delays occurred at Ostrolenka. General von Gallwitz, who placed particular importance on rapid advancement at this point and therefore pressed, had to yield to the objections of General von Eben, who wanted the crossing to be carried out only after thorough preparation based on the experiences at Kamionka. Major General Freiherr von Watter, the commander of the advancing 54th Infantry Division, reported that despite all efforts to accelerate, he could not cross until the 28th. Contributing to this were the unfamiliar road conditions of the east, which posed great difficulties for his vehicles coming from the west, further exacerbated by rain.

Also, at the 8th Army, hardly any progress was made on July 26. Two battalions of the 75th Reserve Division reached the left bank of the Narew; however, their situation threatened to become difficult as the enemy also hindered the bridgehead here with artillery fire and searchlight illumination.

In a report demanded by the Supreme Army Command in the morning about the situation, General von Gallwitz reported on his current mission and described his forces against the enemy opposite as sufficient. For the effective continuation of the attack, however, the troops needed a rest and above all ammunition. Further halts had to occur in the forward movement. General von Gallwitz was considering now directing all strength to the left wing, with which he then wanted to swing south. However, he wanted to postpone the attack of the right wing, which he considered less urgent.

c) The Standstill in the Attack from July 27 to August 6.

For the right wing and the center of Army Group Gallwitz, July 27 was essentially a day of standstill after the heavy fighting of the 26th. In some sections, the troops observed how the enemy expanded and wired their positions; it

Page 233

even they themselves were initially set on defense. General von Plüskow considered withdrawing parts that had suffered particularly heavily only possible "when a rearward position had been established." On the left flank, at Rozan, where the enemy had cleared the forest area east of the river at night, the bridgehead was extended to Goworowo, reaching a depth of eleven kilometers; at the same time, the 83rd Infantry Division was able to approach the crossing point from Kaminotka to the north to within about five kilometers; in total, more than 2000 prisoners were brought in. However, the relief hoped for the situation of the 2nd Infantry Division did not initially materialize. The 54th Infantry Division, assigned to the crossing at Ostrolenka, was still missing the pontoons set up for deployment as well as part of the ammunition, so that the river crossing on the morning of July 28 seemed impossible according to the troop leaders. General von Eben, however, now stuck to the set attack time.

In the 8th Army, it was the 75th Reserve Division of Lieutenant General von Seydewitz that succeeded in completing a bridge at the Swan Mouth during the night and bringing its entire infantry to the southern bank of the Narew despite enemy fire during the day; the 58th Infantry Division had arrived behind them. As a further task of this wing of the 8th Army, Lieutenant General Ludendorff now designated the advance eastward against the rear of Lomza; he promised two mortar batteries of the Eben Corps as soon as this corps had completed the crossing. Since the heavy batteries freed at Pultusk and Rozan had joined the Beseler Group, the left wing of the Gallwitz Army Group and the right of the 8th Army had to make do with their existing artillery, which was quite limited for the task at hand; the Eben Corps had only six heavy howitzer batteries in total with three infantry divisions.

On the morning of July 28, the Gallwitz Army Group reported directly to the Supreme Army Command, apparently at their request: On the right flank, the attack against Dembe-Serock would be possible in about three days, until then the Russians would exhaust themselves in unsuccessful attacks. The Prut position, which had proven to be strongly fortified, was also to be attacked; however, it would take two to three days before the ammunition arrived. At the Pulwy Break and northward, the XVII Army Corps would fight in a broad front defensively. It was important to first help the Eben Corps across the Narew. If the crossing at Ostrolenka succeeded today or tomorrow, the offensive could also begin on this flank with new divisions in two to three days.

Page 234

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

continued. When this report was immediately communicated to the Supreme Army Command by the East Command, the difference in views on further objectives became apparent. While Colonel Marquard pointed out that "the encirclement around Warsaw must be closed and tightened," the left wing should not be extended further against the 8th Army, but rather strengthened if possible, Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann revealed the view of the Commander-in-Chief East, who did not expect much from the push south against and over the Bug, but wished to gain ground southwards; the Gallwitz Army Group must first unite with the 8th Army to open the Narew crossing in the direction of Sniadowo; until Lomza had fallen, they could not cross the Bug anyway.

Reports of Russian attacks also came from the right wing of the Army Group on this day. In a discussion with the Plüskow Corps, Colonel Marquard hoped that the Russians would bleed out in the continuous attacks. Meanwhile, the German attack was halted everywhere. The resumption at the Plüskow Corps was now scheduled for August 3; until then, ammunition was to be procured. Thus, the right wing of the army was not only — as assumed in the morning report to the Supreme Army Command — paralyzed for three days, but for almost a week. The advance against the Bug directly into the rear of Warsaw, to close the encirclement there, was postponed accordingly. But even on the rest of the front, progress was not as desired on July 28.

At the Watter Corps, only a local success at Goworowo was recorded; the temporarily assigned 83rd Infantry Division, replacement, Landwehr, and Landsturm troops with only about six batteries, were too weak to make further progress after the successes of the previous day. At the Eben Corps, the stubbornly persistent 2nd Infantry Division managed to bring five batteries across the river at night — parts of the 37th Infantry Division followed — but the situation could not be decisively improved initially.

At Ostrolenka, where the crossing attack of the 54th Infantry Division succeeded only partially against the prepared enemy defenses early in the morning, the Army Command, considering the experiences at Ramonieka, considered whether to proceed with the operation after all.

1) p. 325.

Page 235

Between Narew and Bug. Battles without Progress.

to break off again, to bring the division over a bridge begun south of Kamionka to the left bank of the Narew. In contrast, the division commander, Major General von Watter, still considered the execution of the once initiated operation to be promising and "in the interest of the troops and the cause" necessary. He wanted to cross at several points in the coming night, thus in a broader front, which General von Eben also agreed with. However, General von Gallwitz intervened with the order to prepare the division for departure to the south, where a secure crossing was prepared and fresh combat strength was urgently needed against the stubborn resistance of the enemy.

In the 8th Army, the 75th Reserve Division could not significantly expand its position south of the Narew with rising water; their troops were, as stated in the war diary, "at the end of their strength after the enormous exertions." To continue the operation, the commander, Lieutenant General von Seydlitz, was also assigned the 58th Infantry Division and deployed on the right wing.

On July 29, the surprising news came in the morning that the Woyrsch Army Detachment had taken the right bank of the Vistula between Iwangorod and Warsaw with several spearheads. However, there was complete standstill on their own front; the enemy seemed to be reinforcing here; at Błystok, flyers reported unloading of troops who seemed to be marching further on Ostrow. If the enemy retreated from the Vistula, it was possible that he was trying to gain space to the north. General von Gallwitz therefore ordered his entire right wing up to and including the XVII Army Corps to strengthen and barricade the positions and to pull out reserves. On the left army wing, only the Eben Corps was to attack on July 30, unless a "significant change in the situation occurred" by then, to which the 83rd Infantry Division withdrew. The goal was to encircle the IV Siberian Corps standing at Ostrolenka from the south. The Watter Corps had to cover the right flank of this attack. As General von Gallwitz explained during his audience, his further intention was still: "Hold on the right, initially no attack against the fortifications. On the left, with ten divisions, covered by the 8th Army to the east, advance on Ostrow—Malkin," thus a large right swing against the Bug. From the Plüskow Corps, the 1st Guard Reserve Division was to

Page 236

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Army reserve to march back to Szelkow, from where it could be brought over Rozan to reinforce the left wing of the army. The attack of the Eben Corps began on July 30 only at noon and, despite the deployment of the 54th Infantry Division on the right wing, again fell far short of the hopes of the Gallwitz High Command. Due to the stubborn resistance of the Russians, instead of encircling them, there was a frontal push back by a few kilometers in a northeasterly direction. The general difficulties encountered in rapid advancement, and the determination with which the leadership still adhered to achieving a major goal through attack, are shown by an instruction given by General von Gallwitz on this day to the commanding generals and division commanders. It stated: "The great successes achieved in the fight for heavily fortified positions through the use of heavy and heaviest artillery should not lead to waiting for the involvement of such combat means in cases where the fight can be conducted without them." The 21 cm mortars are intended for heavily fortified strongpoints, against wide wire entanglements, and under certain circumstances also against villages with strong masonry. However, the supply of ammunition is difficult and can only be carried out at the expense of field artillery ammunition and provisions due to the lengthening supply lines. As much as it is necessary to spare the infantry "losses as much as possible, the troops should not be too pampered. Hastily constructed strongpoints, for which the enemy now had only a few days to prepare, must be overcome with the cooperation of field artillery and heavy field howitzers. The longer the attack on such points is delayed, the more time the enemy has to reinforce them." Ammunition shortages were also evident in the 8th Army. The commander of the 58th Infantry Division, Lieutenant General von Gersdorff, accustomed to essential combat conditions, reported that in his view "with the completely inadequate means, a continuation of the attack is out of the question." The crossing of the Narew was only considered for the night of August 2.

For a week, the operation had essentially been at a standstill. General von Gallwitz assigned the 1st Guard Reserve Division to his left wing. When he also brought in the 50th Reserve Division from the Plüskow group on July 31, it felt only capable of holding the position, but no longer of attacking. On the same day, a Russian counterattack temporarily broke through the 83rd Infantry-

Page 237

Between Narew and Bug. Increasing Ammunition Demands.

The division inflicted heavy losses on them. At the same time, it became apparent that the situation of the parts that had crossed the Narew at Kamionka was still significantly less favorable than General von Gallwitz had assumed based on previous reports. General von Eben had indeed ordered the continuation of the attack on the entire front east of the Narew, but had to report in the evening that his ammunition columns at the Krempa distribution point, where the Watter Corps also received supplies, had to wait for days to be filled; the demands of his corps were barely met by a third there, which posed a serious threat to the continuation of the attack. Nevertheless, progress was made by the 2nd Infantry Division during the afternoon, especially in finally taking the Russian position controlling the crossing at Point 92. At Ostrolenka, rearward movements of the enemy were detected on the southern bank of the Narew. On the other hand, the Narew bridge of the 75th Reserve Division was destroyed again by Russian fire at the 8th Army. At 11 p.m., General von Eben ordered the continuation of the attack on the entire front for the following day to open the river crossing for the 8th Army.

Even August 1st brought no decisive progress. Complaints about ammunition shortages persisted, while the Russian artillery showed more activity than before. According to Major General Tappen of the Supreme Army Command, who spoke at the army headquarters in Krasne that day, there was enough ammunition for the east; however, due to long and poor transport connections from the unloading stations, it did not move forward to the required extent. Not only the chief of staff of the Eben Corps, Major General von Boyna, but also that of the Watter Corps, Lieutenant Colonel Reinhardt, made emphatic complaints about this situation in telephone conversations with the high command. The cholera threat was also not yet overcome. There were 97 cases; as a specialist in combating it, General Physician Dr. Hünermann joined the army group.

Meanwhile, it became known that the attack by the Mackensen Army Group was now progressing and that one of the forts of Iwangorod had already fallen. Foreign newspapers spoke of the impending evacuation of Warsaw. It seemed that the Russians were still stubbornly defending access to the large double-track railway Warsaw—Bialystok, which must have been important to them for the return of equipment and supplies.

1) See p. 308 and von Gallwitz, p. 314.

Page 238

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

On August 2, pilots reported that the evacuation of Warsaw seemed to be well advanced; numerous larger bivouacs had been observed south of the Bug towards Nowo Minsk. Increasingly, it had to be considered that the enemy was now also yielding in front of the Army Group Gallwitz. However, on this day, only the Eben Corps made some progress; on August 3, it found the Russian positions at the Narew near Ostrolenka vacated and moved forward. By evening, the railway from Goworowo to south of Ostrolenka had been reached; more than 2000 prisoners were taken. "The railway for the general attack in a southeasterly direction was clear," wrote General von Gallwitz later; it was to begin on August 4. Instead, the Commander-in-Chief East now ordered the continuation of the attack with the left wing on Sniadowo, thus sharply to the east. This required a turn from the previously southeast-directed front and the final abandonment of the thrust south over the Bug into the rear of Warsaw. Somewhat deviating from the decision of the Commander-in-Chief East, General von Gallwitz temporarily held on to the idea of advancing his left wing more southeasterly to cooperate with the Mackensen Army Group.

On August 4, the attack was also resumed at the Watter Corps, which had meanwhile been reinforced by the 1st Guard Reserve Division, and the enemy east of Goworowo, at and north of the road to Ostroln, was thrown out of its positions in fierce fighting. At the same time, the Eben Corps advanced up to 15 kilometers east of Ostrolenka. Subsequently, the "Seydewitz Corps" (58th Infantry and 75th Reserve Division) of the 8th Army began the advance south of the Narew to the east. Near the town of Nowogrod, the 10th Landwehr Division crossed the river. 5000 prisoners were the spoils of the day for the Gallwitz Army Group, 4000 of them by the Watter Corps. However, the territorial gain for this corps, especially on its right wing, remained small. In the evening, it was also learned that the enemy of the 9th Army had meanwhile retreated behind the fortifications of Warsaw and that it had completely vacated the left Vistula bank at Iwangorod. "One particularly felt the decision," noted General von Gallwitz on this day. However, he still expected new resistance from the enemy in a position that had meanwhile been prepared, which ran fairly straight from the northeastern end of the Pultny Marsh to the area west of Lomza.

1) von Gallwitz, p. 314. — 2) Ibid., p. 316.

Page 239

August 5th showed that the enemy was initially not even forced to retreat to these lines. The day brought no progress. The 38th Infantry Division was now also assigned from the right wing of the army group to the left wing, and the XI Army Corps command was to follow there. However, it was learned that the enemy had already abandoned Warsaw; the 9th Army had followed them to the Vistula. "The Russians are desperately defending themselves and have entrenched again," wrote the First General Staff Officer of the army group, Major Staps, on this day. "But I still hope that we will get through and, together with Mackensen, strangle them."

On August 6th, the left wing of the Beseler group reached the Fort Dembe on the Narew, which was not defended by the enemy. Otherwise, the day brought some progress in tough fighting towards the southwest, especially at Wonsowo and Czerwín, which, although not operationally significant, resulted in a larger number of prisoners, 14,000 men along with 69 machine guns, and also a capture of six guns, together with the battles of the last three days. An attempt by the 8th Army on this day to advance against Diswiec by releasing gas, however, did not achieve the hoped-for success. On the other hand, various points on the front reported backward movements by the enemy; numerous village fires indicated imminent, possibly larger retreat plans by the Russians.

4. The Events at the 9th Army and the Capture of Warsaw2).

Maps 5, 6, and 7, Sketch 12.

When Field Marshal von Hindenburg issued the fundamental order for the initiation of the Narew operation on July 3rd, the 9th Army had received the order to initially cover Poland to the left of the Vistula. However, if the Russians retreated here, they were to follow them to encircle Warsaw and Nowogeorgiewsk on the left bank of the Vistula.

After the transfer of the XVII and ½ XI Army Corps for the Narew attack, Field Marshal Leopold Prince of Bavaria, with Major General Grünert as Chief of Staff, at his ...

Page 240

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

Along a nearly 100-kilometer-long front, there were over 6½ divisions of infantry, including fully equipped assault troops from the 5th, 49th, and 50th Reserve Divisions, as well as a cavalry division. The strength ratio to the opposing Russian 2nd Army was estimated by the High Command at 83 German against 148 Russian battalions, but they felt significantly superior in artillery of all calibers and ammunition. As the results of aerial reconnaissance repeatedly indicated that the enemy would soon retreat to the Grojec-Blonie position, the idea of pursuit stood against the task of covering the border group, and the Supreme Army Commands and the Eastern Commander-in-Chief wished that the enemy, before withdrawing, would be disrupted again, if possible, by repeating the gas attack, to relieve the offensive of the Mackensen Army Group as well as the impending attack against the Narew.

On July 6, Field Marshal Prince Leopold ordered gas to be released as soon as the weather conditions allowed. "It is important to damage the enemy before it is too late, even if full tactical exploitation of the effect must be waived." Gas cylinders were installed in the area of the XXV Reserve Corps between Sumin and the southwestern corner of the northern adjoining Bzura Bend near the Beseler Group. The timing of the release was left to the commanding generals.

Already in the evening of the day, the weather conditions in the southern section seemed so favorable that General von Scheffer ordered the release at 9½. Between Sumin and Borzymow, the success seemed good. Further north, the release had been omitted due to insufficient wind strength, but then the gas cloud crept back, which had formed further south, and moved along the positions northwards beyond the Sucha. It came completely unexpectedly for the German troops stationed here and was not recognized in the darkness. Thus, serious losses occurred; a total loss of over 29 men from Russian fire was opposed by one of about 109 men from their own gas, of which — including all who died from the effects in the following days — 138 were dead. The effect also seems to have been significant on the enemy. Assault troops

1) Allocation on July 3 (from the right wing): Division of Genlt. von Menges (Replacement and Landwehr troops from the former Breslau Corps), Group of Gen. von Frommel: 1st G. D., 84th G. D., 89th I. D. (Landwehr and Depot troops from the former Posen Corps), 49th R. D., 50th R. D., 5th R. D. (Landwehr and Depot troops from the former Posen Corps), III. A. K. (5th R. D.), 83rd I. D. (Landwehr and Depot troops from the former Posen Corps), and 148th I. D. (Landwehr and Depot troops).

Page 241

Simultaneous Battles of the 9th Army.

They were able to bring back 112 prisoners, 11 machine guns, 1700 rifles, and other equipment as spoils from their positions. From the course of this third gas operation, the lesson was learned that blowing off at night would only be considered again when one's own troops were equipped with sufficient protective measures.

In the following days, signs of the enemy's impending retreat increased. The Russian IV Corps had been withdrawn from the front on the right wing of the army, and the enemy weakened in front of the southern adjoining Army Detachment Woyrsch. Daily, the pilots reported heavy rail traffic in the rear area. Prisoners testified that the area in front of the Blonie position was devastated, and villages there were burned down. Most of the population was being transported away, and everything that could be of any use, especially metals, even church bells and door handles, was being removed.

When the attack at Prasznysz began on July 13, the tension increased, but the 9th Army itself was further weakened. It had already given up the 50th Reserve Division; Landsturm troops and re-harnessed artillery had taken their place and were consolidated into a division under Major General Gerée. When the attack of the Gallwitz Army Group made good progress and on the right wing, which had been quiet opposite the 9th Army, began to move on the Vistula bank, the Commander-in-Chief East announced on July 16 that the 9th Army was to prepare for the siege of Warsaw and Noydogorjevoff; moreover, further forces were to be released in the event of a Russian retreat. The 83rd Infantry Division and the Menges Division were designated for this.

Already the following morning, it became apparent that the Russian retreat had become a fact. Almost without a fight, the 9th Army was able to follow up to the Grojec-Blonie position on July 17 and the two following days, where the enemy had settled again. A little over 1300 prisoners were the total spoils. However, the strength to overcome the long-prepared extensive enemy position was no longer sufficient after the release of the two divisions demanded by the Commander-in-Chief East; above all, there was a lack of the ammunition required for such a task.

On July 20, when the Russian counterattack directed against the Gallwitz Army Group suggested that the enemy was deploying stronger forces from the front of the

1) p. 268 and 281. — 2) p. 297.

Page 242

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

The 9th Army would withdraw, while the Army Detachment Woyrsch with its right wing was already approaching Iwangorod from the south, the High Command 9 believed that the enemy would not seriously defend the Grojec position, but would soon retreat to the Vistula and the bridgehead of Gora Kalwarja. The Supreme Commander East gave the order to break through the enemy positions between Grojec and Blonie in the direction of Tarczyn, "to gain the right bank of the Vistula above Warsaw and to attack Warsaw." Ammunition was made particularly available. On the left, the army was to secure against Nowogeorgiewsk, for its later siege General von Beseler transferred to the General Command of the III Reserve Corps to the Army Group Gallwitz, while Lieutenant General von Diringshofen took command of the troops of the left wing of the army.

Already on the morning of July 21, the expectation of the High Command 9 was confirmed. The enemy had evacuated the Grojec position at night, but still held at Blonie. The corps Scheffer (49th Reserve Division and Landsturm Division Gercke), previously assigned to break through to Tarczyn, was given the direction to the northeast towards Piaseczno. On July 22, the 9th Cavalry Division, as the right wing of the army, following the enemy, reached the Vistula over the Pilica estuary and turned north against Gora Kalwarja. The new Russian position extended in a semicircle of about ten kilometers around this place and then moved to the outskirts of Warsaw, which ran from Piaseczno via Nadarzyn and Blonie to the Vistula west of Nowogeorgiewsk.

On this day, the Supreme Army Command had announced that, according to reliable reports, the evacuation of Warsaw was to be expected soon, to avoid exposing it to bombardment. To the left of the Vistula, the extensive fortifications of the city, as aerial reconnaissance showed, had already been blown up by the enemy. The Supreme Army Command placed great importance on accelerating the attack on the outskirts of the fortress. The 9th Army planned for July 25 for this purpose. Field Marshal Prince Leopold directed the breakthrough against the Piaseczno-Nadarzyn section, with the aim of reaching Warsaw early here. The following days were spent preparing for the attack, especially with positioning the partly unlimbered batteries and their ammunition; air raids were launched against the Warsaw station and the Vistula bridges. As

1) G. 308 ff. around 317. — 2) S. 396. — 3) Cf. G. 341, note. — 4) S. 309.

Page 243

Attack of the 9th Army against the Positions of Warsaw.

Then on July 24, the news of the capture of the Narew fortresses Pultusk and Rozan came, it seemed to the Supreme Army Command and the Commander-in-Chief East that it was high time to advance against the Russians from the west with special emphasis. The attack was to be accelerated as much as possible.

According to plan, under the leadership of the General of Foot Artillery, Colonel Hüther, on July 25 at 11 a.m., the effectiveness shooting began from around 150 guns, about 80 of which were heavy and one heaviest indirect fire, on the eight-kilometer-wide attack section west of Piascezno. 16 battalions of infantry were available; they were to launch the assault at 3 p.m. The core was formed by the infantry of the 49th Reserve Division, which had so little time to prepare for its task that it could only work its way up to 600 to 800 meters to the enemy positions by the start of the effectiveness shooting and finally attempted the assault from 400 meters away. They mostly encountered Russian positions already in the field and found the enemy wire obstacles still intact. The artillery, consisting to a significant extent of militia with older guns, had not had the hoped-for effect in rain and poor visibility. Strong Russian fire struck the attackers. At 7 p.m., General von Scheffer reported to the Army High Command that, despite the use of all available ammunition, it had not been possible to make the Russian position ready for assault. He called off the attack. The attempt had cost 750 men in losses. The Commander-in-Chief, who had personally attended the attack of the 49th Reserve Division, ordered another careful artillery preparation to repeat the attack afterward. New ammunition had to be awaited for this.

Meanwhile, the resistance strength of the Russian positions began to be assessed higher. According to artillery reports, they seemed to be more strongly built overall than was the case at Gorlice; however, the amounts of ammunition assigned for combat there were greater. In the evening, the Commander-in-Chief East reported to the Supreme Army Command: Yesterday's battle and reconnaissance had shown that the Russian positions were extraordinarily strong. Heavy field howitzers did not penetrate the covers; whether these were reinforced concrete had not yet been determined. In agreement with the High Command, the Commander-in-Chief East considered a breakthrough possible after systematic destruction of the position by heavy indirect fire with appropriate ammunition use. Otherwise, now also

Page 244

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

on the right bank of the Vistula east of Gora Kalwarja, strong new Russian positions have been identified.

On July 27, Generaloberst von Woyrsch informed the Commander-in-Chief East that his left wing, the German Landwehr Corps, was to force the Vistula crossing between Iwangorod and Gora Kalwarja, at the mouth of the Radomka, on the night of July 29. For this, he requested the support of the 9th Army through feint operations below the mouth of the Pilica. However, the enemy pushed back the German 9th Cavalry Division, which was standing in a 22-kilometer-wide front, somewhat on these days. The wide deployment of the army was therefore not considered entirely without concern, as it had concentrated all its strength in a narrow space against the planned breakthrough point and was no longer so mobile due to its entire composition with built-in, partly unmanned guns and numerous siege and bridge equipment, that it could evade at any time. At the same time, it became apparent that the amount of ammunition necessary for the destruction of the Russian position and for subsequent new attack preparations would probably not be available at all. Rather, the Supreme Army Command had pointed out that, according to the evening report of the previous day, there seemed to be little prospect of early successes against the Blonie position: in this case, a reinforcement of the Narew strike group or the Woyrsch army detachment by parts of the 9th Army was in question, "all the more so as, according to all reports, the Russians will hardly hold Warsaw if it is threatened from the east."

The Commander-in-Chief East replied: The Russians had about six divisions in the Blonie position and were conducting the defense very actively. A further weakening of the 9th Army was therefore impossible, even if the attack were to be stopped. In view of the currently high water level of the Vistula and the Russian fortifications along the eastern bank, the attempt to cross at the mouth of the Radomka seemed to him to be of little prospect. "Within the framework of the current operations, it would therefore be more promising to either reinforce the 9th Army with the Landwehr Corps to initially push the Russians into Warsaw, where they would have strong forces free to deploy — or to deploy the Landwehr Corps on the right wing of the Narew strike group to accelerate the fall of Warsaw through vigorous pressure from the north." General von Falkenhayn replied: "Although I consider a breakthrough of the

1) p. 406.

Page 245

Battles of the 9th Army before Warsaw.

The Russians from the Blonie position moving westward with further objectives are not considered likely, so the 9th Army temporarily refrains from deploying forces, respecting Your Excellency's position. However, for various reasons, the transition visit of the Woyrsch Army Division must be adhered to. A simultaneous operation of the 9th Army north of the Pilica estuary is urgently desired. The Commander-in-Chief East now ordered the 9th Army to cease the breakthrough attempt "due to the large expenditure of ammunition" and to support the operation of Colonel General von Woyrsch. The idea of breaking through the Warsaw positions was thus abandoned. Field Marshal Prince Leopold redistributed the troops more evenly along the front, especially strengthening the right wing, the Frommel Group, which had to push the enemy back to Gora Kalwarja before immediate support from the Woyrsch Army Division could be considered. Three heaviest batteries, which had meanwhile arrived for deployment against the fortifications of Warsaw, were to be withdrawn again, and the position reached so far was to be expanded for defense.

On July 28 and 29, the enemy retreated before the Frommel Group back to Gora Kalwarja, while simultaneously the left wing of Colonel General von Woyrsch surprisingly gained a foothold on the eastern bank of the Vistula south of the Pilica. To advance further, the Colonel General also requested continued support from the 9th Army, which then initially conducted an attack with its 14 aircraft against the railway facilities of Warsaw on July 30. Further attacks, including by the airship Z 12, followed, but without achieving decisive destruction given the state of bombing at the time. Moreover, the 9th Cavalry Division, as before, was to cooperate with the Woyrsch Army Division. It soon joined with the Higher Cavalry Commander 3, General von Frommel.

During the course of August 3, it became apparent that the enemy had already begun the expected retreat from the Blonie position. By noon, without any fighting having occurred, they were in full retreat before the entire front of the 9th Army. Before the pursuing German troops, they seemed to have withdrawn with the main forces to the outer forts of Warsaw by the evening of the day; only on and north of the road from Blonie did they still hold the foreland. According to air reports, the rubble of the blown-up Warsaw fortifications

1) p. 407 f.

Page 246

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

expanded and connected through field installations into a continuous position. Field Marshal Prince Leopold had ordered the enemy to be thrown into Warsaw the following day. On August 4, the advance before the fortified line of forts halted again; behind it, the enemy seemed to continue the retreat through the city and across the Vistula to the east. The following day, the Scheffer Corps pushed through along the road from Piaseczno. But already during the night, the Russians evacuated the line of forts and Warsaw itself and retreated to the right bank of the Vistula. On the morning of August 5, the troops of the German 9th Army entered the city. The population remained calm. The Vistula bridges were destroyed; a firefight ensued across the river.

With the capture of the Polish capital, a widely visible success of the operations in Poland was achieved. Although there was hardly any military booty to record, the impression on the entire world was of considerable significance. The Russians had destroyed war equipment and militarily important supplies before their withdrawal. The city and population had suffered little; traffic proceeded as usual.

5. Disputes between the Supreme Army Command and the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. — Formation of the Prince Leopold Army Group.

Maps 6 and 7.

As the attack in Courland was concluded with the reaching of the Aa section by the end of July, and that of General von Gallwitz had again come to a halt, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief considered it urgent to bring into action the operation over the Njemen against Vilna, which had been advocated several times since the beginning of the month in Posen, most recently on July 22, and to first take Rowno. According to what General von Tscharner himself had expressed in his communications of July 21 and 24, he also seemed to agree with this plan and only considered the time for its execution as not yet arrived. Just now, he had the supply of the heaviest 5th A. batteries, which the Eastern Commander-in-Chief

1) Information on the booty of the 9th Army during the advance against the Vistula could not be determined, losses amounted to about 7000 men.  
2) p. 464. — 3) p. 326 ff. — 4) p. 271 ff. and 317 ff. 5) Ibid.

Page 247

for deployment against Kowno, which Generaloberst von Conrad had immediately requested and also received assurance of, was prevented by pointing out that they would be needed against Iwangorod, for the Vistula crossing, and for the advance of the 4th Army. However, since this seemed to be a purely Austro-Hungarian task, which Generaloberst von Conrad was primarily called upon to decide, this reasoning was not considered entirely valid by the Supreme Commander East. On July 26, Field Marshal von Hindenburg addressed the Kaiser with the following report: "Your Imperial and Royal Majesty, I respectfully and dutifully venture to submit my view of the current war situation: The enemy is withdrawing forces in the direction of Brest Litowsk before the armies of Field Marshal von Mackensen. Their transport is likely, I see against Army Group Gallwitz, whether in the direction of Bialystok, or against Army Group Gallwitz, or in the direction of Wilna. The striking power of the armies of Field Marshal von Mackensen seems to be essentially exhausted by the ongoing battles, and thus the success of the operations ordered by Your Majesty is in question. The Vistula has become wider due to continuous rain, a crossing between Iwangorod and Warsaw, as long as the enemy holds the right bank fortified, is therefore no longer feasible in my opinion. The Army Group Gallwitz will probably only gain ground. However, if the enemy deploys its forces against them, their striking power will soon weaken unless they are further immediately reinforced. Even if they are successful, their advance will never lead to the defeat of the enemy army. At most, they can push the Russians back against the Brest Litowsk—Bialystok line. However, the decision of the war has not yet been made despite all successes. The Russians must be hit much more sensitively! This can only be achieved in the current war situation by strengthening the 10th Army, capturing Kowno, and an offensive by the 10th and Njemen Army against the Russian connections. This operation could be initiated by providing assault equipment on Kowno and by strengthening the 10th Army with parts of the armies of Field Marshal von Mackensen, the Army Detachment Woyrsch, and the 9th Army — but only after completing their current attack." When the letter arrived in Pleß, General von Falkenhayn had just left for the western theater of war. The response was therefore delayed until July 30. On that day, the General-

Page 248

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

The chief of staff immediately upon his return from the western theater of war submitted the Emperor's decision. Just a week ago, on July 24, he had presented his intention to enclose the fortresses of Ivangorod, Warsaw, Nowogeorgiewsk, but otherwise to pursue the retreating Russian army to destroy it before it crosses the Bug(1). Meanwhile, on July 29, the Vistula crossing by the Woyrsch army division succeeded, and at the same time, the Mackensen army group resumed its offensive after a several-day pause with a splendid initial success. Thus, General von Falkenhayn now points out that the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had based his assessment of the difficulties of these two army parts on incorrect assumptions. However, the favorable turn on the southern part of the Polish theater of war had also revived his hope of achieving a great success on the chosen path. He did not believe that the Russians would evade the decisive battle by retreating halfway to the Brest-Bialystok line. The relevant passage in the Field Marshal's letter was annotated with the remark: "The Russians must be defeated beforehand before they decide to do so."

The Emperor agreed to the proposals of his Chief of General Staff. The letter, in which he informed the Eastern Commander-in-Chief of the decision Remnitis, for the first time also contained a certain concession to the operational concept that he had been advocating with increasing emphasis since the meeting in Posen on July 2. General von Falkenhayn admitted that it would undoubtedly be highly desirable to advance with a strong army on the middle Njemen, but continued: "Time and space unfortunately make it impossible to form this army from the contributions of Woyrsch and Mackensen in such a way that the enemy could not easily take timely countermeasures. A certain consequence would be the stagnation of all our forces deployed here until winter. This must be avoided under all circumstances. Therefore, the only option left is to continue the defeat of the enemy with the strongest continuation of the

1) Diary entry of Colonel General von Plessen, who added: "I fear this intention will no longer succeed, as the departure has begun in a timely and very skillful manner. With this situation, our position worsens significantly, as we must hurry westward with their army stage against the forces gathered behind the Bug." In fact, the situation in the West at that time did not indicate this (p. 99 f.).

Page 249

Discussion with the Supreme Army Command.

To strive for ongoing operations1). His Majesty hopes that Your Excellency can significantly contribute to success by advancing strong parts of the Narew assault troops on the right Bug bank and similarly advancing parts of the Njemen Army in the area east of the Njemen."

Decisive for this negative stance was still the desire to conclude the offensive on the eastern theater of war in the foreseeable future. This line of thought also corresponded to the intention to give further impact to the successful but not yet secured Vistula crossing of the Woyrsch Army Detachment by bringing in reinforcements. On July 31, the inquiry was therefore made to the Commander-in-Chief East: "The Vistula crossing of the Landwehr Corps has already led to a welcome impact on the enemy. The effect would be significantly increased by bringing in additional forces. An attempt will be made to make troops from the southeastern front available for these purposes. Support could be provided more quickly by the 9th Army. I therefore ask Your Excellency for a prompt notification of whether at least one infantry division of this army can be released." Since the High Command 9 did not consider the release of an infantry division feasible in any sector, only a cavalry division was released2).

1) In contrast, the War Minister present at the Great Headquarters, General Wild von Hohenborn, and the Chief of the Field Etappen Inspection, Major General Groener, essentially held the same position as the Commander-in-Chief East. General Groener noted in his private diary: "July 28. Meeting with General von Wild. We agree in a few minutes on an offensive with the 10th Army. General von Falkenhayn is too inflexible in his thinking, clinging rigidly to the decision once made and repeatedly returning to it. General von Falkenhayn is for further advancing at Gallwitz on Siedlce, attacking Malin. — July 31. Discussion with Lappen about the operation. He believes that we lack the forces for the large pincer movement. He still wants to bring over the III Army Corps from the west to Gallwitz, where everything available must be deployed. The mistake is, we must not aim with Falkenhayn to destroy the Russian army as much as possible. They want to be content with the defense on the Bug line, to then bring their ten corps through a breakthrough to the west. Falkenhayn repeatedly returns to this idea. Groener, who led the task for an offensive order in the east through his own operation against the Russians' rear connections. For this purpose, everything possible from the Bug Army to Gallwitz should be brought out to the question of whether the operation begun in Gallwitz, encompassing the entire Russian army, can be brought to an end." — 2) C. 339.

Page 250

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front:

The hope for "overthrowing the enemy through the most vigorous continuation of ongoing operations," as General von Falkenhayn's letter of July 30 shows, was very much based on the success of quickly advancing strong parts of the Narew assault group on the right Bug bank. Their slow progress threatened to nullify this hope at the beginning of August. However, he considered further reinforcement of this group necessary and suggested to the Eastern Commander-in-Chief on August 2 whether the transfer of one to two divisions of the 9th Army to the Narew was now indicated. "Even if the Russians wanted to advance on the right bank, from the fortress triangle to the west, which I consider very unlikely, they will not be able to change the course of the main decision in any way. The position of the Commander-in-Chief of the 9th Army would indeed be severely affected temporarily. However, I am ready to request an order from His Majesty that would remove any sharpness from the process."

Meanwhile, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief had already decided to reinforce the 10th Army with new forces as preparation for the future attack against Kowno. He replied to the Supreme Army Command on August 3: "I currently do not consider it possible to withdraw one to two divisions from the entire front, which is under attack and in close contact with the enemy parts of the 9th Army. If the Russians vacate the Blonie position, one to two divisions will be freed. I will prepare everything to expedite the transport. However, I do not consider their deployment at the Narew favorable. There is no lack of troops here, but we are fighting purely frontally in very difficult terrain conditions. I can only support the deployment of the forces that may be freed up at the 9th Army at Kowno, to decisively act against the rear connections of the Russians in conjunction with the Njemen Army after capturing the fortress. Kowno maintains only weak fire. A quick deployment is still possible here. However, I will attack Kowno without reinforcing my weak left flank to prepare an offensive here. I have given the order for this. I request the allocation of ammunition for the heaviest artillery and heavy field howitzer ammunition. If I receive additional heavy artillery, I would be grateful." In response to a query from General von Falkenhayn, this position was supplemented: "Before the 9th Army, the enemy apparently about to, Blonie-

Page 251

Formation of the Army Group Prince Leopold.

To clear the position. No sign of any slackening of resistance before Gallwitz. If the attack by Gallwitz's left wing succeeds tomorrow and thus the right wing of the 8th Army advances, further resistance is initially expected, then in the Czerwony Bor position. The Russians will probably also bring forces freed by shortening their front against the left wing from Commander-in-Chief East."

When the withdrawal of the enemy from the Blonie position was confirmed during the day, the Commander-in-Chief East considered the time ripe to further weaken the 9th Army. He wanted to start on August 5 with a division that was to be assigned to the 10th Army for the attack on Kowno. In his war diary, the explanation is given on August 3: "Even now it seems obvious from our point of view that the current operation Mackensen-Boyrich-Gallwitz will probably lead to a retreat of the Russians, but not to a decision; on the contrary, the decisive operation over Kowno against the rear connections of the Russians no longer seems as promising as before after the retreat of the Russians, because the enemy, then standing on a shorter line, can free up forces and parry the blow, and he will be all the more able to do so the longer we wait with the offensive."

While the German 9th Army captured Warsaw, the Commander-in-Chief East prepared the transport of the 84th Infantry Division (from five heavy field howitzer batteries (of the 23 previously united before Warsaw) of the 9th Army for deployment against Kowno. He also considered how the vast Russian territories conquered by his troops should be administered in the future. At noon on August 5, he received the following order from the Supreme Army Command: "His Majesty has ordered: The 9th Army and Army Detachment Woyrich will be united into an army group under the command of Prince Leopold of Bavaria and will temporarily come directly under the Supreme Army Command."

Thus, the 9th Army was withdrawn from the Commander-in-Chief East. The newly formed independent Army Group Prince Leopold was to

1) p. 475 f.  
2) A diary entry by then-Captain von Baldow from August 4 read: "Hopefully we will finally free up forces that we can send to Kowno. If we have the fortress, we will be much more pleased than with Warsaw, which is much more important. We have now come so far that Gallwitz is already advancing and will capture Warsaw and Nowogeorgiewsk. Then we can finally strengthen our left wing."

Page 252

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

“under securing against the forces possibly still located in the Vistula fortresses, advancing with all means against and over the Lukow—Siedlce line”).

That the Supreme Army Command was considering such plans had been known to the Commander-in-Chief East for some time, yet the order came as a complete surprise. After a series of incomparable victories and almost a year of successful activity as the sole commander over the German part of the Eastern Front, Field Marshal von Hindenburg felt the restriction of his command area, ordered on the very day of the capture of the Polish capital, as an affront. His staff felt the same way. This exacerbated the opposition to the Supreme Army Command to the utmost, in conjunction with factual disagreements, leading to an irritated exchange of telegrams with them. General von Falkenhayn's explicit designation of the formation of the new army group as a temporary, purely operational measure necessitated by the war situation and command arrangements with the Austro-Hungarian army, which did not restrict the administrative area of the Commander-in-Chief East, could not erase the feeling that, besides factual reasons, at least the intention played a role to limit the power of the Commander-in-Chief East and thereby deprive him of the opportunity to reinforce the 10th Army and thus to the planned thrust over the Njemen.

Despite the reorganization of circumstances, the Commander-in-Chief East adhered to the plan to dispatch the parts of the 9th Army (84th Infantry Division and heavy batteries) already designated against Kowno, but encountered decisive rejection from the Supreme Army Command. On August 6, General von Falkenhayn reiterated his conviction that “in the current situation, everything depends on defeating the enemy in Poland by attacking from all sides, and that rapid advancement of the wings is only possible if strong pressure is exerted from the Vistula.” As a replacement for the requested parts of the 9th Army for use against Kowno, he proposed the 115th Infantry Division from the west, which could only arrive on August 12. The heavy batteries were to be released only after the 9th Army had forced the Vistula crossing, thus at a quite uncertain time. From the troops of this army, the Commander-in-Chief East was left only with the

1) Operations of the Army Group Prince Leopold p. 410 and 414 f.

Page 253

Conflicts with the Supreme Army Command.

The division reinforced the previous Westernhagen unit, consisting of Landwehr and Landsturm, which had formed the northern wing and was designated against the southern front of Nowogeorgiewsk. The entirety of these events prompted a letter from Field Marshal von Hindenburg to General von Falkenhayn, in which he bitterly complained on August 12 that "the degree of independence essential for his position, naturally serving the whole, had gradually and repeatedly been restricted in a diminishing form to an extent that not only impaired his creativity but also significantly complicated the conduct of operations."

Meanwhile, the Njemen Army had reached Poniewiez and Mitau, and the 10th Army had initiated the attack against the large Njemen fortress Kowno. Despite the extremely limited resources available according to the binding instructions of the Supreme Army Command, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief was determined to continue doing everything possible to gain ground in the Njemen area and thereby pave the way for a future operation over Wilna. However, mustering the necessary forces was difficult after the transfer of the 9th Army, as the large fortress Nowogeorgiewsk also had to be dealt with, where about four divisions were pinned down. On August 7, General von Falkenhayn pointed out: "Our ammunition situation makes it completely impossible to simultaneously undertake the siege of two fortresses"; since the siege of Kowno had already begun, that of Nowogeorgiewsk had to be postponed. But just two days later, he demanded that the deployment of the heaviest Austrian-Hungarian batteries, freed from Iwangorod, be directed first against Nowogeorgiewsk, whose accelerated capture he "must place special value on given the current situation and the reports on the condition of the garrison." Thus, in the following days, the attack on Kowno and that on Nowogeorgiewsk proceeded side by side.

Once again, Field Marshal von Hindenburg reported his assessment of the overall situation to the Supreme Army Command on the morning of August 13: "The operation in the East, despite excellent achievements of the Narew thrust, has not led to the destruction of the enemy. The Russian

1) pp. 466 and 476 f. 2) The reasons for the change in assessment could not be determined. 3) p. 377 f.

Page 254

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

as expected, has escaped the pincer and can be pushed back frontally in the desired direction. He is able to regroup at will with the help of his good routes and direct strong forces against my left wing, which threatens his connections. I consider this endangered. On the other hand, a decisive blow is only possible from the Kowno area, although unfortunately a considerable amount of time has been lost for this. I therefore urgently request a reinforcement of my left wing again, in order to either become offensive depending on their outcome or at least to hold the territory gained so far. I emphasize again that I saw the only possibility of destroying the enemy in the offensive of my left wing against connections and the rear of the enemy. This offensive is probably still the only means to avoid a new campaign, in case it is not already too late.

In contrast, General von Falkenhayn stated in his detailed response of August 14: “The destruction of the enemy has never been hoped for from the ongoing operations in the East, but merely a decisive victory corresponding to the purposes of the Supreme Army Command. The destruction as a whole should not have been pursued in this case, according to my view, which must remain decisive after approval by His Majesty. The basic conditions are simply lacking for this, if one does not strive to destroy an opponent who is numerically far superior and facing frontally, who has excellent connections, unlimited time, and unrestricted space, while one is forced to operate in railway-less, path-poor terrain with a tight time limit and in conjunction with many troops that are not very powerful, some even not resistant. However, no one will doubt that the enemy has already been decisively defeated for our purposes, who realizes that the Russians have lost about 750,000 men as prisoners alone in three months, countless material, besides Galicia the Kingdom of Poland and the Duchy of Courland, finally the possibility of seriously threatening Austria-Hungary during the initiation of the Italian war or at all in the foreseeable future, as well as the other, their Odessa army, to deploy at the critical moment in the Balkans. There is also some prospect that the results of the operations will increase, as it has been possible to throw no less than five thoroughly defeated enemy armies into the area between Bialystok and Brest Litowsk.” – In contrast, the Chief of the General Staff now admitted for the first time that the operation would probably have been even more decisive if it had been possible to simultaneously strike over the Njemen

Page 255

Disputes with the Supreme Army Command.

to conduct1). However, the Supreme Army Command had no forces for this, and Your Excellency considered the use of the Njemen Army in Courland more necessary. With the latter, as I note to prevent misunderstandings, no judgment is expressed, but simply the fact stated." Then General von Falkenhayn addressed the concerns of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief for his left wing and requested information on the news that justified this concern. He stated: "The Russian 13th Army2) is still in Volhynia, and the divisions withdrawn from at least the Galician front are mostly in Poland. I also suspect that the Russians will attempt to achieve successes in Courland. So far, however, I am not aware of any forces that Your Excellency could not counter with your own means, for example, the 3rd Reserve and the 115th Infantry Division3). Reinforcement of your left wing from the west or the Mackensen and Prince Leopold army groups is currently excluded; it would only be feasible from the Narew assault group once the current operation is completed. However, it will always be necessary to consider the general war situation before forces are withdrawn from the 10th or Njemen Army. How much my view on the effectiveness of the offensive actions of the mentioned parts aligns with Your Excellency's, I have already expressed in my telegram No. 43884).

Regarding the situation in front of the northern flank, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief provided clarification on August 15, stating that the enemy had recently reinforced there with about three infantry and three cavalry divisions, and that there were reports of additional troops arriving5); since "the Russians have good rail connections, while ours are poor," they could very well seek success there. Furthermore, the Eastern Commander-in-Chief emphasized that, in his opinion, the forces at the beginning of July were sufficient to facilitate the frontal pursuit of the Mackensen army group by encircling the Russian northern flank and thus a

1) Previously, he had only considered such an operation as a subsequent addition to the Mackensen-Galicia offensive (pp. 277 and 342). The idea of the simultaneous Njemen thrust reappears on August 26 in a letter to Colonel General von Conrad. 2) pp. 419 and 424. 3) pp. 354 and 346. Both divisions were meanwhile deployed against Kowno. 4) Telegram from July 21, 1915, afternoon (p. 318). 5) p. 533.

Page 256

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

to achieve a significantly more favorable outcome of the operation. Since this assessment included the renunciation of the Narew operation, it bypassed the thoughts of General von Falkenhayn, for whom such renunciation was never in question. That General von Falkenhayn finally made the forces freed by the fall of Nowogeorgiewsk on August 19 available for the Njemen area did not in any way alleviate the extremely heightened tension between the two highest German command posts. It had been continuously growing since the formation of the Prince Leopold Army Group. A new point of contention had already arisen due to the need to lift the outdated subordination of parts of the homeland area (six deputy general commands along with their fortresses) under the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. On August 24, General von Falkenhayn responded to the complaints of the Field Marshal from August 12. He emphasized that none of the measures he himself proposed or ordered according to his authority had ever been carried out for reasons other than purely factual ones. In impressive sentences, he then stated: "In my position, I have to bear the responsibility for the overall course of the war before my conscience, before our King and Lord, and before our descendants entirely alone. No one can share it with me, no one can relieve me of it, no one can even help in the slightest. In this position, to subordinate my honest, factual conviction to the opinion of anyone else, no matter how high they stand, or even to personal consideration, no matter how venerable the person in question may be, would be a crime for which there is no closer designation, not because I consider myself better than many others — I know my inadequacy all too well — but because in my office, which was not entrusted to me by my own doing or at my own request, but merely through the trust of His Majesty in the most difficult moment of the war, according to my understanding, I must not make factual compromises, and because my absolute duty in this office is to unite all parts of our armed forces in joint action for the good of the whole according to the unified will of the supreme command, which of course only represents that of His Majesty."

This letter from the Chief of Staff was not yet in hand

Page 257

Disputes with the Supreme Army Command.

of the Field Marshal General, when on August 24 the General Government of Warsaw was formed under General von Beseler and, contrary to earlier hopes, the main part of the Russian territory previously administered by him was also taken from him. Field Marshal General von Hindenburg then stated on August 25 in a letter addressed to the Supreme Army Command and simultaneously copied to the Military Cabinet and the Ministry of War: The title "Commander-in-Chief of all German Forces in the East" granted to him in the urgency of need had now become a cutting edge, he asked to consider a change. However, this was rejected by the Supreme Army Command with detailed reasoning, pointing out that the use intended for the Field Marshal General by His Majesty would still necessitate the creation of a similar title. This communication could no longer mitigate the sharpness of the resulting opposition in any way.

6. The 12th and 8th Army in the Pursuit through Poland.

Maps 6 and 7, Sketch 22.

a) The Pursuit from August 7 to 11.

On the morning of August 6, General von Falkenhayn asked the Gallwitz High Command whether the army group would "get through." Colonel Marquard replied that "there was a good prospect." When asked for an operational proposal, he recommended strengthening the right wing of the 8th Army. Finally, General von Falkenhayn again pointed out the importance of the army group's operation. In the afternoon, Colonel Marquard, apparently at the instigation of General von Gallwitz, called Major General Tappen and repeated: "The operation must not be stopped; it is going well. If forces are available, they must be directed to the right wing of the 8th Army." At the border against the direction of attack maintained by the Gallwitz army group, a larger gap was already forming to the southeast. At the same time, General von Gallwitz also suggested to the High Command of the 8th Army that it should strengthen its right wing with its own forces. That the army itself meanwhile at

1) p. 346. — 2) Connection to C. 333.  
3) According to records at the A.O.K. Gallwitz. — To what extent the D.O.B. was informed about these discussions could no longer be determined (p. 352).

Page 258

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

On August 3, the 6th Landwehr Brigade had to be transferred to the 10th Army1), which was a very surprising measure by the Eastern Commander-in-Chief. To comply with his directive to move the left wing towards Sniadowo without abandoning the intention of advancing southeast, General von Gallwitz extended the left wing with reserve troops to connect with the 8th Army, while maintaining the southeast direction for the core of his army group.

To what extent the Eastern Command was informed about these intentions and the direct communication between the subordinate army group and the Supreme Army Command can no longer be determined2). In any case, it had a completely different view than General von Gallwitz. According to General Ludendorff, "there was nothing more to gain between the Bug and Narew." The Eastern Commander-in-Chief also felt how the Supreme Army Command ensured that "nothing independent was ordered from his side"3).

On August 7, the Gallwitz Army Group, long the strongest of all formations under the Eastern Commander-in-Chief, received the designation 12th Army4; its group Beseler, intended for the attack against Nowogeorgiewsk, came directly under the Eastern Commander-in-Chief the following day4).

The morning of August 7, after almost two weeks of stalemate, brought costly frontal battles with no visible success. On a broad front, the enemy had vacated positions they had stubbornly defended for about ten days during the night, as the Russian 12th Army, positioned east of Rozan, was, according to the official Russian account5), "gradually so worn down that they were no longer able to hold off the Germans even for a short time." Only in front of the center of the German 12th Army did the enemy still stand on the eastern edge of Pulmyn-

1) p. 344 note and p. 475.  
2) The then First General Staff Officer of the Army Group, now Colonel a. D. Staff, wrote to the Reichsarchiv in the summer of 1931: "I fundamentally informed the Eastern Commander-in-Chief about everything unless Colonel Marquard expressly wished it to be omitted. This happened more than once or twice, as it was a reason for the later sharp differences between Ludendorff and Tappen, whose persistence Colonel Marquard tried to avoid." In contrast, General Ludendorff stated in a letter from December 1931 to the Reichsarchiv that he had never heard of these conversations.  
3) p. 376.  
4) p. 376.  
5) Njesnamow, p. 192 f.

Page 259

Between Bug and Narew. The Objective of the Operation.

Following the enemy, often fighting against rearguards, the troops of this army reached the lower Narew and the Bug from Dębe to below Wyszków by the evening of the day. The fort Zegrze, abandoned by the enemy, was occupied and subsequently a line was taken, which ran six kilometers northwest past Wyszków over the eastern edge of the Pułtusk breach, east past Wonieść to the Ruz-Bach. Here, in the direction of the Narew lowlands west of Lomza, the 8th Army joined. Again, 4000 prisoners were brought in. The enemy apparently was in an orderly retreat to the east from the previously advancing arc against the middle Vistula. The bridges over the lower Bug had been demolished, numerous localities set on fire.

General von Gallwitz still intended to pursue in a generally southeast direction to intercept the Russian forces retreating from Warsaw to the east at the Bug. In contrast, Lieutenant General Ludendorff, in a telephone conversation on this matter, doubted the prospects of such an attempt and again pointed to parallel pursuit to the east and close connection to the 8th Army. Accordingly, the commander-in-chief gave the 12th Army the order on August 8 to advance north of the Bug against the line Maków—Zambrów—Łomża, with main forces on Łomża. Subsequently, the 8th Army was given Rutki as its target; it was to take Łomża. Meanwhile, as General von Gallwitz again expressed hope of capturing the enemy retreating from the Vistula at the Bug, Lieutenant General Ludendorff wanted to take this possibility into account. General von Gallwitz was, however, not very satisfied: "My new front," he wrote later, "left to the east, right to the south, then formed almost a right angle. Ludendorff, however, considered the army strong enough to be able to turn sufficient forces to the southeast against Ciechanowiec, in addition to the front to the east and the Bug occupation in the south. In such an approach, I saw the idea of encircling the retreating enemy fade significantly." In the same matter, Colonel Marquard and Major Staff also approached Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmann, pointing out that if operations continued over the line Nur—Wizna, i.e., beyond the narrow point between Bug and Narew, the forces would not be sufficient. The commander-in-chief

1) von Gallwitz, p. 320 f.  
2) According to the communication from Colonel a. D. Staff from the summer of 1931 to the Reichsarchiv, the renewed inquiry was made at the special request of Gen. von Gallwitz.  
† World War. Volume VIII.

Page 260

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

However, he often did not let this deter him in his decisions. General Ludendorff had already informed the 8th Army that it was desirable to take Lomza as soon as possible to free up forces for the 10th Army, with the 3rd Reserve Division being considered for transfer. In the evening, he agreed in a conversation with Colonel Marquard that the 12th Army no longer intended to cross the Bug, and concluded by saying: "If you want to wait a little longer, you must hold far forward. I believe you have enough forces."

The view recorded in the files, which the Chief of Staff of the 12th Army, Colonel Marquard, presented to his Commander-in-Chief in the evening, sought to bridge the differences: "The enemy cannot, due to poor road conditions, withdraw all the forces located there, about 16 corps, from the arc between the Vistula and Bug over Brest Litowsk and south of it. Rather, at least five to six corps must cross the Bug northwest of the fortress, even if some corps are transported by rail. The task of the 12th Army is to prevent this retreat to the northeast or at least to hinder the enemy as much as possible. If the enemy begins the backward movement immediately, the 12th Army may no longer be able to catch him at the Bug. Therefore, operations must be conducted so that in this worst case, one can fall on the enemy's flank further east — in the Bielsk area. The longer the enemy delays the withdrawal, the more likely one can still engage him at the Bug. If he offers sustained resistance in a position forward of Brest, one can completely get behind him. To accommodate all these possibilities, one will have to pursue the now defeated enemy with a strong left wing and under echeloning to the right along the Bug." Accordingly, Colonel Marquard wanted, as soon as the current resistance was broken, to deploy the left wing, the Eben Corps, on Zambrow, the Hilsberg Corps past Andrzejow to the north, the Watter Corps and the XVII Army Corps against the enemy north of Andrzejow and at the Bug, the XVII Reserve Corps folded to the right. "The main idea" must remain to encircle the enemy "in the north and push him back over the Bug or in a southeasterly direction. Only if execution proves impossible and a concentration of the main forces on other parts of the front becomes necessary should this viewpoint be abandoned. — If the enemy prepares in a bridgehead position at the Bug, the following should be indicated: XVII Army Corps between Bug and ...

Page 261

Successes between Bug and Narew.

Road Ostrow—Malkin, Corps Watter subsequently from the north and northeast.”

Meanwhile, the enemy had again vacated his positions in front of the right wing of the 12th Army during the night, while he held tenaciously in front of the left and the 8th Army. In pursuit, the XVII Reserve Corps (85th Landwehr and 86th Infantry Division) reached Wizkow and east of it the Bug. At Tucholka, the front turned north; the XVII Army Corps (88.1), 36th and 35th Infantry Division) reached this watercourse. In the area west of Ostrow, the Corps Watter joined (3rd Infantry-1st Guard Reserve and 4th Guard Infantry Division, followed by 26th Infantry Division), then the newly formed Corps Plüskow on this army wing (54th Infantry, 50th Reserve and 38th Infantry Division) and finally the Corps Eben (83.2, 37th Infantry Division and Landsturm units). The enemy held a position that ran about eight kilometers west and northwest of Ostrow over the large artillery range there and then followed the course of the road to Sniadowo to the Ruz Brook. Here, the 2nd and 37th Infantry Division had unexpectedly broken into the Russian position just south of the brook, but could only hold the captured ground with heavy losses. Further north, the enemy held the Ruz Brook and his position in front of the 8th Army, which now advanced south of the Narew with three divisions (58th Infantry, 75th Reserve, and 10th Landwehr Division).

On August 9, the listening service revealed the further retreat of the Russian radio stations on both sides of the Bug. The Corps Plüskow and Eben broke through the enemy rear guard positions on the road Ostrow—Sniadowo and pursued several kilometers beyond them. Progress was also made in other parts of the front. The greatest difficulties were in the direction of Ostrow, where knowledge of the artillery range terrain may have offered special advantages to the Russian artillery. In the 8th Army, the 10th Landwehr Division captured the weakly defended western fort of Lomza, but the road Sniadowo—Lomza was not reached. From the north, the 1st Landwehr Division approached the outdated fortress, which the enemy seemed to be evacuating.

On this day, the 12th High Command again communicated directly with the Supreme Army Command about the situation and intentions, with Colonel Marquard calling Major General Lappen at noon and explaining over the phone that south of the Bug the enemy was moving east.

1) Previous Division Menges.

Page 262

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

retreats, but the 12th Army constantly throws new forces against it. The army's business agents were decreasing, and it was feared that they would arrive too weak at the decisive point in the enemy's flank. It was therefore desirable that the left wing of the 9th Army, whose XXV Reserve Corps was stationed west of Nowo Minsk on this day and was set to move east towards Kaluszyn, while further north the 2nd Cavalry Division was gaining connection to the 12th Army in a northeasterly direction. If the left wing of the 8th Army's attack group passed the Wizna swamp, it would be threatened from the left, and it was questionable whether the army's strength would then be sufficient. Colonel Marquard therefore asked whether an army corps could be brought to the left wing of the 12th Army, and Major General Tappen assured him that he would keep an eye on the matter.

How the Commander-in-Chief East positioned himself in these negotiations, and to what extent he was aware of them, is not known1). When the success of the Plüskow and Eben corps was reported to him at 7 p.m., General Ludendorff replied: "Then continue straight ahead and then turn." Accordingly, the two corps were set for pursuit in an easterly direction on August 9, with General von Gallwitz still hoping to "push as many parts of the enemy as possible into the bridgehead of Malkin and over the Bug," to fall into the flank of the enemy withdrawing east of the Bug bend). This seemed all the more possible to him as the German 9th Army was still a strong day's march west of the river.

The morning of August 10 brought the pleasant certainty that the Russian 12th Army, whose southern wing was assumed to be on the railway south of Lomza, had begun its retreat; the concern about the connection to the 8th Army thus receded into the background for the moment. Almost without encountering any resistance, the Eben corps was able to cross the forested hills of Czernowy Bor. The small fortress of Lomza was evacuated by the enemy and occupied by the German 8th Army. But the Russian 1st Army also now gave way at Ostrow. The rail-

1) General von Gallwitz informed the Reichsarchiv in the summer of 1931 based on diary entries that Colonel Marquard had spoken with the Commander-in-Chief East at noon on that day. The main content apparently consisted of complaints from the 8th Army that the 12th Army was not holding far enough north and thus allowing the 8th to advance.  
2) See page 351 note 2 and page 352.  
3) von Gallwitz, page 322.

Page 263

Successes between Bug and Narew.

The crossing point Malkin was reached, and thus after more than three weeks of offensive, the northernmost of the major railway lines, which connected Warsaw with the interior of Russia and had so far supplied the Russian troops in West Poland, was reached. Operationally, this was now an insignificant gain and also of value for the increasingly difficult own supply only if it was possible to restore the Vistula bridge at Warsaw, which was still in enemy hands, or to gain a connection to the German railway network through the connection line under construction from Willenberg to Ostrolenka. The enemy now seemed to be in full retreat to the east. Pilots reported retreating enemy columns in many places; villages burned, the fields were devastated. A leap forward was achieved, as on no day since the beginning of the operation; it amounted to 20 kilometers and more for many corps. South of the Bug, contact was made south of Wyszkow with the cavalry of the 9th Army.

General von Gallwitz and his advisors were not entirely of the same opinion about the further direction to be taken. Since the end of July, the First General Staff Officer, Major Stäpf, had increasingly leaned towards the view of the Commander-in-Chief East that the Narew operation had done its part and that the decision should henceforth be sought in the Njemen area. "The distance we have gained in four weeks can be marched on the left wing in four days," he wrote on August 9. In contrast, General von Gallwitz himself still held firmly to the idea of pursuing with full force to the southwest. Colonel Marquard, however, now proposed a more northerly direction, "since there is nothing more to gain at the Bug." The decision requested from the Commander-in-Chief East was fair to both possibilities and went as follows: the army should, with the main focus on the right, push further forward against Ciechanowice–Sokolv; the 8th Army, which had entered through the Wizna swamp, would maintain contact with them. However, since this army had just now to transfer the 3rd Reserve Division, which was standing north of Lomza, to the 10th Army, it counted only five divisions, of which three were already south of the Narew.

On August 11, the 12th Army advanced well along the Bug; the XVII Army Corps reached Zuzel. On the other hand, to its left

1) P. 307. – Initially, only a field railway was laid here; at the end of July, full railway construction began.  
2) Communication from Colonel a. D. Stäpf from summer 1931 to the Reich Archive.  
3) von Gallwitz, p. 325.  
4) P. 354 and 478.

Page 264

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

The Watter Corps in pursuit battles with the left wing only up to just before Czyzew. "The progress is quite time-consuming," says the war diary of the General Command, "and proceeds slowly. This was due less to the strength of the enemy than to the fatigue of the troops and the almost complete lack of clarity of the terrain. It was repeatedly expressed to the Army High Command that the support was progressing slowly, that the reinforcement of the lines by new masses did not change anything significant, but that much could be achieved with some rest for the troops, who had been in continuous combat for four weeks." In the northern adjacent Plüszow and Eben Corps, the enemy offered considerably more resistance. It seemed not to be a weak rearguard as the day before, but stronger forces with artillery, and the whole day was spent struggling to advance only a few kilometers. In the evening, the Eben Corps had taken Zambrowo. The 8th Army had gained a foothold on the eastern bank of the Bac section.

Thus, the narrowest point between Bug and Narew was reached; on 45 kilometers of front, about 18 German divisions stood so close that it had already become necessary to move five of them into the second line. The Narew operation had long since surpassed its tactical peak and was already threatening to turn into a frontal push. Capturing the Russian masses retreating east of the Bug in front of the Mackensen and Prince Leopold army groups could only succeed if the 12th Army advanced quickly, faster than the enemy could retreat. This had not been the case so far. In the 30 days since July 13, it had taken about 120 kilometers of space in total, which made only four kilometers per day; that it would advance significantly faster in the future was hardly to be assumed. Just August 11 had again shown what it meant when the enemy was willing to resist. With an enemy who had skillfully conducted his retreat operations up to that point, such determination had to be expected as soon as his situation required it. The previous battles had clearly shown the difficulties of frontal pursuit. Actual pursuit had hardly ever occurred: Almost everywhere and every time, the enemy had been able to retreat after stubborn resistance under the cover of darkness, to reposition further back in a new, often already prepared position. Each time, weak points of the enemy had to be identified first.

Page 265

Combat Conditions and Results between Bug and Narew.

Deployment reconnoitered, the attack ordered, the artillery concentrated against the breach points. Every tactical advance had to be bought with an expenditure of time, ammunition, and blood, which hardly corresponded to the operational gain.

The surprisingly large ammunition requirement, even for an experienced artillery general like the commander of the 12th Army, which had to be used to overcome each individual enemy reformation¹), significantly contributed to the delay of the advance. As the distance from the starting point increased, it became increasingly difficult to procure the necessary quantities. The railway construction could not keep pace with the operation despite its slowness. At the destroyed Vistula Bridge in Warsaw, on the Mlava–Nowogeorgiewsk line, otherwise on German territory and near Kolno, the endpoints of the main railway operations were temporarily located. A field railway rebuilt from Mlava via Przasnysz had reached the area west of Rozan, coming from Willenberg to Ostrolenka, thus ending about 60 kilometers behind the front. The troops to be pursued between Bug and Narew had meanwhile grown to about 18 divisions with more than 700 guns.

Opposite them, however, the enemy had also further strengthened. By August 11, about 18 divisions of his 1st and 12th Army were positioned, with four divisions gradually brought in from the Southwestern Front, facing probably also about 700 guns²). Thus, the impression of the German troops seems accurate that the enemy was now considerably stronger in artillery than at the beginning of the operation. The more his infantry dwindled, the more the essentially unchanged number of artillery had to make itself felt.

The severity, but also the peculiarity of the four-week-long previous battles, is highlighted by the following figures: The c a s u a l t i e s

¹) Since the beginning of July, the army had been allocated: 370,000 rounds for field guns (7.7 cm), 27,500 for 10 cm guns, 192,000 for light field howitzers (10.5 cm), 129,000 for heavy field howitzers (15 cm), 15,000 for mortars (21 cm); totaling 734,000 rounds.  
²) On August 9 (11) and 11, 1915, between Narew and Bug from Bieze to Zuzel: From the 12th Army V Corps (10th and 17th Div.) and IV Siberian Corps (9th Siberian and 10th Fib. 59th, 69th, ¾ 61st Div.); 1st Army, XXVII Corps (1st Rifle Brigade and 76th Div.), XXI Corps (33rd and 44th Div.), 1st Siberian Corps (1st Siberian 6th Div.), IV Corps and 30th Div. (1st and 2nd Siberian Rifle Brigade, 1st Siberian Div.). Russian units: 17¾ infantry, 1¾ cavalry divisions. The listed 4¾ divisions had come from the Southwestern Front since July 13.

Page 266

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

The army of Gallwitz and the right wing of the 8th Army involved in the attack had grown from July 13 to 26 to about 37,000, and by August 8 to more than 56,000 men. This meant 3,000 to 4,000 men, more than a third of the infantry strength in each division, and is a significant testament to the sacrificial task that the infantry still had to solve despite the high consumption of artillery ammunition. These losses were offset by spoils, which, including those of the participating parts of the 8th Army, amounted to about 80,000 prisoners and 250 machine guns by August 11, but only 20 guns.

b) Up to the Upper Course of Nurec and Narew. August 12 to 19.

The frontal pursuit, in which the army group Prince Leopold and the right wing of the Commander-in-Chief East (12th and right wing 8th Army) were involved, was to continue to have the goal, according to the will of the Supreme Army Command, of cooperating with the army group Mackensen, which was advancing from the direction of Cholm—Lublin towards Brest and the Bug below this fortress. General von Falkenhayn wanted to decisively hit the retreating enemy west of the Rokitno swamps and the primeval forest of Bialowieza. The army group Prince Leopold, which stood close to Lukow and Siedlce on the evening of August 11, was therefore set to advance on Brest with the right wing.

The Commander-in-Chief East also had hope on this day that his 12th Army, advancing with a strong right wing on Ciechanowice, could at least intercept parts of the Russian troops that were heading further south from the west and southwest towards the Bug. However, he did not promise himself decisive successes from this. He considered it certain that the enemy would manage to systematically evade in a northeasterly direction and wished to place emphasis on further advances initially in a generally easterly direction towards Bielsk, but later north of the forest of Bialowieza. In contrast, General von Gallwitz continued to advocate for the southeasterly direction.

While troops of the army group Prince Leopold entered Lukow and Siedlce on August 12, the 12th Army encountered sustained resistance on the entire front north of the Bug on this day. However, the enemy also withdrew here during the night; the pursuit led

1) p. 416 ff.

Page 267

Last Efforts Between Bug and Narew.

Together with the right wing of the 8th Army up to the lower Narew and then in a line that ran almost straight north past Sokolow to the Narew marshes of Wizna. The enemy seemed to have set up new resistance. The Supreme Army Command had General of Foot Artillery, Major General Schabel, examine whether it was possible to bring down the fortress of Osowiec by releasing and shooting gas. Since the reconnaissance had shown that with the available limited forces, for example only three heavy artillery batteries, even with the use of gas, there was no prospect of overcoming the place, they had to wait until it was opened by advancing on the eastern Bobr bank. Here the 8th Army now had four divisions, while on the west bank the 11th Landwehr Division alone blocked the 50-kilometer-long swamp stretch.

On the evening of August 13, the Commander-in-Chief East learned that the enemy was now retreating rapidly down the Bug in front of the Mackensen Army Group from the south. He had to, it seemed, cross the river at Brest and below in a northeasterly direction. On the northern wing of the Prince Leopold Army Group, the Frommel Cavalry Corps had received orders to head towards Kleszczele, "to get behind the enemy parts retreating over the Bug." For the 12th Army, this initially changed nothing. Its commander was, as always, full of hope. In an order he gave to the commanding generals that day, it was said that further advance of the army could lead to the destruction of the enemy. "We must break the resistance facing us with all our might as quickly as possible. Extreme effort in the coming days will save us much blood later. The goal is worth the effort."

On August 14 and 15, the attack of the center (Plüskow Corps) and the XVII Reserve Corps, which had meanwhile moved in north of it, brought the decision for the 12th Army. East of Mazowiec, the 4½ division strong Russian XXI Corps retreated before the attack of the German 54th, 38th, and 86th Infantry Divisions, losing 2000 prisoners, (as it is called in the official Russian account1) "defeated" and thus gave the entire Russian front between Bug and Narew the impetus to further retreat.

1) Njesnamow, p. 97 (there the battle is apparently mistakenly dated to August 22).

Page 268

Meanwhile, the Commander-in-Chief East had already directed the 8th Army on August 14 to take a more northerly direction, into the rear of Osowiec, and also instructed the 12th Army, once Bielsk was taken, not to proceed eastward, but towards Białystok, thus sharply to the northeast. When the Supreme Army Command again pointed out that 12 to 13 Russian corps were evading the Mackensen Army Group towards the Bug below Brest, a ruthless attack by the Prince Leopold and Hindenburg Army Groups promised great success, and the right wing of the 12th Army, under these circumstances, had to maintain the direction eastward, towards Kleckszelle, this did not change the fact that the focus of their advance — as determined by the situation and terrain — had to remain initially directed at Bielsk, between Narec and Narew. In this view, the Commander-in-Chief East and the 12th High Command agreed, with the latter, as before, hoping to catch the retreating Russians, while the former thought of opening the Osowiec front.

On August 16, the 12th Army reported, in response to a direct inquiry from the Supreme Army Command about the state of the enemy, that it had suffered heavy bloody losses and lost many prisoners, but was still making strong counterattacks; it was still combat-ready and had more artillery and ammunition than in the previous week, its units were very mixed. The 8th Army, questioned in the same way, also pointed out that the Russian use of ammunition had increased significantly in recent days. August 17 seemed to confirm this assessment of the enemy. Reports of counterattacks against the right wing of the German 12th Army prompted General von Gallwitz to order the XVII Army Corps stationed there to hold and strengthen its positions for the following day, and to bring in infantry support for the 9th Army, whose northern wing was occupied by cavalry over a wide area. Nevertheless, the continued attacks of the army in the direction of Bielsk, in which the 38th Infantry Division lost the high number of 750 men on that day, caused the Russians to continue their retreat the following night, thus clearing the Bug crossing for the Prince Leopold Army Group.

The evening of August 18 saw the German troops in the line Niemirow on the Bug — west bank of the middle Narec — in front of Bielsk and on the left bank of the Narew to the west of Tykocin. Here, the

1) According to later captured Russian orders, it was indeed only a counterattack by a single regiment of the Russian 55th Division.

Page 269

The 8th Army dispatched the 10th Landwehr Division under Lieutenant General Clausius, which had already crossed the road leading from the south to Ostrowiec in the swampy terrain on both sides. On August 19, the 12th Army attempted to advance at the decisive point against Bielsk. The 86th Infantry Division of the XVII Reserve Corps suffered extraordinarily heavy losses, losing 1300 men. However, decisive progress could not be achieved in the purely frontal battle.

c) The Turn to the Northeast.

On August 19, the Commander-in-Chief East, to regulate further pursuit, reported to the Supreme Army Command that he intended to "place the main focus of the 12th Army in the direction of Bielsk—Narew (City), assuming that the left wing of the 9th Army would also be directed in a northeasterly direction, i.e., north of the Klejsczele—Gajnowka railway. Is the Supreme Army Command in agreement?" — The response was: "The Narew assault group of Army Group Hindenburg) must first advance in a purely eastern direction, securing its left flank against the Narew section with the right wing over Klejsczele, then proceed north of the Policzna section. Emphasis should still be placed on rapid advancement over Bielsk. The group's march north can only occur when the situation with the enemy west and southwest of the Sialkowice forest is further clarified." This directive was further supplemented by General von Falkenhayn, who explicitly emphasized on the same day that the opening of Ostrowiec was less important at this moment than the uninterrupted continuation of the thrust along the left bank of the Narew River. At the same time, the southern wing of the 12th Army, "due to good progress with Prince Leopold," could take a slightly more northerly direction; it should now proceed north past Klejsczele towards Gajnowka. This at least approximately corresponded to the intentions of the Commander-in-Chief East, who then reorganized the tasks of all his armies. The orders stated: "Main focus 12th Army direction Bielsk—Narew (City)—Mjalinowo, main focus 8th Army direction Tykocin—Anyszyn." At the same time, the 10th Army was now to attack Wilna with its left wing. The assignment of the two cavalry divisions of the 9th Army was requested from the Supreme Army Command, but on August 20

Page 270

The Attack of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief against the Russian Narew Front.

It was answered that only the German 9th Cavalry Division was withdrawn.

Furthermore, the enemy continued to retreat in accordance with his situation before the Army Group Prince Leopold rather than before the northern adjoining 12th Army. On the other hand, the increasing pressure against the rear of Osowiec prompted him to evacuate this place after the demolition of the works and bridges already on the night of August 23 and thus also to retreat before the 8th and the left wing of the 12th Army. While the northern wing of the Army Group Prince Leopold reached the western edge of the Bialowieza forest by the evening of August 24 in pursuit, the strong southern wing of the 12th Army fought hard up to and beyond Bielsk. The center was still fixed before the upper Narew, the extreme left wing, the 37th Infantry Division, had already crossed west of Bialystok to join the Seydlitz Corps of the 8th Army. Further north, three Landwehr divisions of this army could follow the enemy over the abandoned Osowiec almost in one go to Knyszyn and to the Berezowka section.

The difficulties that stood in the way of effective continuation of the offensive had increased significantly in the last ten days with the 12th Army. Already in the "special orders" of August 12, General von Gallwitz had pointed out that it was impossible for the stage to keep pace with the troops. The space to be bridged by the columns of the corps had to be stretched far beyond the usual measure, the supply of oats had to be reduced to half of the normal requirement. Since the harvest was now standing in the field or had just been brought in, the troops were to feed themselves as much as possible from the land. In the area still untouched by the war, which had now been reached, essential parts of the supply needs were also provided in a reasonably sufficient quantity, because the enemy had no longer succeeded in removing or burning all the supplies of the vast area in time; but even the supply of flour and bread could hardly be managed alongside the supply of ammunition by the vehicle columns.

Even a leader as strong-willed as General von Gallwitz had to increasingly take these conditions and the diminished attack power of the troops into account. Records of the responsible offices and leaders provide a picture of what it looked like in the army:

1) G. 297, 331 and 357 ff.

Page 271

Supply Difficulties and Reduced Attack Strength.

In the war diary of the Watter Corps, it was already written on August 20: "37 days continuously in combat, the infantry had only half its strength left, the field artillery material was unusable to a worrying extent." This, along with the length of the rear connections, which measured 100 kilometers to Ostrow and another 35 kilometers to the field railway endpoint Rozan, and the poor fodder condition of the horses due to a lack of oats, made a pause urgently desirable. On August 22, "with regard to the urgently necessary ammunition savings, only very quiet artillery fire was maintained." In the following days, a conversation with the commanding general gave the impression that due to the overexertion, the attack capability of the troops had significantly decreased. It was expected from the artillery that "it should do everything." At the Sirein Corps, according to its war diary on August 20, the last ammunition column was emptied, and the next filled one could only arrive on the 23rd. The heavy losses, it was said, especially of the 86th Infantry Division, were attributed to the inadequate artillery preparation due to a lack of ammunition. A regiment of the 50th Reserve Division had to be withdrawn from the front after it had shrunk from 57 officers to 6, from 3700 men to 600. The remaining troops, it was said in the report, mostly came from the "last replacement, which arrived during the operation, was already classified as inferior and also proved to be inferior." New replacements, it was requested, would not find any old core in the regiment that would give them support. The regiment needed 14 days to reorganize and regain internal strength. On August 22, the chief of staff of the Plüskow Corps, Colonel Baercke, personally arrived at the army headquarters to describe the "lack of striking power due to the small numbers and the shortage of officers." On August 24, the Parnewitz Corps also reported: Since ammunition and supplies could not be delivered according to consumption, a three-day pause in the attack was necessary. General von Berlin himself judged in his diary entries on August 20: "The Russian army report emphasized the stubbornness of our attacks." But I could not deny that our strength was no longer what it used to be. For 39 days we had been in

Page 272

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narow Front.

fought and had since then given up 1,400 officers and 60,000 men¹). A stop in the relentless push soon seemed inevitable." The war diary of the High Command also pointed out the low combat strength of the infantry, which, as always, had to bear the brunt of the bloody losses as well as the mental and physical strain. Thus, the battalions of the 38th and 54th Infantry Divisions did not have 400 men combat strength, and the 4th Guards Infantry Division counted only 4,000 rifles in total. On August 21, General von Gallwitz could "no longer overlook the exhaustion of the troops." The hope, temporarily held the following day, of still repelling the enemy quickly shattered in the face of increasing difficulties. "It would be a pity," he wrote in his diary, "if we faltered now, because according to prisoner reports, letters, and their enormous losses, things look much bleaker for the Russians. They are ripe for collapse if we can only apply the necessary force. Everywhere they show hopelessness, mainly because of our artillery ... I wanted to wait yesterday to bring in replacement artillery ammunition. But the troops, who are of the best will, always act differently and thus awaken in the higher command the belief that it will still work. With battalions of 325 men, there is not much to be done. Well, the army has fulfilled its duty." Russian counterattacks, which were also reported on this day, the General considered "to be ordered from above, as last attempts to turn the tide or at least to gain freedom of movement." Conditions were more favorable than with the 12th Army for the 8th Army, which had not been fighting as long or as hard and had better supply conditions.

With such a decisive reduction in the offensive power of the main army, it was ultimately of lesser importance which direction was given to the right wing of the Commander-in-Chief East for further action. The Supreme Army Command still wished to let the main force act in a purely eastern direction, while the Commander-in-Chief East, since the capture of Osowiec, considered a northeasterly direction necessary to at least indirectly support the advance of the 10th Army against Vilna²). He therefore ordered on August 24, in continuation of the instruction given on August 19 — as he had to believe — in agreement with the Supreme Army Command³), that "after the capture of Białystok" the railway from there via Sokolka to Grodno

¹) See p. 360. — ²) p. 483 f. — ³) p. 363.

Page 273

The Shift to the Northeast towards Grodno.

The boundary for further operations of the 12th and 8th Army was to be established. Not three hours after the order was dispatched, the following directive from the Supreme Army Command arrived: "The development of the situation between Bug and Narew urgently suggests that the upper course of Swislocz should be reached by parts of the 8th Army as soon as possible." This seemed to give this army a precisely eastern direction and at the same time a target about 70 kilometers away. The Commander-in-Chief East could not form an idea of what operational intentions the Supreme Army Command was now pursuing. On August 25, he reported to General von Falkenhayn: "The 8th Army faces enemies across the entire front, who offer stubborn resistance everywhere, so that a rapid advance of parts of it to the upper course of the Swislocz is currently completely out of the question." The extremely tense mood of these days prompted him to add: "To be able to lead, I ask for directives." The Supreme Army Command, which had temporarily hoped to catch the enemy with a southern thrust of Prince Leopold's army group, now faced a changed situation, as the enemy had already begun to evacuate the strong fortress of Brest. So it now set the railway line leading from Klejsczele via Gajnowka to Wolkowysk, thus to the northeast, as the right boundary of the Commander-in-Chief East and also had "no more objections if our forces from the Gallwitz strike group were shifted to the northern Narew bank."

This boundary setting essentially corresponded to the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief East. On August 26, he ordered for his two armies: "The 12th and 8th Army follow the enemy, the right wing of the 12th Army along the railway Gajnowka—Siemionowka. Henceforth general direction of advance: 12th Army with deep right wing Swislocz—Soflowla; 8th Army Sofolva—Dombrowo, ready to turn the left wing from here to Lipitze. Further instructions for the 12th and 8th Army will follow." The 10th Army was to continue advancing towards Wilna, the Njemen Army to continue covering the northern flank. Since the Supreme Army Command had now approved shifts from the 12th Army to the northern Narew bank, the Commander-in-Chief East, as he explicitly recorded in his war diary on this day, considered himself entitled to extend his forces there as well, where success beckons. He ordered the previous strike armies (12th and 8th Army), "to increase the pressure of the left wing of the 10th Army," a total of three infantry and one cavalry division.

1) G. 350 f. — 2) S. 428. 3) Wording and details of the orders for the 10th and Njemen Army see p. 487.

Page 274

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

to give up further. For this reason, the Chief of Staff of the 12th Army, Colonel Marquard, while advocating for a frontal pursuit to the east to throw the Russians "into the swamps," made representations to the Supreme Army Command on the same day during a telephone conversation with Major General Tappen, but without success. In fact, in the following days, the 12th Army did not even have the opportunity due to supply issues to pursue with its remaining forces. On the evening of August 26, its left wing, together with the right of the 8th Army, was able to capture the important city of Białystok in battle. On August 27, the 12th Army reached the city of Narew behind the now rapidly retreating Russians, and on the 28th, the pursuit could only be continued with partial forces. The offensive of the strongest army advancing through northern Poland had stalled. A record by Captain von Waldow from the Eastern High Command from the next day stated: "The Russian is retreating in an orderly manner, and so quickly that we cannot follow with our rear connections. The railways are too heavily destroyed. One could howl with rage. The 12th Army must actually halt in the pursuit and wait, and the Russian gets time to move forces to Wilna. Just now comes the news that a new corps is being unloaded there and is marching north. Our operation has not succeeded."

Meanwhile, a fundamental new order from the Supreme Army Command on August 27 halted the army groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold in view of the Rokitno Swamps. Only the operations initiated by the Commander-in-Chief East were to be continued. However, their focus was no longer on the 12th, but on the 10th Army assigned to Wilna.

d) Reflections.

"The army has fulfilled its duty." — This statement by General von Gallwitz about the achievements of the 12th Army, which was temporarily the strongest with 14 divisions involved in the pursuit through Poland, must be at the forefront of reflections on the results; it applies equally to the 8th Army, which had only seven divisions. The troops marched, fought, and bled with a willingness to sacrifice and dedication, as they did under the

1) General von Gallwitz writes about this in the summer of 1931 to the Reich Archive, stating that Colonel Marquard was not commissioned by him for this.  
2) See wording on p. 489.

Page 275

Reflections.

could not have been greater given the circumstances. As countless testimonies attest, as far as their strength allowed, they repeatedly approached the almost daily new attacks with enthusiasm and were rightly filled with the proud awareness of having driven back a numerically superior enemy through all of Poland and 200 kilometers. Tactically, what was achieved — considering the circumstances that were given¹) — was all that could be achieved. If the attack results in terms of loot and operationally are not fully satisfactory, it primarily expresses that it was purely frontal work, beginning with the breakthrough through a very strong and deeply structured trench system that had been created over months of work, continuing over a river section also prepared for sustainable defense, and culminating in pushing back an opponent who repeatedly defended himself but always managed to evade a decision in time. Stubborn resistance at strong natural sections, often combined with local counterattacks, alternated with unnoticed nightly withdrawal. The pursuit repeatedly got stuck on very weakly occupied enemy positions. This constantly repeating game required, besides time and effort, disproportionately much ammunition and cost the impatient infantry many officers and the best of the troops, so that eventually only quickly trained recruits and older age groups were the mainstay of the fight. The need for effective artillery preparation had to assert itself all the more. But even their performance was no longer at the same level as at the beginning of the war due to worn-out barrels, less effective makeshift ammunition, and inadequate shooting training of some batteries manned with older age groups. When one considers how much the strength of the Russian defense had simultaneously increased, despite great shortages of equipment and ammunition, through the long-range effect of artillery and machine guns, one will rightly appreciate the magnitude of what was achieved by leadership and troops. The destruction of the enemy was not achieved, only attrition. The loot figures speak a clear language. They amounted in 6½ weeks for 21 divisions of the German 12th and 8th Army to a total of about 125,000 prisoners, 350 machine guns, but only 23 guns. How little this meant in its entirety, especially regarding the number of guns, becomes clear when one considers that

¹) See p. 358 f. ²) World War. Volume VIII.

Page 276

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

Tannenberg 13 German divisions captured 92,000 prisoners in six days, but brought in 350 guns. Due to the slowness of the purely frontal attacks, the enemy was always able to withdraw his artillery in time and almost always evade in good order. How high his total losses were is not known.

General von Falkenhayn pointed out after the war that the Gallwitz army, due to a lack of forces, was unable to give real emphasis to its left wing and was thus increasingly pushed in a purely Westphalian direction. The Commander-in-Chief East could very well have brought more forces to their attack, four divisions from the 9th and two from the 10th and from the Niemen Army. "Had the Narew shock group conducted their attack on the 14th with 20 divisions, it is highly probable that they would have been able to prevent strong parts of the enemy from withdrawing from the pincers. It is therefore a mistake that the reinforcement was omitted. Its cause must... be sought solely in the fact that it was not possible to bring about a unified understanding of the situation between the leading and executing positions." It should "not have been tolerated" that the main operation, "for whatever reasons, a single man was withdrawn. As surely as it would have been primarily the responsibility of the high command to integrate into the overall operation, so surely was part of the responsibility for this not happening on the chief of staff. His task was to ensure the complete integration of each part into the whole and to secure it, even where, as in this case, extraordinary personal difficulties stood in his way."

The Commander-in-Chief East, who was decidedly opposed to the Narew operation from the outset and considered its continuation deep into August to be misguided, nevertheless did everything in his view to ensure its success. Once the decision was firmly made in favor of his chief of staff's proposal, Field Marshal Hindenburg considered it his duty to leave nothing undone to help this plan succeed. He has since used his entire authority for the success of the operation and personally positioned himself at the beginning of the attack.

1) For more details on the enemy see pp. 301, 323, 325, 359, 374 and 436 ff. 2) From Falkenhayn, pp. 104 and 109 f. — 89. e. 275 ff., 281 around 1917. 4) Personal communication to the President of the Reich Archives from November 7, 1931.

Page 277

Reflections.

He went to the battlefield at Przasnysz because he knew "what decisive importance our Supreme Army Command attached to the success of the ordered breakthrough." General Ludendorff, as the Field Marshal further wrote in his book, had often internally adhered to the plan of the Njemen operation. This deviation "had neither any influence on our further joint thinking and actions," nor did it impair the "strength with which we implemented the decision of the responsible Supreme Army Command in mid-July." Similarly, General Ludendorff himself wrote that the disagreements with General von Falkenhayn had imposed on him the special obligation to implement the Supreme Army Command's thoughts, which differed from his own, "if possible with even greater care than those that were consistent or his own."

The Supreme Army Command was continuously informed about the measures of the Commander-in-Chief East, especially as far as they concerned the Gallwitz Army Group. Had they considered the deployment of forces against the Narew insufficient, they would have had to intervene decisively. Regarding the question of complete exposure of the Vistula, General Ludendorff expressed himself as follows: "The release of the left bank of the Vistula west of the Sam mouth Nowogrodek was correct if the Supreme Army Command was firmly determined to fight for the decision in the East. Then they had to accept the risk of exposing the front. The enemy could not advance into the empty front. It was different if it had to be reckoned with that the operation against Russia might come to an early conclusion. Then the enemy, who no longer felt threatened far in Poland and Lithuania, could attack west of the Vistula." In a similar sense, General von Falkenhayn also expressed himself to the Commander-in-Chief East on June 28, stating that the enemy would not be able to derive any significant benefit from the exposure of the front west of the Vistula "as long as the advance between Bug and Vistula" — that is, the offensive of the Mackensen Army Group — "remained in progress." On the other hand, he repeatedly urged an attack by the 9th Army after July 2, even considering reinforcing it with two additional western divisions." Thus, the Supreme Army Command is at least fully responsible for the burdening of the strongest forces west of the Vistula. A significant contrast between their view and that of the Oberkom-

1) von Hindenburg, p. 128. — 2) Ludendorff, p. 120. 3) Letter to the Reich Archive from December 29, 1931. 4) p. 266 ff. — 5) p. 315.

Page 278

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

mandos East does not seem to have existed at this point. However, it did exist regarding the forces to be left at the Niemen. But General von Falkenhayn allowed the Commander-in-Chief East to act there as well, even repeatedly demanding active engagement for this section of the front. It is therefore quite questionable whether his idea that 20 instead of 14 divisions should have been deployed against the Narew is merely a retrospective consideration, which, however, cannot be denied justification.

If the six divisions in question had been available at the beginning of the Narew operation, which was undoubtedly possible given the situation, intentions, and railway conditions, the enemy could have been attacked on July 13 at two places simultaneously, besides Przasnysz also at Ostrolenka—Nowogrod, with strong forces, thereby not only splitting the Russian defense but also giving the own attack a much more effective operational direction. Also, according to later experiences, an early, surprising attack at Ostrolenka—Nowogrod might have come faster and easier than at Pultusk—Rozan and over the Narew. During the course of the battles, the attack front was eventually extended up to Nowogrod. However, since the overall strength was too low for this and it was the border area between the Gallwitz Army Group and the 8th Army, full unity of command was not achieved at this point. Especially here, there was a lack of troops, particularly heavy artillery, because General von Gallwitz deliberately kept his left wing weak compared to the center of his front, where he initially aimed for tactical victory. Additionally, disagreements with the General Command of the I Army Corps commanding before Ostrolenka and resulting fluctuations in orders had a detrimental effect. Only after overcoming the Narew itself, when the center of the army group had stalled before new Russian positions, did General von Gallwitz begin to shift the focus more to the left wing. However, by then it was already quite late to achieve the operational effect.

The Commander-in-Chief East gave the Gallwitz Command, in which he had full confidence, free rein in conducting the operations. More serious disagreements about the pursuit direction only arose during the battles between Bug and Narew, where the Gallwitz Command could rely on the aligned view of the Supreme Army Command. However, it can hardly be proven that these contradictions affected the success

Page 279

Reflections.

have impaired the operation. Even if, in the sense of the Supreme Army Command, an attempt had been made at the beginning of August to strengthen the attack front between Bug and Narew more than it was, the result would hardly have been greater. The already serious supply difficulties at that time would have likely increased with further accumulation of troops to such an extent that they outweighed the advantage of the larger number.

The Commander-in-Chief East and the High Commands Gallwitz and Scholtz tried with the limited number of forces assigned to the Narew operation to make the most of the situation. This was naturally the case especially with General von Gallwitz, who believed until the end with full inner conviction in the possibility of intercepting significant parts of the Russians. The limited forces that the Commander-in-Chief East, but only in the course of the later pursuit operation directed eastward through Poland and almost always only after consultation with the Supreme Army Command, gradually spared for the sustenance of the battle in the Njemen area, could hardly have changed the outcome between Bug and Narew. Due to the contrast between the two highest command posts, the Gallwitz High Command was in a difficult position, as it was in constant direct connection with the Supreme Army Command, whose views it shared, but at the same time had to act according to the instructions of the Commander-in-Chief East. It resulted in the particularly difficult conditions being managed with tact, so that serious frictions were avoided and the operation essentially proceeded in harmony.

The fact that the Narew campaign was not more successful was solely due to the fact that the attack had to begin with the always difficult and time-consuming breakthrough through a developed trench system and subsequent river crossing. Meanwhile, the enemy found time to reinforce from the troops fighting west of the Vistula and in Galicia to such an extent that the German attackers soon faced opponents equal in division numbers, who were at least equal in number of rifles, if not superior, and only inferior in artillery. This ratio shifted with the progress of the battles more in favor of the Russian defenders than the German attackers. Thus, rapid advancement was out of the question given the described combat and supply difficulties, and the disagreements over the operational direction to be maintained were of only minor importance for the actual course.

Page 280

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

The task of throwing an opponent retreating in a broad closed front into the Rokitno Marshes or, as General von Gallwitz occasionally expressed it, "embracing" them, was not feasible when the operational gain in 46 days was only 200 kilometers, averaging less than five kilometers per day. In contrast, the Russians, relying on relatively efficient rail connections, always had the opportunity to secure not only the fighting troops but also many other valuable assets. It might have seemed tempting to throw the parts that appeared to retreat northeast between the Rokitno Marshes and the advancing German armies from the west, consisting of 13 to 14 corps, into that relatively accessible area and thereby decisively damage them. However, the Russian retreat direction was not hit in such a way by the advance direction of the Gallwitz army that a flanking effect could be achieved. The northern Russian armies (2nd, 1st, and 12th Army) were almost entirely redirected eastward to the Brest—Białystok line, thus frontally, and only gradually moved northeast to meet the growing demand for forces on the northern flank after abandoning the Słonim Front; the 4th, 3rd, and 13th Army marched obliquely from the south towards them. This coincided with the transport of forces by rail in the general direction of Minsk—Wilna. Such a generously and properly conducted retreat movement, even for parts of the army, to turn into a catastrophe was not possible — quite apart from the strength that the defense already possessed in 1915 — the striking power of a pursuer was no longer sufficient, who had almost uninterrupted fighting for four weeks in the first half of the attack and was already more than 100 kilometers away from the endpoints of efficient railway stations. And yet, great achievements were made. In cooperation with the Mackensen army group, the victories of the Gallwitz army and its neighbors on the right and left drove the enemy away from the threatening proximity of the German border. The capture of Warsaw and the loot taken during the yet-to-be-described conquest of the large fortress of Nowogeorgiewsk must also be seen as direct consequences of the Narew campaign.

Page 281

7. The Conquest of Nowogeorgiewsk¹).

Nowogeorgiewsk was the largest and strongest of all Russian fortresses and the only fortress complex in western Poland that was exempted from decommissioning in 1910 and has since been further modernized. Located at the confluence of the Narew and Vistula rivers, it secured, along with the adjacent outdated forts Dembe, Zegrze, and Beniaminow, the Narew crossing north of Warsaw and blocked the railway leading east of the Vistula to Warsaw, which had to cross the Wkra and Narew rivers within the fortress. Eight older forts, advanced beyond the city walls, enclosed an area about eleven kilometers in diameter. On the north and west fronts, the Russians had begun a new line of fortifications consisting of armored groups four to five kilometers ahead of the old one. This had been rapidly expanded since the beginning of the war and extended to other fronts. In approximately the same distance beyond this outer line of fortifications, deeply structured, advanced positions had emerged.

On July 17, the right wing of the Army Group Gallwitz, Corps Dickhuth, and XVII Reserve Corps advanced against the northern front of Nowogeorgiewsk. It was a fortunate coincidence that the chief engineer officer of the fortress, who had driven beyond his own lines in a motor vehicle, fell into German hands dead but with valuable maps. The following day, the left wing of the 9th Army, Westernhagen Division, also approached the fortress's positions on the southern Vistula bank. By July 20, the General Command of the XVII Reserve Corps had gathered from intercepted Russian radio transmissions, aircraft, and patrol reports the impression that only a weak enemy was opposite²); strong elements, the Russian XXVII Corps, seemed to be leaving the fortress to the south and east. Lieutenant General Surén considered it possible to take the fortress by storm the following day. However, General von Gallwitz prevented the execution of this plan, which was unlikely to succeed, although the movements had already been initiated. At the same time, the Supreme Commander East appointed the commanding General of the III Reserve Corps, General of Infantry von Be-

¹) A detailed account is contained in Issue 4 of the "Battles of the World War": Betag: "The Conquest of Nowogeorgiewsk". — ²) See p. 309.

Page 282

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

feler, for leading the unified attack against the large fortress, who had already successfully led the capture of Antwerp; the previous Chief Quartermaster of the 9th Army, Major General von Gaußewitz, joined him as Chief of Staff. On July 21, General von Beseler took command of all troops in front of the northern front of the fortress, Corps Dickhuth and parts of the XVII Reserve Corps. The infantry gradually advanced further. Gradually, heavy batteries arrived in greater numbers, whose deployment was directed by the General of Foot Artillery, Colonel von Berendt, who had been detached since the fall of Pultusk.

The news of the impending fall of Warsaw prompted the acceleration of the attack: On August 5, an advance was to be made against the Narew Bend Dembe-Serock; given the composition of the assault infantry from predominantly older age groups, General von Beseler demanded that the artillery must succeed. The bombardment of the positions advanced north of the forts Dembe and Zegrze was successful, as the Russians, who had already abandoned Warsaw, quickly vacated these positions. After the forest area behind it was cleared on August 6, the two forts could be occupied without a fight the next day, while at the same time on the eastern Narew bank, the right wing of the 12th Army reached the Bug. On August 9, the Wetzingerode detachment completed the encirclement of the fortress in the south up to the Vistula, corresponding to the advances of the 9th Army; above, it also joined the siege troops, which on the same day were directly subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief East as the independent Army Group Beseler. When on August 10, a brigade of the 85th Landwehr Division could also seal off Nowogeorgiewsk in the east between Narew and Vistula, the ring around the fortress was closed. To carry out the attack, General von Beseler now had troops of about four divisions, which, except for a part of the siege batteries, consisted only of Landwehr and Landsturm and could deploy around 300 guns in total, including over 100 heavy and 14 heaviest howitzers.

1) Volume V, p. 221 ff. — 2) p. 311 ff. — 3) p. 352 f. — 4) p. 414 f. 5) Corps Dickhuth, mostly Landsturm; 14th Ldw. D. and Brig. Pfeil, half Landsturm; 169th Brig. of the 85th Ldw. D.; Wetzingerode detachment; additionally specially assigned siege artillery. — Total: 55 battalions, 10 squadrons, 69 1/2 batteries (including 42 1/2 heavy and heavy, among the latter five with motor batteries).

Page 283

The Attack on Nowogeorgiewsk.

For the attack1), the northeastern front of the fortress between Wkra and Narew was primarily considered, against which the only railway from Mlawa led. Here, General von Beseler wanted to deploy his main forces and proceed similarly to the autumn of 1914 against Antwerp. Without formal siege, the artillery effect was to be concentrated sharply, breaching the individual resistance lines in a narrow strip of the attack section, through which the closely following infantry was to penetrate in a rapid thrust. Operations against the other fronts were intended to hinder the enemy from shifting forces within the fortress area.

The heaviest and heavy artillery alone counted 26 batteries with 113 guns2) at the attack front. However, a large part of these, especially among the inherently less worn flat-trajectory guns, were older types with only limited firing speed and range. Additionally, the ammunition situation imposed restrictions, as the large fortress Kowno was also being attacked simultaneously3), and a lack of columns made the supply of ammunition extraordinarily difficult. Thus, the gun, the heavy field howitzer, initially had only 200 to 300 rounds4).

On August 11, the Commander-in-Chief East pointed out that he "must place great importance on the rapid execution of the attack against the fortress" to free up the forces used for further tasks soon. General von Beseler was already willing to comply with this.

After three days of artillery effect, on August 13, the 14th Landwehr Division under Lieutenant General Schalscha von Chrenfeld and the Pfeil Brigade broke through the front enemy defense lines between Wkra and Narew on a narrow front and advanced close to the permanent tank groups XIV, XV, and XVI; about 2000 prisoners were the spoils. At the same time, operations against

1) The attack plan against the fortress drafted by the Great General Staff in peacetime can no longer be found, so it could not be determined how the strength of the fortress was assessed at that time and what attack means were considered necessary against it.  
2) High-angle fire: 3 batteries 42 cm, 5 batteries 30.5 cm, 2 batteries Mrs. (21 cm), 11 batteries heavy field howitzers (15 cm); total 21 batteries. Flat fire: 2 batteries 15 cm-Ran., 3 batteries 12 cm-Ran., 2 batteries 10 cm-Ran.; total 5 batteries.  
3) G. 347 ttm. 472 ff.  
4) At Gorlice 600 each, at Przasnysz 1000 rounds each.

Page 284

The Attack of the Supreme Commander East against the Russian Narew Front.

The other fronts took place. The attack was to be continued against the section of Groups XV and XVI, each consisting of two forts with several intermediate works, connected and secured by obstacle belts. Already on the night of August 14, the artillery carried out the necessary change of position and began on this day the destructive fire against all works between Biebrza and Narew.

Under the impression of the previous German attack successes, the Russians evacuated their advanced positions on the entire northwest front up to the Vistula on the night of August 15. However, at the attack front itself, progress was initially not as desired. An assault attempt by General von Scholz against Fort XVa at the railway failed. General von Beseler considered refraining from the sap attack under these circumstances, but then decided to continue the artillery attack immediately and repeat the assault on August 16. After systematic strong artillery preparation against Groups XV and XVI and a subsequent multi-hour crisis, the assault against Group XV finally succeeded; Fort XVb was taken by Brigade Pfeil, which captured 500 prisoners, Fort XVa, the strongest work of the entire fortification belt, somewhat later by the 21st Landwehr Brigade; the total booty of the day was 2400 prisoners and 19 guns. The simultaneous attempts against the west, south, and east fronts initially brought no decisive progress, but the enemy also retreated to his armored groups here the following night.

The new assault planned for August 17 after strong artillery preparation against Fort XVIa led Brigade Pfeil only to the glacis of this work, where the troops remained exhausted. General von Beseler therefore intended to use August 18 and 19 for further preparation of the attack and to renew the assault only then. The order for this had already been given when the enemy evacuated Armored Groups XIV and XVI on the night of August 18, leaving behind many prisoners and much equipment. Without a fight, the German troops could follow up to Narew, behind which the enemy, supported by the old forts, had re-established a new defense. On August 18, the attack artillery resumed fire against these forts; the infantry of the 14th Landwehr Division gained a foothold on the western bank of the Biebrza. The left wing of Corps Dichthuth was able to connect with them by advancing south over the fort XIIIc, which had also been abandoned by the enemy in the meantime.

Page 285

The Capture of Nowogeorgiewsk.

Intercepted radio messages, seemingly random artillery fire, and the departure of six aircraft to the east were interpreted as signs of the impending fall of the fortress. General von Beseler decided to continue the attack with full force despite the previous great efforts for the capture. Throughout the night of August 19, the outer works and the interior of the fortress were kept under disruptive fire. Meanwhile, the enemy also evacuated all armored groups from the northwest front and retreated to the line of the old forts. Explosions and fires suggested that structures, ammunition, and supplies were destroyed.

Fighting, the German troops penetrated the inner forts of the northeast front on August 19, later also entering the citadel. Here, the commander of the fortress, General Bobyr, surrendered. The bulk of the garrison seemed to have retreated to the southern bank of the Vistula, whose bridges they had blown up, but surrendered there without making a serious breakthrough attempt, still in the afternoon hours to the German encirclement troops. By evening, the entire fortress was in German hands. The railway bridges over Wkra and Narew were thoroughly destroyed. The spoils, 6 generals, about 90,000 men, including 30,000 fortification soldiers, 103 machine guns, and about 700, later counted even 1600¹) guns, exceeded all expectations; rich supplies of ammunition, clothing, equipment, and provisions as well as significant stocks of war-important metals were added. The capture of the largest, modernized Russian fortress was achieved in just under twelve days. The heavy artillery had fired around 34,600 rounds (519 from German, 678 from Austro-Hungarian heavy guns) and overcame all difficulties, the inevitable ammunition supply and position changes with outdated equipment, paving the way for the infantry consisting only of older cohorts.

On the day after the capture of the fortress, August 20, the Supreme War Lord visited the victorious troops with General von Falkenhayn. The Supreme Commander East and General Ludendorff had also gone to Nowogeorgiewsk for this purpose. Operational questions were not discussed. The Supreme Commander East had already received permission to use the forces freed up before Nowogeorgiewsk in the future on the Njemen front.

¹) Including all older and close-combat guns.

Page 286

The Attack of the Commander-in-Chief East against the Russian Narew Front.

The combined attack of the Mackensen Army Group and the Gallwitz Army Group did not give the Russians time to evacuate the fortress of Nowogeorgiewsk as systematically as they had done with other fortresses. The evacuation of Warsaw had fully occupied the railways, and evacuating Nowogeorgiewsk would have required another 1,000 trains. Thus, the Russian Supreme Command had already decided on July 5th that the fortress of Nowogeorgiewsk should be defended as an independent position to the utmost. This corresponded to the garrison and artillery equipment. It was calculated that the fortress could hold out for at least two months. The reason for the unexpectedly rapid fall was rightly attributed to the destructive power of the German artillery, whose last radio test by the commander had indicated an initial explosion in the citadel. Moreover, as the Chief of General Staff, General Januschkewitsch, remarked, "God knows whether the German cannons alone are to blame. If 10,000 men had surrendered and 80,000 had fallen, that would be understandable. But 80,000 surrendered, and only 10,000 fell. One really cannot say that Nowogeorgiewsk fulfilled its task honorably."

1) Krolow, "The Failed Kamnä," p. 41. 2) Kudaschew Letter from August 26, 1915. — According to Knor, p. 320, the High Command of the 1st Army, to which the fortress was last subordinate, estimated the resistance duration at only ten days.

Page 287

D. The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

I. The Pursuit between Bug and Vistula in the First Half of July.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketch 24.

Soon after the capture of Lemberg, the armies fighting in Galicia were given new, separate tasks by the allied military commands¹). The 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army were to advance northward between Bug and Vistula under the unified command of Field Marshal von Mackensen to press the southern flank of the Russian forces in Poland. The three armies of the right wing, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd, the Southern Army, and the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, were assigned to cover this operation with an eastward-facing front. To avoid creating a gap between the inner wings of both army chains and to ensure the immediate flank protection of the 11th Army, the prompt advance of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, currently still positioned between Bug and Vistula, over Lemberg to the Bug was intended²). Until this could be effectively achieved, the 11th Army had to protect its flank directly and hold its right wing — Beskiden Corps, Corps Kneussl (119th Infantry Division and 11th Bavarian Infantry Division), Austro-Hungarian VI Corps — staggered to the right.

The left wing of the 11th Army (Guard Corps, XXII Reserve and X Army Corps) opened in the last days of June by continuing its advance towards Zamosc, the section of Taneo previously unsuccessfully attacked by the neighboring Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. In a rapid march, this army overcame the swamp and forest area of that section on June 30, despite significant route difficulties, and pushed its left wing almost up to the height of Krasnix. The results of the reconnaissance indicated a retreat of the Russians along the entire line to the northeast behind the Bug and into a position running from Hrubieszow over Krasnix to Szozefow. In the foreground of this position, northeast of Zamosc,

¹) See pages 247 and 253.  
²) The railway Jaroslaw–Przemysl–Lemberg was restored by July 5.

Page 288

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk

At the Labunka and especially at the Por, the three corps of the left wing of the 11th Army encountered sustained resistance on July 1, while the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was still able to advance to the enemy's main position along the line Turóbin—Kraśnik—Józefów.

The next day, a certain relief of the far-advanced right wing of the 11th Army occurred with the re-arrival of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. It had hurriedly marched from Jarosław and was now inserted between the 119th Infantry Division, positioned northwest of Krystynopol, and the Kneussl Corps (now consisting of the 11th Bavarian and the newly arrived 107th Infantry Division). This strengthening of the flank protection made it possible to use the corps of the center (Kneussl and Austro-Hungarian VI Corps) for the push northward. While both encountered strong resistance, the enemy retreated behind the stream sections of the Wolica, Wieprz, and Por, under rearguard actions, before the Guard and XXII Reserve Corps. The X Army Corps managed to advance over the lower Por. It was supported by the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, which broke into the Russian main position east of Kraśnik. As the 11th Army, on July 3, under the protection of its Bug security, which had advanced northward to the area west of Krylow, prepared to continue its push northward vigorously, its center and left wing were unexpectedly attacked by strong enemy forces. Despite heavy fighting, the army managed to generally hold or regain its line. However, as further strong Russian reserves were identified near Hrubieszów and Cholm, Field Marshal von Mackensen believed that the 11th Army should only continue its offensive once its right wing was relieved by the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, thereby freeing additional forces of the 11th Army for the attack. Only the left wing of the 11th Army, advanced over the Por, was to reach the line Plonka—Turóbin to gain a favorable starting position for the later continuation of the offensive.

From the not entirely accurate reporting of the intelligence service of the Supreme Army Command at the Army High Command about the intentions of the Field Marshal, General von Falkenhayn gained the impression that, besides the 11th Army, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army should also be halted. However, this would not have corresponded to his wishes.

1) G. 248. In place of the General of Infantry von François, appointed as the commanding general of the VII Austro-Hungarian, Lieutenant General von Winkler took over the command of the XXXXI Reserve Corps. For this, the leadership of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division was given to Lieutenant General Freiherr von Lüttwitz.

Page 289

The Pursuit is Fixed Between Bug and Vistula.

Already on July 1, he had placed decisive importance on the fastest possible and uninterrupted advance of the army group in a discussion with Army Command 11 in Rawa Ruśka, and the next day had Generalmajor v. Kappen in Teschen point out that the right wing of the 11th Army in the Bug defense should be quickly relieved by the 2nd Army and that the 1st Army, designated as future flank protection, should be made as strong as possible. In a personal discussion with Generaloberst von Conrad on July 3 in Teschen, he further proposed to strengthen the 11th Army with the entire Southern Army, giving the staff of the Mackensen army group the greatest emphasis. However, since the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff expressed concerns about whether the eastern-facing defensive front would remain strong enough, it was finally agreed to initially withdraw only two divisions from the Southern Army at Zlota Lipa to reinforce the 11th Army. On the evening of July 3, General von Falkenhayn urgently pointed out to Army Command 11 that any delay in the advance must be avoided, "for the longer the enemy holds time and the railway at Lublin, the harder he will be to defeat." However, Field Marshal von Mackensen was able to report to him on the morning of July 4 that the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, which had meanwhile significantly expanded its breakthrough east of Krasnik on July 3, had by no means been halted; rather, it should continue the offensive together with the left wing of the 11th. However, he dutifully combined this report with the note that a very strong depletion of forces had already occurred in the attacked armies, and that the bulk of the 11th Army would only be capable of new attacks when effective relief for it was achieved through the deployment of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army around July 13. General von Falkenhayn now again urgently pointed out to Army Command 11 on the evening of July 4 that any delay in the advance must be avoided. He also once again turned to Generaloberst von Conrad with the request to expedite the relief of the Beskiden Corps by the 2nd Army and the transport of the 1st Army. At the same time, he requested the immediate transfer of the two divisions of the Southern Army and its high command to form a new army within the Mackensen army group. The continuation of the partial offensive initially brought some successes. On July 4, the left wing of the 11th Army managed to reach the Plonńa—Turbin line under fighting. Also, the attacking part of the 4th Army

1) See p. 281, note 4.

Page 290

was pushed a good bit further north. On July 5, the enemy continued to give way before the inner wings of both armies. However, his resistance stiffened in the Stierbizów–Urzendow line. On July 6, only minor advances could be made on the left wing of the 11th Army and west of Urzendow with the 4th Army. The Mackensen High Command reported in the evening that no fewer than four new Russian corps had been identified in front of its front. The pursuit of the 11th Army had essentially come to an end. Nevertheless, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army hoped to be able to continue its thrust towards Lublin after replenishing its ammunition stocks. However, July 7 and 8 brought it significant setbacks. The right wing and center were pushed back to the Krasnix area. A relief by the left wing was widely dispersed and the heavily weakened 11th Army was no longer possible. The attack between the Bug and Vistula had stalled. Meanwhile, the Russians continued their counterattacks only briefly and without particular force. Both sides dug in along the entire front.

The reinforcement of the Mackensen Army Group, deemed necessary by General von Falkenhayn for a successful continuation of the offensive in the area between the Bug and Vistula, depended on the course of events on the neighboring army fronts. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army (like the Austro-Hungarian 3rd Army) had only slowly gained ground from section to section since the end of June in daily, partly heavy fighting. The tenacious enemy had often launched strong counterattacks on this front. Only on July 5 was the 2nd Army in undisputed possession of the Dunajow–Busk–Kaminonta Strumilowa line. To its right, the Southern Army had already reached the west bank of the Zlota Lipa from Dunajow the day before. On the same day, the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army advanced very small forces of its left wing at Butowla to the northern Dniester bank, while gathering all dispensable forces to form a strong reserve around Horodenka, as it expected Russian attacks in the Jaleszczyki area. With the capture of the Zlota Lipa and Bug lines, the combined army commands considered the advance of the right army wing in Galicia to be temporarily completed. The 2nd and Southern Armies were ordered to sustainably expand the captured positions for defense.

1) In fact, Guard Corps, XXXI, II Siberian, and VI Siberian Corps were newly deployed there. — 2) G. 249 ff.

Page 291

Reinforcement of the Mackensen Army Group.

This created the possibility of withdrawing forces from this front to reinforce the Mackensen Army Group. As early as July 4, Colonel General von Conrad had given his consent to the weakening of the Southern Army requested by General von Falkenhayn, but at the same time expressed the wish that it be subordinated to the commander of the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army, General von Pflanzer-Baltin, in the event of a resumption of the offensive. The German Chief of Staff had rejected this and added that instead of the current high command of the Southern Army transferring to the Mackensen Army Group, General of Infantry Count von Bothmer would take over the command of the army with his general command. The Southern Army then relinquished its general command of the X Reserve Corps (General of Infantry Roß) with the 101st and 105th Infantry Divisions. On the evening of July 6, the commander-in-chief, General von Linsingen, was recalled with his staff and took command of the newly formed Bug Army on the right wing of the Mackensen Army Group. In the following days, the Southern Army was further weakened by the transfer of the 1st Infantry and 5th Cavalry Divisions as well as the general command of the XXIV Reserve Corps (General of Infantry von Gerok) to the Mackensen Army Group. West of the Vistula, the Russians had once again retreated at the turn of June/July. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army initially followed them to the Kamienna and was then withdrawn except for one infantry regiment and half of the 2nd Cavalry Division. An infantry division joined the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army east of the Vistula, while the remaining parts were transported by rail via Lemberg behind the right wing of the 11th Army to the Bug downstream from Kamionka Strumilowa. Here, the Szurmay Group and the 46th Infantry Division from the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army joined them. The Woyrsch Army Detachment took over the entire front west of the Vistula up to the Pilica. Its right wing advanced to the heavily fortified enemy position in the Zemborzyn—Gienno—Ilza line and attacked it unsuccessfully on July 7. On July 11, the chiefs of staff of the allied army commands agreed in Plesk on guidelines for continuing operations on the southeastern theater of war. Opinions on this initially differed significantly on several points.

1) p. 254. 2) World War. Vol. VIII. 25

Page 292

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Generaloberst von Conrad proposed that the Austro-Hungarian 4th and 11th Armies, with their left wing along the Vistula and right on Cholm, should attack, with the Bug Army to the right — this with a strong group east of the Bug on Wladimir Wolynsk. On the western Vistula bank, the Army Detachment Woyrsch was to advance in conjunction with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army in the general direction of Iwoslen. Generaloberst von Conrad envisioned covering this decisive main operation to the east in an offensive form by advancing the Austro-Hungarian 1st and 2nd Armies and the Southern Army to the line Zimno (south of Wladimir Wolynsk)—Druzkopol—Pieniaki—course of the Sereth, while the 7th Army was to simultaneously push northward east of the Strypa. In these proposals, General von Falkenhayn saw the danger of a fragmentation of forces; he agreed with them only regarding the use of the 4th and 11th Armies and the Army Detachment Woyrsch. However, he wanted the Bug Army to closely cooperate with the 11th Army to increase the striking power on this side of the Bug. Furthermore, he desired the participation of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army in the operations of Army Group Mackensen under the command of the Generalfeldmarschall. It was to advance east of the Bug against the line Wladimir Wolynsk—Luzk to protect the Allies' offensive on the right flank. The head of the operations department, Generalmajor Tappen, went even further in the objectives for this army. He advocated that it should be reinforced by German troops to quickly and securely take control of that line "as a starting point for repelling the Russians." If the foundation were thus laid for the possibility of always holding the right and preventing the Russians from evading eastward, they would have to come into a very bad situation under the simultaneous pressure of General von Gallwitz's offensive; under certain circumstances, they could even be encircled if they held their ground." This agreed with the view of the Chief of the Field Marshal's Staff, Generalmajor Groener, who wrote in his diary on July 4: "In my opinion, a strong army east of the Bug is necessary." General von Falkenhayn opposed such an extensive offensive goal east of the Bug, as "given everything known about the terrain beyond the Bug, there was concern that this alone would already hinder further operations.

1) From unpublished war memoirs of the current Lieutenant General a. D. Tappen.

Page 293

Reorganization of Army Group Mackensen.

would create insurmountable obstacles in the course“1). He also had concerns about weakening the striking power of the decisive main group in the area between Bug and Vistula by transferring German troops to the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army. Colonel General von Conrad, however, who gratefully and gladly welcomed any reinforcement of his troops by Germans, quickly warmed to General Tappen's proposal and also withdrew his objection to placing the 1st Army under the command of Field Marshal von Mackensen. Thus, General von Falkenhayn finally agreed to the transfer of the XXXXI Reserve Corps and the 5th Cavalry Division as well as the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division to the 1st Army, although he maintained his concerns about a far-reaching operation in the difficult terrain east of the Bug2). The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army was tasked with accompanying the offensive on the southern flank by advancing over the Bug into the area near Wladimir Wolynsk with at least four infantry and three cavalry divisions, while securing the Bug line downwards to the level of Dub with their remaining forces. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and the Southern Army were initially to remain defensive, while the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army was to attack east of the Strypa in the direction of Czortkow—Buczacz. On July 11, corresponding instructions were issued to the armies.

Field Marshal von Mackensen ordered that the new offensive should be launched by the Bug Army on July 15. On the same day, the 81st Reserve Division of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, which had already joined the left wing of the 1st Army at Krylow, was to join it, while the assembly of the other parts of this army, intended for the attack on Wladimir Wolynsk, which could only be completed on July 18, postponed the action to a later date. Field Marshal von Mackensen also assigned it the 103rd Infantry Division3) of Major General von Stossfuß, arriving from Strymien, whose deployment General von Falkenhayn had secured despite initial concerns from Colonel General von Conrad. The 11th and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army were to advance one day later than the Bug Army, i.e., on July 16. The necessary shifts for the deployment proceeded smoothly without interference from the enemy. In total, 33 infantry and two cavalry divisions were available to the Bug, 11th, and Austro-Hungarian 4th Army.

1) von Falkenhayn, p. 93.  
2) General Tappen noted in his diary: “It was only a compromise, nothing whole.”  
3) p. 260.

Page 294

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

The vast area between the Bug and Vistula, into which the army group had already entered around the turn of June/July and where the decision was to be fought in the future, has the character of hilly land in its southern part up to about the height of Cholm—Inowgorod, north of which it increasingly turns into flatland. Mostly covered with extensive, dense forests and traversed by numerous watercourses with marshy lowlands in various directions, the section-rich terrain offered generally favorable positions for operations, to whose artificial reinforcement the population was extensively recruited. Large roads with solid ground were only available in limited numbers. Railways were completely absent in the 100-kilometer-deep area from the Galician-Russian border to the line Cholm—Lublin, except for the Rozwadów—Lublin line, which the Russians had not yet fully completed and which had since been destroyed. It was therefore to be expected that the regulation of supplies would encounter serious difficulties. According to a suggestion from the Army High Command 11, the head of the field railway service had already ordered the immediate construction of a single-track field railway at the end of June, which was to establish a connection with the Russian main railway network via the Rawa Ruska—Belzec line through Zamość in the general direction of Cholm. Similar conditions existed in the area east of the Bug. Here, the southwestern extensions of the large Rokitno swamp area extended over a wide stretch right up to the river. The difficulties that arose from this for the movements of large troop bodies were indeed overestimated by General von Falkenhayn, according to his own later testimony, based on the existing maps and terrain descriptions as well as gathered reconnaissance. It was not known that "the magnificent works carried out in the years before the war to improve the drainage conditions in the swamp area had lowered the water level to such an extent that the passability of the area in such dry summers as that of 1915 was actually only hindered by the watercourses themselves. It would have been quite possible," writes General von Falkenhayn, "to operate even with stronger troop formations in it

1) Only on August 9 could this line be put into operation after extensive restoration work. 2) The construction begun on June 29 was put into operation up to Zamość on August 1. Only on August 25 was the connection to the main railway Cholm—Lublin, which had just been made operational, reached. 3) von Falkenhayn, p. 93.

Page 295

The Russian Forces in Front of the Mackensen Army Group.

to move if it were possible to overcome the supply difficulties. They naturally remained fully in place due to the complete lack of railways and solid roads.

The Mackensen High Command, based on the information available to it about the distribution of the Russian forces, assumed that parts of the 4th, 3rd, and the newly formed 13th Army, with a total strength of about 15 corps and 8½ cavalry divisions, were facing the army group in the area from the Vistula to the region south of Vladimir Volynsk. It was assumed that the front of the 4th Army on this side of the Vistula (XXV, XV, VI Siberian Corps, 2½ Cavalry Divisions) extended eastward to Bychawa, with the front of the 3rd Army (IX, X, III Caucasian, XIV, XXIV, II Siberian Corps, Guard Corps, one Cavalry Division) extending to the west of Grabowiec, and the front of the 13th Army (II Caucasian, XXIII, XIX, XXXI, V Caucasian Corps, five Cavalry Divisions) on both sides of the Bug with its left wing reaching the area of Bzary. Prisoner statements revealed that there was a shortage of rifles and replacement troops often arrived without firearms. Behind the combat front, Russian infantry regiments were to be formed as commands without rifles. Ammunition seemed to be more plentiful. However, it was doubted whether it would be sufficient for prolonged artillery battles.

The assumptions about the composition and strength ratios of the Russian armies generally corresponded to reality. The 4th Army under General Ewert (XVI, Grenadier, XXV, VI Siberian, XV Corps, a total of 10 infantry and 2½ cavalry divisions) stood on both sides of the Vistula, the front of the 3rd Army under General Lisch (IX, X, III Caucasian, XIV, XXIV Corps, a total of ten infantry and two cavalry divisions) extended from Bychawa to Grabowiec. Behind it were in reserve the II Siberian Corps, Guard Corps, and the 56th Infantry Division, a total of 5½ infantry divisions. The newly formed 13th Army from the previous Olschozy Group under the command of General Gorbatowski (II Caucasian, XXIII, V Caucasian, XXXI, XXXI Corps, a total of 13 infantry divisions, and 4 cavalry corps with four cavalry divisions) held with its left wing on

1) In contrast to the completely railway-less area west of the Bug, there was a connection east of the river in the railway line Vladimir Volynsk–Sokal, already established by the Russians in the autumn of 1914, between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian main railway networks.  
2) See p. 262.

Page 296

the eastern Bug bank in the area north of Sofal to loosely connect with the 8th Army. At the beginning of July, the assembly of strong German and Austro-Hungarian forces between Bug and San, especially against the inner flanks of the Russian Northwest and Southwest Front, suggested an attack from the south and southwest. The 3rd and 13th Armies were instructed to offer stubborn resistance to allow reinforcements to be brought in. The 4th Army was to maintain the connection to the 3rd Army on the eastern Vistula bank, if necessary by giving up terrain on the opposite bank. This task had been successfully solved by the three Russian armies in previous battles. They were determined to accept the upcoming decision as well.

2. The Battle of Krasnostaw and Hrubieszow from July 15 to 22.

Maps 5 and 6, Sketches 24 and 25.

The attack of the Bug Army¹ on July 15 initially brought no success. The attempt by the Gerok Corps to break through on the right army flank at Malmowce failed. In repeated counterattacks, the enemy threw the attackers back to their starting position. The advance of the Beskiden Corps, with its focus in the direction of Zabrce, also came to a halt. In the evening, General von Linsingen reported that ten divisions were facing his army in defensive combat. This deployment of forces revealed the enemy's firm intention to cover their retreat on the roads leading east behind the Bug with strong resistance. He assumed that it was primarily important not only to defeat the enemy but also to cut them off from retreating eastward. Only by quickly advancing the Bug Army on the western bank and the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army on the eastern bank could the enemy's retreat still be blocked. However, this required a reinforcement of the Bug Army and a reduction of its attack front.

The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army² had to cross the Bug at Sofal  
¹) The Bug Army consisted of: Gerok Corps (Genlt. XXIV. R. K., 11th Bavarian I. D., 107th L. S. D.), Beskiden Corps (25th R. D., 35th R. D., 4th G. D.), 1st S. D. ²) The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army consisted of: I Corps (5th I. D., 36th I. D.), Szurmay Group (47th I. D.), I Corps (46th S. D.), German XXXXI. R. K. (81st, 82nd I. D.), Bavarian 103rd S. D., German 5th R. D., Austro-Hungarian 4th and Hungarian 11th I. R. D. (Rad.-Corps Heydebreck)

Page 297

The Prussian Guard Storms Krasnostaw.

due to high water. Only weak parts reached the eastern bank during the night.

Even on July 16, the Bug Army did not break through. With the 11th Army, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps in a frontal attack against the strong position behind the wide Wolica lowlands could only achieve local progress with significant losses. However, a full success was achieved west of the Wieprz. Under the pressure of a powerful thrust by the inner wings of the XXII Reserve and X Army Corps, the Russians, simultaneously pressured by the Guard Corps at the front, were forced to quickly abandon the Wieprz-Volkswina angle. By deploying the 119th Infantry Division on the right wing of the X Army Corps, the attack wedge could be pushed further north to Izdebno. With the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, there was no unified attack on this day.

On the right wing of the Bug Army, even on July 17, the deployment of the 1st Infantry Division with the Gerok Corps could not bring the attack into flow. However, the 11th Army managed to exploit its success west of the Wieprz despite increased resistance. Krasnostaw succumbed to the assault of the Guard. Under a flanking cover pushed north on the west bank of the Wieprz, the infantry of the Guard Corps crossed the Wieprz and gained a bridgehead east of Krasnostaw. To be able to quickly move the parts of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division of Lieutenant General Freiherr von Aßnitz, still standing at the Wolica front, the 105th Infantry Division was to be deployed for their relief. This division and the adjacent 22nd Infantry Division, which had succeeded in crossing the Wolica at a spatially limited point, were subordinated to General of Infantry Kosch. To the left of the Guard Corps, the XXII Reserve and X Army Corps fought back and forth over Izdebno. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, attacking in a broad front, still gained no ground today. Therefore, Field Marshal von Mackensen decided to shift the focus to their right wing, in order to

1) The 11th Army consisted of: Austro-Hungarian VI Corps (12th, 39th Infantry Division), Guard Corps (1st, 2nd, 3rd Guard Infantry Division), XXII Reserve Corps (42nd, 43rd, 44th Reserve Division), X Reserve Corps (19th, 20th Guard Division), Gerok Corps (Bentho. X Reserve Corps, 101st, 105th (3rd Guard Division), 119th Infantry Division), 3rd Guard Division (the latter brought from the western theater of war in early July G. 99.)  
2) The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army consisted of: XVII Corps (11th, 45th Field Division), XIV Corps (3rd, 8th, 10th Infantry Division), IX Corps (106th, 4th, 41st, 21st Schützen Division), X Corps (2nd, 24th, 26th Guard Division), Reserve Corps (37th, 62nd Schützen Division), German 47th Reserve Division and 1st and 3rd Brigade of the Polish Legion), 2nd Reserve Division.

Page 298

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Connection to the victorious left wing of the 11th Army to carry out the attack.

The previous result of the offensive was minor. Only the three corps of the left wing of the 11th Army had made a spatially limited breach in the Russian front west of the Wieprz. The stubborn resistance that the enemy had offered in the first three days of fighting, and the reports received by July 18 about their force distribution, gave the commander of the army group the conviction that very strong Russian forces must have been deployed between the Bug and the Vistula, determined to fight a decisive battle. He even expected a counterattack from the Cholm—Lublin line, or at least the strongest defense in this line. On the other hand, he no longer considered an advance by the Russians from the east over the Bug against the right flank likely. He therefore believed he had to keep his forces as concentrated as possible in the area between the Bug and the Vistula, where the decision was being fought, but could forego the redeployment of stronger forces of the b.-ö.u. 1st Army to advance from Krylow to Vladimir Volynsk. This army was instructed to only secure bridgeheads on the Bug, which were to serve as a fallback for the cavalry corps of General von Hebler (German 5th, ö.u. 4th, and Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division) to be deployed later on Vladimir Volynsk—Lutsk. The Bug security of the 1st Army was to extend downstream to Slupce. Since the army no longer needed the XXXXI Reserve Corps for this purely defensive task, it was to join the Bug Army and increase its striking power. This seemed all the more necessary to him, as this army had not yet succeeded in advancing by July 18.

In the 11th Army, the breach in the enemy position widened that day. The bulk of the 105th Infantry Division, led by Major General von der Esch to the Wolica front, was moved west of the Wieprz behind the guard and advanced through the bridgehead of the Wieprz to the east. Immediate heavy counterattacks by the Russian guard from the north and east brought this advance to a halt and thus enabled the extremely threatened Russian garrison of the Wolica position to retreat. The b.-ö.u. VI Corps and the 22nd Infantry Division simultaneously pushed frontally over this section after the retreating enemy. Also west of the Wieprz, the Guard Corps and the left wing of the XXII Reserve Corps had to fend off strong counterattacks. The initially well-advancing left wing of this corps no longer got beyond Olszanka. In front of the X Army Corps

Page 299

The Battle of Hrubieszow.

The enemy first offered sustained resistance in a new position northwest of Izdebno. West of the Gielczew Brook, the 19th Infantry Division, in cooperation with the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, pushed them back to Rzczonow.

On July 19, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army expanded its bridgehead at Sokal and was able to gain a foothold on the eastern bank of the Bug north of Ibzary. The Heydebreck Cavalry Corps began to cross the river. The army was again advised that further advances beyond the Bug were not feasible, but the prompt relief of the XXXXI Reserve Corps was necessary, as it occupied the western Bug bank on both sides of Krylow and was simultaneously striving to maintain the connection to the Bug Army to the north. This army was now in full forward movement, as the enemy had retreated along its entire front on the night of July 19. Covered on the right flank at the Bug by the 1st Infantry Division, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division pushed the enemy back behind the Huczwa, which had become swampy due to recent rains. The 107th Infantry Division, under the leadership of Major General von Moser, advanced north of Zaboryze. Here, the enemy successfully opposed further advances into the rear of its position at Hrubieszow. The territorial gain was significantly larger on the left army wing, where the Beskiden Corps under General of Cavalry von der Marwitz was able to follow the retreating enemy to Wosylow. To continue the pursuit the next day along the entire line, Hrubieszow was to be captured early by encirclement from the west.

In front of the 11th Army, the enemy retreated further east of the Wieprz under the double pressure in the front and against its rear from the bridgehead east of Krasnystaw. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps followed and reached the brook section at Siemnica Krolewska with its left wing. As the troops of General Korsch (22nd and 105th Infantry Division) and parts of the Guard Corps advanced from the northeast of Krasnystaw, the former were to be withdrawn again. Along this entire line, they now encountered newly reinforced positions. However, on the eastern bank of the river, the advance took on more of the character of a pursuit. The left wing of the Guard Corps swung towards Wieprz. The XXII Reserve Corps advanced beyond Lopiennik. The X Army Corps, however, pushed its spearhead towards Piaski under great marching efforts and thus stood close to the intended target, the Cholm—Lublin road.

Also in front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the enemy advanced in one move up to

Page 300

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

a new position in the Chmiel—Opole line, to which the army advanced.

Thus, by the evening of the fifth day of the attack on the battlefield between Bug and Vistula, a great spatial success was recorded almost along the entire line. However, the enemy had managed to avoid a decision by a systematic retreat into well-prepared positions. Their combat strength, which had also manifested in effective counterattacks, was by no means broken.

Meanwhile, on the western bank of the Vistula, the army detachment Woyrsch south of the Ilzanka wanted to achieve a great success, which did not remain without influence on the enemy front opposite the Mackensen army group. On the morning of July 17, the right wing of the army detachment broke into the Russian position and forced the enemy to retreat. In pursuit, the Ilzanka was reached by the evening of July 18. The group Kövesz on the left wing was also able to follow the withdrawing enemy on July 19 up to the line Starzyn—Kowala—west of Przytyk—west of Wysmierzyce. Thus, the operational cooperation of the forces on both sides of the Vistula began to become threateningly noticeable for the Russians. According to the orders of Field Marshal von Mackensen, the enemy between Bug and Vistula was to be withdrawn to their main positions everywhere on July 20 and these themselves attacked on July 21.

Things did not proceed so systematically, however. Initially, it was a surprise that the enemy attacked the bridgeheads of the s.u. 1st Army on the eastern Bug bank with strong forces on July 20 and pushed back their garrisons. The cavalry corps Heydebreck had to vacate the barely won Olsufte again. This delayed the relief of the XXXXII Reserve Corps intended to strengthen the Bug Army. Field Marshal von Mackensen did not allow the deployment of the 103rd Infantry Division of Major General von Esfott requested by the 1st Army for a counterattack on the Olsufte.

The Bug Army also encountered unexpected obstacles. The hope of General von Liningen that the enemy would succumb to the comprehensively planned attack against Hrubieszow was initially not fulfilled. The thrust of the 107th Infantry Division from the west against the heights north of Hrubieszow did not penetrate. To give this flank attack greater force, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division of Major General Ritter von Kneußl south of Hrubieszow was reinforced by the 1st Infantry Division of Lieutenant General von Conta

Page 301

The Bug Army Breaks the Resistance at Hrubieszow

relieved and moved across to the western Huczwa bank. However, on July 20, it could no longer engage in battle due to the late hour. As the Beskiden Corps also had to postpone its attack due to unfavorable weather to July 21, General von Linsingen decided to bring down Hrubieszow the next day through a frontal attack by the 1st Infantry Division south of the Huczwa and by encircling with the 11th Bavarian and 107th Infantry Division from the west. He hoped in this way to separate the Russian forces west and east of the Bug.

The striking power of the 11th Army was reduced by the days of fighting and marches on roads made impassable by rain. Its territorial gain on July 20 in new fierce battles against the enemy, reinforced by significant fresh forces, was therefore only slight. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, which had shifted its focus to the right wing, unsuccessfully attempted to break through at Chmiel in connection with the 11th Army.

Field Marshal von Mackensen saw no danger in the strong deployment of forces against the Bug bridgeheads of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army. It even seemed desirable to him that the enemy, feeling threatened here, would tie down forces away from the decisive battle. Apparently, the Russians had no intention of advancing over the Bug themselves. Since the use of the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps east of the Bug was not possible at the time, the Field Marshal ordered on July 21 that his cavalry divisions (the German 5th and Austro-Hungarian 4th) on the western Bug bank should free up the XXXXI Reserve Corps as soon as possible for use at the front of the Bug Army. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division was assigned to the Bug Army. Due to shifts within the front, the attack of this army was only carried out in the course of the afternoon. The enemy abandoned Hrubieszow under pressure against his right flank and rear. He was thrown back from Hrubieszow to the north and onto Zabudce. The Beskiden Corps succeeded in taking the position on both sides of Wosjlawice in a broad front and then holding it against counterattacks. General von Linsingen believed that these counterattacks served as the prelude to further retreat and therefore ordered that the XXXXI Reserve Corps should also soon engage in the battle over Hrubieszow with the 1st Infantry Division, and the 11th Cavalry Division should follow the army wing. The 11th Army encountered the hardest resistance on both banks of the Huczwa. However, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army succeeded in breaking into the enemy on both sides of Trzciniec.

Page 302

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Even on July 22, the enemy attacked the bridgeheads of the k.u.k. 1st Army east of the Bug in vain. Field Marshal von Mackensen informed the commander-in-chief, Field Marshal von Puhallo, that for operational reasons he no longer placed value on the bridgeheads, only the absolute holding of the river section was necessary. The Bug Army continued its attack on the right flank. The foremost parts of the XXXXI Reserve Corps had to immediately turn east against the enemy after breaking through Hrubieszow, who was standing in the river bend west of Uscilug. Northward, the 1st Infantry Division Woyrsch fought. The Gerdt Corps had already advanced westward but encountered new heavily fortified positions at and east of Teratyn. The Beskiden Corps could only hold its lines in changing battles. The divisions of the 11th Army were at the end of their material strength and dug in. The k.u.k. 4th Army was able to further expand the success of its center. The left army wing advanced on the Vistula at Imlitowicz, as ordered by the Mackensen High Command, to maintain the connection with the Army Detachment Woyrsch.

Before this, the enemy had already evacuated the stubbornly defended position north of the Ilzanka on the morning of July 19 after fierce nightly battles. By the evening of July 22, partly only after overcoming new resistance, both wings of the Army Detachment Woyrsch reached the Vistula, above Iwangorod in the line Janowice–Patkowice, below Iwangorod in the line west of Pawlowice–Ryczwol to the Pilica estuary. In the gap in between, the fortress was closed from the west, and strong parts were prepared for crossing the river on both sides of the road Zwolen–Nowo Aleksandria.

The Mackensen High Command assessed the enemy's intentions on July 22 in a report to the Supreme Army Command as follows: "Enemy preparing retreat with 13th Army to the northeast. From the 3rd Army, counterattacks are initially expected, then retreat to the north, later to the northeast. The 4th Army will initially cover the middle Vistula, then withdraw, initially to the north." The enemy thus seemed to be preparing a large backward swing behind the Bug. Field Marshal von Mackensen did not conceal that a strong thrust of the army squadron would be desirable to hit the flank of the Russian retreat. However, he could not ignore the realization that the battles over the course

Page 303

Pause in Operations for the Mackensen Army Group.

The heavily burdened and exhausted 11th Army was no longer able, in its current grouping of forces, to achieve decisive successes against the enemy, whose defensive strength remained unbroken. Therefore, he reported with a heavy heart to the Supreme Army Command his decision to "continue the advance northward with a strong center and cover to the east only after a necessary pause in operations." This decision did not surprise the German Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army. He himself had viewed the prospects as extremely favorable on July 19, but on the 21st wrote to the Commander-in-Chief East: "The Mackensen Army Group faces a far superior enemy. Those of its troops that must advance have been severely affected by almost three months of mobile warfare, and their right flank requires constant attention. It is therefore not to be assumed that the army group can advance on its own." For the director of overall operations, however, a pause in the Mackensen Army Group's offensive called into question the success of his own plans, which were aimed at a decisive blow against the main body of the enemy. The previously favorable course of events, especially on the Narew Front, had only recently awakened in him the hope "that the decision in the fight against Russia would fall in the area south of the Narew." To achieve this goal, the concentric pressure from the northwest and south against the enemy masses located in the area between the Bug and Vistula rivers could not be allowed to slacken even temporarily. It was therefore crucial to get the stalled offensive of the Mackensen Army Group back on track as quickly as possible. General von Falkenhayn, in the aforementioned letter to the Commander-in-Chief East, identified the uninterrupted continuation of the Narew operation with the deployment of all available forces as the most effective means, since immediate support for the Mackensen Army Group by bringing in fresh units did not seem feasible due to unfavorable railway and supply conditions in Galicia and southern Poland. At the same time, he was also eager to bring the forces still west of the Vistula, such as the 9th Army and the Woyrsch Army Detachment, to bear on the course of the war beyond the river as soon as possible. After July 21, he therefore proposed to Colonel General von Conrad to combine these two units into an army group directly subordinate to the German Supreme Army Command under the command of

Page 304

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

To unite Prince Leopold of Bavaria and launch an attack across the Vistula between Iwangorod and Warsaw in the direction of Lublin-Siedlce. This idea undoubtedly corresponded to the understandable desire of the German Chief of General Staff to secure a stronger immediate influence on the continuation of overall operations on the Eastern Front by incorporating some Austro-Hungarian units into the German command area, in line with the numerous German contributions to the Austro-Hungarian command. He also had sufficient reasons from the standpoint of overall war strategy to bring the fight against Russia to a successful conclusion as quickly as possible, in order to free up forces for use in the West and — given the precarious situation of the Turkish ally — to exert "pressure on the Balkan states."

However, his proposal met with decisive rejection from the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff. He had already previously ordered, in line with the existing agreements of the Woyrich Army Division, to cross the Vistula above Iwangorod under protection against the fortress and to engage in the battle of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army. He now asked General von Falkenhayn to maintain the existing command relationships, as the operations of the Woyrich Army Division were connected with those of the Mackensen Army Group, while the 9th Army was linked with the Narew attack. General von Falkenhayn immediately pointed out in his response that the consolidation of the two armies was precisely intended to deploy them in the most effective direction, in this case, to attack the Russian forces opposing Field Marshal von Mackensen from the rear. However, Colonel General von Conrad persisted in his position, arguing that an attack across the Vistula below Iwangorod would be too time-consuming and would allow the enemy to shift forces from the Vistula bend against both the Mackensen Army Group and the Gallwitz Army Group. The exchange of views on this continued for several days without result. Even a personal discussion between the two Chiefs of General Staff in Teschen on July 24 initially brought no agreement. Only after Field Marshal von Mackensen assured General von Falkenhayn in response to an inquiry that the situation at the front of his army group could be maintained by its own strength until the Vistula crossing became effective, did Colonel General von Conrad agree to General von Falkenhayn's proposal to the extent that the army-

1) Letter from General von Falkenhayn to the Commander-in-Chief East dated July 21, 1915.

Page 305

The Army Detachment Woyrsch is to relieve the Mackensen Army Group. The Woyrsch Detachment was to force the crossing b e l o w Ivangorod. The German Chief of General Staff temporarily refrained from further discussing his plan to form a new army group under General Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria. General Field Marshal von Mackensen had accurately assessed the situation and intentions of the R u s s i a n s in his report to the Supreme Army Command on July 22. Despite the deployment of reinforcements (II Siberian and Guard Corps with the 3rd Army, 56th and 27th Infantry Divisions with the 13th Army), it was not possible to hold the previous positions. The Commander-in-Chief of the Northwestern Front, General Alexeyev, ordered a gradual withdrawal to the prepared positions Ivangorod—Kock—Ostrow—Dalin—Luboml—Kowel for the three armies of his southern wing (4th, 3rd, and 13th Army) on July 22. The 3rd and 13th Armies were tasked with delaying the advance of the Mackensen Army Group towards Brest Litovsk through offensively conducted resistance. In particular, the area around Vladimir Volynsk east of the Bug was to be held as long as possible. Due to the pause in attacks by the allies, the Russians gained time for the systematic preparation of the ordered retreat. They refrained from immediately initiating movements.

3. The continuation of the offensive on Cholm—Lublin from July 23 to 31. Maps 6 and 7, Sketch 24.

Until the resumption of the offensive on the front of the Mackensen Army Group, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army successfully repelled enemy attacks against their bridgeheads on the Bug as before. Their cavalry divisions were deployed for flank protection down to Stitcze. In the Bug Army, General von Linsingen, who saw only the concealment of further retreat in the enemy's counterattacks, initially attempted to continue the offensive. The XXXXI Reserve Corps and parts of the 1st Infantry Division had to fight long, heavy, bloody battles for possession of Sziplosch (east of Moniatycze) and the forest east of Annopol in their front directed eastwards against the Bug loop between Uscilug. The fighting strength of the enemy was also evident in the often repeated attacks against the left adjoining front of the 1st Infantry Division and the Geyl Corps.

Page 306

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Counterattacks from the forests. Nevertheless, after a few days, the 11th Bavarian Infantry Division succeeded in taking the enemy positions west of Annopol. Attempts to advance at Teresyn on the road to Cholm, however, were unsuccessful. Only the Beskiden Corps, supported by neighboring troops of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, achieved some local advantages on its left wing on July 25. Counterattacks by the Russians in the following days were repelled. The overall result of these several days of bitter fighting by the Bug Army was small. They only proved that their severely exhausted and weakened divisions alone were unable to break the stubborn resistance of the enemy. Here, too, a pause in fighting was absolutely necessary to resume the attack together with the other armies. Against the 11th Army, the Russians only launched connected, unsuccessful attacks on July 23. Otherwise, the regrouping and preparation of forces for a new advance could be carried out undisturbed by the enemy until July 28. Reinforcements to strengthen the very weakened forces arrived in the meantime. In front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, the enemy began to retreat into a prepared position only a few kilometers back on July 23. The army followed them; the deployment for the new attack also remained undisturbed here. For the resumption of his offensive, Field Marshal von Mackensen chose the middle of the enemy front between the Bug and Vistula, the line Cholm—Lublin, as the main direction of attack. He did not perceive that another thrust further east, with partial forces on the right bank of the Bug, could effectively hit the enemy if he, as expected, evaded to the northeast. However, this would have required time-consuming regroupings. The terrain near the Bug, with its numerous watercourses and swampy areas, was also considered particularly unfavorable for movements and battles of large troop masses. Furthermore, it was expected that the enemy would offer particularly stubborn resistance on his outer army wing to cover the withdrawal of his masses over the middle Bug. From a further westward thrust, the Field Marshal finally hoped, in close cooperation with the Army Detachment Woyrsch, to quickly outflank the Russian Vistula front still held on both sides of Swangorod. He also considered a premature retreat of the

1) The Austro-Hungarian army command withdrew the 8th Infantry Division from the army for use on the Italian front. 2) See p. 388.

Page 307

Resumption of the Offensive of Army Group Mackensen.

It was considered possible by the enemy and believed that such an attack would certainly be covered by heavy partial attacks. "The army is ready," it was therefore ordered, "to repel these attacks as before and to follow the retreating enemy. A premature assault against his strong positions does not promise the desired success and would play into his hands." Only on July 29 were the 11th and 4th Armies to jointly launch a new attack.

The main breakthrough point for the 11th Army was again determined to be the front west of the Wieprz. Here, a strong assault group under the command of General von Emmich (XXII Reserve Corps, Corps Roßki, X Army Corps, 119th Infantry and Guard Cavalry Division) was to first break through at Biskupice and then throw strong rear echelons southward for a flank attack eastward over the Wieprz. This was intended to ease the difficult frontal attack over the enemy-rich Siemnica section for the right-adjoining front (Guard Corps and Austro-Hungarian VI Corps). After reaching the first objectives, the main pressure was to be shifted from the western Wieprz bank to the eastern one. The remnants of the army (the 22nd and the 103rd Infantry Division transferred from the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army) were therefore positioned immediately east of the river. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was to join the attack with a strong right wing in the direction of Lublin. It extended to the right into the area northeast of Chmiel to facilitate both the crossing of the Giełczew stream by the left wing of the 11th Army and to flank the enemy standing in front of its own front. The center, where the German 47th Reserve Division was located, was to continue the frontal breakthrough northwest of Trzciniec. Additionally, the army was instructed to pivot its left wing on the Vistula to hold Russian forces that might otherwise turn against the army detachment Woyrsch tasked with crossing below Iwangorod. The Bug Army was assigned the dual task of both covering the right flank of the 11th Army and participating in the new offensive by advancing on Cholm as long as possible.

According to the enemy force grouping reports, the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army (five infantry and two cavalry divisions²) faced seven Russian infantry divisions and two cavalry corps on the eastern Bug bank. More than ten Russian divisions had positioned themselves in front of the Bug Army, which numbered eight infantry divisions.

1) p. 394. — 2) p. 395. \* World War. Volume VIII. 26

Page 308

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

massed. However, the 11th Army with 12½ infantry divisions was almost four divisions superior to the enemy in front of them, and the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army (14½ infantry divisions) was about seven superior. The Russians were supposed to have freshly assembled their units. Artillery ammunition also seemed to be more plentiful with them now. General von Emmich wanted to lead the decisive attack entrusted to him by breaking out fan-like from the area on both sides of Fajslawice. The Kosch Corps was to break through the enemy position in the direction of Biskupice. Accordingly, the mass of heavy artillery was deployed here. To the right of this, the XXII Reserve Corps was to advance with a strong left wing north of Fajslawice and then attack eastwards below Lopiennik over the Wieprz. The flank security above Lopiennik was taken over by the Guard Cavalry Division. The X Army Corps had to provide strong parts on its right wing to cover the left flank of the Kosch Corps against a threat from the large forest west of Fajslawice. The task of the left wing of the corps, however, was to join the attack of the neighboring army directed to the northeast west of the Gielczew stream. General Kosch focused on the left wing of his corps. Here, the 105th Infantry Division of Major General von Eich succeeded, after repeated sharp fire concentration, soon after 7 a.m., in storming the elevated group of houses Ignasin (west of Fajslawice), the focal point of the enemy position. In a powerful swing, the division expanded its success to both sides. The adjacent 101st Infantry Division under the leadership of Major General Reiser was also able to advance its attack east of this place at noon, supported on the left flank over Fajslawice, and pull along the left wing of the XXII Reserve Corps. In the early afternoon, the 44th Reserve Division, following in the second line under Lieutenant General von Dorrer, pushed east over the Wieprz. The coverage of the left flank of the Kosch Corps was offensively carried out by the 20th Infantry Division under Lieutenant General Ritter and Edler von Deiting, advancing east of the Gielczew stream in the direction of Piaski. Under the impact of these all-round successes, the enemy abandoned further resistance in a rearwardly fortified position and cleared the area in the Wieprz—Gielczew arc. Advancing, the 101st Infantry Division secured the Wieprz bridges northeast of Fajslawice, while the 105th Infantry Division to the left of ...

Page 309

relentlessly advanced northward and captured Biskupice by midnight. The X Army Corps reached Piaszki. The battle on the eastern bank of the Wieprz was not as successful. To make the flank attack of the XXII Reserve Corps across the river as effective as possible, General von Emmich moved the 119th Infantry Division to Fajsławice. By 4 p.m., strong parts of the XXII Reserve Corps had already crossed the Wieprz after executing the right turn. However, strong resistance then set in, as the enemy recognized the danger posed to its southward-facing front by this rear threat from the Guard Corps and the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps. Therefore, the XXII Reserve Corps was unable to advance further eastward today. Consequently, the Prussian Guard Corps also achieved only minor local successes on both sides of Krupc in its frontal attack against the stubborn resistance of the Russian Guard. Fortunately, the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, which joined this attack, achieved significant territorial gains. The Bug Army now showed how much the previous battles had depleted the troops' striking power. The combat pause had been too short. The attack, centered on the 1st and 11th Bavarian Infantry Divisions west of Annopol, did not break through despite local advances by both divisions. The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army maintained its bridgeheads on the Bug despite some local losses. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army also did not achieve any major success. Overall, the gains of the first day of the attack were thus limited to the successful breakthrough of Emmich's assault group into the enemy's position west of the Wieprz. The aim was now to expand this success so that it also affected the adjoining fronts to the right and left. To this end, Field Marshal von Mackensen ordered General von Emmich on July 30 to continue with as strong forces as possible, holding the line from Boritz to west of the Wieprz, to bring down the particularly well-fortified enemy position in front of the Guard Corps and the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps. At the same time, these two corps were to attack the front anew. If the strike east of the Wieprz succeeded, it was hoped that the difficult attack of the Bug Army would also gain momentum. The commander of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, Archduke Josef Ferdinand, now intended to emphasize the attack on the left wing

Page 310

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

to reposition, break through the enemy here and then roll him up to the right. The decisive factor for this change was the fact that the Woyrich Army Detachment had succeeded on July 29 in crossing the Vistula below Iwangorod at several points. It was hoped that this threat from the rear would weaken the enemy's resistance in front of the left wing of the 4th Army.

In the early morning of July 30, Field Marshal von Mackensen was unexpectedly faced with a new situation: The enemy, having timely recognized the great danger threatening east of the Wieprz, had begun a retreat during the night almost along his entire front between the Bug and the Vistula into a new position, which, as reconnaissance revealed, ran approximately along the line Matcze (on the Bug) — south of Cholm — north of Lublin — Kurów. This position was also strongly fortified, according to intelligence reports, with the involvement of the civilian population. West of Kurów, it found support at Nowo Alexandrija on the Russian imperial front around Iwangorod. Once again, as so often before, the enemy had evaded the decisive blow intended for him at the last moment. Once again, the army group seemed to face the equally difficult, exhausting, and thankless task of a frontal attack against a strong position. For the pursuit, immediately undertaken by all three armies, quickly came to an end.

On July 31, the enemy was pushed back from the field to his main position, partly again under fierce fighting. In the Bug Army, the 1st and 11th Bavarian Infantry Divisions successfully advanced over Strzelce. The army was instructed to focus its further advance in the direction of Cholm. Also, on the left wing of the 11th Army, the X Army Corps succeeded in breaking into the Russian position west of the Wieprz. The left wing of the 4th Army advanced into the area of Kurów. Its right wing received a direction towards the northeast on Lenczna. The 11th Army was to succeed in making a convergence of its striking power in a narrower space impossible. The decisive attack planned by Field Marshal von Mackensen on August 1 with the Emmich Group on both sides of the main road Fajslawice — Wlodawa, with the Plettenberg Group (Guard Corps, 22nd and 103rd Infantry Division) east of it, left wing over Pawlow, was to be conducted. Yet, the Russians also seemed determined to hold their ground against the concentrated attacks of the Allies in Poland, despite the previous failures of their entire front.

Page 311

The Order for the Crossing of the Vistula below Iwangorod

The military success of the 11th Army at Biskupice, which had revived the offensive of the Mackensen Army Group, coincided with an equally important event on the left neighboring front, the crossing of the Vistula by the Woyrsch Army Detachment. Generaloberst von Woyrsch, based on the directive received on the evening of July 21 from the Austro-Hungarian High Command, to engage with as strong forces as possible over Nowo Aleksandrija in the battle of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, immediately set out to reach the Vistula above the fortress drownings against the line Nowo Aleksandrija—Golomb. The crossing was to take place on the night of July 24 to 25 at Nowo Aleksandrija, with a simultaneous feint by the Landwehr Division of General Count von Bredow at Janowice. However, during a meeting with General von Falkenhayn on July 23, the Chief of Staff of the Army Detachment, Lieutenant Colonel Heye, expressed concerns about the crossing at Nowo Aleksandrija, as the advantage of surprise would be lost at this location, and suggested crossing below the fortress. Apart from the possibility of surprise, this would allow the continuation of the thrust to hit the rear of the enemy opposing the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army and have a significantly more favorable operational impact. General von Falkenhayn, who, as already mentioned, shared the same view, proposed a corresponding amendment after consultation with Generaloberst von Conrad.

Meanwhile, preparations for the crossing at Nowo Aleksandrija were begun for all eventualities. Only on the late evening of July 24 did the new directive from Teschen reach the High Command in Radom, according to which the crossing of the Vistula below Iwangorod in the area of the Radomka estuary was to be forced by the Landwehr Corps and the Landwehr Division Bredow. The Austro-Hungarian XII Corps of General von Kövess was tasked with securing the river from the Chodel estuary down to Kozienice, enclosing Iwangorod, and attacking the fortress upon the arrival of heavy artillery. General von Falkenhayn added to this directive on July 25.

1) The Woyrsch Army Detachment consisted of: 2nd Landwehr Bredow, Landwehr Regiment (3rd and 4th Austro-Hungarian Divisions), Kövess Group (Austro-Hungarian XII Corps with 16th and 35th Infantry Divisions), Austro-Hungarian 7th and 9th Austro-Hungarian 2nd Divisions.  
2) C. 398. — 3) C. 398. — 4) C. 398/399.

Page 312

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Additionally, the main requirement for the success of the crossing is the surprise of the enemy. The choice of the crossing point is therefore left to the high command and should not be restricted by the reconnaissance of the Radomka estuary. The crossing should take place as soon as possible, without regard to any parts of the 9th Army that might be brought up.

Although the crossing at Nowo Aleksandria had already begun on the night of July 25th, the left march of the three Landwehr divisions was immediately initiated: the Landwehr corps was to reach the area Swierze Gorne—Glownaczow—Magnuszew by July 27th, and the Landwehr Division Bredow was to reach the area of Brzuzza by the 28th. Despite the extraordinarily long and strenuous marches required for this regrouping of all troops, especially the bridge trains already deployed at Nowo Aleksandria, all three Landwehr divisions were in the ordered accommodations by July 27th. After the relief of the Landwehr corps, General von Kövesh took over with the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division the Vistula security from south of Janowice to Opatkowice and closed off the fortress Iwangorod with the Austro-Hungarian XII Corps from the west. The Austro-Hungarian 9th Cavalry Division maintained the river security between Kozienice and the Pilica, and it was directly subordinated to the high command Borysch.

Based on the reconnaissance results, Generaloberst von Borysch ordered the crossing for the night of July 28th to 29th between Swierze Gorne and Tarnow with the main focus at Ryczywol. However, on July 27th, the Russians attacked the cavalry stationed on the right wing of the German 9th Army north of the Pilica. Generaloberst von Borysch was thus faced with the serious question of whether to adhere to his decision to cross the Vistula or to first turn north to support the 9th Army. The situation did not seem critical, as it was believed that Russian attacks between Iwangorod and Warsaw had to be expected since July 24th; 4½ Russian corps were identified at the Vistula section, enemy troop transfers to the north and the Vistula crossings below the Pilica estuary were in Russian hands. Generaloberst von Borysch, however, remained firm in his decision, as he saw his own river crossing as the most effective countermeasure against impending enemy attacks east of Warsaw. In the order issued on the morning of July 27th, he entrusted the leadership of the crossing to the commander of the Landwehr corps, General of Cavalry Fre...

Page 313

Preparations and Execution of the Vistula Crossing.

Mr. von König. Initially, the high ground on both sides of the Maciejowice–Góbelow road and the forest area on the eastern bank of the Vistula were to be secured. The 3rd (Major General von Arnim) and 4th (Major General von Hofacker) Landwehr Divisions were primarily designated for this operation; the Bredow Landwehr Division, whose artillery was made available to the Landwehr Corps for the crossing, was to be ready to advance immediately to the eastern bank, as Russian counterattacks were expected soon. The k.u.k. 9th Cavalry Division initially retained its security mission on the Vistula, while the Kövess Group at Kazimierz and Nowo Aleksandja was to simulate crossing attempts and otherwise pin down the enemy with artillery fire. The 9th Army was also called upon to support with diversionary maneuvers. The technical management of the river crossing was, according to the instructions of the General of Engineers at the Woyrsch High Command, Major General Adams, in the hands of k.u.k. Colonel Michel. He had four German, six k.u.k. pioneer companies with two German divisional, ½ corps bridge train, and 21 k.u.k. military bridge equipment at his disposal. This bridge material, equivalent to the equipment of six German corps, allowed a strong combat force to be thrown across the approximately 900-meter-wide river with the first echelon. The crossing itself was to take place in five groups at ten crossing points over a front width of 20 kilometers. Each group was to take four guns with them; the bulk of the artillery was deployed close to the Vistula. East of Rychzowol, the construction of a military bridge was to begin immediately. Since on July 28, the 9th Army explicitly waived support from the Woyrsch Army Detachment on the northern Pilica bank, and all indications were that the preparations had remained hidden from the enemy below Iwangorod, the prospects for success of the river crossing had significantly improved. On the night of July 28 to 29, at 1 a.m., the first echelon set off. Less than two hours later, the bulk of the infantry was on the eastern bank of the river across the entire front; by early morning, Kobylinica, Przewoz, and the large island east of Rychzowol were in German hands, with 300 prisoners and 5 machine guns captured. Despite enemy artillery fire, bridge construction east of Rychzowol could begin at 7 a.m.; by noon, the first parts of the artillery and the train had crossed. The 22nd Landwehr Brigade of Lieutenant General Sachs faced the strongest resistance at Tarnow. It managed to bring only a few guns across the Vistula and

Page 314

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Against soon-to-begin Russian attacks, a difficult position. Only when artillery arrived over the bridge at Ryczywol to provide support did their situation improve. The crossing was successful, but now it was necessary to quickly gain space for deeply structured bridgehead positions. Although the corps reserve and the flank protection from the Pilica were immediately brought up, it was no longer possible, given the rapidly advancing enemy reinforcements on July 29, to make further progress on the eastern bank. The next day, strong counterattacks were launched, particularly against the two flanks at Kobylinica and Tarnow. The Landwehr Division Bredow was brought over a newly completed second bridge at Swierze Gorne and took Maciejowice after heavy fighting. On July 31, the water of the Vistula rose significantly due to heavy rainfall in recent days, making the northern bridge unusable. This created a critical situation as the Russians brought up reinforcements and continued their counterattacks. Although the Landwehr Division Bredow managed to take the village of Podzamcze in a follow-up attack after repelling heavy attacks from 16 Russian battalions, it was only when the Landwehr Corps captured Domaziew in fierce fighting on August 1 that a bridgehead was secured, ensuring a safe river crossing. Already on July 29, and again on the 30th and 31st, after the left wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army had also moved and reached the height of Nowo Aleksandrija, Generaloberst von Woyrsch appealed to the allied army commands for reinforcement with powerful infantry, as his Landwehr divisions were too weak to exploit the success achieved. General von Falkenhayn then attempted to obtain the transfer of a division to the army section from both the Supreme Commander East and Generaloberst von Conrad, but was rejected by both. The only support available on July 29 was the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Cavalry Division from the Austro-Hungarian 9th Army, and on July 31, the German 9th Cavalry Division from the 9th Army was assigned; in addition, the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division, which had become dispensable before Iwangorod, and the Austro-Hungarian 9th, which was still securing the Pilica-Vistula angle. However, there was initially no possibility of use for cavalry east of the Vistula, as the Russians still held their bridgehead position firmly. Stronger accumulations-

1) p. 404. — 2) pp. 338 and 343.

Page 315

Strong Counterattacks by the Russians on the East Bank of the Vistula.

Movements near Jelechow, reported by pilots, suggested a continuation of their attacks.

Although the Kövesz Group had achieved successes before Iwangorod on August 1 and during the night of August 2, and had advanced to the enemy's position, the stubborn resistance of the Russians on the eastern Vistula bank in front of the Landwehr Corps continued on August 2. Generaloberst von Conrad was now inclined, after further representation by General von Falkenhayn, to accede to the requests of the Supreme Command Bövryich for reinforcements, and declared himself ready to provide him with the German 47th Reserve Division of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, albeit only after reaching the Bzura.

August 3 also brought no noticeable relief. Although the Russians withdrew on this day on the southern flank of the Landwehr Corps to the heights east of Kruszyna, they continued to hold stubbornly on the heights southwest of Sobolow and Laskarzew at the eastern edge of the forest area. However, the Kövesz Group succeeded in taking possession of the Russian position on the road Gniewoszów—Slowiki on the western front of Iwangorod. By evening, explosions and fires in Iwangorod seemed to indicate the evacuation of the fortress. On the night of August 4, the Russians indeed abandoned the western front of Iwangorod and withdrew to the east bank of the Vistula into the city and some outdated works, already abandoned in peacetime. Generaloberst von Bövryich then ordered, on the instructions of the Austro-Hungarian Army Command, the preparation of a division of the Kövesz Group for crossing at Rozienice; at the same time, however, Generaloberst von Conrad, in agreement with General von Falkenhayn, ordered that the German 47th Reserve Division, in view of the "changed situation at Iwangorod," should remain with the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army.

In the following days, the Landwehr Corps was still unable to completely break the enemy resistance. Nevertheless, local progress was made. During August 2, the left wing took the stubbornly defended Damirow, and on the night of August 5, the northern area was also taken, finally giving the 22nd Landwehr Brigade some breathing space, which had had to fend off strong Russian attacks for days, closely aligned with the Vistula. In the center, it was also possible to break into a height position southwest of Laskarzew and occupy Budy. The Kövesz Group, however, unsuccessfully attempted to gain the east bank at Iwangorod. As the Austro-Hungarian 35th Infantry Division had completed its assembly at Rozienice on the morning of August 5, Generaloberst von Bövryich intended to resume the attack on the east bank after a short pause.

Page 316

The Allies' Offensive on Brest-Litovsk.

to resume. The change in the overall situation that had occurred in the meantime prevented this from happening.

After the capture of Warsaw by the 9th Army, General von Falkenhayn revived his previously expressed plan to unite the 9th Army and the Army Detachment Woyrsch into an Army Group under the command of Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria. Colonel General von Conrad now agreed. The corresponding orders were issued immediately on August 5th. The new Army Group was placed directly under the German Supreme Army Command and was given the operational task of advancing with all means against and beyond the Lukow—Siedlce line.

The command area of the newly formed Army Group Prince Leopold of Bavaria extended along the Vistula from the area just south of Iwangorod to the southern front of Nowogeorgiewsk and initially counted 9½ infantry and four cavalry divisions along this approximately 150-kilometer stretch, of which two or three belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Army. Field Marshal Prince Leopold directed the right wing of Army Detachment Woyrsch to advance toward Lukow. With the main forces of the 9th Army, the Commanding General of the XXV Reserve Corps, General von Scheffer-Boyadel, was to force a crossing of the Vistula at or south of Warsaw. Only the Westernhagen detachment, consisting of Landwehr and Landsturm troops, was to remain facing the southern front of Nowogeorgiewsk. Reinforced to division strength, it was removed from the army area on August 7th at the request of the Commander-in-Chief East and was subordinated to General von Beseler for the attack on the fortress.

¹) p. 340. — ²) p. 345/346. — ³) p. 398 f.

Page 317

Retreat of the Russians to the North.

East of the Bug, they now retreated. Only to the east of the Vistula, opposite the h.-u. 4th Army and the Army Detachment Woyrsch, did they still hold their ground. General von Seeckt reported to the Supreme Army Command that the armies would initially follow the enemy along the entire front until they encountered serious resistance, which would require special preparation to overcome.

The h.-u. 1st Army had the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps cross the Bug between Krylow and Słipcze and sent it after the enemy retreating towards Wlodawa Wolhynsk. The Bug Army occupied Horodlo and Dubienka on the Bug and pushed its left wing in strong marches on deep sandy paths northwards beyond Cholm. The pursuit of the 11th Army encountered new resistance on the line Cholza—Wiepz south of Lenczna. The h.-u. 4th Army gained only a little ground on the left wing on both sides of Kurow.

Aerial reconnaissance gave the impression that the main forces of the Russians were retreating west of the Bug towards Wlodawa, but still occupied strong positions in several sections along the way. As much artillery, apparently well supplied with ammunition, had appeared, the Mackensen High Command believed that second-line forces had taken in the defeated corps.

On August 2, the h.-u. 1st Army increased its pressure east of the Bug by advancing the Szurmay Group from Bzary in a northerly direction to the right of the cavalry corps, which had been pushed forward to the stream section Grzybownica—Uściług. The Bug Army advanced over Uchańka and along the railway and road Cholm—Wlodawa. On this day, only the left wing of the 11th Army, reinforced by the 119th Infantry Division, pushed the enemy back over the Swinka stream east of Lenczna.

Under the impression of their failure, the Russians retreated further on August 3 along the entire front of the 11th Army. This followed up to the line Koziagora—Lenczna, and the right wing of the h.-u. 4th Army joined in. However, the enemy resistance remained strong north of Kurow and east of the Vistula, opposite their left wing.

From the burning of retreating villages, systematic road and bridge destructions, the dismantling of many radio stations, and other signs, the High Command of the Army Group concluded that the enemy, despite local resistance still being offered in many places, was deliberately continuing the retreat of the entire front and intended to avoid a decisive battle with the arriving strong opponent. This impression was confirmed on August 4, as the Russians not only in the area east

Page 318

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Bug and Vistula, but also on the eastern Bug bank in front of the left wing of the 5th and 1st Army to continue to evade. The armies of the Allies followed. In a report to the Supreme Army Command, Field Marshal von Mackensen described his task as moving Borissow with strong forces to the north, regardless of whether this would finally force the enemy to abandon his positions on the Vistula or whether it would hit the southern flank of the retreat. Main direction of the thrust over Parczem against the Warsaw—Brest Litowsk railway. Initially, the left encirclement of the 11th Army, to roll up positions behind Bieprz and Tysmienica and at the same time gain freer operational terrain than a frontal pursuit offers. Broader front 1st Army is considered sufficient after the enemy's withdrawal, after the 13th Russian Army is moved north. Bug Army extends to the left, initially to cover against Wlodawa, then again moves towards Wlodawa. 11th Army is to lead the main thrust over Ostrow—Parczem on both sides of the Tysmienica, 4th Army in the main direction Kock against the line Bobyn—Luftow and gain connection to Borysch, whose marching direction is assumed on Siedlce." Field Marshal von Mackensen believed he could achieve a faster and thus greater success if he shifted the focus of his operations not, as previously intended, in a northerly direction towards Wlodawa, but northerly towards Parczem. Through the necessary leftward shift of the 11th Army, he also wanted to give the Bug Army the opportunity to bypass the forest area southwest of Wlodawa, which is difficult to overcome frontally and is traversed by swamp strips, with parts to the left, and also to open the crossing over the difficult river sections of the Bieprz and the Tysmienica for the 5th and 4th Army. The High Command did not consider the large retreat movement of the enemy behind the Bug to be so advanced that a powerful thrust to the north could no longer effectively hit the southern flank. It also saw the possibility of close operational cooperation with the army division Borysch and the 5th Army for the highest satisfaction for a great success against the main part of the Russian forces in Poland. By army order at 10:30 a.m., the corresponding regrouping in further operations was ordered to be initiated on August 4th. The view of Field Marshal von Mackensen coincided with that of the German Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, while Colonel General von Conrad now directed the entire army group

Page 319

Shift to the Left of the 11th Army.

wanted to know given to the northeast, as the enemy seemed to be about to stand, also to give up his Vistula front, thus turning the battles along the entire line into an operational pursuit. Therefore, on August 4, he suggested in a telegram to General von Falkenhayn to direct the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army towards Parczew, the 11th Army towards Bialowka, and to take the Bug Army to the eastern bank of the Bug. Although General Lappen also supported this idea, General von Falkenhayn was opposed, arguing that this would disrupt the "harmonious pursuit" already ordered and initiated by Field Marshal von Mackensen in a northerly direction.

The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army reached the Bug on August 4 as ordered with the Szurmay Group and crossed this river with the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps at Wladimir Wolynsk and Uscilug. The army was to take over the Bug security up to Dubienka through the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division under its command.

The commander of the Bug Army, General von Linsingen, considering the fact that the enemy was retreating not only in front of his front but also east of the Bug in a northerly direction, considered an advance of his right wing to the opposite bank of the Bug for the purpose of cooperating with the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps to be more effective than continuing the pursuit with all forces on this side of the river. He therefore ordered the XXXXI Reserve Corps to "force the Bug on the Uscilug—Dubienka line and advance against Luboml and north of it." This order had to be reversed after the arrival of the army group's command. The XXXXI Reserve Corps was now moved to the right wing of the army to be deployed here later. The entire army front carried out the ordered shift to the left and reached Garbatowka with the left wing after the relief of the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps and parts of the Guard Corps.

The 11th Army formed three assault groups under Generals Freiherr von Plettenberg (Guard Corps and 22nd Infantry Division), von Falkenhayn (44th Reserve Division and Austro-Hungarian VI Corps), and von Emmich (Koch Corps and X Army Corps with Guard Cavalry Division). Army reserves followed behind the right wing the 43rd Reserve Division, behind the left wing the 119th and 103rd Infantry Divisions. By evening, the army reached the new narrow front Garbatowka—Czerniejow on the Wieprz.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was to proceed with its right wing on

Page 320

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Initially continuing at Lubartow, then moving forces behind the 11th Army advancing north over the Wieprz to open the crossing over the river with the main direction towards Kock. The army approached Lubartow closely on August 4th and reached the line Samokleski—Bronow. West of the Vistula, the enemy had already abandoned the fortress area of Iwangorod. From the reconnaissance results coming in about the Russian retreat, the picture of a separation of their forces on the battlefields in Southern Poland and Eastern Galicia now clearly emerged. The right wing of the Russian Southwestern Front (8th Army) was still at Sokal on the Bug. However, the left wing of the Northwestern Front (13th Army) had moved northward towards Kowel. In the gap that had formed between the two fronts, seven Russian cavalry divisions were supposed to be concentrated. In the following days, the ordered movements continued. The enemy withdrew in the area between the Bug and the Vistula, partly under stubborn and skillful rearguard actions, further back to a strong position recognized by aircraft in the line Uchnuf (on the Bug)—Ostrow—course of the Tysmienica and lower Wieprz. The armies advanced against this position fighting. Of decisive importance was a success on August 7th by the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, which led over Lubartow on the road to Kock up to Firlej. This resolved the crossing ordered on August 4th behind the 11th Army into the area beyond the Wieprz. On its own strength, the right wing could now gain the eastern bank of the Wieprz on both sides of Lubartow. In extension of this success, on August 8th, the 4th Army reached its entire front up to the lower Wieprz, thus already entering the fortress area of Iwangorod, which had meanwhile been evacuated by the enemy, with its left wing. Also between the Tysmienica and the Wieprz, the left wing of the 11th Army could advance accordingly on this day. By August 9th, the necessary movements were completed. It also advanced east of the Tysmienica under fighting closer to the enemy's position. However, the left neighboring army could already advance the center and left wing beyond the Wieprz. This rapid advance of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was related to the events that had meanwhile occurred on the front of Army Group Prince Leopold. Already on August 7th, intercepted radio messages had given the impression that the enemy, as

1) p. 409.

Page 321

General von Linsingen Considers Focus on the Bug More Effective.

before the neighboring left army Gallwitz1), as well as before the 9th Army, continued the retreat, with the main forces already at Garwolin, Nowo-Minsk, and Stanislawow, and only weak rearguards at the Vistula. On the night of August 8, the 84th Infantry Division, the 49th Reserve Division, and the Gereke Division succeeded in gaining the eastern bank of the river at Warsaw with parts. Weak enemy resistances disturbed; they began building a military bridge in Warsaw, over which the crossing began on the morning of August 9. Meanwhile, the enemy had been retreating since the night of August 8, where before the Army Detachment Woyrsch; this itself followed him and reached on the 9th with the Landwehr into the area of Stamin and northwards, with the group Köves on the right wing beyond Rosfisz. On August 10, the k.u.k. 4th Army north of the Wieprz, in conjunction with the right wing of the Army Group Prince Leopold, continued its right turn over Kock and to the upper Bystrzyca. Also before the Emmich Group of the 11th Army, the enemy voluntarily gave up the western bank of the Tysmienica. They then prepared for a flanking attack over the floodplain of the river, widely inundated by damming.

The Bug Army, on the other hand, could make only slight progress in these days in difficult swamp terrain, especially against the elevated positions between the railway and road Cholm-Wlodawa north of the Ucherka, under heavy, loss-rich attack battles. Already on August 6, General von Linsingen had tried, in the sense of his earlier assessment of the strategic situation2), to effect a shift of forces to the right wing of the army at Field Marshal von Mackensen. He explained that the Russians could only be prepared for a defeat by a "quick and strong advance on both banks of the Bug or at least on the western bank." An advance of the left wing or the center of the armies operating between the Bug and Vistula would no longer hit the flank of the enemy retreat. Rather, the enemy would offer resistance in strong positions immediately west of the Bug to the relatively weak forces of the German right wing until the withdrawal of its main masses over this river section was completed. General von Linsingen has therefore, by reinforcing the Bug Army by one to two army corps or by shortening their front, put them in a position to force a breakthrough just west of the Bug as quickly as possible.

1) C. 352. — 2) G. 390 and 413.

Page 322

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

In response to these representations from his subordinate, Field Marshal von Mackensen, in agreement with the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, maintained his position. "I consider," he replied, "the thrust of a strong center still appropriate, as it offers the best prospects for rapid progress of the offensive. This must first force the enemy, who has not yet been completely made to retreat, to withdraw and must finally quickly reach his southern retreat flank. I do not promise myself this speed of success from an advance on both sides of the Bug. Furthermore, the advance of the Bug Army can be halted by an enemy thrust into our right flank. Securing the 11th and 4th Armies from such an impact is the task of the Bug Army. If it also succeeds in advancing with considerable forces over Wlodawa, it will significantly support the operation of the 11th Army." The Chief of the General Staff, General von Seeckt, also expressed in a telephone conversation with General Lappen on August 6th the hope of capturing the enemy "before Brest Litowsk" by continuing operations in the ordered directions.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Northwest Front had already decided on August 3rd, in view of the dangerous overall situation, to withdraw his 12th, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 3rd Armies, yielding to the concentric pressure of the Allies, to the line Lomza—Ostrow¹—Koch—Dzialin. On August 10th, he was forced to order the continuation of these movements to the line Osowiec—Wizna—Ciechanowiec—Drohiczyn—Miendzyrzec—Wlodawa, while the 13th Army south of the Bug had to withstand the pressure of an operational encirclement against the flank and rear of the shortened front and simultaneously maintain the connection to the Russian Southwest Front through cavalry.

6. The Pursuit from August 11th to 16th.

Maps 6 and 7, Sketch 24.

Already on August 3rd, General von Falkenhayn had informed the Austro-Hungarian Chief of the General Staff that he considered the joint task of the Allies on the Eastern theater of war to be solved as soon as the pursuit operation reached the general line Bug—Brest Litowsk—Grodno². Then, strong forces would have to be deployed on other war-

¹) Ostrow south of Lomza.  
²) See p. 483. The Commander-in-Chief St received this message only on August 18th.

Page 323

Colonel General von Conrad Proposes Pursuit to the Northeast.

It was suggested that in the East, a state of stagnation would arise with the separation of the operational areas of the allies. On August 5, Colonel General von Conrad had fundamentally agreed with this spatial objective but also expressed the view that the continued presence of the Russian front in Galicia, 40 kilometers from Lemberg, could not be tolerated in the long run, and indicated that he would either, in connection with the current operation or following it, aim to advance his own front east of the Bug and in Galicia.

A few days later, on August 8, he himself presented the German Supreme Army Command with a detailed proposal for the continuation of joint operations in the East. He maintained the previous strategic goal of thoroughly defeating the Russians in the Narew-Vistula-Wisłoka-Włodawa arc through concentric pressure from the northwest, west, and south. However, as the enemy was attempting to escape encirclement by rapid retreat under stubborn resistance on its flanks, the Mackensen army group now had to take the general direction towards the northeast to Brest Litowsk, while the pressure of the Bug Army on the outer flank could be reinforced by the addition of the German 47th Reserve Division. This time, there was no mention of crossing this army to the eastern bank, which Colonel General von Conrad had previously advised several times. However, it had to result inevitably from the change in direction of the army group to the northeast. Colonel General von Conrad also intended to have the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army advance in the direction of Rowel and to reinforce it further from the 4th Army. Parts of the Russian 13th Army were apparently being transported away from Rowel, while the Russian 8th Army extended its front northwards along the Bug. Simultaneously with the 1st Army, he also wanted to have the 2nd and the Southern Army become offensive against the line Białykamień-Alczow-Zborow with their inner flanks.

The response from General von Falkenhayn on August 9 already revealed some uncertainty: In his view, the Mackensen army group would, in continuing the ongoing pursuit, naturally come into the desired direction to the northeast. However, he feared that issuing new instructions to them at this moment would cause an undesirable delay, while the utmost urgency was required.

Already on August 5, Colonel General von Conrad had ordered the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army to transfer the Austro-Hungarian X Corps to the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army.

Page 324

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Therefore, he also wanted the Bug Army to advance northward as quickly as possible on this side of the Bug. Undoubtedly, his previously expressed concern about the terrain difficulties of the Rokitno Swamps played a role in this. He agreed to the other proposals and intentions with certain reservations. Generaloberst von Conrad immediately made a new representation: Only by a strong thrust of the right wing of the Mackensen Army Group could success still be achieved, which was all the more serious as the enemy was daily withdrawing more from the flank attack. A loss of time could not arise from a new directive, as the attack on the current Russian position was to be carried out first.

Upon receiving the report on the morning of August 10 that the Russians were now also retreating in front of the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, Generaloberst von Conrad again turned to General von Falkenhayn with an urgent request to change the operational direction for the Mackensen Army Group, as otherwise not only the 4th, but also the 11th and Bug Army would come to the front instead of the enemy's flank. In a personal discussion, for which Generaloberst von Conrad traveled again to Ples, General von Falkenhayn maintained the position that "given the exhaustion of the troops and the terrain and supply difficulties, it was less important whether the 11th and Bug Army broke through than that they succeeded at any point at all." As during this discussion the news arrived that the enemy was now also retreating from the left wing of the 11th Army, it was easy for Generaloberst von Conrad to demonstrate that the conditions for the thrust of the 11th Army northward towards Parczew had become obsolete. General von Falkenhayn now agreed that the Mackensen Army Group was given the direction northeast towards Brest Litowsk. The 4th Army was to advance with its left wing via Radzyn to Biala, the 11th Army with its left wing via Parczew to Lomazy, and the Bug Army with its right wing in the river valley northward.

Field Marshal von Mackensen then issued corresponding orders. He also ordered that the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army should transfer an Austro-Hungarian division to the 1st Army and the German 47th Reserve Division to the 11th Army, which in turn was to transfer the 22nd Infantry Division of the Bug Army. The 1st Army received a double assignment depending on the behavior of the Russian forces assembled in the area around Kowel.

Page 325

The pursuit presses forward only with difficulty.

Russian 13th Army. Field Marshal von Mackensen anticipated that this army could become offensive from Kowel to facilitate and relieve the retreat of the main Russian forces behind the Bug. If it advanced westward against the right flank of the Bug Army, it should itself be attacked on the flank by the 1st Army. If it directed its advance southwest against the 1st Army, then this had to fend it off at the Aug and Bug section, while the Bug Army could then find an opportunity to flank over the Bug. In the third case, that the Russian 13th Army did not become offensive at all, the 1st Army received no new instructions.

The next task of Army Group Mackensen was purely tactical: it was necessary to drive the enemy out of its non-opposing positions. However, the strength of the Bug Army was not sufficient on August 11 to break the resistance of the Russians in the strong elevated positions north of the Ucherka and in the swampy lowlands on both sides of the Garbatowka—Wlodawa road. Even the 11th Army achieved only insignificant partial successes east of the Tymienica despite brave efforts. A relief of this front by the intended flank attack of Group Emmich over the Tymienica did not occur, as it did not succeed in overcoming the swampy lowland. In front of the b.-u. 4th Army, however, the enemy surrendered the Bystrzyca above Ossowno without a fight.

The army detachment Woyrsch, located on the right wing of Army Group Prince Leopold, occupied Lutow and advanced close to Siedlce. It was to continue the pursuit north of the Lutow—Brest Litowsk railway on orders from the Supreme Army Command, "to prevent a march of the enemy from the area west of the Pripjet swamp area in a northeasterly direction." The 9th Army, extending with the left wing over Wengrow, encountered stubborn resistance at the Koritzyn and Siwice sections. The situation here was similar to that of the neighboring 12th Army on the left: the pursuit was characterized by laborious and time-consuming advances from section to section.

At the front of Army Group Mackensen, the execution of the attacks on August 12 was completed, as the enemy evaded the Bug and 11th Army. When aerial reconnaissance detected extensive marches north and northeast in the early morning hours, it ordered

Page 326

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

Field Marshal von Mackensen of the Bug Army was to advance northwards towards Wlodawa. They were also to spare forces for use in a northeasterly direction beyond the Bug. However, the pursuit came to a halt on the main roads towards Wlodawa, already before Macoszyn and Bruszki. The artillery could not follow in the difficult terrain in time. The 11th Army, with its front narrowing and strong units (XXII Reserve Corps, Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, X Army Corps, 47th Reserve Division) moved to the second line, encountered the enemy again after passing through the forest zone and south of Parczem. The inner flanks of the 11th and 4th Armies still did not succeed in crossing the Lhynienica west of Parczem today. The left flank of the 4th Army, however, swung completely to the east. The army was instructed to transfer two more divisions with the Austro-Hungarian IX Corps command to the 1st Army. In Prince Leopold's army group, the advance of the Woyrsch army detachment beyond Lubow—Siedlce had the effect that the enemy also abandoned his resistance in front of the 9th Army at the Kostrzyner section and further north. Already on the evening of August 11, General von Falkenhayn had asked the Austro-Hungarian Chief of Staff for instructions to the Mackensen army group to adjust their left flank to the forward movement of Prince Leopold's army group. Generaloberst von Conrad then ordered, beyond the agreements made the day before in Plesk, a rapid right turn against the Bug for the entire Mackensen army group in the sense of an overtaking pursuit. The 11th Army High Command now determined as boundaries for the advance of its army to the right the line Piesia Wola—Süszno on the Bug (north of Wlodawa), to the left the line Parczew—Roznadawofka. Against this, General von Falkenhayn raised an objection the next morning at the army headquarters in Lublin, where he had gone for oral consultation with Field Marshal von Mackensen, and set, in accordance with the agreement of August 10, the line Parczew—Lomazy as the direction of advance for the left flank of the 11th Army. He designated the task of all armies as reaching the road Slawatycze—Radzyn as quickly as possible, in order to still catch the enemy retreating in front of Prince Leopold's army group in the flank. Contrary to expectations, the Russians continued their retreat immediately west of the Bug on the night of August 13. General von Linsingen

Page 327

General von Falkenhayn still hopes for great successes before Brest Litowsk.

requested a further reinforcement of his army, as the river security would have to stretch further with the rapid advance northward. Consequently, the X Army Corps, following in reserve behind the left wing of the 11th Army, was dispatched with the Guard Cavalry Division to relieve the XXXXI Reserve Corps at the Bug. In a strong march, where the terrain and the enemy's road and bridge destructions often caused greater delays than the resistance of his rearguards, the three armies advancing west of the Bug reached the line Rozanka (north of Blodanka)—Rundo—area southwest of Miedzyrzec on August 13. Here, the right wing of Prince Leopold's army group joined, whose left wing approached the middle Bug south of the Nurzec estuary.

The intention of Field Marshal von Mackensen was to let the Bug Army advance west of the river up to Roden. The 11th Army was to reach the line Roden—Petrkowice on the railway to Brest Litowsk and probe towards the fortress. Thus, the Bug Army was assigned the area east of the Bug as a later operational field. For the s.e. 4th Army, there was no more room in the front of the two army groups. It could be excluded for other purposes.

According to the findings of the aviators, the enemy retreated north before the Bug and 11th Army, northeast before the 4th Army, and east before Prince Leopold's army group. General von Falkenhayn concluded that large troop masses had gathered in the area northwest of Brest Litowsk and hoped that with the sharp all-around pressure of the allied armies, it would succeed in engaging large parts of the enemy retreating over the Bug still on this side of the Bialowieza forest in the area between the upper Narew and middle Bug, at least significantly disrupting their retreat. Based on this assessment, he sent the following directive in the evening: "Army Group Mackensen is to secure against Brest Litowsk with the left wing of the 11th Army from Lomazy via Biala to Janow. Operations against the roads leading east from Brest Litowsk are recommended." Prince Leopold's army group was deployed with the right wing from Mienowze to Niemirow on the Bug, with the cavalry corps Frommel in the general direction of Kleiszeele. This directive meant a change in the operational direction for Mackensen's army group. The 11th Army was to push directly north past the fortress Brest Litowsk to the west.

1) p. 361.

Page 328

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

The advance of the Bug Army to the east across the river was again abandoned. The directive was issued in agreement with the Austro-Hungarian military command. Consequently, Generaloberst von Conrad also abandoned the intention of exerting significant pressure beyond the Bug east of Brest Litowsk against the southern flank and into the rear of the enemy's retreat movement. Accordingly, Generalfeldmarschall von Mackensen had to change his orders. The 11th Army was assigned the Bug route Brest Litowsk—Janow as its target, and it was to be accompanied on the right by the Bug Army, which was also entrusted with the proposed operations against the roads leading east. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army was to participate in the pursuit to the Bug, even on an ever-narrowing front. For all three armies, it was important to stay on the heels of the enemy retreating north and northeast. The involvement of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army by advancing beyond the river to the north against the Russian 13th Army was abandoned, as no further counterattack was expected. The 1st Army was also to limit itself to holding its positions after the arrival of reinforcements.

However, it became apparent as early as August 14 that the Russian command, in a correct assessment of the impending danger, had ensured a strong defensive front on the southern flank of their retreat movement. The three armies of the Mackensen Army Group therefore made little progress against the stubbornly resisting rearguards along the entire line. Behind this line of resistance, the masses of Russians continued their withdrawal, east of the Bug to the north, west of the river to the east towards Slawatycze and Brest Litowsk, and north over Janow. Airmen found the area around Brest Litowsk heavily occupied with troops.

By August 15, the general retreat of the Russians had progressed so far that the defensive front directed south could be withdrawn a bit. The previously still occupied eastern Bug bank was now also vacated by the enemy north of Dubienka. On the right wing of the Bug Army, parts of the X Army Corps, which had meanwhile been replaced in the river area by the XXXXI Reserve Corps and the 22nd Infantry Division, were able to gain a foothold on the opposite bank, even under hard fighting, near Wlodawa. Downstream, the army advanced beyond Slawatycze. The 11th Army followed the skillfully evading enemy despite the greatest terrain difficulties up to the Luczna—Krzna line.

1) The Austro-Hungarian XIV Corps detached from the 4th Army.

Page 329

The Russians continue the planned retreat before the Mackensen Army Group.

South of Biala, the 4th Army subsequently reached westward up to and over the Krzna stream. The right wing of the Prince Leopold Army Group stood about 14 kilometers north of Niemirowce. "The Russian withdrawal routes made a very orderly impression; nothing was discarded; no broken wagon, no dead horse lay on the road"1). However, along the entire wide-spanning pursuit front, the bridges, villages, and harvest supplies set on fire by the enemy were in flames. Explosions were audible from the direction of Brest Litowsk.

In view of the rapidly progressing retreat movement of the Russians on the entire front of all three army groups, General von Falkenhayn now deemed it necessary to point out to the Mackensen Army Group the increased importance of a strong pressure along the Bug. At the same time, the Commander-in-Chief East was designated Klejsczale as the direction for the advance of the right wing of the 12th Army2). The Prince Leopold Army Group was also to advance seamlessly over the middle Bug.

Field Marshal von Mackensen therefore ordered the Bug Army, in conjunction with the Guard Corps advancing on the right wing of the 11th Army, to push the enemy back to the fortress of Brest Litowsk. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps was to take over the security against Brest Litowsk to the left of the Guard, the left army wing (Kosch Corps) to advance over Biala and drive the enemy back over the Bug below the fortress. Even on August 16, the enemy continued the retreat on both banks of the Bug northward. Overheard Russian radio messages already reported strong blockages at the crossings. To protect its march on the east bank, the enemy hurriedly deployed troops brought in by motor vehicles against the bridgehead created the day before at Wlodawa and prevented the attempt to expand the bridgehead as a starting position for offensive operations through strong counterattacks. On the west bank, strong parts of the Bug Army swung north from Slawatycze to the area south of Koden against the river. The 11th Army pushed its right wing to the Bug at Koden. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army crossed the Klukowka, while the Prince Leopold Army Group was already probing against the Bug below Niemirow. The Trommel Cavalry Corps reached Siemiatycze.

1) Transcript from August 15 in the war diary of the Prince Leopold Army Group. 2) G. 362.

Page 330

7. The Battles for Brest Litowsk from August 17 to 26.

Maps 6 and 7, Sketch 24.

The allied army commands established the Niemirow–Tumin line as the boundary between the two army groups on August 16. The Mackensen army group was to continue the pursuit with its left wing in conjunction with the Prince Leopold army group, and in addition, initially close off the Brest Litowsk fortress on this side, later also on the northwest front on the opposite Bug bank. Furthermore, General von Falkenhayn decided, upon inquiry from General von Seeckt, that larger operations by the Bug Army on the eastern bank were not desirable in terms of the general situation. He justified this by stating: "The enemy does not retreat voluntarily, but heavily beaten, although in an extraordinarily skillful manner. Nevertheless, it is possible that he still thinks of a change in the situation through a counterattack similar to the Marne Offensive. Given the state of his 12th, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 3rd Armies, he could mainly rely on the 13th Army, now located in the northern march through the western Polesie1). However, its intervention would hardly lead to the hoped-for result. It is necessary that the Mackensen army group, by strengthening its positions along the Bug above Brest Litowsk and later in front of the fortress, creates the possibility of moving forces brought in as a reserve behind the right wing of the parts that continue the thrust past the fortress over the Bug. These must be made as strong as possible to attack ruthlessly." General von Falkenhayn also shared the agreement2) made with Generaloberst von Conrad at the beginning of August, that the continuation of the pursuit operation beyond the general line Brest Litowsk–Grodno was not intended at the time, unless there was a prospect of inflicting significant damage on the enemy through a short advance beyond this line. Smaller operations over the Bug above Brest Litowsk against the connections leading east were recommended. On the other hand, "measures of a larger scale in this direction fell outside the scope of the overall operation." The Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army thus decided once again in the spirit of the operational idea that had guided him from the beginning of the offensive. Field Marshal von Mackensen pointed out to the Bug Army and 11th Army the need for a strong expansion of their encirclement positions and

1) Another term for Rotkino-Gimpfe. – 2) p. 416.

Page 331

Right Turn of Army Group Mackensen against Brest Litowsk.

decided to move the X Army Corps, which had been deployed as a security at the Bug shortly before, behind the left wing of the 11th Army. By carrying out the ordered relief movements, the left wing of the Bug Army and the 11th Army were able to swing to the right into the line north of Roden–Janow on August 17. The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army reached the Bug southeast of Niemirow in a narrow space, where it joined Army Group Prince Leopold. On the opposite bank, the enemy entrenched. The main road from Brest Litowsk to Kobryn was covered with marching columns of all arms. According to intelligence reports, the Russian leadership intended to hold the fortress as long as it could be used for the retreat of the field army. There was a lack of ammunition for prolonged defense. However, strong forces had to be concentrated in a confined space in the fortress itself. Since a new general command (XXXIV) was also detected in front of Brest Litowsk by interception, the Mackensen High Command, following the advice of General von Falkenhayn, considered the possibility of an advance from the fortress and prepared against the Guard Corps as well as the 103rd and 119th Infantry Divisions behind the right wing of the 11th Army. Since the Supreme Army Command was already considering the imminent attack on the fortress, Field Marshal von Mackensen ordered the Bug Army to encircle the south and west fronts and soon to attack, and also subordinated to it the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps now standing on the right wing of the 11th Army.

The retreat of the Russians east of the Bug continued. Consequently, Field Marshal von Mackensen believed, within the framework of the instructions given to him, that he should now attempt to cut the communication line of the Russian 13th and 8th Armies and thus also that from Brest Litowsk to the southeast by an advance of the Cavalry Corps Heydebreck) from Wladimir Wolynsk on and over the railway junction Kowel. The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army received corresponding orders. Generaloberst von Conrad, however, attached great importance to the early capture of Kowel for other reasons. Already on August 14, he had expressed to General von Falkenhayn in Teschen his intention, based on his previously indicated plans, to gradually unite the 4th Army, which had been pushed out of the front of Army Group Mackensen, with the 1st Army on the Bug front and to direct both armies from there initially towards Kowel.

Page 332

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk

to carry out. Then they were no longer to participate in the operations of Army Group Mackensen, but to comprehensively attack the Russian 8th Army from the north, while at the same time the inner flanks of the 2nd and Southern Army were to take the offensive south of the Krasne—Brody railway. Generaloberst von Conrad therefore saw in the advance of the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps a welcome means to gain a suitable starting position for this encirclement operation against the Russian 8th Army as soon as possible. General von Falkenhayn agreed with the intentions of the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff on August 19.

The Bug Army succeeded on August 18 in significantly expanding the bridgehead at Wlodawa and advancing the 1st Infantry Division from it against Piszca, although it soon encountered strong resistance favored by the swampy terrain. On the front of Army Group Mackensen west of the Bug, there were only preliminary skirmishes in the wider fortress area. Army Group Prince Leopold crossed the Bug below Niemirow.

On August 19, the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps began its concentric advance from its broad deployment area in the Wladimir Wolynsk—Luboml region towards Kowal, initially without encountering the enemy.

However, the resistance of the Russians east of Wlodawa proved so strong that the 1st Infantry Division was still unable to reach the road junction at Piszca. The pivot north around Brest Litowsk continued with the 11th and 4th Armies, with the left flank reaching the Koterka section after crossing the Bug near and north of Janow, where it connected with the Woyrsch Army Division north of Wolka. Desperate counterattacks, in which strong Russian cavalry was also ruthlessly used in the attack, suggested that heavy troop concentrations must still be gathered around Brest Litowsk. General von Falkenhayn therefore urged the 11th Army to accelerate its advance. He hoped to achieve significant successes against the enemy north of the middle Bug and designated the Tumlin—Ruskij line as a further separation line for the advance of Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold. He directed the left flank of the latter towards Klejsczele—Gajnowka. Last doubts about the feasibility of the Chief of General Staff's hopes were dispelled by encouraging peaceful reports that the Russian 3rd Army's high command had already left Brest Litowsk. Large dis-

Page 333

Advance of the Bug Army East of the Bug.

Supplies and much artillery material with ammunition were to be transported away. This indicated a planned evacuation of the fortress. Indeed, on August 20, the Russian 4th Army (XVI, Grenadier, XXV, XV, VI Siberian, IX Corps) swung back into the line Kleszczele—Wysoko Litowsk—east of Drogniki, followed by the 3rd Army (XXIV, X, XIV, III Caucasian, XXIX, XXIII, XXXI Corps, 4th Cavalry Corps) reaching the line east of Drogniki—Koden on this side of the Bug, while beyond the river it held the extended line Koden—Sack—Kursk—Wladyslawow (east of Wladimir Wolynsk). The Russian 13th Army had been dissolved on August 17. Its troops, insofar as they were not transported to other fronts, were assigned to the 3rd Army. The fortress Brest Litowsk was also subordinated to this. The Russian leadership was evidently aware of the serious danger that the execution of their retreat movement from a pressure of the enemy on the right Bug bank east past Brest Litowsk had to grow. Therefore, they ensured the strongest defense there. Consequently, on August 20 and 21, the Bug Army also failed to advance to the road Luboml—Piszca, although the entire XXXI Reserve Corps from the south tried to encircle through the lake district and the 22nd Infantry Division attacked on the left next to the 1st. Only on August 22 did the XXXI Reserve Corps advance over this road to Mielniki. Simultaneously heavily engaged in the front, the enemy finally also released Piszca and the area north of it. Although General von Linsingen reinforced his forces east of the Bug with the Gerok Corps (11th Bavarian and the 107th Infantry Division), the stubborn enemy could only be pushed back a few kilometers in the difficult forest and swamp terrain in the following days. Behind strong blocking positions, his main forces continued to flow to Kobryn. On August 24, the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps, after days of fighting, took possession of the railway junction Kowel and advanced from there in a northerly direction to Ratno. It now came under the command of the Bug Army's high command. Parts of the b. u. l. 1st Army had already followed the cavalry corps to Kowel in the last few days. The army, further strengthened by detachments from the 4th Army, was already regrouping for the offensive ordered to the southeast. On August 22, the request of Generaloberst von Conrad from the command area of the army group command had been decided. General von Linsingen saw in the strong resistance that his army found on the east bank of the Bug, the enemy's intention to

Page 334

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

to enable the planned evacuation of the fortress Brest Litowsk and the orderly retreat of the Russian masses to the east. He considered a quick grasp and accelerated attack on the fortress west of the Bug absolutely necessary. On August 22, he instructed his corps not to wait for the decisive attack until the siege artillery, expected to be ready by August 28 and 29 at the earliest, had arrived. The following days were spent preparing for a coup de main attack.

As a result, useful progress was initially made only north of the Krzna stream on the front of Army Group Mackensen west of the Bug. Here, the 11th Army reached the Bug as early as August 21, with its left wing (Corps Kosch) pushing beyond it to the Nareka section, where it became embroiled in heavy fighting. In the following days, the 44th Reserve Division from the south and the 103rd Infantry and 47th Reserve Divisions from the north, as well as rear parts of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, joined in, without achieving the intended encirclement of the enemy. It seemed that the Russians had brought artillery from the fortress with ample ammunition to support their defense. Only when the Guard Corps also advanced over the Bug below the Krzna mouth on August 24 did the enemy shift to a west-facing front.

On this day, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army reached the area south of Ruski with its left wing closely connected to the Army Detachment Woyrsch, while the northern wing of the 9th Army crossed Kleszczele to the western edge of the Bialowiec forest. In serious fighting in the source area of the Nurec on August 22 and 23, the German Landwehr Corps, the Landwehr Division Bredow, and the Corps Scheffer were again able to report larger numbers of prisoners, totaling around 10,000 men and 25 machine guns. Already on the evening of August 23, the Supreme Army Command had informed the High Command of Army Group Prince Leopold that it was not intended to let the left wing follow further than the western edge of the Bialowiec forest. It would be of great importance to block there only with weak parts, but to advance as quickly as possible with strong forces south of the forest, and then to operate in a general southern direction against the retreat route of the enemy still in front of the Austro-Hungarian 4th and German 11th Army.

However, as things had developed by the evening of August 24 with the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold, it appeared

Page 335

The Enemy Abandons Brest Litowsk.

no prospect anymore that the hope expressed in this directive would still be fulfilled.

The Mackensen Army Group, despite all attempts to strike the Russian retreat movement on the flank, had come up against their front in its pursuit operation. Continuing the attack against the Leina position, where sustained resistance was expected, could only push the enemy back in the direction they themselves desired, to the east. A change in this operationally unsatisfactory situation could only be hoped for if the Bug Army succeeded in quickly bringing down the fortress of Brest Litowsk and simultaneously breaking the enemy's resistance with their forces deployed in the forest and swamp area east of the Bug. General von Seeckt, however, no longer expected any great success from the flanking action south of Brest Litowsk in an assessment of the situation presented to the Supreme Army Command on the evening of August 24. Indeed, the enemy strongly resisted the pressure of the Bug Army on August 25 at Maloruta and northwest of there up to the Bug. The Heydebreck Cavalry Corps was still far behind. However, on the evening of the same day, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps succeeded in taking several forts on both sides of the road to Brest Litowsk by storm. In front of the right wing of the northern adjoining XXII Reserve Corps, the enemy retreated south of the Krzna to their positions in the fortress area. On the northern Bug bank, the left wing of the XXII Reserve Corps swung over the lower Lesna to the right, while the other corps of the 11th Army pushed the enemy back behind this section, and the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army reached as far as Rusilow with its left wing.

In the area of the fortress, strong firelight and numerous explosions were observed. The marches out of the fortress towards Kobryn continued. In the evening, intercepted enemy radio messages arrived at Mackensen's headquarters, indicating that the Russians would also evacuate the Leina position at night. Similarly, the retreat was to begin at 2 a.m. in front of the Bug Army. Consequently, Field Marshal von Mackensen ordered the uninterrupted continuation of the pursuit by the Bug Army south and the 11th Army north of the Brest Litowsk—Kobryn road at 10 p.m. General von Falkenhayn also pointed out late at night the great importance of a rapid advance north and south around Brest Litowsk. At the same time, the Prince Leopold Army Group received orders to continue the offensive south of the Bialowieza fort with the Woyrsch Army Detachment, while the left wing of the

Page 336

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

The 9th Army was also to take over the blockade of the fort at the Gajnowka—Siemienowka railway.

In the early morning hours of August 26, the right wing of the Bug Army, the XXXXI Reserve Corps and the 22nd Infantry Division, crossed the railway on both sides of Maloruta and pursued the enemy retreating towards Kobryn, who, however, repeatedly offered strong resistance in the sectional terrain. The right wing reached Motrany after a hard fight and redirected the enemy, pushed back northwards through the swamps by the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps from the south. It was pushed southwards. The Cavalry Corps reached Ratno. Under the pressure of the right wing of the Bug Army on the road to Kobryn, the Russians also evacuated the forest area to the west up to the Bug, abandoning the heavily fortified Brest Litowsk fortress. Without serious fighting, the Settlement Corps and the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps were able to occupy the southern part of the fortress and cross the Bug in the early morning hours. The VI Corps was then assembled and withdrew to the 11th Army. The XXII Reserve Corps had already occupied the citadel between 2 and 3 in the morning; the forts were mostly blown up by the enemy. The Bug Army was instructed to advance sharply with its left wing on and south of the road to Kobryn, in conjunction with the parts of the 11th Army pursuing further north over the Lejna to the east, to relocate the enemy forces still holding the swamp sections on both sides of the Wlodawa—Kobryn road from this beautiful, irregular terrain. The Bug Army then reached the Ryta section. The 11th Army followed the enemy retreating east of the Lejna under rearguard fighting to the line Raczkí (on the railway)—Kamieniec Litowsk.

The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army occupied a bridgehead east of Kamieniec Litowsk after crossing the Lejna. It was only to hold it to secure the side change of the right wing of Prince Leopold's army group, which reached the Lejna Prava north of Kamieniec Litowsk in the evening. Then the rest of the 4th Army, as well as the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, had to march to the 1st Army.

Upon the report of the capture of Brest Litowsk, the Supreme Army Command determined on the evening of August 26 to firmly establish the Lejna as the boundary between the Mackensen and Prince Leopold army groups. It was stated: "An advance through the swamp terrain southwest and south of Pruzana is not intended." Thus, a goal was set for the further pursuit operation of both army groups.

Page 337

The operational success remains denied.

Thus, August 26 brought the Mackensen Army Group an apparent great success, the capture of Brest Litowsk, one of the most heavily fortified Russian fortresses! At the same time, it became clear that the hope held by General von Falkenhayn until the end, to cut off significant parts of the enemy, had been nullified. The Russian retreat had been carried out in a thoroughly planned manner under skillfully conducted rearguard actions. The evacuation of Brest Litowsk had been thoroughly prepared. The forts were blown up, the magazines and the city abandoned by the population were mostly set on fire. Considerable supplies could, however, still be saved from destruction. However, only small ammunition stocks fell into the hands of the attacker. All modern artillery material was also transported away, only a few old guns formed the booty. Despite the concentration of strong troop masses in the fortress area, the number of prisoners was also small. Aerial reconnaissance revealed that the withdrawal of enemy marching columns on the roads over Kobryn and Prusana to the east to the northern bank of the Bug remained a continuous flow. The main mass of the southern wing of the Russian Northwest Front was thus moving backward north of the Rokitno swamp area. The connection to the Russian Southwest Front was thus finally cut off. Only the Russian 4th Cavalry Corps remained south of the swamp area in the region of Kamien Koszyrski. It had, as determined by intercepting radio messages, the task of blocking the roads leading north through the Rokitno swamps. Characteristic of the confident mood with which the higher Russian leadership, despite all tactical setbacks, looked forward to the outcome of their strategic retreat, was an intercepted radio telegraphic call from General Ewret, the leader of the 2nd Army. In it, the expectation was expressed that the troops would disengage from close contact with the enemy with honor. Added was: "May they remember the great war of 1812 and draw from it instruction and the deep belief in our ultimate victory." Indeed, the traditional skill of the Russians in conducting the retreat, supported by the sloping terrain, proved effective once again. Although the operations of the Mackensen Army Group, which alone cost the Bug Army about 33,000 men and the 11th Army over 50,000 men in losses, had failed to achieve the desired operational success, they had still managed to engage the enemy, apart from his

Page 338

certainly significantly heavier bloody losses and prisoners), deeply shaken in its combat strength and deprived of any offensive capability for a long time. In addition, the moral impact that the rapid fall of Brest Litowsk had on both friend and foe was not to be underestimated. The surrender of this, the last stronghold of Russian national defense in Poland, newly expanded at great expense, was an open admission that the vast area west of the great river barrier of the Bug was definitively lost to Russia.

8. Considerations.

In view of the operationally not fully satisfactory results that the offensive of Army Group Mackensen had from mid-July to the end of August, the question arises whether a greater, decisive success could have been achieved with different leadership of the operation. One would have to consider the possibility of using strong forces on the eastern bank of the Bug for the purpose of an operational encirclement of the Russian defense front directed to the south and a push against their rear connections. This idea was not only discussed in the fundamental meeting of the allied general staffs on July 11 in Plesz before the start of the offensive, but also repeatedly during its course. General von Falkenhayn initially opposed it due to the unfavorable terrain east of the Bug and the expected supply difficulties and steadfastly maintained this view until the end. His concerns about the possibility of using larger troop masses in those areas were not shared, at least not to the same extent, by his colleagues, nor by Generaloberst von Conrad and General von Linsingen. They later admitted that General von Falkenhayn's own concession was exaggerated. For supply, the conditions east of the Bug might have been less unfavorable than west of the river, insofar as the Galician railways were disrupted by the Russians in the autumn.

1) The Bug Army captured over 33,000, and the 11th Army 55,000 prisoners in July-August. The number of captured guns (15) and machine guns (174) was small. The Woyrsch Army Detachment captured 16,500 prisoners in August, bringing in 48 guns (mostly spoils from Ivangorod) and 60 machine guns. 2) p. 385. — 3) p. 386.

Page 339

The Operational Leadership of Army Group Mackensen.

The railway connection built in 1914 from Wladimir Wolynsk to Sokal had a connection to the Russian railway network. The head of the German military railway system therefore considered the deployment of a strong army east of the Bug as feasible and necessary as early as the beginning of July.

It is not disputed that it would have been possible to create the conditions for simultaneous operations on both banks of the river by regrouping forces on a large scale and by exchanging the s.-u. 1st Army with the Bug Army, which was in the process of formation, in time before the opening of the new offensive. Apparently, however, this idea was not considered by the connecting general staff chiefs at that time, because the difficulties of the upcoming task only gradually became apparent from the increasingly solidified, eventually even openly conducted counter-resistance of the Russians in the area between the Bug and the Vistula in the first week of July. When the question of using stronger forces on the east bank was discussed for the first time in Plesz on July 11, it was already too late for such extensive and time-consuming regrouping of forces before the start of the offensive, as the timing for this could no longer be postponed in view of the simultaneously planned Narew operation. Consequently, the conditions for a far-reaching offensive of strong forces on the east bank of the Bug were lacking in the initial situation in mid-July, as it had developed through the course of events in the first half of the month. The weak attempt to change banks, which the s.-u. 1st Army made in the first days of the operation, then served only to protect the right flank of the army group against possible attacks by the Russians from the east. When these did not materialize, Field Marshal von Mackensen immediately abandoned the continuation of the attempt.

Certainly, even after the start of the offensive, the shift of stronger forces of the Bug Army to the east bank was still possible. They could have exerted increased offensive pressure there together with parts of the s.-u. 1st Army. However, it was not assumed that they would find easier work against the Russian 13th Army there than west of the river. A complete encirclement of the outer wing of the Russian Northwest Front seemed hardly to be hoped for. Rather, there was a danger that the forces predicted east of the Bug could become entangled in barely manageable battles and easily be diverted in an eccentric direction from the main decision-making site. That these already in view

1) p. 386. 2) World War. Vol. VIII. 28

Page 340

The Offensive of the Allies on Brest Litowsk.

The aim was to seek the closest possible cooperation with the Narew assault group in the area between the Bug and Vistula, in line with the guiding idea. Field Marshal von Mackensen therefore had the justified desire and, after the course of the first heavy days of fighting, even more reason to keep his forces in this area as concentrated as possible. As long as the enemy seemed determined not only to defend to the utmost but also to fight a decisive battle in Poland — this impression persisted, apart from temporary fluctuations, until the end of July — the leader of the army group saw the extension of his right wing beyond the Bug to the east as an impairment of his striking power at the decisive point. He welcomed the fact that the strong river obstacle provided effective protection against an offensive threat to the right flank of the army, and consequently the number of troops falling out for security purposes could be kept within tolerable limits.

Thus, until the end of July, it was primarily tactical reasons that made the concentration of the strongest possible forces necessary to achieve victory at the main battlefront. From the beginning of August, as the large, apparently uniformly planned retreat movement of the entire Russian force in Poland began to clearly emerge, operational considerations suggested the crossing of strong forces to the eastern bank of the Bug. Generaloberst von Conrad and, independently of him, General von Linsingen advocated this idea in the sense of a northward pursuit aimed at the Russian retreat routes. In contrast, Field Marshal von Mackensen, in agreement with General von Falkenhayn, adhered to continuing the operation in a generally northern direction on this side of the Bug, with the strategic overall picture in mind. He hoped to advance more quickly with the 11th Army, designated as the main force of the pursuit, on a shorter route in more favorable terrain and thus exert more effective pressure against the Russian retreat routes than seemed possible in the feared swampy area beyond the Bug, where stronger enemy resistance was expected. This calculation proved to be quite correct, as the Russian retreat from Poland had already progressed further than the German leadership had dared to assume. Instead of hitting the flank, the pursuer ended up in front of the front. It remains to be seen whether a pursuit conducted with greater consideration past Brest Litowsk towards the northeast would have achieved significantly greater material successes. The

Page 341

Question of a Stronger Flanking Break East of the Bug.

Determined resistance, which parts of the Bug Army encountered there from mid-August after their crossing at Wlodawa, even suggests that it would have been very difficult to quickly achieve direct impact against the retreat area of the Russian main forces north of the swamp area. Nevertheless, from a retrospective point of view, the possibility cannot be dismissed that an earlier and stronger flanking break here would have strategically threatened the Russian retreat movement more sensitively. This would have more severely disrupted the orderly and planned execution of this retreat movement, particularly the evacuation of the Brest Litowsk fortress, and could have further shaken the combat strength of the Russian army than the frontal pursuit managed to do.

The question of using strong forces east of the Bug would be fundamentally different under the assumption of a simultaneous offensive directed not against the Narew from the front of the Commander-in-Chief East, but on and over Wilna against the northern flank of the Russian main forces. In such a case, it would have corresponded to the idea of concentrated cooperation against the rear connections of the enemy masses standing in Poland if the Mackensen Army Group had already placed the focus of its operations in the area east of the Bug from mid-July.

Page 342

E. The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August¹).

Since Gorlice, the Russian Supreme Command was primarily focused on defense. It hoped for relief through the attack by the Western Powers²) begun on May 9 and the entry of Italy, soon Romania, perhaps even Bulgaria into the war. On the other hand, it was concerned whether it would actually succeed in halting the advance of the Central Powers in Galicia. Both were interrelated: successful defense in Galicia had to promote the acquisition of new allies, whose intervention would also bring relief for the situation in Galicia. Besides domestic political and economic considerations, foreign policy concerns also argued for a tenacious fight for every inch of ground, while purely militarily, the idea was to maintain the army's striking power and therefore to retreat into the vastness of the empire as needed without regard to land loss. The ambivalence of these viewpoints played a decisive role in the measures of the Russian leadership alongside the impact of the Central Powers' attack.

At the beginning of May, the overall front, measuring over 1300 kilometers, was commanded as before by General Alexeyev in Siedlce, with the Northwest Front consisting of five armies (10th, 12th, 1st, 2nd, 5th) with about 55 divisions, and General Ivanov in Cholm with the Southwest Front also consisting of five armies (4th, 3rd, 8th, 11th, 9th) with 50½ divisions³); the policy divided the overall front into two approximately equal parts. The Supreme Command, as before, with Grand Duke Nicholas as General Staff Chief and General Janushkevich as General Quartermaster, was located in Baranovichi. Directly under the Grand Duke, the 6th Army in the north, with non-deployable troops, had to protect the Baltic Fleet, Petersburg, and the coast, while in the south, a similarly composed 7th Army and the Black Sea Fleet

¹) Volume VII, C. 436 (regarding Dardanelles, p. 329). — More about Southwest Front C. 189 ff. and 261 ff.  
²) p. 51 ff.  
³) Landwehr units are not included here. General Danilov (p. 521) gives the total strength for the end of June, fully including Landwehr, as 108 infantry divisions, 16 rifle and foot-rossfan brigades, and 35 cavalry divisions.

Page 343

Structure and Combat Strength of the Army.

The sea had a corresponding special task. In Odessa, after the transfer of the V. Caucasian Corps, a weak landing corps was kept ready for Constantinople, whose use, however, was only considered in view of the strength of the Turkish fleet if Bulgaria's connection was achieved or if the Allies had already advanced to the Bosporus. The Caucasus Army, still about six divisions strong, was stuck at the border almost entirely on Turkish soil in impassable mountainous terrain.

The organization of the Russian army was essentially the same as at the beginning of the war, but they had begun to expand the existing independent rifle brigades into divisions and later began to consolidate Landwehr units into divisions. The infantry regiments still had a target strength of four battalions, and the light batteries, originally equipped with eight guns, were reduced to six guns with few exceptions, so that each division probably had about 36 field guns. The heavy artillery (flat fire of 10 cm, high-angle fire of 15 cm and upwards) counted only 104 batteries with 386 barrels in June. After the continuous fighting since August 1914 with few interruptions, the troops were all too much in need of rest and replacement of officers, trained personnel, weapons, and ammunition. However, there had been a serious shortage of all this for a long time. The Russian war industry was unable to meet the demand. Deliveries expected from abroad, especially through British mediation from the United States, were delayed because the Western powers themselves had urgent needs. Ignoring the always uncertain route through the neutral countries of Scandinavia and particularly the Balkans, the only permanently open connection still led through the Far East; for the port of Archangelsk was usable only in a few summer months, and the new railway to the ice-free Murman coast was barely a third completed. Deliveries from Marseille to Petersburg took two months in the spring.

1) Volume VII, pp. 330 and 434.  
2) Another unit intended for the "entry" into Constantinople was ready in Vladikavkaz. England, which placed no value on such participation, is said to have refused sea transport (Kudaschev letter of June 22, 1915).  
3) Volume II, Appendix 2.  
4) It is not possible to determine with certainty.  
5) Manikowski, II, p. 81.  
6) Volume VII, p. 136.  
7) French official report, Vol. III, Year 612; the route is not known.

Page 344

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

Behind the front lines, which apart from the breakthrough front in Galicia and southern Poland and the area north of the Njemen were quite strongly developed, in Poland from south of Iwangorod via Nowogeorgiewsk to near Lomza, deeply echeloned rear positions and behind them the Narew-Vistula line, further reinforced by fortifications, offered stubborn resistance. However, if the pressure from the opponents unexpectedly forced the abandonment of this "forward theater of war," there was still the large rear main defense line of the Njemen and Bug with the strong and modernly developed fortresses of Kowno, Grodno, and Brest available. Their right flank seemed sufficiently protected by the absence of railways and roads north of the Njemen, while the left wing found secure support behind the Dniester at the Romanian border. This last position was hoped to be held even under the most unfavorable developments.

Since the beginning of May, the focus of the Supreme Army Command had been fixed on the situation at the front in Galicia. Information about the German troop distribution was generally quickly and well obtained, presumably through agent reports and prisoner statements. The German advance north of the Njemen was not considered significant, as the forces detected there were too weak to pose a threat. Thus, the Northwest Front had meanwhile become the source of strength, nourished by troop transfers for the heavy and costly battle of the Southwest Front. Here, around mid-May, the pressure against the section that had previously felt it most strongly, against the 3rd Army, which stood below the fortress of Przemysl on the San, seemed to have eased, as it was believed that the German troops were moving more southward. On May 17, the Grand Duke personally wired General Brussilow, the commander of the 8th Army, expressing special confidence in his tactical skill and was convinced that he would not only hold Przemysl, whose possession was particularly important, but also strengthen the overall situation through active combat leadership on his remaining front. He suggested to the Southwest Front to consider forming a new operational army from their reserves in the area north of Lemberg, to which the three-division strong army reserve and a particularly proven army leader from the Northwest Front, General Plehwe, previously commander of the 12th Army, and one and a half corps should be assigned. However, the commander of the Northwest Front reported that if he were to make such contributions, he needed to know whether he should continue to hold his current front or could relinquish the Grojec position covering the Narew and Warsaw.

Page 345

Hope for Relief through Italy's Intervention

As the enemy at the San did not advance further on May 20, the Russian military leadership saw the situation as more favorable again, with the imminent intervention of Italy likely having played a decisive role. A military convention had already been concluded with it on April 26, through which both powers committed to deploying the maximum of their forces in the direction of Vienna-Budapest for a decisive blow against the Danube Monarchy and to manage with a minimum on the other fronts. Serbia was to participate by seeking contact with the Italian right wing at Laibach in a northwesterly direction. In view of these plans, the start of the retreat from the San was postponed. General Ivanov intended to prepare a larger offensive operation; General Alexeyev now proposed an even larger one, aiming to attack in the West and thus restore the situation in Galicia. The Grand Duke had the military leaders of the powers explain on May 23 that at least ten newly deployed German divisions from their front were already fighting against Russia; although this complicated their task, it came "within the framework of the overall situation just in time to facilitate the expansion of the successes already achieved in the West." When the state of war was declared on the Italian front on May 24, General Joffre was to send a reply telegram expressing admiring recognition of Russian heroism and expected "the most brilliant results from Italy's entry into the war." The Russian military leadership believed, as on the same day the attack of the Central Powers at the San continued, only in a final effort by the enemy to end the operation by capturing Przemysl and then turn against Italy. They ordered that the fortress should only be evacuated when all means were exhausted, and had the 4th Army of the Southwest Front transfer to the Northwest Front so that General Ivanov could focus all his attention on the defense in Galicia. However, the formation of a new operational army north of Lemberg had meanwhile proven impractical. It soon became apparent that the new ally, contrary to his initial intentions, was not yet ready for the offensive, and his deployment would last well into June. Likewise, the Serbs were unable to attack because they were hindered by diseases and flooding of the border rivers and by Bul-

1) Tsarist Russia in the World War, p. 328 ff. 2) Valentinov, E. 49. — See p. 73 ff. of this volume. 3) p. 29.

Page 346

garien and Albania were threatened. On the other hand, despite all efforts, the hope of forming an alliance with Romania or Bulgaria was dwindling. When the last forts of Przemysl had to be evacuated on the night of June 3, the Galician front began to waver again. But the situation on the Northwest Front also began to cause concern. The first overall operation of the German 9th Army caused fear for Warsaw, while the continuation of attacks on the Njemen and north appeared threatening only for the extreme right wing of the army. On June 5, the Chief of General Staff, General Januschkewitsch, wrote to the Minister of War: "After the Germans have brought about an unprecedented collapse on the Southwest Front, they will now apparently turn to the Northwest Front"; the question was only whether against Warsaw or Riga. Reinforcing the Northwest Front was not easy, because since May 9, about 18 divisions, or about 200 battalions, had been thrown to the Southwest Front. The result of their intervention was "almost zero," the complete corps and divisions had "melted away like snow." While Warsaw was somewhat secured by the armies and fortifications standing before it, Riga, which was more important for the army's supply due to its large industry than Warsaw, was almost unprotected; open to enemy access. A panic had broken out in the city; people began to remove money, supplies, and machines, so that the threat alone already hampered the production of army supplies. In Petersburg, there was concern. Since the commander-in-chief of the Northwest Front did not yet expect far-reaching German operations north of the Njemen, the Supreme Army Command retained the leadership of the previous Riga–Schavli group, which became the "5th Army," to be transferred to General Plehwe and as the only available reinforcement at the time, three spent on the Southwest Front

1) p. 11. 2) p. 134. 3) pp. 124f. and 131 f. 4) Correspondence Suchomlinow/Januschkewitsch. 5) From the Northwest Front in April III. Reserve Corps (21st and 52nd Div.), 63rd Div., 62nd Div., 13th Reserve Div., 62nd Div., XV Corps (8th Div.), 77th Div., 3rd Guard Div., II Reserve Corps (on Gren. and 51st Div.), VI Corps (4th and 6th Div.), then the two divisions marked with \* and another (12th Reserve) from the Southwest Front returned in early June. From the Caucasus Front: 20th and 3rd Reserve Div. as well as 5 Turkic-Cossack Brigades. A total of 15 divisions. How the number of 18 divisions was calculated was not clear. 6) Knox, p. 291 f.

Page 347

Evacuation of Przemysl. Situation of the Northwest Front.

Divisions with only 3000 men each (business counters) to be relocated to Riga until they are replenished. "This will alarm the public and cool down the Kaiser," wrote the Chief of General Staff to the Minister of War. The new 5th Army was to protect the route to Petersburg in the future, together with the Baltic Fleet. Admiral Kanin, who had taken over command for the now deceased Admiral von Essen, relied on the naval ports in the Gulf of Finland; in the open Baltic Sea and in the Gulf of Riga, he had almost only light forces, mainly minelayers and submarines. The 5th Army was detached from the rest of the front due to its special task; its rear connections led northeast to Riga. This gave the fortress of Kowno increased importance as the right wing support point of the main front and was therefore placed directly under the commander of the Northwest Front, its garrison reinforced. All troops west of the lower Vistula to the Pilica were combined as the 2nd Army, eliminating the previous 5th Army.

Regarding the overall situation of the Northwest Front, General Alexeyev wrote to the Chief of General Staff on June 5: The decisive factor was that without reserves, it was "stretched to a thin thread." After twelve divisions had recently been withdrawn for the Southwest Front and seven for the area north of the Njemen, the front garrison was so weakened that the enemy could break through even the strongest fortified positions after thorough artillery preparation. Therefore, the only option was to shorten the front by retreating behind the Narew and into the Grojec position; then up to four corps could be spared as reserves. It was essential to preserve the fighting strength of the armies, considerations of the moral impact of retreating had to take a back seat. However, there was no time to lose to avoid being attacked in the current extended positions. Once the regrouping was completed, an attack could be considered again. The commander of the Southwest Front viewed the situation differently. When General Januschkewitsch suggested on June 6 to gradually take up rear positions to preserve the army and fight the major battle at the Gnila Lipa, General Ivanov wanted nothing to do with it. He replied, the task

1) p. 440, note 4. 2) Correspondence Suchomlinow/Januschkewitsch, June 7. 3) p. 440, note 4. 4) In May III Corps (56th and 73rd Div.), XIX Corps (17th and 38th Div.), XXXVII Corps (6th, 68th, and 79th Div.); also Inf. Brig. XIII, 1st Caucasian and 3rd Turkish Rifle Brig.

Page 348

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

despite the most difficult circumstances, to defend every inch of land; "the Emperor, Russia, and the Grand Duke demand from us stubborn combat... We have not covered the entire area with a network of strong positions just to retreat now, only covered by a rearguard"1).

On the same day, the Grand Duke reported to the Tsar2) that the deficit now amounted to 300,000 men on the Southwestern Front and 100,000 men on the Northwestern Front, but the arriving replacements lacked weapons, "thus every strategy ends." The training level of the replacements, who had barely learned to shoot due to the lack of rifles, was beyond criticism; there was a lack of officers. "We cannot seize the initiative again, but must limit ourselves to repelling the enemy's blows... Due to the enormous losses, the value of the troops decreases every day; the units are dwindling away..." Although Italy has now entered the war, the Germans have strengthened their forces against Russia. The French attack also remained ineffective, despite their deployment of ten corps, superior artillery, and unlimited ammunition3). It is "distressing and shameful" that Russia's "truly more than heroic, brilliant troops suffer unheard-of losses due to a lack of weapons and ammunition and are not even rewarded with successes." In such a situation, the negotiations conducted simultaneously with the Western powers for better cooperation only expressed helplessness, and they had no influence on the course of events.

On June 8, General Januschkewitsch replied to General Alexejew's proposal to retreat, stating that the last positions at the Narew and near Grojec were still in question without giving up the overall situation. He received four divisions of heavy artillery, which meant a "significant reinforcement"4) of the Northwestern Front. The final decision on what should happen next was left to him. The Grand Duke agreed to carry out the movement soon; the only condition was that the construction of a second line of defense behind the Bug and Narew, as well as behind the positions of Grojec and Radom, should begin immediately. On the Southwestern Front, General Brussilow was forced on June 15 to retreat to the Grodek position west of

1) Njesnamow, p. 57.  
2) Ssejankow, pp. 56 ff. and Bonch-Brujewitisch, p. 259.  
3) Staff. The French had a different view of the balance of forces.  
4) A total of 8 batteries of 15-cm howitzers and 4 batteries of 10-cm cannons, totaling 48 guns. — See p. 437.

Page 349

Retreat Considerations. Case of Lemberg.

To command Lemberg. After the enormous losses, which this front had especially suffered, the total deficit was now already estimated at 500,000 men. The shortage of rifles increased; in the columns of the southwestern front, up to 60 percent of the ammunition quota was missing. On June 17, in a meeting with the commanders of the army groups in Cholm, defense was established as the task for the near future, to restore the army's combat strength and later to resume the offensive. The northwestern front was to consider the middle Njemen, the Bobr, the Narew, and the Vistula up to Iwangorod inclusive as the main line of defense. Forward of this line, the front could be shortened if necessary, but Warsaw was to be held "to the utmost." The southwestern front, whose right wing (3rd Army) was still north of the lower San, could, in view of the sharp German pressure towards Lemberg, retreat southwards to Lublin-Cholm up to the Reich border, but should delay the enemy by exploiting every available terrain feature. To strengthen this front, extreme measures were taken; their infantry was to immediately receive from each cavalry regiment of the entire army 30 men suitable for non-commissioned officers "with rifles," 100,000 replacement troops "with rifles," and the entire remaining available stock of 40,000 rifles. An additional 150,000 rifles were hoped to be freed in the coming months by equipping the replacement battalions with Japanese weapons; the factories produced about 45,000 pieces monthly. All infantry regiments were to be reduced from four to three battalions as needed. Based on the Cholm meeting, the Supreme Army Command ordered on June 19 to withdraw the right wing of the 3rd Army to the right bank of the San and to maintain the connection to the 4th Army of the northwestern front in the future at the Vistula near Zawichost. When the 8th Army then saw itself compelled the following night to evacuate Lemberg itself, the "most thorough evacuation" of the Galician capital and the entire still-occupied part of Galicia was ordered. The loss of Lemberg on June 22 was a particularly severe blow to Russia's prestige. The situation had escalated to such an extent that major decisions had to be made. Within the empire, dissatisfaction was evident, which had led to street riots in Moscow. "From all sides, people are shouting" (wrote the Chief of the General Staff to the Minister of War), "and frighten us with the Hydra of Revolution. That has us

Page 350

The Russian High Command until the End of August.

still missing. With Romania, the matter is being dragged out, with Sweden we are anxious. It gets worse by the hour. — The internal enemy is also beginning to stir. Duma deputies have convened for a congress. Basically, the Duma has convened on its own without being summoned and wants to exercise power.”

On June 25, the Tsar, accompanied by all ministers, came to the Great Headquarters. He had previously dismissed the Minister of War, General Suchomlinov, who was blamed for the inadequate supply of the army with weapons and ammunition, and replaced him with General Polivanov. During the consultation in Baranowicze, the entire situation was thoroughly discussed. Politically, the result was the Imperial Decree of June 27, through which the Duma was convened and the Russian people were urged to endure with the reasoning: “The enemy must be defeated, otherwise peace is impossible.” For Poland, the self-administration promised shortly after the outbreak of war in 1914 was to be worked out.

General Danilow reports on the military decisions: For the Grand Duke as Supreme Commander, the main goal was to preserve the army. He hoped that the pressure from the allies would eventually bring relief, and that the “irregularity” of the approaching Serbian and German advance would set a target. It was therefore a matter of gaining time, with the “numerical area” of Russia offering great possibilities. And yet, in the future, no step of Russian soil should be surrendered to the enemy without compelling necessity. If it was not possible to hold further west, then the defense in the Njemen-Bug line was the most promising. It measured only about 1000 kilometers from Riga to the Romanian border and had positioned itself behind this railway cross-connection Riga—Wilna—Baranowicze—Rowno—Kamenez-Podolsk, with numerous branches to the west and east. The outer army wings had almost reached this favorable defensive line while retreating, while the center had not yet moved forward. It was necessary to lead them out of threatening encirclement if needed. It was therefore desirable to place them under a unified command. At the same time, the circumstance had to be taken into account that

1) Volume II, p. 33. 2) Danilow, p. 521, recalls that the consultation had already taken place on June 24. However, according to Paleologu I, p. 358, the Tsar did not leave Tsarskoye Selo until June 25. — 3) Danilow, p. 522 ff.

Page 351

Change of the Minister of War. Retreat Preparations.

the armies, in the event of further retreating to the Rokitno Marshes1), the large forest and marsh area of the upper Pripet, would encounter. According to considerations already made in peacetime, in such a case, the focus of warfare should lie north of the marsh area on the roads to Moscow and Petersburg. Therefore, the northernmost army of the Southwestern Front (3rd Army) and the large Bug Fortress Brest Litovsk were already transferred to the Northwestern Front. The border was henceforth in the line Rawa Ruska–Sokal, so that the entire front in Poland, the entire "forward theater of war," fell into the area of the Northwestern Front. General Ivanov, with only three armies (8th, 11th, and 3rd Army) and twelve corps, comprising 36 divisions and thus about one-third of the entire army, was responsible for covering south of the Rokitno Marshes in the direction of Kiev. At present, his armies were advancing in a front about 300 kilometers wide on the upper course of the Bug, the Zlota Lipa, and the Dniester to the Romanian border east of Czernowitz. "The most responsible part of the general task"2) was to be fulfilled by General Alexeyev as the commander-in-chief of the Northwestern Front. He commanded eight armies on a front currently measuring 1300 kilometers (starting from the right wing: 5th, 10th, 12th, 1st, 2nd, 4th, 3rd, and the newly forming 13th Army) with 37 corps, comprising 80 divisions and thus about two-thirds of the entire army. He was also to withdraw the six armies currently in Poland through the area between Ostrowiec and the Rokitno Marshes, which, despite a width of about 200 kilometers, represented a kind of bottleneck due to the small number of usable roads. The Lomza–Ostrowiec–Forest of Augustow line had to be held at all costs; marsh areas facilitated this. But also the danger that an attack against the weak northern flank could bring for the overall situation north of the Rokitno Marshes "had to be constantly kept in mind by the supreme army command." Everything was thought through and prepared for the event that the retreat became unavoidable, which included the evacuation of all of Poland with Warsaw. Minister Sazonov reassured the French ambassador in Petersburg on June 26th3): "The Russian army will carry out its retreat as slowly as possible and take advantage of every opportunity for counterattacks and to unsettle the enemy. If Grand Duke Nicholas should find that the Germans are withdrawing part of their forces to use them on the Western Front, he will immediately-

1) Previously called Polesje in earlier volumes. 2) Danilov, p. 522. 3) Paléologue I, p. 360.

Page 352

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

immediately resume the offensive. His campaign plan allows him to hope that our troops can hold Warsaw for at least two more months."

When in the last days of June and the first days of July the new left wing of the Northwestern Front and especially the right of the Southwestern Front had to further yield to the pressure of the Central Powers, General Alexeyev wanted to continue stubborn resistance south of the Lublin—Cholm line, where the enemy seemed to be directing the main thrust; he also prepared for the possibility of a German attack in the most sensitive direction, from East Prussia via Ostrowiec. On July 4, he ordered the 2nd Army, most exposed in West Poland, to withdraw the deployed fortress artillery on the night of July 7 and to retreat to the Blonie—Grojec position; the 4th Army to the south and the 12th and 1st Armies on the Narew Front were also to join the movement. However, the execution was then halted again, the timing left open; preparations for the evacuation of Warsaw had begun.

At the request of General Alexeyev, the Grand Duke himself came to Siedlce on July 5 and gave him free rein through an order stating: The enemy, who was apparently only conducting a feint operation north of the Njemen, threatened the entire situation on the front battlefield with the attack on Lublin—Cholm. If it was not possible to stop this attack, General Alexeyev was to continue to evade, "to preserve the living strength of the army for the still long-lasting war." Meanwhile, in the south, the abandonment of the Bug Line was already being considered, with the front Lomza—Malkin—Lutow—Ratno, 75 kilometers south of Brest Litowsk on the upper Pripet, being envisaged as the next line of resistance; the extreme limit for the retreat was initially to be the line Bobr—upper Narew—Brest Litowsk—Ratno. Thus, the Southwestern Front was henceforth assigned the front between the Rokitno Marshes and the Romanian border. Ivangorod, Warsaw, and Nowo-Georgiewsk were not to be defended as fortresses but evacuated as parts of the field positions with these. The Grand Duke could not bring himself to order the same for the large and strong fortress of Nowogeorgiewsk; this place, which covered Warsaw, was to be held and defended to the utmost; the impossibility of also assigning it to the already overloaded railways leading east from Warsaw had decisively influenced this. Meanwhile, the Grand Duke hoped to be able to postpone the retreat further. On the Isonzo, the enemy

Page 353

Effect of the German Attacks.

perhaps the German offensive power was still waning. Even in the worst case, he expected to be able to hold Warsaw for at least another month, until early August²). The difficulty and uncertainty of the situation was also expressed at the meeting held at the French Grand Headquarters in Chantilly on July 7³), when the Russian military attaché, Colonel Count Ignatiev, could not give a binding statement about the Grand Duke's next intentions.

Due to the success of the large German attack against the Narew Front on July 13⁴), General Alexeyev was forced to order his 2nd Army to execute the retreat to the Blonie-Grojec position; the movements began on the night of July 17. This marked the decisive turning point. Eager telegrams were sent to the Western powers; they demanded that the Italians act more decisively. The Serbs had already received the news that their advance on Laibach⁵) was no longer feasible "in view of the inactivity of the Italians"; instead, they were to be ready to invade Syrmia at a given signal. The Russian military leadership no longer fully trusted them, as they had been conducting a small war since early June to gain control of Albania, with the conflict of interest against Italy playing a role, which had already occupied Valona in December 1914. Serbia even wanted, as was heard, to negotiate a separate peace with Vienna⁶).

With the advance of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army to the east bank of the Bug⁷), holding this river line by the Southwestern Front was already in question. Then, on July 19, when the Woyrsch Army Detachment also launched an attack⁸) and the Gallwitz Army Group stood before Pultusk and Rozan⁹), the Grand Duke again came to Siedlce and gave General Alexeyev explicit authority to withdraw the armies "as needed" across the Vistula to the east. Warsaw was to be evacuated in the following "very possible" cases: once, if the

¹) p. 31. ²) Rudzewitsch Letters, July 6, 1915. ³) More details in Volume IX. ⁴) Details of the Russian countermeasures on this front see p. 301 and 370; the Southwestern Front p. 389 f. ⁵) p. 439. ⁶) Rudzewitsch Letters, July 18 and 24, 1915. – See also p. 606 and 611. ⁷) G. p. 390 ff. ⁸) Gebna. ⁹) p. 304 f.

Page 354

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

The enemy in the north finally breaks through the front, but also if he advances in the south to Ivangorod—Brest Litovsk¹).

On the night of July 21, following the retreating 4th Army on the northern flank of the 2nd Army, the Grojec position was abandoned. On the 22nd, General Alexeyev ordered the southern flank (4th, 3rd, and 13th Armies) to gradually retreat to the Ivangorod—Kovel line. The following days saw the fall of the Narew line Pultusk—Lomza. At the same time, the pressure of the new German attacks in Lithuania and Courland²) began to take effect, now already threatening the road to Vilna. On July 24, Prince Kudachev, the representative of the Foreign Minister at headquarters, reported to Petersburg that General Janushkevich, "taking a deep breath," declared: "We must drink the cup to the dregs" and, pointing to the Riga—Shavlen front, said: "If the Germans continue to attack there, we must evacuate Warsaw and retreat."

General Alexeyev did not yet consider the situation on the extreme northern flank threatening. As he explained to the Grand Duke during another meeting in Siedlce on July 28, the German forces deployed there were too weak for a major operation, and new decisions were not yet necessary. General Danilov, on the other hand, attached "paramount importance" to the front north of the Niemen, and the Grand Duke accordingly ordered the immediate reinforcement of the 5th Army fighting there with two infantry³) and a cavalry division from the southwestern front. However, he left the timing for the evacuation of the Vistula line to General Alexeyev as before. The events on the Narew front were now considered decisive for the fate of Warsaw, as a German breakthrough towards Wyszkow on the Bug could severely hinder the retreat of the Russian troops still standing on the Vistula. At the Lublin—Cholm front, it was believed that they could hold at this time, so an attack at this point was considered less threatening.

The surprising Vistula crossing by the Woyrsch army detachment on the night of July 29 between Warsaw and Ivangorod brought new concerns. When the Russian 4th Army failed to repel the enemy here, General Alexeyev ordered the 2nd Army on August 2 to evacuate the west bank of the river and thus Warsaw; the line of

¹) Kudachev letter from July 22, 1915. ²) p. 460 ff. ³) 69th and 2nd Finnish Div.

Page 355

Orders for the Retreat.

The old outer forts were initially to remain occupied but not defended. On August 4, the bridgehead on the left of the Vistula at Iwangorod was evacuated; the following night, the last Russian troops left Warsaw and blew up the bridges. On August 5, General Alexeyev ordered the start of the general retreat from the Vistula to the east for the night of the 7th, with the next target being the line Lomza—Malkin—Lukow—Cholm. Parts freed by the shortening of the front were to reinforce the extreme right wing (5th and 10th Army), for which there was increasing concern.

Meanwhile, the Grand Duke had already informed the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Front at his new headquarters in Rovno on August 3 of the intention to continue the retreat to the Niemen—Bug line, explaining that this line in the north was already threatened by encirclement. To strengthen the 5th Army in particular, the Southwestern Front now had to give up 120 individual companies. Overall, the Northwestern Front was already short of 650,000 men of the required strength. For the gap that had to arise between the two army groups during the continuation of the retreat towards Pinsk, only two cavalry divisions were now available against the enemy south of Vladimir Volynsk over a width of 30 kilometers. On August 6, the Grand Duke came to Rovno again. The decision made at that time, to build seven bridges over the Dnieper near Kiev and below on a 200-kilometer stretch of river, shows what possibilities the supreme army command was already considering in view of the disruption of the Northwestern Front and the ongoing weakening of the Southwestern Front. Despite everything, there was still hope for a final victory. When Prince Kudaschow reported on German peace feelers during these days, General Januschkewitsch was very dismissive. The prince reported to Minister Sazonov: "I believe that here, as everywhere in Russia, it is felt that it is indispensable to end the war with a failure."

In view of the German attacks north of the Niemen and before Kovno, concerns about the right wing of the army also continued to grow. As early as July 30, General Alexeyev had serious concerns about the possibility of a German breakthrough between the 5th and

1) Njesnamow, p. 87. — There may be an error in the date, and it may also refer to the journey from August 3. 2) p. 604 ff. 3) Kudaschow letter from August 3, 1915. 4) World War. Volume VIII. 29

Page 356

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

The 10th Army expressed concerns about Swenzjany, where the Germans could unexpectedly strengthen quickly. This would force an immediate weakening of the Vistula front, whose evacuation had not yet been ordered at that time. The 5th Army was to shift its focus more to the south, towards the area of Dünaburg. On August 9, the Southwestern Front was again ordered to transfer two divisions to the 5th Army. At the Northwestern Front, the Grand Duke inquired whether it was not "advisable to withdraw the front in Poland further back to strengthen the middle Njemen and the roads to Kowno, the section that was to support the future front." The attacks carried out that day by the German 12th and 8th Armies south of Lomza against the Russian 12th and by the Mackensen Army Group near Lubartow against the 3rd Army accelerated the execution of the retreat movement. "To prevent the armies from being completely dissolved," General Alexejew ordered on August 10 for the 12th, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 3rd Armies to continue retreating to a line running south past Lubow east of Diswiece. The movement was to be carried out gradually; cavalry and rearguard were to repeatedly hold up the enemy and force development, while entire corps were simultaneously to be released as reserves. However, this movement also led to further withdrawal of the 13th Army, positioned southwest of Kowel with its right wing on the Bug, which the Supreme Command would have liked to keep standing to protect Brest Litowsk. On the other hand, the southwestern front, which adjoined to the south, was already so weakened by contributions to the north that it was hardly able to hold its line.

The rapid advance of the German attack against Kowno increased concerns. On August 14, the Supreme Command designated the best and numerically strongest corps of the army, the Guard Corps, from the 3rd Army to Wilna; this army thereby shrank from 90,000 to 63,000 rifles, which were distributed among five remaining corps (ten divisions).

The following days brought a decisive change in the structure of the army. After discussions that dated back to July 28, and after a meeting with General Alexejew

1) 65th and 4th Finnish Divisions. 2) Pages 355 and 414. 3) Two infantry divisions and a rifle brigade.

Page 357

Reorganization of the Army.

On August 16, at its new headquarters in Wolkowysk, the division of the oversized Northwestern Front into a Northern Front (under General Ruzski, the recovered former commander of the Northwestern Front), and a Western Front under General Alexeyev was ordered on August 17. The new division was to take effect on August 31. While the Western Front would cover the roads to Moscow with the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 3rd Armies along the Grodno—Brest line, the Northern Front (with the 6th Army responsible for coastal defense, 5th Army, a new 12th Army to be formed at Vilna by dissolving the previous 12th and 13th, and 10th Army) would cover the routes leading over the sea from East Prussia to Petersburg, for which the Baltic Fleet was also subordinated to it, and hold the line of the middle Njemen. Above all, Kowno, the strongest support of this front, was to be defended with all means against the ongoing German attack. The aim was further to gather enough forces to push the enemy on this flank back to the west, "to deprive him of the favorable starting position for an encirclement of the entire front." Therefore, General Alexeyev was to give up, in addition to the Guard Corps of the 3rd Army, the two most combat-ready corps of the 13th Army for the formation of the new 12th Army at Vilna, but instead gave two exhausted corps (II Siberian and II Caucasian).

Moreover, these plans were already changed in the following days by the unexpected fall of Kowno on August 18 and the entry of German naval units into the Gulf of Riga, and by the question of a new appointment to the supreme army command becoming noticeable. Since General Suchomlinov was no longer Minister of War, the position of the Chief of General Staff, General Januschkewitsch, was also considered shaken. When General Alexeyev, who was suspected to be the successor, now proposed to form the 12th Army not at Vilna but at Riga under the changed circumstances, but to appoint General Ruzski as the future commander of the Northern Front beforehand, the Grand Duke rejected the latter; but he himself also "wished to exercise no compulsion." Thus, the new army was formed at Riga according to General Alexeyev's intention. The measures demanded and partially already ordered by General Ruzski in view of the appearance of German warships off Pernau were-

Page 358

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

The deployment of two corps for coastal defense to Wolmar and Walk was prevented by General Aljezejew when the German ships soon left the Gulf of Riga again. The mass of incoming reinforcements continued to flow into the area of Wilna, where the Grodno-Lida gap, which had been particularly dangerous since the fall of Kowno, was located. The fall of this fortress also forced the abandonment of the entire line Kowno-Grodno-Brest Litowsk. The front was to be withdrawn, but in such a way that the railway Wilna-Baranowicze-Rowno remained secured as a cross-connection behind it.

On August 22, Djovice was released. After the 4th Army had been shaken by the German Army Detachment Woyrsch on the 25th and in view of the simultaneous threat from the southeast, the prepared evacuation of the strong modern fortress Brest Litowsk was also carried out, General Aljezejew ordered the general retreat to the Grodno-Rowno line on the night of August 26.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Army Command had moved to Mogilew on the Dnieper since August 21. Here, the Minister of War, General Polivanowo, brought the Grand Duke the news on August 22 of the Tsar's decision to take over the supreme command himself with General Aljezejew as Chief of Staff. The Grand Duke was then to be assigned the Caucasus Front. From then until the Tsar's arrival on September 5, the previous Supreme Army Command did not intervene decisively in the events, which were hardly sustainable anyway. How the views of their previously influential personalities were at that time is characterized by the report of Prince Kudaschew from August 30: The outgoing Quartermaster General, General Danilow, said that lack of ammunition and declining morale left little hope for significant improvement in the situation; nevertheless, "the final victory can remain ours under two conditions: 1. that we do not despair and do not tire despite all trials, 2. that we do not have a revolution." Otherwise, the prevailing view was: The Germans, judging by the tone of their press, have the double solution: 1. Strike both west and east. Accordingly, our goal must be: 1. Make a pure peace before the Germans are expelled from Russia, 2. preserve the ranks of the army.

Page 359

Change in the Supreme Army Command.

The overall course of Russian operations until early September was a stubborn struggle for every inch of ground and protection of the "evacuation" of territories, which ultimately had to be abandoned; nothing was to fall into the enemy's hands that could serve him in any way for warfare.

From a purely military point of view, objections can be raised against such a type of warfare, as it exhausted the army's forces in pure defense, even though there was room to retreat. With timely withdrawal of the front, the Russian army could have been almost entirely withdrawn from decisive attacks by the Central Powers. A major German operation north of the Njemen would likely have come to a halt soon with the early establishment of a strong Russian right flank, as it was at a disadvantage due to poorer rear connections. This would have led to purely frontal attrition in trench warfare, with the Russian army remaining a fully valid power factor in a strong defensive position and dangerously close to the borders of Germany, ready to break through to a major offensive again at the appropriate time. This could have compensated for any partial loss that the Central Powers might have been able to achieve on other fronts in the meantime.

For the decision on the fundamental question of how the war should be conducted on a large scale, however, as already mentioned at the outset, military considerations alone were not decisive, but alongside considerations of the wishes of the Western powers, ultimately external and internal political circumstances and thus the Tsar and his government. It cannot be overlooked that the procedure applied throughout the summer tied up very strong German forces, which would have been freed for other fronts with a rapid retreat to the Njemen-Bug line. In remarkable calm, the Russian command skillfully conducted the retreat movements covering many hundreds of kilometers, and indeed systematically on the already self-chosen routes with the danger posed by the confined space between Osowiec and the Rokitno swamps. However, the resistance strength of the troops failed because they lacked too many officers, trained replacements, weapons, and ammunition, and thus ultimately morale suffered. It is noteworthy that until the final battles against the Central Powers, apart from the established fortresses, around and about Przemysl, Nowogeorgiewsk, and Kowno, largely unaffected, often also immobile and outdated equipment, from mid-May to the end of August, the number of

Page 360

The Russian Supreme Command until the End of August.

200 pieces did not exceed, while the loss of prisoners in these 3½ months amounted to around 850,000 (including 90,000 garrison from Nowogeorgiewsk). Meanwhile, the losses of artillery had notably decreased since early July, so that perhaps at this time, in connection with the idea of a general retreat, greater restraint in the use of artillery may have been ordered. According to a report made to the French ambassador at the end of August by the Russian General Staff, Russian total losses from May to July were 350,000 monthly, and in August 450,000, totaling 1,500,000 men.

The measures actually taken on the Russian side also raise the question of what prospects an early, at the latest after the capture of the Narew line, i.e., around the end of July, initiated large German offensive on Wilna would have had. It could have been supported by a land and sea attack against Riga, but especially by simultaneous sharp pressure on both sides of the Bug from the south. The forces for this would have been readily available. The Narew-Stob had already delivered what was expected of it, and west of the Vistula, every combat-ready unit was dispensable. A strong German offensive suddenly starting against Kowno and on both sides of this fortress would have encountered very little Russian resistance on this secondary march and could have penetrated deeply in a swift initial advance; it would have taken a long time for the Russians to bring up sufficient forces to counter such a thrust. The German success had to be all the greater, the more it succeeded in destroying the Russian forces standing around Kowno in a double encirclement, gaining ground to the south, and thus blocking the three railway lines leading from Ossowiec and Rotitno-Gimpfen into the interior of the Reich. In view of the strong Russian countermeasures expected here, however, such an offensive had to become increasingly difficult with increasing distance from one's own power sources and with simultaneously increasing supply needs due to the duration and intensity of the battles. It was therefore crucial to prevent the mentioned supply lines from being blocked early and to keep them blocked for the duration of the battles, thereby also making it difficult, if not impossible, to supply the Russian masses flowing back from Poland. That with such conduct of operations

¹) Paléologue I, p. 400.

Page 361

Reflections.

It is possible that a surrender of significant parts of the Russian army could have been achieved; however, a much quicker and, for the Russians, especially in terms of equipment, more costly retreat from Poland would have been forced than through the encirclement attempt west of Bug and Njemen. In retrospect, it seems that the time required for this was underestimated, which was already necessary at that time due to the defensive strength of the weapons for an essentially frontal offensive against an approximately equally strong enemy, if this enemy had the will to defend every inch of ground. It was precisely from this will of the opponent that the prospect of success for a far-reaching strong encirclement operation in the Njemen area also arose.

Page 362

G. The Occupation of the Permanent Position and the Events until the End of the Year at the Commander-in-Chief East¹).

According to the order of the Supreme Army Command of September 25, the permanent position in the section of the Commander-in-Chief East was to run from the mouth of the Beresyna into the Niemen to the Baltic Sea coast. The connection at the Gulf of Riga resulted in by far the shortest line. It also measured almost 400 kilometers in the air. However, the troops had already advanced almost 100 kilometers beyond this shortest line to the east on a broad front and were engaged in heavy fighting against attacking enemies east of Wilna and also near Dünaburg. Overall, the Commander-in-Chief East currently had 37½ infantry divisions and nine cavalry divisions, but could only count on about 28 divisions of infantry in the long run²).

Under these circumstances, all previous far-reaching plans, such as advancing to Minsk and capturing Riga, had to be finally abandoned³). But even the battle east of Wilna, which in any case promised no major territorial gains, had to be abandoned, and further execution of the attack against Dünaburg became questionable. A shortest possible and favorable overall line for defense had to be chosen, and the front at Wilna even had to be moved back for this purpose. The fact that the enemy could count such a retreat as a victory had to be accepted.

On September 27, the Commander-in-Chief East presented a report on the situation and intentions, requested by the Supreme Army Command, stating that it would probably not be possible to repel the enemy before the right wing of the 10th Army. He continuously strengthened and extended his wing east of Wilna and apparently moved forces into the area east of the Narocz Lake-Dünaburg line. An imminent offensive against this line had to be expected. The offensive of the 8th and 10th Army is therefore suspended. The 10th Army initially bends its left wing back to the Narocz Lake and moves forces from its center to the area north of the Narocz Lake. A reinforcement of the left wing of the Niemen Army is also necessary. The army group be-

¹) p. 522 ff. and 537 f. ²) p. 524. ³) p. 521 ff. and 536.

Page 363

extends in line Berezyna-Mouth—Narocz Lake—area west of Dünaburg—Mitau—Castle its permanent position." As soon as possible, further forces would be released for the supreme army command, a general command and three divisions would be prepared for deployment in the coming days. How many divisions could then still be deployed and in what timeframes, however, could not yet be foreseen.

After the armies had already been informed about the intentions in general and had been duly informed about the manner of execution, the Commander-in-Chief East set the line for the permanent position in the east on September 28. It was to run from the Njemen to the Lida—Molodeczno railway along the Berezyna, thus in the previous front, then over the Narocz Lake to the Driswjaty Lake and further along the Düna to the current position of the Njemen Army. Although it was the outermost line, it offered such great advantages over this one by exploiting natural obstacles that it was likely to be held with the least forces. The position was to gain a certain depth by laying several lines and behind it, at a short distance, a second position was to be explored and prepared. At the same time, efforts began to reorganize the units, which had been greatly mixed due to the fighting, and to restructure the entire front. The previous 8th Army was dissolved and had to transfer its troops to the 12th Army; its deputy commander-in-chief, General von Scholz, with Lieutenant Colonel Count von Schwerin as chief of staff, was soon to take over a newly formed army group between the 10th and the Njemen Army, which would then be assigned the area from the Düna to halfway Dünaburg—Jakobstadt. Hand in hand with these changes, the redistribution of forces to the individual armies took place.

The occupation of the permanent position proceeded according to plan, but still under numerous local battles. They were most intense with the 10th and the Njemen Army, in the area east of Vilna and near Dünaburg.

For the 10th Army, the task was to shorten the front in the area west of Molodeczno by removing the protruding Russian position arc from Smorgon. In doing so, the right wing of the Litzmann group made good progress south of the city on September 27. On September 28, the outermost left wing of the old 8th Army gained,

1) p. 124.

Page 364

General von Frommel with the 83rd Infantry and 11th Landwehr Division, at the Berezyna bend northeast of Wiszniew, captured more than 3000 prisoners and nine machine guns. The battle for the city of Smorgon itself was particularly stubborn. Here, the left wing of Group Litzmann from the west and the right of Group Eben from the northeast worked together, but only the attack of the latter (3rd Reserve and 31st Infantry Division) on the eastern bank of the Wilia from the north advanced, capturing 400 prisoners and six guns on September 29 and advancing deep into the rear of Smorgon on September 30. The further advance of the left wing of Group Litzmann, however, stalled due to a lack of ammunition. Surrounded from the west, north, and east in an arc of only four kilometers in diameter, the Russians managed to hold the city of Smorgon. Meanwhile, the left wing of the German 10th Army had disengaged from the enemy, after the latter had inflicted a serious blow east of Wilejka on the 77th Reserve Division on September 27. Otherwise, the withdrawal proceeded systematically and essentially undisturbed to a line running from the Wilia east of Smorgon over the Wiszniew Lake to the Narocz Lake. The Russians followed and captured, according to their own account, abandoned vehicles and ammunition, while "only very few prisoners" fell into their hands. The idea of inflicting further damage on them with a counterattack was abandoned by the German 10th Army's high command when, on the night of September 30, reports arrived, including a Russian order captured by the 9th Cavalry Division, indicating a deep advance by the approximately four-division-strong Kasnakow Cavalry Corps from the east into the gap north of the Narocz Lake was expected for that day.

The wide area between the Narocz Lake and Dünaburg, reliably blocking the border area of the 10th and Njemen Armies, had not been adequately covered by German forces so far. Repeatedly, smaller Russian units had penetrated from the east. Thus, on September 28, the cavalry of the Njemen Army under General von Richthofen had to clear Postawy, Kosjany on the Disna, and Dutschk of the enemy. By September 30, four German cavalry divisions were available between the Narocz and Driswiaty Lakes, but the expected Russian advance did not come until October 1 and was repelled at Kosjany and southward without difficulty on that and the following day.

Page 365

Battle for Smorgon. Capture of the Permanent Position.

was rejected. After it had meanwhile also succeeded in closing the gap that still existed from the northern end of Lake Dryswjaty to the German positions in front of Dünaburg, at the beginning of October a continuous, albeit still quite thin, defensive line was achieved on both sides of the Düna on the entire front of the Commander-in-Chief East. Right here, in the area of Krosjany and north to Lake Dryswjaty, the enemy continued his efforts against the weak German forces stationed here in the following days with great superiority, with his entire IV Corps¹) being identified in addition to strong cavalry. Meanwhile, German infantry had also arrived, so that the stubborn attempts of the enemy, repeatedly made on October 3 and the following days, finally encountered the resistance of five German infantry and 5½ cavalry divisions and could since then be repelled more easily everywhere.

The Supreme Army Command now demanded, as it had long promised²), further contributions, which it urgently needed in view of the difficult situation in the West and the Serbian campaign³). Without endangering the defense in the extended lines of the Commander-in-Chief East, they could only be provided after these had been further consolidated and the expansion of positions had made some progress. The 10th Army estimated the enemy at its front at the time at 38 divisions; that was more than the total forces of the Commander-in-Chief East⁴). In an assessment of the situation demanded by the Supreme Army Command, it was explained to them on October 6: "Russians are attacking the 10th Army and the right wing of the Niemen Army with all their might with the intention of breaking through to the Dünaburg—Wilna road or at least making it impossible to withdraw further forces of the Eastern Army to the West through their attack. I expect that it will be possible to prevent the enemy from breaking off." A contribution of further forces, it was then said, was impossible and could only occur, if the attack was repelled, after a shortening of the front had been achieved by taking Smorgon and the bridgehead of Dünaburg.

¹) In fact, between Postawy and Lake Dryswjaty from the south: the Russian I, IV, XIV Corps with a total of 6½ infantry divisions and 8 cavalry divisions.  
²) See 483 and 492.  
³) See 502.  
⁴) In fact, the 10th Army faced only about 30 Russian infantry and 9½ cavalry divisions, in addition to 11½ infantry and 3 cavalry divisions north of Lake Narocz.

Page 366

For this, some of the heaviest batteries were urgently requested. The shortening of the front was all the more necessary as the commander-in-chief also had to withdraw reserves from the center for his own needs to lead the left wing, as any penetration of the front at Mitau "would have the most serious consequences." General von Falkenhayn immediately replied: "Undoubtedly, it would be advantageous if the current position of the army group could be permanently held and, moreover, if pressure could be exerted in the direction of Dünaburg." However, if the question is raised whether the retention of forces is permissible, whose absence on the Western Front could endanger the German position, it must be absolutely denied. He suggested shortening the front if necessary by retreating to the line Smorgon–Dünaburg–Bausk or even to one that runs straight from Smorgon to Bausk. However, it must be adhered to the allocations; the heaviest guns could only be transferred once they were freed up on the Serbian front after the Danube crossing. In contrast, the commander-in-chief East emphasized on October 7 that the position currently occupied, with or without shortening at Smorgon and Dünaburg, was by far the most favorable that could be taken. It should be held with a minimum of forces. Any rear position that dispensed with the protection of the Düna would require more, but at least the same forces as the position without shortening the front. He therefore left it at the line previously ordered for the permanent position. On the other hand, General von Falkenhayn did not insist on the transfer of all units requested in September; instead of 13, only nine infantry divisions were eventually transferred. Meanwhile, the 10th Army repelled all attacks directed against its left wing. However, their forces were so engaged that the idea of taking Smorgon had to be finally abandoned on October 11. Also, on both sides of the Düna, where the Russian pressure was expected, the thinly manned front was withdrawn on October 19 from Kossjany by about 15 kilometers to Widzy, where the defense conditions were considered more favorable by the troops than in the previously held front line. The attack on Dünaburg by the Njemen Army was continued as far as the forces allowed. On October 6, 7, and 8

1) G. 524 Amm. 1. – 31., 42., 115. I.D. and 6. R.D. remained with the commander-in-chief East.

Page 367

Fights of the Njemen Army.

The I Reserve Corps under General von Morgen (36th, 1st, and 78th Reserve Division) made progress against the northwest front of the bridgehead and captured 1350 prisoners. However, on October 9, fierce Russian counterattacks began, which were repeated on October 11, 14, and 17, and also extended further south. They were successful nowhere. On the German side, it was necessary to hold back for the time being, as heavy artillery and ammunition were scarce, and the extremely unfavorable railway conditions precluded rapid and regular supply. Thus, the attack against the northwest front could only be resumed on October 23 after the artillery was reinforced. 14 batteries of heavy and heaviest indirect fire prepared the assault of the 2nd Infantry, 78th, and 1st Reserve Division, which then broke into the enemy positions over a ten-kilometer width. They reached Illuxt, captured 3700 prisoners and 12 machine guns, and inflicted extraordinarily heavy bloody losses on the Russian masses retreating against the Dvina bridges. But then the attack came to a halt. A further success achieved on October 26 had only local significance.

Overall, despite the use of stronger artillery and all the efforts of the troops, the goal of reaching the Dvina line was not decisively closer; this would have required significantly stronger attacking forces than the railway situation allowed to bring in and equip with war supplies. Since October 1, two months earlier than originally planned, the Bajohren–Prekuln¹) connecting railway had come into operation, and thus a line independent of the sea connection to Schaulien–Poniewiez and Mitau was opened, the situation was initially only slightly eased, as the capacity of the new route was still very low. The enemy still held a bridgehead on the west bank of the Dvina, which extended about 20 kilometers north from the fortress of Dünaburg and had a depth of about ten kilometers. The Commander-in-Chief East found the progress made unsatisfactory in the overall situation. He feared a strengthening of the enemy before the troops could expand the permanent position and therefore suggested on October 27 to stop the attack. General von Below, however, like General von Morgen and their subordinates, hoped for a decisive improvement of the positions from gaining the Dvina bank and also believed that stopping the attack,

¹) See p. 458 and 548.

Page 368

The Events Leading to the End of the Year at the Eastern Commander-in-Chief.

before the goal was reached, it would negatively affect the troops. They wanted to try to continue it. However, when this attempt had to be postponed on October 30 due to the ammunition situation, they were also in favor of stopping the attack. The order for this was given on November 1 by the Eastern Commander-in-Chief.

General Otto von Below had also been eager to simultaneously advance the positions at Mitau further against the Düna with the attack on Dünaburg and thus shorten the overall line. This goal was achieved on October 15 through a surprise attack led by Lieutenant General Hans von Below, involving the 6th Reserve Division, 6th Landwehr, and 174th Infantry Brigade1), which brought in 1000 prisoners. The German position then ran along the Düna to Kirchholm and then at the southern edge of the Riga protruding Tirul-Gumpf westward to the coast at Schloss. Thus, the enemy also maintained an extensive bridgehead on the left bank of the Düna here, as well as at Dünaburg and Jakobstadt.

All in all, the October battles of the Njemen Army once again brought in 12,000 prisoners and 37 machine guns as spoils. However, they also faced about 15,000 of their own losses.

The situation on the sea flank2), which was now stretched from the Reich border to 360 kilometers, remained constantly uncertain. English submarines that had penetrated the Baltic Sea and Russian mines not only hindered trade traffic to Scandinavia and the only one still open to Germany, but also caused losses to the German Baltic Sea forces, which from July to the end of the year included an armored cruiser, two small cruisers, and about twelve other vessels, while corresponding losses of the more restrained Russian fleet were not present. Instead, it had gained a significant increase through four new battleships. If it did not exploit its great superiority in any way, but rather limited itself to morally covering the way to Petersburg in the Finnish Gulf, this was mainly due to the presence of this hostile force together with the English submarines and the ever-newly emerging mine barriers affecting the overall situation in the Baltic Sea. The sea route to Libau was constantly endangered, its port defenseless against long-range fire from ship guns. The Gulf of Riga remained a dominion of the Russian fleet, secured by mine barriers against German ships, whose forces the German coastal surveillance

1) Previously Brig. Sommeier.  
2) See p. 468. For more details, see "War at Sea," Baltic Sea II, p. 268 ff.

Page 369

were occasionally disturbed by artillery fire and smaller landing operations. The Commander-in-Chief East felt compelled to reinforce the coastal section with a cavalry division. However, the bombardments were found to be so unpleasant as securing against them was hardly possible. Long-range guns requested for defense could not be provided by the Supreme Army Command for the time being, and the fleet was not in a position to help unless at least the island of Ösel was taken, thereby providing the necessary support for a permanent establishment in the Gulf of Riga. Such a far-reaching operation was not conceivable for the time being due to a lack of forces. Only when the sea bay froze over could peace from the sea be hoped for.

At the entire land front of the Commander-in-Chief East, combat activity decreased as the construction of positions progressed and the situation stabilized, while at the same time fatigue from the immense efforts of the long summer campaign, ammunition shortages, and the onset of winter imposed restrictions on both sides. Between November 10 and 17, the designation "8th Army"2) was granted, formed on October 28 from contributions from both Army Group Scholz, whose front, starting at Widsh, was extended northward to below Dünaburg in the first days of November. Here, the Russians had made a strong advance shortly before, on November 6, using very explosive Japanese ammunition, which inflicted serious losses on the German 36th Reserve Division. After continuous attack battles, this unit had to be withdrawn in peace because the "supply was inadequate, bringing in winter supplies was not possible due to urgent ammunition transports"; the men of the division were "partly only dressed in rags"3).

Overall, the land front measured 590 kilometers after the conclusion of the battles, secured by 33 infantry4), 7½ cavalry divisions, and 52 Landsturm battalions; the enemy seemed to be facing six infantry and 1½ cavalry divisions. 1⅓ German cavalry divisions and two Landsturm battalions were deployed on the coast.

1) C. 468. — 2) C. 541.  
3) War diary of Army Group Scholz.  
4) C. 524 and 540. — See 80. R. D. (Brig. Monteon), 108. J. D. (Div. Beckmann), 109. J. D. (174. J. Br. [Sommer]) and 17. Ldw. D. (Abt. Eisebed) were renamed or newly formed.

Page 370

The Events up to the End of the Year with the Commander-in-Chief East.

The supply conditions had gradually improved thanks to the tireless efforts of the stage authorities. The number of troops and combat activity had decreased, but the demand for supplies had not, as construction and preparations for winter prompted extensive new demands. Far-sighted, strenuous work by the railway authorities and troops was necessary to bridge transport facilities in the held border areas with limited resources, away from the Russians. East of the Vistula, at the beginning of the war, only three railway lines led over Mlava, Osjowiec, and Kowno into Russia, with only the last being double-tracked. In the winter of 1914/15, the connection Marggrabowa-Gumbalt, established by the Russians, was added, then, built by German railway troops, the Willenberg-Ostrolenka railway in August and from October 1st the Bajohren-Prekulm line, while at the same time the partially lasting destructions on the conquered Russian lines were repaired. During the Narew operation, railway constructions and restorations in northern Poland had priority, aiming to gain connection to the eastward leading Russian main lines east of the likely destroyed Vistula bridge from Warsaw and the Bug bridge from Malkin. Later, the restoration of the double-track railway over Kowno to Wilna became particularly important. West of Wilna, the tunnel from Landwarowo could only be made passable by October 10th. The Njemen bridge near Olita was not completed until November 25th, and the Njemen bridge in Grodno not until December 5th, and accordingly, traffic forward of these points was resumed. Meanwhile, the railway network still showed very large deficiencies; above all, it could not handle more than the most urgent supplies north of the Njemen. Since the completion of the railway bridges from Olita and Grodno, the conditions improved somewhat by relieving the Kowno line. The deficiencies of the very low-capacity Lithuanian railway network could not be remedied in the foreseeable future. Here, troops and replacement transports remained dependent on sledges or even on foot marches, as the railway's capacity was far exceeded by the urgent supply demands of the troops, leading to traffic jams until conditions stabilized. Thus, a general traveling on behalf of the Supreme Army Command needed 29 hours for the journey from the High Command 10 in Wilna to Schallen (200 kilometers) at the beginning of December.

1) p. 530.

Page 371

Railway Situation and Permanent Position. 549

from there to the High Command 8 in Poniewiez (80 kilometers) again 24 hours.

The activity of the Commander-in-Chief East, who had moved his headquarters from Libau to Kowno since October 21, was dedicated, in addition to purely military tasks, to the administration of the occupied Russian territory, which also included the area behind Army Group Prince Leopold and thus, despite the separation of the General Government Warsaw, still covered around 220,000 square kilometers. From this area, which corresponded in size to about two-fifths of the then German Empire, it was necessary not only to supply one's own troops with provisions and horses but also to send them to the homeland and the Western Army as much as possible.

When the Kaiser visited the area of the Commander-in-Chief East with General von Falkenhayn at the end of the year, Field Marshal von Hindenburg reported to him on December 12 about the situation. He considered the right wing and the center of his front to be secure; the construction of positions had already made good progress here. As reserves, the 12th and 10th Armies and the Scholtz Army Detachment could only pull out one mixed brigade each. The situation appeared more threatening with the new 8th Army. Here, one had to be prepared for Russian attacks, especially as soon as the frost set in, the Dvina, the lakes, and swampy areas would no longer pose an obstacle. However, only two infantry divisions stood as reserves behind this front; reinforcement was desired here. The Commander-in-Chief East did not expect larger landings on the coast, but rather annoying bombardments from the sea and the threat from agents and spies who were deployed behind the own line. So far, as he further explained, it had been possible to compensate for the lack of troops through mobility; however, this assistance failed in the interior of Russia. The railway conditions did not allow for rapid movements; wherever a troop was stationed, it generally had to be used.

1) p. 351.

Page 372

H. The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold after the Fall of Brest Litovsk¹).

The German Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army had in August given his approval to the proposals of the Commander-in-Chief East and Generaloberst von Conrad to shift the focus of the offensive from the center of the allied army front to the flanks, with the condition that the planned, spatially far-separated special operations against parts of the Russian army should not result in a continuation of the offensive along the entire line for an uncertain period. For weeks, his primary concern as the leader of overall operations was to make available as soon as possible sufficient forces for the campaign against Serbia, deemed absolutely necessary. Additionally, the possibility had to be considered that the Western opponents would deploy their reserves, which had grown to nearly 50 infantry divisions, against this offensive as well²). It was also necessary to strengthen the Eastern forces. This was most feasible from the center of the army front in Russia. For these purposes, General von Falkenhayn withdrew strong troops from the Mackensen army group in rapid succession from August 25³).

On August 27, Generaloberst von Conrad agreed to the proposal that in the future, instructions to the Mackensen army group should come solely from the German supreme army command. As a result, the rest of the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army and the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps were also removed from this army group. However, Generaloberst von Conrad did not immediately relinquish all influence on the progress of operations on the German front. Understandably, he was very concerned that during the partial operation he planned in Eastern Galicia, the Russian army would be occupied elsewhere.

¹) Connection to C. 435. — ²) C. 614. ³) On Aug. 26, the 101st I.D., on Aug. 28 and 29, the Guard Corps, on Sept. 1, the 11th Bavarian I.D., on Sept. 2, the 119th I.D., on Sept. 3, the 103rd and 105th I.D., on Sept. 4, the XXII R.K. and the 25th R.D. of the Beskiden Corps, on Sept. 7, the 20th I.D., on Sept. 9, the Gen. Kdo. X. R. and the 19th I.D.

Page 373

The Pursuit Continues East of Brest Litowsk.

The front was kept in check. Thus, he not only returned to his earlier proposal, expressed in the spirit of Field Marshal von Hindenburg, to strengthen his army group for the upcoming offensive on Wilna, but he also suggested simultaneous actions by the army groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold up to the area of Pinsk and to the Jasiolda. General von Falkenhayn remained firm against these proposals, maintaining the position he had already justified in a letter to Colonel General von Conrad on August 26: "Certainly, strengthening the Kronow Group is desirable, but it is far more important that the Dardanelles are closed, and that the iron in Bulgaria is forged while it is hot. Consequently, the forces we can withdraw from the area of Brest Litowsk, without initially loosening the grip on the enemy's throat, must go to the Danube."

The initial impetus for the operations of the army groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold not coming to a halt after the capture of Brest Litowsk, contrary to the intentions of General von Falkenhayn, came from the High Command of the Mackensen Army Group. Already on the evening of August 26, Major General von Seeckt had expressed in a report to the Supreme Army Command the view that stubborn enemy resistance south of the large Jasiolda swamps was not to be expected, and that apparently "there was still the prospect of a generous encirclement of the Russian army," provided that the advance of the Hindenburg Army Group on and over Wilna was considered promising. The participation of the Mackensen and Prince Leopold army groups in this was made in an advance over the line Kobryn—Kamieniec Litowsk in the direction of Pruzana under cover against the east and closure of the southern edge of the Bialoviez forest. Field Marshal von Mackensen therefore also continued the pursuit of the Bug Army and the 11th Army eastward on August 27. Also, with the Prince Leopold Army Group, the Woyrsch Army Division forced the crossing over the Lesna Prawa in battles, while the 9th Army continued the blockade of the Bialoviez forest.

The confidence expressed by Major General von Seeckt in assessing the overall situation did not leave an impression on General von Falkenhayn. Although he adhered to fundamental instructions for the operations of the near future¹), which were issued on the night of August 28, that the Mackensen and Prince Leopold army groups

¹) p. 489.

Page 374

The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold.

with their main force to halt the advance eastward at the swampy terrain east of the Ratno—Kobryn—Szereszow line and only to remain with smaller mixed units on all roads near the enemy. Both army groups were also tasked with the immediate construction of field positions along the general line Bug—Brest Litowsk—extent of the Bialowiez forest—mouth of the Narewka into the Narew, which should be suitable for holding with as few forces as possible. At the same time, however, General von Falkenhayn pointed out the early grouping for an advance of the inner wings of both army groups, which would lead against the enemy's rear connections north of the Bialowiez forest.

Consequently, Field Marshal von Mackensen ordered on August 28 that the Bug Army should only continue its assigned pursuit over Antopol—Kobryn as far as an impact on the southern flank of the Russian forces retreating eastward could be hoped for. The 11th Army was also to pursue only with its right wing up to the Muchawiec section. However, its left wing (the corps Kosch\* reinforced by four infantry divisions) was to advance to Pruzana in conjunction with the action ordered by Field Marshal Prince Leopold of the Woyrsch army detachment on Szereszow to create the conditions for a continuation of the offensive northward. The desired flanking pressure of the Bug Army did not materialize. The enemy was pushed back purely frontally in fierce and for him costly battles until August 29 over the Kobryn—Szereszowno line. This resulted in a strong destruction and weakening of his units. The 11th Army alone captured 3700 prisoners on August 29. The Woyrsch army detachment encountered strong resistance on both sides of Szereszow. Aerial reconnaissance detected the departure of endless columns up to and beyond the Sczara, extensive troop gatherings at Pruzana, and heavy column traffic from there to Glomino and from Rozana northward. At the Koslow station, on the Brest Litowsk—Baranowicze railway, new supplies were stored.

General von Falkenhayn believed, from the booty numbers and reconnaissance results transmitted to him on the evening of August 29, that there was still the possibility of inflicting severe damage on the enemy by further sharp pursuit of the Mackensen army group in a northeasterly direction up to the Jasiolda section.

Page 375

General von Falkenhayn intends to continue the pursuit.

to do. He informed the high commands of both army groups during the night that he had no objections to such an operation with a simultaneous advance of Army Group Prince Leopold over Pruzana. However, as of August 30, only slow frontal retreat of the Russians remained possible, and moreover, the own troops had already suffered greatly from supply and replenishment difficulties, General Field Marshal von Hindenburg saw no further prospect of a major success. He decided to halt the advance after the capture of Pruzana and ordered for August 31, apart from a short advance on the main Kobryn road over the Muchawiec section, only the reinforced Corps Koch on the left wing of the 11th Army to continue the pursuit up to the Drancze–Pruzana road in connection with the Army Detachment Woyrsch. In response to an inquiry from the Supreme Army Command, he reported on the morning of August 31: "Hope of intercepting significant parts of the enemy between Jasiodla and Muchawiec section no longer exists. The main reason is that the Bug Army has not succeeded in swinging in with the right wing, nor with the cavalry corps, in time against the southern flank. Frontal pursuit of the right wing and middle 11th Army over marshland promised no significant success, as the withdrawal of the Russians was initiated in time and alternating rearguards were carried out systematically ... Heavy rains will halt troop movements in the marshland everywhere. Condition of the troops good, although probably partially fatigued. Performance of the horses, especially with heavy artillery and columns, is expected to decrease significantly in places. Losses are concerning."

Nevertheless, General von Falkenhayn urgently recommended that at least on the passable roads along the entire front, a sharp pursuit up to the Jasiodla section should be pressed. This was also necessary to facilitate the advance of the Army Detachment Woyrsch and simultaneously to gain advantage from it. In the subsequent ordered continuation of the pursuit up to Jasiodla, the Bug Army was instructed to aim its left wing along the road near Kobryn towards Bereza Kartuska. While in the evening its right wing was held up in front of the Sniper–Bug Canal, secured to the south by the divisions of the now established cavalry corps, its left wing, in conjunction with the 11th Army, gained further ground on the main road. The Guard Cavalry Division under Lieutenant General von Storch reached Luft. On the northern wing of the 11th Army, Corps Koch advanced into the area north of Malecz. The Army Detachment Woyrsch reached Jasiodla with advance troops after the capture of Pruzana. Arrival of

Page 376

The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold.

The 9th Army crossed the Bialowieza Forest on pathless roads.

On September 1, Field Marshal von Mackensen urged his two armies once more to advance rapidly on both sides of the main road Kobryn—Bereza Kartuska up to the Jasiolda. At the same time, the Bug Army was also to advance towards Pinsk to prevent the enemy from transporting away by rail. They then shifted their focus to the right in this direction. Again, the day brought heavy fighting along the entire line against the Russian rearguards, firmly entrenched behind canal and swamp lines, determined to offer stubborn resistance. No significant successes were achieved.

However, in the early morning of September 2, when the 82nd Reserve Division under General Fabarius broke into the hotly contested position at the Dniepr—Bug Canal at Hordce, the enemy soon retreated on the rest of the front as well. Both armies pressed forward. General von Linsingen still hoped to encircle the parts retreating towards Pinsk on both sides. In the evening, he subordinated his right wing (5th Cavalry Division, XXXXI Reserve Corps, and 107th Infantry Division) to General von Gerok for an attack along the railway towards Pinsk, while the garrison corps was to pursue along the main road to Bereza Kartuska, but with the main force advancing southeast of the Jasiolda. The 9th Army reached the Jasiolda with the Kosch Corps at Zielec. Since the command of the X Reserve Corps with the 103rd and 105th Infantry Divisions was now to be transferred, it was replaced by the X Army Corps (19th Infantry and 47th Reserve Division, with the 20th Infantry Division in reserve).

The Prince Leopold Army Group gained little ground on September 1 and 2. The enemy offered steadfast resistance both to the Woyrsch Army Detachment at the few crossings of the broad swampy lowlands of the Jasiolda and to the 9th Army at Nowogrodek and northwest of it. Already in the early morning of September 2, an order from the Supreme Army Command had arrived, according to which the Prince Leopold Army Group was to continue the offensive over the road section Slonim—Zelwa. In the evening, the Mackensen Army Group also received orders to participate in this attack with its left wing towards Slonim. Its high command then ordered the commanding general of the Beskiden Corps, General of Cavalry von Marwitz, to carry out this advance with the 4th Infantry, 35th and 47th Reserve Divisions, as well as the Guard Cavalry Division.

1) G. 550. — 2) G. 492.

Page 377

Cooperation with Army Group Hindenburg is sought.

The new, broad objective was related to the course that operations on the right wing of Army Group Hindenburg had meanwhile taken. Here, according to the instructions of the Commander-in-Chief East from August 29th1), the 12th Army was in rapid pursuit eastward over the Swislocz section, while to its left the 8th Army captured the fortress of Grodno on September 2nd. The Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army wanted to use this situation to attempt to push the still retreating enemy northeastward through cooperation between Army Group Prince Leopold and the right wing of Army Group Hindenburg. He envisioned simultaneously applying corresponding pressure from the 10th Army from the northwest towards Lida to draw large masses of the enemy onto the swamp islands of Slonim2).

The advance of Army Group Prince Leopold3) towards Slonim—Selwa encountered, however, on September 3rd and 4th, torrential rain at the flooded Jasiolda section and stubborn resistance northwest of it. The Marwitz Group of the 11th Army was also stuck at Bereza Kartuska. Only on September 5th did the pursuit on the left wing of Army Group Prince Leopold resume, almost along its entire front the following day. By September 8th, it had approached with its right wing, now reinforced by the 119th Infantry Division from Army Group Mackensen, north of the Brest Litowsk—Baranowicze railway to the Sczara to about 35 kilometers. The next day, the Marwitz Group also overcame the Jasiolda section. It now came under the command of Army Detachment Woyrsch. Once again, Army Group Prince Leopold was held up by enemy resistance west of the upper Grinda and at the Zelwianka until September 12th.

Serious supply difficulties also arose. Already on September 9th, General von Scheffer reported: "For serious continuation of operations, regular ammunition supply is absolutely necessary. The General Command is not in a position today to supply the divisions with provisions, on the other hand only with great difficulty. Column routes exhausted and unable to achieve the given objectives on the trackless paths." The land offered nothing

1) G. 490. — 2) G. 494. 9. R. O. and Commander-in-Chief East and to the front of the ally on the same day the ö. u. 7. R. D., early Sept. the ö. u. 2. and 9. R. D. covered. The H. K. K. 3 (Gen. von Frommel) then joined the 8th Army. G. 501.

Page 378

The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold.

for the supply and no accommodations. It was thoroughly exhausted. The water supply also encountered difficulties in some places. Only on the night of September 13 did the enemy retreat before the army group Prince Leopold as well as before the 12th Army. The pursuit that immediately began, however, already encountered the broad swamp section of the Sczara on the evening of September 14. Russian landwehr corps, attempting to force the crossing at Slonim in the following days, initially brought only minor local successes. On the night of September 18, the enemy continued the retreat along the entire front. The Supreme Army Command considered it urgently necessary to press forward sharply with the army group Prince Leopold, in view of the advancing operations of the army group Hindenburg in the area of Wilna, and on September 19 gave its left wing, which had already reached the railway northwest of Molczadz, the direction almost pointing north towards Nowogrodek. Stubborn resistance from enemy rearguards and impassable roads further hampered the advance. By September 21, the pursuit reached close to Baranowicze and the area south of Nowogrodek. At the Myszanka, strong resistance appeared anew. Only on the night of September 23 did the opponent vacate their positions. The army group advanced to the upper course of the Sczara on both sides of the Baranowicze–Minsk railway and to the Serwetsch. Thus, the important railway junction Baranowicze came into German hands. The right wing of the 12th Army gained space beyond Nowogrodek to the east.

Field Marshal Leopold Prince of Bavaria still believed that by continuing the offensive together with the army group Hindenburg on Minsk, the success could be further expanded. General von Falkenhayn, however, had decided to finally put a stop to the purely frontal pursuit, as the desired operational result had completely failed to materialize. On the night of September 24, the army group Prince Leopold received orders not to cross the Sczara section above the Oginski Canal as well as the Serwetsch and Niemen. On September 25, the Supreme Army Command ordered the army group Prince Leopold to take up a permanent position along the line Oginski Canal (from Telechany)–upper course of the Sczara–Serwetsch–mouth of the Berezyna into the Niemen.

How much the internal condition and the combat strength of the troops, greatly reduced by continuous fighting and marches, affected the setting

1) p. 513.

Page 379

Condition of the Pursuing Troops.

The requirements of the offensive operations are best illustrated by a report submitted unsolicited by the commander of the 119th Infantry Division, Major General von Behr, on September 21. It stated: "The 119th Infantry Division has been in constant forward movement since May 2. This has resulted in conditions that urgently need remedy if the division is not to completely lose its combat effectiveness one day. In the infantry, the number of departures due to illness from overexertion increases daily. The influx of incoming replacement troops cannot keep pace. In the relentless advance, it is impossible for the replacement troops to reach the division. Transport times of six weeks since deployment are now the norm. Instead of fresh, combat-ready troops, exhausted, footsore men arrive, a high percentage of whom have already fallen ill en route. It hardly needs further mention that the weeks-long marches of the replacement transports, with at most two officers without properly organized units, without corporal leaders, etc., are not conducive to maintaining discipline. All troops urgently need replacement clothing and equipment. The infantry especially lacks boots; if the men do not help themselves by taking boots from captured or fallen Russians, many would have to go barefoot. Mounted units suffer from constant horse losses. The artillery and columns, which have long been advancing only at a walking pace due to poor roads, lose several horses daily, which collapse from exhaustion and have to be shot. The increased performance of the horses is not nearly matched by their nutrition. Oats are supplied by the supply columns only irregularly and in insufficient quantities, and in the country, systematic utilization and preparation of known suitable potatoes, beets, and other grains is rarely possible due to the poor large marches. Most of the horses are constantly outdoors, often in cold rain without shelter. Apart from combat losses, the daily loss of horses can be estimated at at least 25. How this loss is to be compensated is currently an unsolvable puzzle. The horse stocks are exhausted, and occasionally small, poorly driven, but unsuitable horses for riding are procured. Replacements from home arrive weeks too late and are already exhausted by the time they arrive.

Page 380

The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold.

and the lack of fodder on the way affects its performance.

With the downright miserable condition of the horses, which are the only reliable means of transport on the bad roads, further deficiencies arise that urgently need remedy. The artillery urgently needs material for the repair and maintenance of the guns. The heavy battery 119 has been firing with only two guns for some time because the long-requested replacement material has not arrived. The same applies to the horseshoe material. It is now feared that the division will not be supplied with cleats when frost sets in, as the possibility of procuring the material is lacking.

The division is currently particularly unfavorably positioned with artillery ammunition. Before September 24, the ammunition column department is unable to issue ammunition to the light columns. If the division continues to march, the distance to be covered by the light columns increases, and thus the difficulty of timely supply of the artillery with ammunition. If one disregards the demands that the ongoing battles will place on the nerve strength of the fighting troops and only considers the supply of the sick and wounded, it becomes apparent that the point at which the division is also at the end of its performance capability is not far off. The evacuation of wounded from the field hospitals to the rear is becoming increasingly difficult because the rear cannot advance at the pace of the front troops. Therefore, the division is forced to leave the field hospitals in place for a long time and, on the other hand, faces increasing difficulties regarding their withdrawal and usability in the event of major losses. — The fact that communication with home via field post has almost completely ceased is mentioned only in passing.

From the above, it follows that the division urgently needs some time to rest; otherwise, the day can already be predetermined when the division will consist only of staffs, regiments of 600 men, and guns without harness and ammunition."

When passing on this report to the Supreme Army Command, Colonel General von Woyrsch remarked on September 23: "Regarding the extremely important question of rapid advance in the current pursuit, I have so far paid no attention to such anxious concerns as expressed in the report, especially since the

Page 381

The Permanent Position of Army Group Prince Leopold.

Despite all hardships, the troops have remained exceptionally good and have distinguished themselves in battles. However, I feel obliged to submit the attached, unsolicited report in its original form, as the conditions in other parts of the army division and especially with the 23rd corps are gradually taking on a similar shape. The main reason for this lies essentially in the inadequate and particularly irregular supply by the railway, which the army division has unsuccessfully tried to improve. For weeks, only half rations and the necessary ammunition could be supplied to the troops, making the fullest use of the available horse and wagon columns.

For the permanent position assigned to Army Group Prince Leopold, a total of eleven infantry divisions and initially also one cavalry division were available over a width of about 160 kilometers. The course of the future position was clearly outlined by the Oginski Canal, Szczara, and Serveitsch. Construction could begin immediately. The double-track main railway Warsaw—Brest Litowsk—Minsk—Moscow, which became passable to Koslow (single-track from Brest Litowsk) on October 4, met the center of the front at Baranowicze and ensured adequate supplies. Opposite the army group stood the center and right wing of the Russian 3rd and the Russian 4th Army with a total of 23½ infantry and 2½ cavalry divisions. The fighting subsided faster in the area of the Commander-in-Chief East than with Army Group Prince Leopold. The calm was only interrupted on October 20 and 21 by an attack led by the Russians against the 5th and XII Corps. This corps, which had to cover the important railway junction Baranowicze in the south and significantly block the major highway Bobruisk—Brest Litowsk, one of the few continuous solid roads in inner Russia, suffered a loss due to the Russian breakthrough into its position.

1) p. 556.  
2) From south to north at the beginning of October: Army Detachment Woyrsch: Guard K.D. (transferred to Army Group Linsingen at the beginning of October), Beskiden Corps (35th and 47th R.D.), 4th and XII Corps (ö.L. of the 35th S.D.), Ldw. Corps (4th Ldw. D.), Ldw.D. Bredow; 9th Army: XXV R. K. (49th I. R. 90th and 84th S.D.); army group reserve: 119th I.D.  
3) From the Russian 3rd Army (from south to north): III Caucasian, XXIV, X, and IX Corps with 2½ Rad. Div., Russian 4th Army: (Gen. Corps, XV, XVI, XXXV, v. ibd. I. Turk. and XXV Corps (Army Reserve) with 15½ Inf., and 1½ Cav. Div.

Page 382

The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold.

7700 men, of whom nearly 6000, mostly of Romanian nationality, were captured. After the situation was restored by the deployment of German reserves, Generaloberst von Woyrsch assigned the Austro-Hungarian corps a section further north, less exposed to enemy operations. On November 10, the right wing of the army group was extended another twelve kilometers to the south.

A week before the pursuit operation of the army group Prince Leopold came to a halt, the Bug Army of the Mackensen army group had successfully carried out its assigned special operation, the attack on Pinsk. On September 3, the enemy had evaded their comprehensively planned attack north of the Dnieper-Bug Canal in an easterly direction. In two groups under the command of Generals von Gerok and von Conta, advancing frontally eastward, the army reached the line Zarzeczka-Chomsk and further northwest the Jasiołda. On September 6, the eastward-directed battlefront was carried forward by the assault of the 107th Infantry Division on Drohiczyn to the line Disvoce-Bezdziez. Due to the great distances from the railway points Włodawa and Biała, the supply service began to fail here as well. The troops were no longer able to bring sufficient ammunition and supplies with their weakened columns over the destroyed roads and impassable paths. Thus, the Bug Army could initially only send mixed detachments after the enemy. Already on September 5, the chief of staff of the Mackensen army group felt compelled to report in detail to the Supreme Army Command about the condition of the troops. They had fully met the high demands on their physical and moral strength during the long period of fighting and had remained consistently reliable and aggressive. However, they wished at least the opportunity for a short training of their replacements, or better yet a rest, as the months-long, costly battles and marches in the most difficult terrain and with the greatest deprivations of all kinds had significantly drained their strength. The guns were heavily worn, but particularly concerning was the recent condition of the horses, both in the troops and in the columns, especially due to the ongoing shortage of fodder.

1) p. 554.

Page 383

Advance of the Bug Army on Pinsk.

In the following days, the army group remained stationary, awaiting the arrival of ammunition and supplies. Meanwhile, the transfer of the X Army Corps¹) was ordered. The Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division marched south to the Austro-Hungarian army. Since Field Marshal von Mackensen had been appointed to lead operations against Serbia, his army group was dissolved on September 8²), but the designation "Army Group Mackensen" was retained for camouflage.

General von Linsingen, who was entrusted with the high command in place of the Field Marshal, reported to the army command on the evening of September 8 that the pursuit with the bulk of the Bug Army had been halted for two days due to a lack of ammunition and supplies. The next operations of the army group were merely a question of resupply. The railway would be operational to Terespol west of Brest Litowsk by September 10 and to Kobryn by September 20. Accordingly, the Bug Army would not be able to resume the offensive on Pinsk until September 14, unless the advance weak detachments succeeded in forcing the enemy to retreat earlier.

Out of caution, the Russians undertook several actions on the night of September 11 to infer from reports of strong transports on the railway over Pinsk to the east, but General von Linsingen concluded that the enemy was about to withdraw and ordered a surprise attack on the entire front on September 12. The breakthrough was completely successful. The Gerok Group advanced with its main effort on its right wing between the Dnieper-Bug Canal and the railway to Slinna-Woroncewicz. In the Conta Group, the 1st and 22nd Infantry Divisions overcame the enemy and advanced beyond Zawierze. On the night of September 13, the 107th Infantry Division succeeded in rolling up the enemy from the north in front of the Gerok Group. Now the entire front moved forward. General von Linsingen urged a sharp pursuit to prevent the Russians from reestablishing themselves in front of Pinsk. On September 14, the XXXXI Reserve Corps³) advanced against stubbornly holding parts south of Ogowa, and the 107th Infantry Division advanced on Obrow. The Conta Group reached Molodowo despite counterattacks. The next day, the enemy was driven back to his deeply echeloned bridge-

¹) See p. 554. ²) The high command of the 11th Army was not reassigned until September 16. ³) The previous leader of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, Gen. von Winkler, took over the IV Reserve Corps. Until the arrival of his successor, Gen. of Artillery von Braun, the commander of the 82nd Reserve Division, Major General Fabarius, took over the leadership of the corps.

Page 384

The Pursuit of the Army Groups Mackensen and Prince Leopold.

Head position at Kolodziejewicze west of Pinsk was repelled. Behind it, strong masses continued to march north over Logishin. After the front lines of the bridgehead were stormed during the night, the troops of General von Conta broke through the Russian position in a final assault in the early morning hours of September 16. The enemy also retreated fighting in front of Group Gerok. By 6 a.m., their foremost parts had already entered the city of Pinsk, encountering almost no resistance. The entire peninsula between Pina and Jasjolda was in German possession.

This pursuit operation also demanded enormous efforts from the troops. The pursuit columns, significantly weakened in their combat strength, fought hard against stubborn resistance in mostly difficult, confusing terrain cut by lakes and swampy watercourses. The hardships of all kinds were no less great, as the small number of supply formations could not adequately supply the troops on the increasingly deteriorating roads during the rapid advance. Although the enemy suffered no significant losses in prisoners during this frontal pursuit, the energetic and quickly executed thrust of the troops, despite exhaustion, found its reward in that the Russians were not given time to devastate the last strip of land west of Pinsk and this city with its rich supplies as they had done with the retreat area further west.

Page 385

J. The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year¹).

1. The Austro-Hungarian Offensive in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia.

Map 6, Sketch 31.

According to the agreements made on July 11 by the allied army commands²), during the offensive operation of the Mackensen Army Group, the German South Army³) and the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army⁴) were to remain defensive in Eastern Galicia at the Zlota Lipa and the Bug for the time being. Only the Austro-Hungarian 7th Army⁵), which had meanwhile grown to about ten infantry and five cavalry divisions, was assigned a spatially limited partial attack east of the Strypa in the direction of Czortkow—Buczacz. It began on the night of July 14, but only brought greater success on the eastern flank. There, the Benigni Group managed to establish itself in the Dniester loop north of Doroschouts. Within a few days, the offensive had to be considered failed. The only gain achieved at the cost of heavy losses seemed to be the Russians' abandonment of the apparently intended withdrawal of divisions of the 9th Army. In the last third of July, the fighting at the breakthrough points subsided; towards the middle of the month, the enemy continued to launch fierce attacks against the Korda Corps on the extreme right flank, which, however, invariably collapsed in the defensive fire of the defender.

At the same time, the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army, which had meanwhile extended north to Dab, in cooperation with the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, cleared the left bank of the Bug between Kamionka Strumilowa and the

¹) Connection to G. 385. — ²) G. 387.  
³) The German South Army consisted of: Hofmann Corps (Austro-Hungarian 55th I. D., Hungarian 39th Honved, Austro-Hungarian 1st I. R. D.), 48th R. D., Marschall Corps (3rd G. S. D., Austro-Hungarian 3rd G. S. D.).  
⁴) The Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army consisted of: V Corps (Austro-Hungarian 14th and 33rd I. D.), XVIII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 9th G. D., Austrian 1st Ldst. Br.), XIX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 29th and 34th I. D.), IV Corps (Austro-Hungarian 27th and 35th I. D., Austrian 1st Ldst. Suf. Br.), Czbullka Corps (Austro-Hungarian 31st, Austrian 43rd G. D.), Army Reserve: Hungarian 51st G. D.  
⁵) The Austro-Hungarian 7th Army consisted of: Korda Corps (Hungarian 42nd S. G. D., Hungarian 202nd S. Br.), Szurmay Corps (Austro-Hungarian 2nd Polish Legion), Benigni Group (Austro-Hungarian 1st G. S. D., Austro-Hungarian 5th G. S. D.), Army Reserve: Hungarian 5th S. R. D. and 30th S. G. D., Benigni Corps (Austro-Hungarian 5th, 15th and 36th G. D.) Army Reserve: Hungarian 5th R. D., 28.

Page 386

Rata estuary and fought for a bridgehead at Kamionka Strumilowa. August was calm at the front of all three armies of the right wing. Only with the 7th Army did a successful attack develop from a violent reconnaissance in the area of Group Krautwald, which led to the capture of the enemy bridgehead at Czernelica on August 9. Further-reaching offensive plans of the cavalry general Baron von Pflanzer-Baltin, which aimed at an attack by Group Benigni north of Dorohoi and the Benigni Corps at Rășinari, had to be temporarily denied approval by Colonel General von Conrad, as he was forced to withdraw some forces from the 7th Army to reinforce the Italian front. On August 12, he ordered the removal of the III Corps (22nd and 28th Infantry Divisions). This section was taken over by the 5th Infantry Division, under the command of Lieutenant Field Marshal Ritter von Henriques. The 2nd Army extended its left wing on the Bug to the Rata estuary on orders from Teschen on August 5 and reinforced Group Czilbulka with the 1st Cavalry Division withdrawn from the Southern Army. On August 6, the army commander, General of Cavalry von Böhm-Ermolli, reported to the army command that his army, after incorporating new replacements, would count 100,000 rifles by mid-August and then be able to unite four divisions and the bulk of the heavy artillery on the southern flank for a breakthrough at Brody, in which the Southern Army would have to participate. This intention coincided with the plan of Colonel General von Conrad to clear Eastern Galicia of the enemy through a major offensive operation. The Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff declared his agreement on August 11 and ordered the 2nd and Southern Armies to prepare for the attack. However, this was not to take place until after the 18th, because the 1st Army, also intended to participate, was not yet operationally ready. On August 16, Colonel General von Conrad informed both army high commands that the "preparatory operation on the inner flanks of the 2nd and Southern Armies would only be carried out as part of a general attack, with the participation of the 4th Army, planned against the armies of the Russian Southwestern Front." The resulting postponement of the start of the offensive led the Southern Army Command to fear that the armies of the Russian Southwestern Front, under the impression of the advance

Page 387

The Instructions of the Austro-Hungarian Army Command for the Offensive.

the allies in Poland could evade the planned strike by prematurely evacuating their positions, for which there were already certain indications. The Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant Colonel von Hemmer, therefore approached the Austro-Hungarian Army Command on August 19 to have the 7th, Southern, and 2nd Armies attack simultaneously in the very next days, regardless of the cooperation of the 1st and 4th Armies. The three armies, having significantly improved their combat strength during the operational pause, would most likely be able to defeat the opposing enemy alone, or at least bind him and deprive him of the freedom to act.

The Austro-Hungarian Army Command responded the next day that it had been prompted by the same considerations to order the deployment of the 1st Army, reinforced by parts of the 4th Army, for a comprehensive attack against the right wing of the Russian Southwestern Front as early as August 19. For this purpose, an advance on Kowel was already underway, and the assembly of strong forces between Wladimir Wolynsk and Kowel was in progress. In connection with this, orders for the attack of the 2nd and Southern Armies were also expected in the coming days, to which the 7th Army would also join.

Simultaneously, the 1st Army received instructions to group itself so that the attack could begin immediately, but in any case after the arrival of the XIV Corps in the area around Kowel (August 24). "To protect the main thrust initially directed from the line Wladimir Wolynsk—Kowel towards Luzk," Kowel was to be firmly occupied by the Cavalry Corps Heydebreck (5th Cavalry Division, Austro-Hungarian 4th Cavalry Division, Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division) and an infantry division of the X Corps. For the attack on Luzk, this corps was to be positioned at Wladimir Wolynsk, the IX south of Turzysk, and the XIV, brought in via Luboml, at Kowel. The group Smetal, advancing from the 4th Army (Austro-Hungarian 4th and Austrian 45th Infantry Division), was to be used as an army reserve as needed.

On August 21, general guidelines for the offensive of the right army wing were issued. The 2nd and Southern Armies were to attack on their inner flank simultaneously with the 1st, with the 7th Army joining from the left flank as the Southern Army advanced. All armies were to be ready to

Page 388

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

To immediately pursue. On August 23, Generaloberst von Conrad, who had been distinguished the day before from the Mackensen Army Group, assigned the 1st Army the task of "driving back the Russian XXXI Corps to Zbąszyn, through an offensive in the area around Kowel, general direction Luck, to strike the right wing of the Russian Southwestern Front, to permanently separate the Russian armies and to expel the enemy from Eastern Galicia." For this, the left wing of the 1st Army was to be strengthened as much as possible, with the Smetau Group and the 7th Cavalry Division, which was advancing from the Boorsch Army Division, being reassigned to it. An advance of strong forces in a northern or northeastern direction was not in the intentions of the army command; the pursuit of the Russian XXXI Corps retreating northwards over Kowel was to be carried out only as far as the security of their own offensive against the right wing of the Russian Southwestern Front required. However, the area around Kowel had to be firmly taken into hand.

The leader of the 1st Army, Field Marshal von Puhallo, reported that he would be ready to attack on the afternoon of August 26 with the II and I Corps as well as the Szurmay Group on the Bug and Lug, with the X and IX Corps on the Zimno–Mafowicze line and with the XIV Corps and the 4th Cavalry Division on both sides of the railway leading from Kowel to Rowno at Holoby. The 2nd Infantry Division was designated for the occupation of Kowel, the pursuit of the Russian XXXI Corps, and the securing of the northern flank was assigned to the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps with the German 5th, Hungarian 11th, and the Austro-Hungarian 7th Cavalry Division arriving on the 27th at Luboml. The Smetau Group was to be moved according to the situation over Kowel or south of it.

The Heydebreck Cavalry Corps occupied Kowel on the 24th and immediately followed the Russian XXXI Corps retreating to Ratno; the next day, the 5th and Hungarian 11th Cavalry Divisions were subordinated to the Bug Army and thus withdrew from the framework of the planned operation. Since the enemy facing the left wing of the 1st Army, estimated to be the 2nd Infantry Division and four cavalry divisions, was in

1) G. 427. — 2) G. 555 Note 3.  
3) Grouping of the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army on August 26: II Corps (Austro-Hungarian 25th S. D.).  
I Corps (Austro-Hungarian 56th A. G. D.), Szurmay Group (Austro-Hungarian 7th Hungarian 40th S. D.).  
X Corps (Austro-Hungarian 24th Hungarian 6th S. D.), IX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 10th Austrian 36th S. D.),  
XIV Corps (Austro-Hungarian 19th Austrian 44th S. D. and 2nd Austrian D.), Army Division Austro-Hungarian 13th G. D.  
4) G. 427.

Page 389

The Beginning of the Offensive.

During the course of August 26, as they retreated southwards, the X and IX Corps advanced beyond the reported deployment line to Chorostow and Kisielin. The XIV Corps was positioned in the evening at Dubitow, with the 4th Cavalry Division ready at Holoby.

On August 27, the right wing of the army launched an attack. On the left wing of the 7th Army, the assault group of the Rhemen Corps (ö.u. 36 and ½ 5th Infantry Division) broke through the Russian positions at the lower course of the Zlota Lipa and advanced west of Nordsiatyn. In the South Army, the left wing of the Hofmann Corps and half of the German 48th Reserve Division took the heights west of Uhnynow; the battle group of the Marschall Corps, formed from the 3rd Guard Infantry Division, the 95th Reserve Infantry Brigade (48th Reserve Division), and parts of the ö.u. 19th and Hungarian 38th Infantry Division, stormed the strong, stubbornly defended Russian positions west and southwest of Urman. The assault wing of the 2nd Army seized the opposite bank heights between Ciemierzynce and Goloszyn. The center of the 1st Army finally reached the line Steniatyn—Chorochoryn, the XIV Corps reached Prespa, and the reinforced 4th Cavalry Division reached the Stryr near and northeast of Sohlul.

In the early morning of August 28, the enemy began a retreat along the entire front north of the Dniestr. The left wing of the 7th, the South, and 2nd Army pressed sharply forward under partially heavy fighting with enemy rearguards and on the 29th reached the western bank heights of the Strypa and the line Zloczow—Sofolowka—Radzichow on newly prepared and heavily occupied positions. In the 1st Army, the X and IX Corps were already positioned on the evening of the 28th, the right wing (II, I Corps, Szurmay Group) on the 29th before a continuous line of resistance stretching from Stojanow over Sadowno to Giernit. On the 28th, the XIV Corps threw back stronger enemy forces at Rozyszcze over the Styr and advanced the next day between the Styr and the railway to Rowno into the area northwest of Riwnecy. The 2nd Infantry Division, brought from Kowlel, left only a reinforced regiment there.

1) Grouping of the ö.u. 2nd Army on August 27: V Corps (ö.u. 14th, 33rd, and 34th I.D., öst. 43rd I.D.), XIX Corps (ö.u. 29th I.D.), IV Corps (ö.u. 27th S.G., ung. 51st S.G.), XVIII Corps (ö.u. 32nd S.G.), Szibulla Corps (ö.u. 31st S.G., öst. 1st Lst. B., ö.u. 1st Lst. D., ung. 1st Lst. D., 1st öst. F. Jäg. B.).  
2) On August 28, the army reserve (Div. 13th I.D.) was inserted into the front of the X Corps.

Page 390

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

had followed in echelon to the left, north of the railway, with the 4th Cavalry Division, which had already crossed the Styr on the 28th, advancing southwards over Troscianiec. Generaloberst von Conrad had already repeatedly pointed out to Field Marshal von Puhallo during the course of August 28 that it was particularly important for the rapid capture of Lucz and extensive encirclement to cross the Styr with a strong left wing downstream from Rozyszcze, where there was full freedom of action. Against the intention of the army commander to advance the XIV Corps on Lucz on the 29th, but to let the X and IX Corps attack the Russian positions on the Styrna frontally only the next day, the Austro-Hungarian Chief of General Staff again raised objections, because this would lead to a very desirable stalemate for the enemy. Also, by wise hindrances around the enemy's northern wing, the Stwa and Styr line on the Dubno-Lucz stretch would be made untenable. Therefore, as strong forces as possible should immediately advance eastwards over the Styr downstream from Lucz. Field Marshal von Puhallo then directed the XIV Corps against the area east of Lucz and directed the 4th Cavalry Division to Rowno. The X Corps was withdrawn from the front on the night of the 30th; it was to cross the Styr on the 31st near and north of Rozyszcze and advance southeastwards on September 1. By this time, the Smefalu group and the 7th Cavalry Division could also be on the designated bank, so that seven infantry and two cavalry divisions were ready for use on the east bank of the Styr. The frontal attack of the remaining corps was postponed until the encirclement became effective. Thus, the XIV Corps advanced on August 30 against the Lucz-Rowno road, with the 4th Cavalry Division advancing eastwards on both sides of the Rowno railway. Apparently under the pressure of these movements, the enemy evacuated his positions in front of the center and the right wing of the 1st Army during the following night and withdrew across the Styr. The II and I Corps, as well as the Garnum group, followed on the 31st to the Styr Dubno-Montonowka line, with the XIV Corps connecting with the troops of the Field Marshal's staff (von Zibulka) on the northern wing of the 2nd Army during the night of the 31st, reaching the Russian positions west of Radziechow and, following the retreating enemy closely, reached the Styr on the same day. On the front extending southwards, only the corps was able to

Page 391

The Austro-Hungarian 1st Army Takes Luc.

The marshal aimed to achieve a larger territorial gain by taking Zborow and advancing north to the Błoczow—Tarnopol railway. However, the center of the Southern Army, held weakly in favor of the assault wing, suffered a significant setback on August 30; a sharp Russian counterattack pushed them back with heavy losses in men and material to the area south of Rozwadow. The Rhemen Corps of the 7th Army also had to fend off heavy enemy attacks on the 31st.

On the night of September 1, a reorganization of forces took place on the left wing of the army. The IX, X, and XIV Corps, the Smetal Group that arrived in Holoby, as well as the 4th and the newly arrived 7th Cavalry Division, formed the new 4th Army under the command of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, to whose orders the 1st Army\*) was also bound during the ongoing operation. Already on the previous afternoon, Colonel General von Conrad had pointed out to all armies again that the offensive not only aimed at clearing Eastern Galicia but also at delivering a decisive blow. While the 7th, Southern, and 2nd Armies were essentially forced into frontal attacks, the 1st and 4th Armies, by uniting strong forces on the northern flank, were in a position to attack the right wing of the Russian Southwestern Front and effectively threaten the enemy forces to the south. Since the enemy could most easily assemble strong forces around Rowno by using their railways, rapid advancement in this direction was advised. The 1st Army was to take the forts of Dubno; the position on the upper Styr was not to be attacked frontally but bypassed via Krzemieniec and to the south.

Accordingly, the 1st and 4th Armies continued their advance on Dubno and Rowno on September 1. The next day, the enemy positioned themselves along the Kozin—Murawica—Olyka line and behind Putilowka; on the 3rd, they launched heavy counterattacks, forcing the right wing of the 1st Army to retreat significantly. During this and the following two days, they managed to regain some of the lost ground, and although the northern corps (I, Szurmay, IX, XIV) struggled in vain to dislodge the enemy from their positions, the X Corps deployed on the northern flank of the 4th Army reached the area southwest of Derazno by September 5.

1) II Corps (Austro-Hungarian 25th, Austrian 46th Infantry Division), I Corps (Austro-Hungarian 9th, Hungarian 40th Infantry Division), Szurmay Group (Austro-Hungarian 7th, Austrian 13th Infantry Division).

Page 392

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

crossed the Putilowka with parts west of Cuman. It was supposed to advance south after repelling the enemy over the Goryn in the angle between Stubla and Uscie, to roll up the enemy and take the forward fortifications of Rowno in the sand strip. However, as the Putilowka lowlands downstream of Cuman had become almost impassable due to continuous rain, Archduke Joseph Ferdinand abandoned the encirclement and, through the group Smetal, reinforced the X Corps southwest of Cuman to break through to Klewan.

Meanwhile, the 4th and 7th Cavalry Divisions, grouped into the Berndt Cavalry Corps, had to turn north against strong Russian cavalry, which had been advancing against the flank and rear of the 4th Army south of the Sarny-Kowel railway since September 2. Against this new enemy, the 1st Cavalry Division provided by the 2nd Army and the Polish Legion (1st and 3rd Brigade), which had just moved in west of Kowel, were also set in motion. Furthermore, Generaloberst von Conrad had agreed with General von Falkenhayn on the evening of September 2 to send the 2nd and 9th Cavalry Divisions, part of the German 9th Army, over Brest Litowsk to Kowel, and ordered the 7th Army to transport the 10th Cavalry Division there as well. On the night of the 6th, General von Falkenhayn finally agreed to the transfer of the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division from the Bug Army to the area around Kamien Koszyrski. The Berndt Cavalry Corps occupied the Nomin crossings at Berestiany and Garajmonka on September 5 after fighting, repelled stronger enemy forces at Kolli over the Styr on the 7th, and advanced in the Romin-Styr angle to Kultkowicze in the following days. The 1st Cavalry Division pushed the enemy north of the Styr back to Zartorysk and Olszuf, and the Polish Legion forced the Russian cavalry, which had advanced to Kowel, to retreat behind the Stochod. Thus, the dangerous threat to the rear seemed to be successfully eliminated.

The northern wing of the 4th Army could only resume the attack on September 8 due to severe fatigue of the troops. The reinforced X Corps broke through the enemy positions southwest of Cuman. At night, the enemy also evacuated the front adjoining to the south. In pursuit, the 4th Army reached the Stubla on the 9th, behind which the enemy had settled again, and the left wing of the 1st Army came to a halt in the line Iwanie-Moszkow. South of Murawica, the enemy had already begun retreating behind the Stwa on the 7th. The II Corps

Page 393

The Offensive of the Austro-Hungarian 1st and 4th Army Comes to a Halt.

followed closely, occupying the western riverbank heights the next day and advancing into Dubno. Under the influence of Generaloberst von Conrad, who hoped that the vigorous continuation of the offensive on Rowno would relieve the armies in distress in Eastern Galicia, Archduke Joseph Ferdinand attempted to bring down the new Russian front again by encircling it from the north. He left only the 24th Infantry Division at the Stubla downstream of Klewan and had the remaining four divisions of the X Corps advance from the north bank of the Putilowka against the Goryn. They took Derzno on the 10th and established a foothold south of the Goryn bend, but then encountered the fiercest resistance. The left wing of the 1st Army (I Corps and Szurmay Group) advancing southward also made slow progress. The Archduke weakened the Stubla front by three more divisions, one of which he assigned to the 1st Army and the other two to the X Corps. However, they were not deployed to the two assault groups, as an order arriving from Teschen on the evening of September 12 required two divisions to be immediately dispatched via Rozin to the 2nd Army.

The offensive of the 2nd Army initially progressed well. Its right wing broke through the strong Russian positions between Olozow and Bialkamien on the night of September 1. Consequently, the enemy withdrew from the entire army front as well as from the left wing of the Southern Army (Marshal Corps). The following night, they evacuated the Strypa position in its entirety and retreated to the Sereth and the line Jalozce–Radzimillow–Rozin. The left wing of the 7.3), the Southern and the 2nd Army followed, engaging in skirmishes with enemy rearguards and advancing towards the new Russian positions in the following days.

In the Southern Army, the attack on the apparently very strongly fortified bridgehead of Strusjow–Tarnopol required such thorough preparation-

1) The 62nd, 45th, 4th, and the 13th I.G. now withdrawn from the Szurmay Group.  
2) The 26th I.D. of the IX and the 2nd and 21st J.D. of the XIV Corps; the 21st J.D. had been stationed as army reserve at Olfta since September 9. Thus, only the 10th J.D. of the IX, the 3rd of the XIV, and the 24th I.D. of the X Corps remained at the Stubla.  
3) The Rhemen Corps and the Henriques Group, now also turning south over the Dniester.

Page 394

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

Preparations meant it could only be set for the morning of September 7. The 2nd Army, however, attacked as early as September 6; it was fully successful. The enemy was thrown from his strong, stubbornly defended positions along the entire front and hurriedly retreated behind the Styr. Pressing sharply, the Austro-Hungarian corps reached the line Gontowa—Rydoml—Rudnia on the 7th; on the left wing of the Southern Army, half of the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division advanced through Jalowce to Majance.

Meanwhile, the situation for the Southern Army had fundamentally changed. On the afternoon of September 6, the center of Hofmann's corps north of Darachow was pressed by unexpectedly advancing superior Russian forces. Nevertheless, General Count von Bothmer still hoped to carry out his planned attack on the bridgehead of Tarnopol the next morning, aside from which a relief of Hofmann's corps was expected. However, when its left wing (the Austro-Hungarian combined Brigade Bolzano) was attacked again and completely broken through in the early morning of September 7, and the adjacent fronts saw themselves seriously threatened on their flanks, the planned operation had to be postponed in favor of the more urgent task of stemming the enemy breakthrough. General Freiherr Marschall had parts of the 3rd Guard Infantry and the 48th Reserve Division advance southeast from Chodaczow Wielki; they drove the enemy back to Nastaszow during the day and were able to recapture six German and Austro-Hungarian batteries lost in the morning. However, the Hofmann corps, severely weakened in its combat strength, could not withstand the continuous strong pressure of the Russians and retreated with heavy losses to the Strypa and Dobropole. Consequently, the left wing of the 7th Army (Austro-Hungarian 36th Infantry Division) also had to retreat to the area south of Laskowce—Koslow.

To relieve the beleaguered neighbor, the commander of the 2nd Army, General von Böhm-Ermolli, had the right wing of the V Corps attack southward on Zbaraz on September 8, further reinforcing it with a division withdrawn from the IV Corps and placing it under the command of the XIX Corps the following day. But already on September 10, the attack of the XIX Corps stalled against strong enemy positions in the line Chronowica—Gniezdzicno. The V Corps also came north of the upper

1) Reorganization of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army on September 9: XIX Corps (½ Hungarian 38th, Austro-Hungarian 14th and 34th, Hungarian 51st Infantry Division), V Corps (Austro-Hungarian 43rd, Austro-Hungarian 33rd Infantry Division), followed by the 8th Reserve Division; on September 8, the Austro-Hungarian 4th Infantry Division withdrawn from the XVIII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 29th and 27th Infantry Division), XVIII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 31st Infantry Division), east 1st, east 2nd, east 3rd.

Page 395

Severe Setbacks for the Southern and Austro-Hungarian 7th Army.

Gorvn did not advance. The left wing of the army, like the 1st Army, had been standing since the 8th at the Strwa, whose eastern bank was held by the enemy. The incomplete result of the relief attack by the 2nd Army was all the more unfortunate as the situation on the southern adjoining front had meanwhile become even more critical. On September 8, the right wing of General Freiherr Marschall had indeed managed to advance beyond Nastasów and the Hofsmann Corps had been able to halt the enemy before their positions. However, the following day, the left wing of the 7th Army was pushed back by strong Russian forces to the Strypa and into the Lwów–Jazlowiec line; on September 10, the Henriques group even had to retreat behind the Dniester and to the Wisch Heights north of Zalesszczyki. General Freiherr von Pflanzer-Baltin, who had already reinforced the Rhemen Corps on the two previous days with one and a half cavalry divisions from the Henriques and Benigni groups, also had the Hungarian 37th Infantry Division, which had been assigned to him by the army command and was unloading in Nizinow, transported by motor vehicles to Buczacz from the morning of the 10th; parts of the division had to be moved to the bridgehead of Zalesszczyki to the Henriques group in the evening. To securely repel the enemy incursion and regain the Sereth line, the Austro-Hungarian VI Corps, originally intended for transport to southern Hungary, was to be transferred from Rawa Ruska to Nizinow and Halicz from September 11 onwards. The 7th Army thus had sufficient forces to prevent a new setback. In contrast, the Southern Army, against which the Russian counteroffensive was primarily directed, lacked any reserves. Its left wing had been engaged in the fiercest defensive battle on September 10. It had still managed to hold the position overall. Whether this would continue to be possible with the continuation of the enemy attack was particularly questionable in view of the heavily battered Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division. General Graf Bothmer found it necessary to return half of the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division to the western Sereth bank within the XIX Corps to have at least a weak reserve behind his northern flank. Since it was not immediately possible to detach them from the 2nd Army's battlefront, General von Böhm-Ermolli initially provided the Marshal with a regiment of the Hungarian 51st Infantry Division. It arrived just in time on September 11.

1) Austro-Hungarian ½ 8th and 6th R. D. — 2) Austro-Hungarian 12th and Hungarian 39th I. D. See C. 550.

Page 396

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

to advance together with parts of the heavily attacked 3rd Guard Infantry and 48th Reserve Division against the enemy, who had broken through in a broad front at Dolzanka in the morning. Although the previous positions of the Austro-Hungarian 19th Infantry Division were retaken in the evening, the High Command of the Southern Army believed that the breakthrough apparently sought by the Russians, especially near Tarnopol¹), could only be thwarted in the long run by bringing in sufficient reinforcements. The Austro-Hungarian Army Command referred to support from the 2nd Army, which could also provide it with two divisions under Field Marshal Lieutenant Cibulka²), as the relief thrust of its right wing had meanwhile come to a halt.

New powerful attacks by the enemy on September 12, mainly directed against the bent-back right wing of the Marshal Corps, raised fears that the proven German divisions of General Freiherr Marshal could also be put in severe distress if they remained in their positions, especially since the enemy was not seriously tied down anywhere on the southern adjoining front. General Count Bothmer therefore decided, with the approval of the Marshal Corps, to withdraw to the heights east of the Wosuszka on the night of September 13 and to deploy a reinforced brigade of the 48th Reserve Division as an army reserve. To support the Hofmann Corps, Generaloberst von Conrad transferred the Hungarian 39th Infantry Division to the Southern Army, in place of which the Hungarian 37th Infantry Division joined the VI Corps.

The severe setback suffered by the 7th and Southern Army in recent days, the stalling of the offensive on the rest of the front of the right wing of the army, and the heavy attacks that the enemy had now also directed against the southern wing of the 2nd Army since the afternoon of September 11, created a completely changed situation for the Austro-Hungarian Army Command. Generaloberst von Conrad could not escape the representations made by General von Falkenhayn on the afternoon of September 12, that a further unfavorable development of the fighting in Eastern Galicia would adversely affect the overall situation and that relief could only be hoped for by abandoning the continuation of the offensive and resolutely transitioning to defense. He therefore ordered Archduke Joseph Ferdinand on the late evening of September 12, only

¹) According to situation reports, which later proved to be false, no more Russian divisions were to have been unloaded at Tarnopol.  
²) The Austro-Hungarian 32nd I.D. and a division combined from the regiments of the Austro-Hungarian IV Corps under Major General Kroupa.

Page 397

The Suspension of the Offensive.

to carry out the partial attack planned on the northern flank of the 4th Army, but otherwise to suspend the offensive and immediately march the 2nd and 26th Infantry Divisions to the 2nd Army). These, the Southern and the 7th Army were to limit themselves to expanding and firmly holding the lines reached until reinforcements arrived.

However, this did not succeed fully. In the 7th Army, the Henriques Group had to be withdrawn to the old bridgehead positions of Jaleszczyki on September 13, while in the 2nd Army, the southern flank, which had been breached in a broad front in the morning, had to retreat to the Zarudzie—Lopuszno line. The combined Kroupa Division from the Southern Army was immediately reassigned to this; the 32nd Infantry Division, which was the only one left to the Czbulla Group, had to close the gap that had arisen between the inner flank of the Southern and 2nd Army due to the retreat of the Marschall Corps.

The next day, after prolonged artillery preparation, which at times intensified to a drumfire, the enemy launched a strong attack against the entire front of the Southern Army. While he was repelled by the Marschall Corps with heavy losses and could only temporarily penetrate the trenches of the Czbulla Group at Worobijowka, he succeeded in breaking through the bridgehead positions of the Hofmann Corps at Burlanow in the afternoon and gaining a foothold on the western bank of the Strypa. This also led to the evacuation of the northern and southern adjoining bridgeheads. As the Southern Army still did not have sufficient reserves to support the Hofmann Corps, which was now only in ruins, and to regain the bridgeheads, and a relief offensive of its left wing was not possible for the time being, General Freiherr von Pflanzer-Baltin, on the orders of the army command, deployed parts of the VI Corps, which had meanwhile arrived at Buczacz, on both sides of the Strypa for a flank attack to the north on September 15.

The attack of the Hungarian 37th Infantry Division advancing east of the river towards Dobropole, although initially gaining ground, came to a halt before adverse enemy positions, but nevertheless provided the Hofmann Corps with noticeable relief, as the enemy shifted his focus to the left wing of the 7th Army. On September 16, the parts that had reached west of the Strypa up to Kotuzow were to

1) p. 571. 2) The Hungarian 39th S. I. D., which was in the process of unloading west of Pobahce, was not yet ready for use.

Page 398

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

The 12th Infantry Division was also to advance on Dobropole to get the attack flowing again. However, they had to be deployed with the 37th Infantry Division, which came under severe pressure from strong Russian counterattacks.

The failure of the relief attack by the 7th Army led General Count von Bothmer to fear another breakthrough by the enemy at Hofmann's Corps. On the morning of September 17, it surprisingly turned out that the enemy had retreated during the night before the entire front of the 7th and Southern Army to the Sereth. This finally allowed the severe crisis, into which both armies had fallen, to be considered overcome. During the day, the Strypa bridgeheads were reoccupied by Hofmann's Corps, and the Wischä Heights north of Zaleszczyki were reoccupied by the Henriques Group. Otherwise, only weak detachments followed the enemy on the orders of the army command. Generaloberst von Conrad did not intend to resume the offensive in Eastern Galicia in view of the overall situation. The current positions were to be expanded instead. The 39th Infantry Division was reassigned to the 7th Army, which had to extend its left wing south of Burkanow. The Southern Army detached the 3rd Guards Infantry Division as an army reserve from Marshal's Corps, which had also included the Austro-Hungarian 32nd Infantry Division¹) since September 14. The Czbullta Group Command returned to the 2nd Army, which in recent days had not only repelled all enemy assaults but, with the help of the 26th Infantry Division²) that had meanwhile arrived, had even regained part of the lost ground east of Lopuszno.

Meanwhile, a fundamental change in the situation had also occurred on the northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian front. The left wing of the 4th Army (the X Corps) had, according to the army command's orders from the evening of September 12, initially continued the attack and on the 13th was able to advance north of the Goryn beyond Positjon; however, it was then pushed into defense and attacked on the 15th by superior Russian forces in the front and left flank. Consequently, the X Corps had to be bent back into the Klewan—Karpilowka line at night.

¹) The Austro-Hungarian 32nd and the reunited Hungarian 38th Infantry Division since September 13 had been able to advance their positions on the 15th through a surprise attack on both sides of the railway to Tarnopol.  
²) See p. 575.

Page 399

On September 16, it was breached north of Klewan. This resulted in the withdrawal of the entire army to the line Jarczow – Netelno and behind the Putilowka. Northward, up to Kosti on the Styr, the cavalry corps Berndt, whose command was transferred to Major General Count Herberstein, took up a new position. In the area between Styr and Stochod, the 1st Cavalry Division retreated to the line Raznicze – Kaizowka.

However, even in the new position, the X Corps and the Herberstein Cavalry Corps were unable to withstand the continuous heavy attacks of the enemy on September 17; repeatedly breached, they had to retreat to a rear line. Since holding this line until reinforcements arrived seemed uncertain due to the exhaustion of the troops, Archduke Joseph Ferdinand ordered the retreat of the 1st and 4th Armies behind Styr and Styr for the coming night. This could be carried out in complete order, as the enemy did not pursue anywhere. On the evening of September 18, the center and left wing of the 1st Army stood ready to defend behind the Styr downwards Dubno, the 4th Army behind the Styr up to north of Rozyszcze — with the XIV Corps in a bridgehead position east of Lucz —, followed by the Herberstein Cavalry Corps (including: ½ 2nd, 4th, 7th Cavalry Division, a regiment of the Polish Legion) up to Sokal; the newly formed corps of the General of Cavalry Baron von Hauer, consisting of the ö.u.: 1st, ½ 2nd, 9th, Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division and the bulk of the Polish Legion (1st and 3rd Brigade), secured the land bridge at Nawoz and on the Stochod up to Lubieszow.

2. The Offensive of the Linsingen Army Group against Rowno.  
Map 6, Sketch 32.

The German Chief of General Staff had followed the unfavorable development of the battles of the ö.u. Northern Army with growing concern. Already on September 14, he had approached Generaloberst von Conrad with the proposal to withdraw the ö.u. front in Galicia behind the Alota Lipa to increase its resistance strength and to reinforce it with the ö.u. XVII Corps, which was ready for transport to southern Hungary at Sokal and Dubno. However, the allied army commands had agreed to hold the current front due to the unfavorable moral effects of a retreat. The XVII Corps was to be moved behind the 2nd Army to Krasne for the time being, even at the risk of arriving too late for the campaign against Serbia.

Page 400

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

Furthermore, General von Falkenhayn, on his own initiative, considered a relief attack by two to three divisions of the Bug Army from the area west of Pinsk in the general direction of Rowno, but then abandoned this idea and instead ordered the Bug Army to transport a division to Southern Hungary.

In the afternoon of September 17, before the withdrawal of the northern wing of the Austro-Hungarian front behind Styr and Styr, Generaloberst von Conrad approached the German Supreme Army Command with the request to direct all forces freed after gaining the area around Pinsk "via Lubiaz—Kosti into the flank of the enemy attacking the 4th Army." Consequently, General von Falkenhayn instructed the leader of the Bug Army, General von Linsingen, to move two divisions in a timely manner to the area around Brodnica so that they could, if necessary, begin the march south together with the 5th Cavalry Division on September 19. With Generaloberst von Conrad, the consolidation of these forces, the cavalry corps Hauer and Herberstein, as well as the 4th Army into Army Group Linsingen was agreed upon, which was to be bound to the instructions of the Austro-Hungarian Army Command. General von Linsingen designated the 1st and 22nd Infantry Divisions under the command of the XXIV Reserve Corps (General of Infantry von Gerok) for the new operation. However, their deployment in the area around Brodnica was delayed by one day because the supply of provisions and ammunition for the near future could not be arranged sooner. From the XXXXI Reserve Corps, whose leadership General of Artillery von Gronau took over, the 82nd Reserve Division occupied the entire security line of the Bug Army, which had meanwhile advanced beyond the Styr and to the Wisłiza, while the 81st Reserve Division was withdrawn as a reserve to the area west of Pinsk. The corps remained under General von Linsingen as the "Bug Army" and was also referred to in the official army report as "Army Group Mackensen" for deception purposes.

General von Linsingen, in agreement with Generaloberst von Conrad, saw it as his task not only to prevent the further retreat of the 4th Army at all costs but also to deliver a decisive blow to the northern wing of the Russian Southwestern Front. Given the precarious condition of Archduke Joseph Ferdinand's troops, he believed a significant reinforcement by German forces was necessary for this. However, given the overall situation, this was out of the question. General

Page 401

The Formation of the Linsingen Army Group.

von Linsingen was therefore only given the task of "preventing the further advance of the northern wing of the Russian forces south of the Pripjet." He was given full freedom of action for the execution. The command of the new army group was taken over on the night of September 20. From the available reports, General von Linsingen gained the impression that the enemy attacks against the northern wing of the Allies, in which only the Russian XII, XXXIX, and the repeatedly defeated XXX Corps, as well as two cavalry corps, seemed to be involved, were by no means a real offensive, but rather one of the usual Russian military maneuvers to disguise defensive intentions. He therefore decided to solve his task offensively, even without further reinforcements, through the Gerok Corps and several divisions to be withdrawn from the front of the 4th Army against the enemy's right flank. For this purpose, the two Austro-Hungarian cavalry corps and the German 5th Cavalry Division were to clear the area between Stochod and Styr of the enemy and block the Styr crossings, the Gerok Corps was to arrive at Liszniowka on September 22, the 4th Army was to prepare three divisions behind their left wing to hold their positions against "an enemy inferior in number and inner value" under all circumstances. Since Archduke Joseph Ferdinand did not have sufficient reserves to form the strike group, Generaloberst von Conrad subordinated to him from September 21 the Austro-Hungarian 11th Infantry Division along with the corps command of the XVII Corps.

On September 20, the Gerok Corps began the advance south. The 5th Cavalry Division had already crossed the Stochod at Lubieszow the day before and driven enemy outposts from Jeleznica and Suczze. Now the Hauer Cavalry Corps also advanced eastward. The 4th and 1st Armies initially followed the enemy hesitantly, but from the afternoon of September 19, they attacked the bridgehead of Lucz with strong forces. In the following two

1) The Austro-Hungarian 4th Army on September 20: IX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 10th and ½ 2nd Infantry Divisions), XVII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 3rd, Austrian 14th and 45th, Austro-Hungarian ½ 2nd and 24th Infantry Divisions), X Corps (Austro-Hungarian 6th, Austrian 3rd Infantry Divisions); Army reserves: Austrian ½ 21st Infantry Division, Austro-Hungarian 10th Reserve Division. Total strength: about 60,000 rifles.  
2) The XVII Corps, when the crisis with the 2nd and Southern Army was considered overcome, was relocated on September 20 to Krasne, together with the Hungarian 41st Infantry Division, behind the Austro-Hungarian 4th Army to close the gap between the Woyrsch and Böhm-Ermolli corps commands. It was thus finally excluded from the planned participation in the campaign against Serbia, just as the VI Corps had been before.

Page 402

During the nights, all assaults by the enemy could be repelled, but early on the morning of September 23, they succeeded in breaking through the northern front, seizing a Styr bridge, and gaining a foothold on the west bank. Consequently, Luz had to be abandoned, and the XIV Corps had to be withdrawn to the Polama Gorta—Stiernit line. Archduke Joseph Ferdinand considered the situation so serious that he ordered the march of the divisions designated for the planned flank attack (Austrian 13th and 21st Infantry Division, and the 11th Infantry Division of the XVII Corps) northward and further requested the assignment of the Hungarian 41st Infantry Division, which had meanwhile advanced to Gorochow, which was promptly granted. He made the 21st Infantry Division available to the XIV Corps, intending to use the other three for a concentric counterattack the next day, which would have made their timely deployment behind the Herberstein Cavalry Corps impossible. General von Linsingen received detailed reports about the events at Luz only on the night of September 24, when he returned to his headquarters in Sablon (60 kilometers southwest of Brest Litowsk) from a trip to Kowel. At the same time, he learned more about a setback at the German XXXXI Reserve Corps; its left wing had to defend against heavy attacks by superior forces east of Logiszin since September 21 and finally had to retreat behind the Jasiolda and Dsjinski Canal on the 23rd with considerable losses. Also, southwest of Pinsk, near Nemez, the German defenses had been pushed back northward. Despite these unfavorable reports, General von Linsingen saw no cause for serious concern. He did not believe in a superior Russian attack on the Pinsk peninsula and trusted that it should be possible for the weak, over 60 kilometers apart forces of the XXXXI Reserve Corps in the impassable, water-rich terrain to prevent further enemy advances. But even if this did not succeed, he did not consider the overall situation to be immediately endangered. He also did not share Archduke Joseph Ferdinand's concerns about the situation at Luz. Incidentally, the command of the 4th Army had meanwhile become a calm reconnaissance itself, as the enemy had not advanced further from the western Styr bank. General von Linsingen therefore insisted that the 11th and 41st Infantry Divisions continue their march northward; only the 13th Infantry Division should halt and remain behind the left wing of the XIV Corps, but only to be deployed there in an emergency.

Page 403

The Envelopment Attack of Group Gerok.

In the gap between the 4th and the Bug Army, the Hauer Cavalry Corps had meanwhile advanced up to and beyond the Kolki—Maniewicze road and up to the Holszüa—Jezierec line. Behind it, the Gerok Corps had reached the railway south of Maniewicze with great difficulty on partly swampy, partly deep sandy paths. Only the 5th Cavalry Division encountered strong resistance; it had been in heavy combat on the western Wiesielucha bank since September 20 and had not been able to defeat the enemy despite support from parts of the 22nd Infantry Division.

In the following days, it became clear that General von Linsingen had assessed the situation quite accurately. The Russians did not continue their attacks at Luck or Pinsk. The Hauer Cavalry Corps pushed the enemy further east, with its left flank reaching Bielskowola on September 24, and its main force moved north the next day to support the 5th Cavalry Division, which had been pushed back to Seleznica. The Gerok Corps, under the command of General von Conta, reached the Russian bridgehead Racznieze under combat on the 25th. In the evening of that day, General von Linsingen issued the fundamental order for the envelopment attack. The 4th Army was to hold its positions and immediately pursue any retreating enemy movements, with its left flank extending to Rowno. The Gerok Group, composed of the XVII Corps, the 13th Infantry Division from the Conta Corps, was to cross the Styr at Kolki with the German divisions on the 26th and attack the enemy's northern flank with all forces from the Soful—Kolki line the next day. The Herberstein and Hauer Cavalry Corps were to advance between Kolki and Malczyce over the Styr eastwards towards the Rowno—Sarny railway, while the Heydebreck Cavalry Corps (Hungarian 11th, German 5th Cavalry Division) was tasked with clearing the Pripjet—Styr corner.

As so often, however, the enemy once again evaded the intended blow under strong flank protection. On the morning of September 26, it began retreating eastward on the left flank of the 4th and Bug Army. Since it had destroyed the Styr crossings everywhere, the pursuit was delayed. General Linsingen's hope that the strike wing would reach the Lyszcz—Garajmowka line that day was not fulfilled; the Conta Corps encountered such strong resistance at Kolki that by evening only one brigade could establish a foothold on the southern bank of the Styr. The next day, however, the enemy also retreated here. The allies pressed sharply forward, finding themselves

Page 404

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

However, on the 28th, before new enemy positions in the line Mlynow–Dyka, behind the Putilowka and in the swamp area on both sides of Berestiany. The Herberstein Cavalry Corps advanced over Rolfi towards the Kormin, the Hauer Cavalry Corps captured the line Nowosiolki–Kolodzieje, and the two divisions of General von Heydebreck were attacking Kuchecka Wola.

With the retreat of the Russians behind the Putilowka and to the Kormin, the task assigned to the army group was essentially fulfilled. However, General von Linsingen did not yet consider his task complete. The objective of the operation was now the capture of Kowno. To achieve this, he initially wanted to push the enemy back over the Stubla and Goryn. Immediate action against this section seemed inappropriate in view of newly discovered Russian troop concentrations in front of the northern wing of Group Gerok, which suggested a flank attack. General von Falkenhayn also pointed out that the Austro-Hungarian troops, in their current condition, probably did not possess the necessary striking power for such a far-reaching offensive, and that the military-political situation urgently demanded no operations be initiated where new setbacks were more likely than the opposite. General von Linsingen therefore ordered that the 4th Army should not initially engage in systematic defense over Berestiany–Czernysz and should move strong forces behind its left wing, while General von Gerok had to prepare the 11th Infantry Division of the XVII Corps and the 4th Cavalry Division of the now also subordinate Herberstein Corps as a reserve at Rolfi. Only after this regrouping and clarification of the situation with the enemy did he want to continue the attack on the northern wing.

However, the left wing of the 1st and 4th Army made hardly any progress on September 29; the southern wing of Group Gerok reached the Putilowka while repelling Russian counterattacks and captured Korytkow, the Conta Corps stormed enemy positions south of Czernysz, and the Herberstein Cavalry Corps repelled strong attacks. The Hauer Cavalry Corps completely pushed the enemy south of the Kowel–Sarny railway over the Styr, on whose west bank now only downward from Sarny had been moved.

1) According to the available reports, the general command of the Russian XXX Corps and the 77th R.D. were moved northwards to the upper Melnica on September 27, and the 77th I.D. was moved from the area around Pinsk to the area west of Sarny.

Page 405

The Offensive of Army Group Linsingen Comes to a Halt.

Rafalowka Russian units were positioned; General von Heydebreck could not advance against Ruchcza-Wola yet. Generaloberst von Conrad no longer expected any significant operational and tactical results from a continuation of the 4th Army's attack alone, especially since participation of the southern closing front could not be considered due to a lack of forces, and the cessation of the German offensive north of the Pripjet allowed the enemy free hand for troop movements towards Rowno. General von Linsingen also decided to refrain from advancing over Putilowka, Kormin, and Styr and to expand the reached lines as a permanent position; the cavalry corps Heydebreck was limited to clearing the left bank of Wiszniewlucha. However, the army command and army group were united in the desire to resume the offensive against Rowno around the railway junction Sarny, whose possession they considered important for the permanent control of the area gained in the southeast, after replenishing the troops and forming a strong strike group on the northern flank of General von Gerok. Generaloberst von Conrad hoped to involve the East Galician front in this offensive. The German General Staff Chief also considered it very desirable for the general situation in the East to keep the Russians under pressure, which was probably only possible south of the Pripjet given the circumstances. However, he pointed out that an offensive starting only in the second half of October would likely encounter equally strong forces that had been brought up in the meantime, and doubted whether the advanced season would allow larger operations in the Rowno—Sarny area. He therefore suggested refraining from further attacks and requested, with reference to the strong German deployment against Serbia, to free up the German forces provided for the operation in Volhynia or equivalent Austro-Hungarian forces for the front north of the Pripjet as well as the German Alpine Corps in Tyrol for the Western Front. The question of whether Army Group Linsingen should attack again or not was to be decided by Generaloberst von Conrad in mid-October. At that time, he also hoped to make up for the setback on the German Eastern Front. However, he immediately initiated the replacement of the Alpine Corps. At the front of Army Group Linsingen, there had still been various battles on September 30 and October 1. The 4th Army had occupied Zornitza, the Conta Corps had been able to take all enemy positions at Czernysz, and the cavalry corps Heydebreck had repelled Russian attacks. The enemy advanced in front of both corps.

Page 406

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

retreated behind the Kormin. However, on the afternoon of October 2, he advanced with strong cavalry and parts of the 77th Infantry Division over the Styr against the left wing of the Hauer Cavalry Corps and pushed it back over the Nowoilluk-Maniewicze road and to Karasin over the next two days. General von Linsingen formed a new assault group from the Austro-Hungarian 11th and the German 1st Infantry Division north of Kolki under General von Conta and launched it on October 5 for a counterattack in a northeasterly direction. According to their progress, the Hauer Cavalry Corps was to concentrate strong forces on its left wing and advance on Holuzki. However, the Conta group initially made slow progress in the impassable swamp and forest terrain; only on October 8 was the enemy driven back across the Styr between Czartorysk and Kolodziesje. General Freiherr von Hauer had meanwhile had to swing north, as parts of the Russian Cavalry Corps Belaschkew had broken through at Jeziere on the 6th and advanced to Rudka Czerwiszcze the following day. On October 9, they were even able to advance south to Karasin. However, when half of the Austro-Hungarian 11th Infantry Division took Rudka the next day and the Hungarian 11th Cavalry Division approached Jeziere from the north to close range, the enemy evaded the impending encirclement by hastily retreating to the northeast. On October 10, the 5th Cavalry Division finally succeeded in driving the enemy out of Kuchecka Wola and from its Wiesflachs camp. This success was probably only due to the assumption that parts of the XXXI Reserve Corps, which had been relieved in the front on both sides of Pinsk by the Guard Cavalry Division transferred by the Woyrsch Army Detachment at the beginning of October, had meanwhile pushed the enemy standing at Newel back over Sinczyce.

Meanwhile, fighting had resumed south of the Styr. Here, the enemy had sharply attacked the Kritef group, the 4th Army, and the northern wing of the 1st Army from October 7 to 9, but ultimately could only establish themselves in Karpilowka.

At the same time, he had advanced with strong forces against the front of the allies in Olyka-Luzk. The 2nd Army, which had already had to fend off heavy Russian attacks in the last third of September and had finally had to give up Nowe Alexiniec, now advanced to Spanow and Kritef.

Page 407

lost on the left bank of the Ikwa. The Southern Army was able to maintain its bridgehead positions at Burkanow, against which the enemy assault was primarily directed, and repelled the enemy who had penetrated the far left flank north of Nordwiwka by deploying parts of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division back to the Sereth. However, on October 11, the Russians succeeded in wresting the bridgehead of Wisniowczyk from the northern flank of the 7th Army and gaining a foothold on the right bank of the Strypa. The Austro-Hungarian VI Corps struggled in vain to restore the situation. Only a determined counterattack by three battalions of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division — the last reserve of General Count von Bothmer — drove the enemy back across the river on October 13. The recapture of the lost bridgehead positions was abandoned. By mid-month, calm returned to the Eastern Galician front.

3. The Russian Southwestern Front from the end of August to mid-October.

Sketches 31 and 32.

At the beginning of the Austro-Hungarian offensive on August 27, the Russian Southwestern Front (8th, 11th, and 9th Armies), after having transferred ten infantry divisions to the Northwestern Front in July and August, had a total of 29 infantry and 11 cavalry divisions1). On the northern flank of the 8th Army, against which the main thrust was directed, only the Rerberg Cavalry Corps with 3½ cavalry divisions and parts of the XII Corps were stationed. They had to relinquish the major road Wladimir Wolynsk—Luzk to the far superior Austro-Hungarian forces on August 27, creating an extremely threatening situation for the 8th Army. As the southern adjoining front was also breached in several places, the commander-in-chief of the Southwestern Front, General Ivanov, decided to withdraw his three original divisions on the 28th to the line Siernitza (northwest of Luzk)—Radziechow—Uscilug on the 28th to the Strypa. To the particularly endangered right wing of the army, he hastily assigned two divisions drawn from the 11th and 9th Armies, consolidated into the XXXIX Corps. But

1) 8th Army: Rad. Corps Rerberg, XII., VIII., XVII., VII. Corps (9 Inf., 3½ Cav. Div.), 11th Army: VI., XVIII., XVII. Corps (7 Inf., ½ Rad. Div.), 9th Army: XXII., XXIII. Corps, 2nd and 3rd Cav. Corps (13 Inf., 7 Cav. Div.). Transferred to the Northwestern Front were: 58, 78. S. D., XXI. Corps, 69. S. D., 2 Finnish Rifle Div., 65. S. D., 4 Finnish Rifle Div., XXVIII. Corps.

Page 408

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

Even with their help, the 8th Army could not withstand the encirclement; on the night of August 31, it had to retreat behind the Styr. When the pivotal point Luck was lost that day, the Styr section could no longer be held. General Brussilov therefore withdrew his army behind the Putilowka and into the line Olyka-Murawica-Radzivilow, united his 3½ cavalry divisions to protect the right flank in the area of Derazno, and had the important railway junction Sarny occupied by a reinforced brigade of the XXXIX Corps. Through brief counterattacks, the Austrians and Hungarians could be halted in front of the new front, and in the army center north of Kozin, the VIII Corps even managed to deliver a significant blow to them on September 3. The Russian 11th Army, which was adjacent to the south, had to retreat further after being decisively broken through at Zloczow on the night of September 1, as did its left neighboring army, the 9th. Under the protection of strong rearguards, they took up a new prepared line of resistance on both banks of the Sereth. General Ivanov then weakened the right wing of the 9th Army by one corps — the XXX —, which he quickly sent to Rowno. However, before it could be used here to encircle the Austro-Hungarian northern wing, the 8th and the right wing of the 11th Army were again defeated and pushed back behind the Stublia and Ikwa and into the line Rydoml-Chyrowica. The advance of strong cavalry from Kormin, Styr, and Stochod against the flank and rear of the Austrians and Hungarians, undertaken in the first days of September, brought no relief to the heavily pressured Brussilov army and eventually ended with the retreat behind the named rivers. On the other hand, a relief attack begun on September 6 from the bridgeheads of Tarnopol and Strusow developed into an unexpectedly successful offensive by the 11th Army and the right wing of the 9th, through which the allies were pushed back with heavy losses by September 13 to Nowe Alekziniec and to the Wosuzka and Strypa, which resulted in the weakening of the Austro-Hungarian northern wing in favor of the attacked front. The next day, the inner wings of the 11th and 9th Army even managed to gain a foothold on the western bank of the Strypa. Now the 8th Army could launch the long-intended counterattack. General Brussilov had his entire cavalry advance southwest from Kormin on September 15.

1) The cavalry corps formed from two cavalry divisions of the 8th Army Welaschen and 1½ cavalry divisions of the 3rd Army sent to assist the 4th Cavalry Corps.

Page 409

Countermeasures of the Russians.

break and set the XXX Corps from the north, the XXXIX and parts of the XII Corps from the east on Derazno. This attack was also fully successful; in several days of bitter fighting, the Austro-Hungarian 4th and 1st Armies were forced to retreat behind the Styr and the lower Stwa.

While the 11th and 9th Armies, after completing their task, returned to their previous positions on the Sereth on the night of September 17, the 8th Army continued its attack, storming the bridgehead of Luck with the XXX and XXXIX Corps and the 4th Rifle Division on September 23, and established itself on the left bank of the Styr. At the same time, a new encirclement operation became more noticeable, with German forces advancing from the north on Kosti. While the 4th Cavalry Corps of the 3rd Army (three cavalry divisions) advanced to the Stochod, it gradually withdrew to the Wiesielucha and the Styr, General Brussilow timely withdrew his northern flank from the impending danger by retreating to the Kormin and behind the Putilowka, where he withstood all assaults.

At the end of September, the Russian military leadership no longer considered the situation on the southwestern front to be threatened. The Chief of General Staff, General Alexeyev, pointed out that the right wing of the 8th Army could be strengthened by detachments from the 9th Army and by bringing in the 125th Infantry Division from the Starokonstantinov–Proskurov area, so that it could offensively counter any enemy encirclement attempt. Consequently, General Ivanov moved a division of the 9th Army to the area northwest of Rovno and ordered his armies to further weaken the enemy through short advances before he could reorganize and replenish his depleted units. As an introduction to this, the 4th Cavalry Corps, now reinforced by an infantry division of the 3rd Army, together with the two cavalry divisions of General Welsajew, which had been moved north and were accompanied by a regiment of the 4th Rifle Division, crossed the Styr on October 4 on both sides of the Sarny–Rovno railway and drove the Austro-Hungarian cavalry back to and beyond the Nowosjolki–Rudka–Czerniszce road. However, it had to give up the gained ground after only a few days. The attacks launched by all three armies of the Russian Southwestern Front on October 7 also led only to

1) In this area (Map 7), besides the 125th Infantry Division, the "Black Sea" Brigade of the 100th Guards Division was also stationed as an army reserve.  
2) The 77th Infantry Division of the XXXI Corps stationed in front of the Pinsk peninsula (left flank corps of the 3rd Army).

Page 410

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

smaller local successes; the right wing of the 9th Army succeeded again, albeit only temporarily, in gaining a foothold south of Burkanow on the western bank of the Strypa. By mid-October, the Russians, as well as the Allies, had taken up permanent positions.

4. Reflections.

Generaloberst von Conrad had pursued the goal with the autumn offensive of the Austro-Hungarian army in Galicia and Volhynia to decisively defeat the Russian southwestern front, to capture the fortress of Rowno, and to clear the remaining Galician territory still in enemy hands. This goal was not only not achieved, but the offensive ended after promising beginnings with a severe setback and extraordinarily large losses in men, and in some places, in material. The attacker had been numerically far superior from the beginning on the decisive northern wing — the Russian 8th Army with 9 infantry and 3½ cavalry divisions faced at the end of August the Austro-Hungarian 1st and 2nd Army with 24½ infantry and 3½ cavalry divisions. Even in overall strength, the Allies possessed a considerable superiority with 38 Austro-Hungarian and German infantry divisions and 8½ cavalry divisions, which was further increased during the operation by deploying five more divisions (Hungarian 37th, 39th, and 41st, Austro-Hungarian 11th and 12th Infantry Division).

If the offensive nevertheless ended in failure, the reasons for this may lie partly in the force deployment, which did not sufficiently aim at encircling the enemy's northern wing. On the other hand, the impassable, water-rich forest and swamp terrain of Volhynia — especially in unfavorable weather conditions — from September 3rd onwards, persistent

1) According to "Austria-Hungary's Last War 1914—1918", Vol. III, p. 163, the Austro-Hungarian Northern Army (7th, Austro-Hungarian 2nd, 1st, and 4th Army), whose combat strength was 480,000 men on September 1st, had a loss of about 230,000 men by the end of the month (including 40,000 sick), including 109,000 missing, who, according to Russian reports, were almost entirely captured. Of these, 17,800 dead and wounded, 3,900 sick, and 13,300 missing are attributed to the Southern Army. The 3rd Austro-Hungarian Army lost approximately 11,600 prisoners and 17 machine guns from the beginning of the offensive to the end of September.  
2) The strength of the Russian 11th and 9th Army in the first half of September was 34 rifles and 11 machine guns.  
3) Not considered here are the Polish Legion (1st and 3rd Brigade) as well as the German 1st and 22nd Infantry Division.

Page 411

The Reasons for the Failure of the Austro-Hungarian Offensive.

Rain — the movements of large troop bodies and the supply faced particular difficulties. More significantly, the divisions deployed for the decisive blow on the northern flank had participated in the advance of the allies from West Galicia to Brest Litowsk since early May and had covered many hundreds of kilometers on mostly poor roads while constantly fighting. Instead of being exhausted and depleted, they had stepped up to the new offensive, where they were again expected to perform at their highest. The Austro-Hungarian units in East Galicia, after the beginnings of the Carpathian winter and the months of strenuous and costly battles that had led them to the Zlota Lipa, no longer had sufficient offensive power to finally drive the tenacious enemy, skilled in conducting a retreat, whom the terrain with its numerous tributaries of the Dniester running parallel to the south offered favorable defensive possibilities, from Galician soil.

After the retreat of the Austro-Hungarian left wing behind the Etwa and the Styr in mid-September, General von Linsingen, with relatively small, also very strained, but advancing forces from the most favorable direction, was able to quickly restore the balance, but he too was denied a decisive blow against the northern flank of the Russian Southwestern Front, as it again managed to evade the impending encirclement in time and then extend its front northwards.

The failure of the offensive had an adverse effect on the overall situation of the allies, as the Austro-Hungarian northern army emerged from it severely weakened, and the German Supreme Army Command was forced to bring in additional German forces from the eastern and western fronts for the campaign against Serbia instead of the Austro-Hungarian VI and XVII Corps, which had to be deployed in the ongoing operations in East Galicia and Volhynia and were tied down there.

5. The Capture of the Permanent Position.

Map 7, Sketch 32.

When the battles in East Galicia and Volhynia concluded with the expulsion of the enemy from the western Styrpa and Styr banks, Colonel General von Conrad directed the Austro-Hungarian 7th and the Southern Army as well as the Böhm-Ermolli army groups on the evening of October 13.

Page 412

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

(Austro-Hungarian 2nd and 1st Army) and Linsingen (Austro-Hungarian 4th Army, Groups Gerok and Gronau) pointed out that the overall situation, "especially the still unclear development of events on the Balkan Peninsula and at the Romanian border," required the secure holding of the permanent position to be expanded by all means. After the arrival of new reinforcements, strong army reserves were to be set aside to repel possible Russian attacks or for use on other fronts.

Before the Linsingen Army Group could begin expanding the reached line, it was hit by a new attack. On October 16, strong forces — a total of 5½ infantry and 4½ cavalry divisions of the inner wings of the Russian 8th and 3rd Armies3) — advanced against the positions of Group Gerok4) between Karpilowka and Jezierzce, aiming to shorten the front by taking the Styr bend from Czartorysk and Kolki5). The next day, the enemy, due to the failure of the unreliable Ruthenian 22nd Brigade of the Austro-Hungarian 11th Infantry Division, managed to seize the well-fortified bridgehead of Kullikowicze and gain the left bank of the Styr at Rafalowka. The 1st Infantry Division, thus encircled on both sides, had to be withdrawn from the Styr bend on October 18 with significant losses in men and material and had to bend its right wing back to Olyka on the 19th. From here to the Styr at Kolki, a 16-kilometer-wide gap opened, into which the particularly proven rifle divisions of the Russian XXXX Corps flowed. North of the Conta Corps, the Cavalry Corps Sauer retreated before a superior enemy into the Holszia-Jezierce line.

General von Linsingen had taken care on October 18 to stem the enemy incursion by bringing up available reserves. On the 20th, parts of the German 22nd Infantry Division and the Austrian 21st Infantry Division, rushed from the left wing of the 4th Army, advanced from Kolki, as did the Austro-Hungarian 10th Cavalry Division from the

1) The designation "Army Group Mackensen" for the Gronau Group (XXXXI. R. R., G. R. D.) was dropped on October 12 — already in the army report from the 7th; the group has since belonged to the Linsingen Army Group.  
2) See pages 576, 583.  
3) From the 8th Army, the XXX and the newly formed XXXX Corps, as well as the Cavalry Corps Weishäupl; from the 3rd Army, the reinforced 4th Rad. Corps.  
4) Austro-Hungarian XVII Corps (Hungarian 41st, Austrian 13th Infantry Division, German 22nd Infantry Division), Austro-Hungarian Cavalry Corps Saurer (Austrian 1st and 3rd Polish Brigade, Austro-Hungarian 9th and 11th Cavalry Divisions).  
5) Brusilov, My Memories, p. 155.

Page 413

New Russian Attacks Collapse.

In the area east of Nawoz, the Polish Legion (1st and 3rd Brigade) from the west and the 1st Infantry Division from the north launched a concentrated counterattack, which pushed back the tip of the Russian wedge over ten kilometers, but then stalled. Even after the arrival of the Austrian 45th Infantry Division, brought in by the 4th Army northeast of Rolli, and the half Austrian 26th Infantry Division and 2nd Polish Brigade supplied by the 2nd and 7th Army in the center and on the northern flank of the 1st Infantry Division, the allies only slowly gained ground in bitter and costly fighting, which was repeatedly contested by fierce Russian counterattacks. Only after a three-day pause in fighting, used to form a strike group at the 1st Infantry Division, could a significant blow be dealt to the enemy on November 13, forcing them to evacuate the western bank of the Styr south of the Rowel—Sarny railway the following night. The left wing of the Conta Corps and the Hauer Cavalry Corps did not advance to the Styr again but entrenched themselves along the Kolodziejce—Jezierec line. Meanwhile, fighting also resumed with the Böhm-Ermolli Army Group and the Southern Army. On October 21, the right wing corps (VII) of the Russian 11th Army unexpectedly attacked the right wing of the Austro-Hungarian 2nd Army and pushed them out of their forward positions near and north of Nowe Aleksiniec. The situation was quickly restored by deploying reserves. More dangerous were renewed breakthrough attempts by the enemy at the Strypa. There, the Russian XXII Corps succeeded on October 31 in capturing the bridgehead of Siemikowce and occupying the village on the right bank. Only after five days of extremely bloody fighting, involving troops from the Russian XVIII and VI Corps, could the enemy be pushed back to their original positions by the Hungarian 38th Infantry Division and parts of the 3rd Guard, 48th Reserve, and Austro-Hungarian 55th Infantry Division. The losses on both sides were unusually high; in the Southern Army, they amounted to 2000 dead, 4500 wounded, and 3200 missing, while the Russians left almost 6300 prisoners in the hands of the allies.

In mid-November, a longer pause in fighting finally occurred on the Eastern Galician and Volhynian front. Only then could the Austro-Hungarian Northern Army and the Linsingen Army Group begin to organize the preceding formations and distinguish themselves as an army reserve. The Austro-Hungarian 7th Army received after transferring 1½ infantry divisions each to the southwestern front and the army-

Page 414

The Right Wing of the Army from Mid-July to the End of the Year.

The Linsingen group had at the beginning of December over 7½ infantry and 4 cavalry divisions for their approximately 150-kilometer-wide section, the Southern Army had over 5½ infantry divisions with a front width of about 60 kilometers. The Böhm-Ermolli Army Group held a front of about 140 kilometers with 10¼ infantry divisions and 1 cavalry brigade, behind which were 1½ infantry divisions and 1 cavalry brigade as army group reserve, and 1¾ infantry divisions as army reserve. It had transferred one division to the Italian theater of war, and a second to the Linsingen Army Group. In its 250-kilometer-wide section, the front line was occupied by 14 infantry and 6 cavalry divisions, which had moved their valuable horse material to the rear to increase their combat strength as foot troops; behind them, as a reserve of the 4th Army, was half a division, and as army group reserve at Kolki and Maniewicze, there were two infantry divisions; finally, around Luck, an army reserve of one infantry and three cavalry divisions was assembled. In total, there were thus 41¼ infantry and 11 cavalry divisions along the approximately 600-kilometer-wide front from the Romanian border to north of Pinsk; the Austro-Hungarian army command had 2¾ infantry and 3 cavalry divisions in reserve on this theater of war. On the Russian side, too, a regrouping of forces was planned for a new offensive towards the end of the year after the conclusion of the fighting.

1) 7th Army: XI Corps (Austro-Hungarian combined brigade Papp, Hungarian 42nd Infantry Division), Benigni Group (Austro-Hungarian ½ 5th Cavalry Division, 3rd and 36th Rifle Divisions), Schütz Group (Austro-Hungarian 30th Cavalry Division, Brunk 6th Rifle Division, XIII Corps (Austro-Hungarian 15th and 36th Infantry Divisions), VI Corps (Austro-Hungarian 12th, Hungarian 39th Infantry Division); Army reserve: Hungarian 202nd Infantry Brigade and German 5th Cavalry Division — Southern Army: Hofmann Corps (Austro-Hungarian 130th, 131st and 132nd Infantry Brigades), Marichal Corps (48th Rifle Division, Austro-Hungarian 19th Cavalry Division, ⅔ 3rd Infantry Division), Gerok Group (Austro-Hungarian 3rd Guard Cavalry Division, 9th Guard Cavalry Division, 2nd Guard Cavalry Division). — Böhm-Ermolli Army Group: 2nd Army: IV Corps (Austro-Hungarian 14th and 33rd Infantry Divisions), V Corps (Austro-Hungarian 64th Infantry Brigade and 34th Infantry Division), Hofal Group (Austro-Hungarian 27th and 29th Jäger Cavalry Divisions), XVIII Corps (Austrian 1st Landsturm Brigade, Austro-Hungarian 31st Infantry Division, Hungarian 1st Landsturm Hussar Brigade); 1st Army: I Corps (Austro-Hungarian 25th, Austrian 4th and 51st Cavalry Divisions), Kestranek Group (Austrian 10th Cavalry Division); Army group reserve: Austro-Hungarian 110th and 51st Cavalry Divisions, 1st Yugoslav Rad Cavalry Division; Army reserve: Austro-Hungarian 34th and 42nd, Austrian 43rd Infantry Division, ¼ 10th and 51st Cavalry Divisions — Linsingen Army Group: IX Corps (Austro-Hungarian 10th and 24th Infantry Divisions), X Corps (Austro-Hungarian 3rd and ½ 24th, Hungarian 37th Cavalry Division), Kritek Group (XVII Command, Hungarian 41st Infantry Division), II Corps (Austrian 13th, 15th and 19th Infantry Divisions); Army reserve: Austro-Hungarian ½ 24th Cavalry Division, Austrian 1st and 10th Cavalry Divisions, reinforced 1st Jäger Division (with 2nd and 10th Polish Brigades), Cavalry Corps Hauke (Hungarian 11th, Austro-Hungarian 1st and 9th Cavalry Divisions, 1st Polish Brigade); Grona Group (Gentb. XXXXI Rifle Division, Austro-Hungarian 1st and 2nd Cavalry Divisions, 1st Polish Brigade); Austro-Hungarian Army group reserve: 22nd Guard Cavalry Division, 11th Cavalry Division — Army reserve: Austrian 21st Infantry Division, Cavalry Corps Lehmann (formerly Herberstein, Austro-Hungarian 2nd, 4th and 7th Rifle Divisions).

Page 415

Transition to Trench Warfare.

Operations were conducted on the southern flank. The boundary between the Western and Southwestern fronts, previously formed by the Sarny-Kovel railway, was moved about 40 kilometers northward at the beginning of December. The troops of the 3rd Army stationed in this area — the 4th Cavalry Corps and the XXIV Corps, deployed here in early November — were transferred to the 8th Army. This army now consisted of 15½ infantry and 5 cavalry divisions. South of Krzemieniec, it was joined by the 11th Army with 6½ infantry divisions and 1 cavalry division. From Strusow to the Romanian border, the 9th Army stood with 12 infantry and 7 cavalry divisions. Including the two infantry and three cavalry divisions of the left wing of the Russian Western Front (3rd Army) facing the Gronau group, the Linsingen Army Group and the Austro-Hungarian Northern Army thus faced a total of 36 infantry and 16 cavalry divisions, approximately equal forces.

1) 8th Army: 4th Cav. Corps, XXIV Corps, 5th Cav. Corps (Weisjachen), XXXX, XXX, XXXIX, VIII, and XVII Corps; 11th Army: VII, VI, and XVIII Corps; 9th Army: XXII, XXXIII, XXXI, XI, XII, and XXXII Corps, 2nd and 3rd Cav. Corps.  
† World War. Volume VIII 38

Page 416

K. The Russian Supreme Command from September to December 1915

On September 5, the Tsar arrived at the Grand Headquarters in Mogilev and, with General Alexeyev as Chief of General Staff, took command of all land and naval forces at the front. The announcement stated: "With unwavering faith in ultimate victory, we will fulfill our sacred duty to defend the homeland to the utmost." In view of the disintegration that the previous supreme commander, Grand Duke Nicholas, enjoyed in the widest circles, the people, army, and allies did not welcome this change with undivided joy and increased confidence. All attempts to dissuade the Tsar from his plan had failed. On the other hand, General Alexeyev, corresponding to his military past, enjoyed particularly high esteem.

The army group of the Northern Front under General Russki, which also included the Baltic Fleet, held the Dvina line at the beginning of September with the 6th, 12th, and 5th Armies with strong bridgeheads on the western bank; the 10th Army had already been transferred to the Western Front at the end of August "under the compulsion" of the German advance between Dvinsk and Vilna. The Western Front under General Ewergt, the previous commander of the 4th Army, stood with the 10th, 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 3rd Armies in a line that ran from west of Vilna east past Grodno to the south. Its left wing, the 3rd Army, had particularly felt the pressure of the German Army Detachment Woyrsch and the Mackensen Army Group in the last days of August, which had pushed them back to Pruzana and Pinsk. After Grodno was evacuated on September 2 before the attack of the German 8th Army, stubborn battles developed to the east. The main concern, however, was directed at the northern flank threatened by encirclement near Vilna; the reserves, which had just been reported, were soon to be consolidated into a new 2nd Army to close the gap at Swenzjany. The Southwestern Front under General Ivanov (8th, 11th, and 9th Armies) was before the

Page 417

Retreat Battles.

retreating enemy to a line running south along the Sereth, east of the Styr, thus still occupying Austrian territory with its southern wing. The Russian Supreme Command had long considered the battles in this theater of war to be of only local significance. The armies of the Southwestern Front primarily served as a source for strengthening the northern fronts, to which they had already transferred 13½ divisions from June to the end of August and were to transfer four more; thus, since mid-July, they had been weakened by 40 percent of their strength overall.

The new Supreme Command could not change the overall situation; initially, it could only try to slow down the pace of the retreat. In its first directive, issued on September 8, it stated that the strength of enemy attacks along the entire front had diminished; the enemy was following with partly strong advance guards mainly along the roads; this had to be taken into account in the defense. Rapid evasion had to be avoided to secure the return of supplies and refugees.

When the German attack, which began on September 9 northwest of Vilna, grew into an extremely threatening encirclement of the northern wing of the Western Front, the Supreme Command had to order the retreat of this front to the line Michaliszki—Nowogrodek—Baranowicze—Dsjatki Canal on September 17. It also hoped for a restoration from the new 2nd Army, which was now gathering west of Molodetschno, but not a decisive change in the situation. Thus, on September 22, the further retreat to the line Narocz Lake—Smorgon and south was ordered, so that the front here finally ran just east of Baranowicze and Pinsk.

The Southwestern Front had meanwhile been deliberately left to itself, despite warning reports from General Ivanov, who was particularly concerned about his right wing, which covered the direction to Kiev, in view of the Austro-Hungarian offensive against Rovno. However, when the Western powers launched a major relief attack in France at the end of September, the Russians also attacked anew, hoping to win Romania for themselves and help Serbia, whose Tsar's government had advised intransigence against Austria-Hungary in the decisive days of July 1914.

Since no German troops seemed to be facing the attack site anymore, "the confidence in one's own ability and the

1) For more details, see p. 525 ff. — 2) For more details, see p. 585 ff.

Page 418

The Russian Supreme Command from September to December 1915.

Belief in the success of troops and leaders to completely different. That their attack brought a considerable booty of more than 70,000 prisoners and 37 guns and in October also achieved a success at Baranowicze, despite the defeat in the north and later setback at Luck, boosted the confidence of the Supreme Command. It gradually became clear that the German command had begun to transfer numerous units that had previously fought against Russia to other fronts. By October, seven divisions had been counted going west, nine to the Balkans. It was also observed since mid-October that less effective ammunition was being fired on both sides. With the decline in combat activity, the expansion of strong positions and preparation for winter began on the entire Russian front, as well as on the Austro-Hungarian and German fronts. The decisive role continued to be a concern for Serbia. To help this country if possible, from mid-November, the 7th Army, located in the wide area around Odessa, was transformed into a fully-fledged and particularly powerful military body through withdrawals from the front.

Moreover, the Russian army urgently needed rest and found it. How severely it had suffered is shown by the total losses, which according to official Russian compilations had grown to more than 2.2 million by the end of the year from May 1915, including more than 1 million missing. The field army (excluding the approximately six-division-strong Caucasus Army) had been reinforced to 126 divisions by consolidating independent militia formations. In December, it counted 1,360,000 infantrymen and 4,650 guns (including 650 heavy ones), which

1) Kjesnamow, p. 127.  
2) p. 559 ff.  
3) Diary entries of an officer from the Russian Great Headquarters from Dec. 15, 1915: "It has been two months now since it has been proven everywhere on our front that the German artillery shells do not explode" from Dec. 17: "The majority of the German heavy artillery shells do not explode" (Lemke, pp. 277 and 296).  
4) p. 436 f. — Further details on this, as well as other military and political measures of the Russian Supreme Command, will be included in Volume IX.  
5) Russia in World War in Figures p. 30.  
6) Figures according to a report made to the French ambassador in Petrograd on Dec. 11, 1915 (Paleologue I, p. 460). The number of heavy guns is said to have been 650. A number for the Caucasus Army of 10 cm, indirect fire from 15 cm upwards; the number of heavy guns for the month of November is said to have been given as 532 barrels, thus even lower.

Page 419

Losses. Strength of the Army.

an average strength of the divisions of almost 11,000 infantrymen and 37 guns. The rifle equipment had already improved to the extent that only about twelve percent of the field army's infantry were unarmed. The continuously growing performance of the Russian arms industry gave hope for further improvement1). Nevertheless, for the production of weapons and ammunition, they continued to rely on foreign assistance and sought it wherever it could be found, not only from the Western powers and America but also in Italy and Japan. However, when the French Minister Doumer in December demanded in exchange for rifles a monthly replacement of 40,000 Russian men for the French army, this degrading proposal was rejected2).

The goal of all efforts was to restore the combat strength of the army to be able to attack again as soon as possible.

1) The production of ammunition for the artillery had increased from 14,000 rounds daily in May to 59,000 in December; it was supposed to reach 122,000 rounds by March 1916. The insurmountable had increased from 45,000 to 67,000 rounds per month since May (communications to the French ambassador; Paléologue I, C. 324 and 460).  
2) Rudaschew letters from December 14 and 23, 1915.

Page 420

V. The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

1. The Situation until Early August.

On May 21, the Chiefs of Staff of the Central Powers agreed to continue focusing the conduct of the war on the Galician theater of war and to remain defensive on the other fronts. General von Falkenhayn adhered unwaveringly to this decision in the following months despite Italy's entry into the war and the temporarily crisis-like tense situation at the Dardanelles and especially on the Western Front. With the growing successes on the eastern theater of war, the operational goal here was increasingly expanded. During the Galician operation, the initial limited task was to relieve the Austro-Hungarian Carpathian Front from Russian pressure, but after reaching the Wisłok, the pursuit continued to the San to "deny the enemy a compensating victory"; thereafter, operations against the enemy east of the San were to be conducted "until a decision sufficient for our purposes," i.e., until the final defeat of the Russian offensive power in Galicia. Finally, in unified cooperation between the Austro-Hungarian and German Eastern Front, the defeat of the main enemy forces in Poland and thus the "campaign decision" against Russia was sought. Under these circumstances, it was clear that the East gradually demanded all available forces from the other theaters of war. With the increasing troop requirements of the Eastern Front, both Chiefs of Staff did not shy away from the risk of stripping the German Western Army and the Serbian Front of forces to the limit of what was possible. From mid-April to the first half of August, no fewer than 14½ infantry and reserve divisions were moved from the West and the Serbian Front, a total of 17½ divisions, to the eastern theater of war; specifically from the Western Front: from April 14, eight divisions, on May 3, one division, on June 2, 2½, on July 19, two divisions, and on August 8, one division. Of these

Page 421

The Military and Political Situation of the Central Powers Spring 1915.

Only two were sent back to the western theater of war. Corresponding to the gradually expanding operational goals on the Russian front, the deployment of these forces had not been uniform but had taken place gradually. A result of decisive importance for the campaign had not been achieved.

All demands exceeding a minimum from the other theaters of war had to be temporarily postponed due to the growing need for forces in the East. The start of the campaign against Serbia, which was urgently demanded and repeatedly considered due to the difficult situation of the Ottoman Empire, had to be postponed again and again. Thus, the route to the Orient to support Turkey, which was engaged in heavy defensive battles on Gallipoli, remained blocked.

However, with even greater emphasis, the diplomatic struggle was continued after Italy's entry into the war to prepare a final solution to the extremely difficult and significant Balkan problem for the overall conduct of the war; for there was a danger that after Italy, the neutral Balkan states would also turn to the enemy camp. The accession of the last European great power to the enemy alliance, the difficult situation at the Dardanelles, and the tension between the United States of America and Germany caused by the sinking of the "Lusitania" meant a considerable burden on the Central Powers from the standpoint of the Balkan states, despite all the successes of the allies on the Galician front. The sharp contrasts that arose in the recently initiated negotiations between Bulgaria and Turkey due to excessive Bulgarian demands could also be seen as a worrying sign of an unfavorable development of affairs. Likewise, the increased resistance to the continuation of neutrality, which was asserted by the Romanian government, could be interpreted. Again, suspicion arose that Romania was bound by contractual agreements to follow Italy's actions.

Above all, it was the uncertainty of the Balkan situation that brought the leading statesmen and chiefs of staff of the Central Powers together for a meeting at the German Great Headquarters in Plesz on May 25. The focus was on exchanging views about Romania's stance. According to the general's opinion, it was necessary

Page 422

von Falkenhayn's efforts were aimed at winning Romania by assuring military and economic guarantees. It was unanimously agreed that it was necessary to bridge the differences between Bulgaria and Turkey. The hope for an agreement between these two states seemed present, as the High Porte, according to recently received reports, did not reject a territorial concession to Bulgaria up to the Maritza line and only demanded the conclusion of an alliance with Bulgaria in return. If an agreement could be reached on these issues, the first condition for the creation of a "Balkan League" was fulfilled, the establishment of which General von Falkenhayn suggested anew during the course of discussions; as a further prerequisite for this, he emphatically advocated an understanding between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.

The uncertainty of the political situation was further heightened by alarm reports from the Dardanelles. On June 9, the German ambassador, Baron von Wangenheim, reported from Constantinople that the recent land attacks by Anglo-French forces on Gallipoli had extraordinarily shaken the Turkish resistance. The enemy artillery had gained considerable superiority, and Turkish ammunition production could no longer keep pace with consumption. "Under all these circumstances, the fall of the Dardanelles must be expected unless a swift agreement with Romania can be reached to ensure the passage of ammunition... In my opinion, the Dardanelles cannot hold out for more than a month."

Immediately thereafter — mid-June — the successful operation of the Allies on the Galician front began to exert its psychological impact on the Balkans to such an extent that the transfer of the majority of the German troops stationed in southern Hungary to the Galician front seemed possible.

This improvement in the situation was mainly due to the fact that the Entente did not succeed at that time in bringing Romania and Bulgaria to their side. However, even though a shift to the enemy camp was avoided, the Romanian government remained firm in its refusal to allow the passage of urgently needed supplies for Turkey.

Page 423

The Unresolved Situation in the Balkans.

To allow ammunition shipments. This had an even more unfavorable effect as the Dardanelles crisis apparently reached its peak at the end of June. On June 30, the German ambassador described the situation based on reports from the army leader, Marshal Liman von Sanders, in the darkest terms: Although the conduct of the Turkish troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula is beyond all praise, "the enemy is bringing more and more heavy artillery into position and bombarding us day and night with heavy shells. Although the number of our guns is completely sufficient, the shortage of ammunition has now become so considerable that the moment can be foreseen when we will no longer be able to withstand the enemy's artillery attack... It must be expected that the resistance of the Turkish army will be broken in the very near future. Once the land armies are defeated, the fortress, according to Admiral Usedom, can only hold out for three more days. Marshal Liman von Sanders therefore asks me to inform higher authorities that if a sufficient quantity of ammunition is not immediately procured, the Dardanelles are lost..."

Despite this report, it was only understandable that the demand was now emphatically raised again to save Turkey by attacking Serbia. In a report dated July 2, the German military attaché in Sofia, Major Freiherr von der Goltz, stated: There can hardly be any doubt that Bulgaria, although ostensibly treating Germany in a friendly manner, is fundamentally unwilling to support us in the matter of supplying Turkey with war material. A change could only occur with a break between Bulgaria and Russia; to bring this about, there is only one means: the attack on Serbia.

To the same conclusion as this report, came a telegram from Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg on July 4. He asked General von Falkenhayn for a response to an inquiry from the German ambassador in Constantinople about what measures should be taken if the enemy's breakthrough through the Dardanelles should succeed. The question was whether Turkey should continue fighting in Thrace after the fall of the Dardanelles, withdraw to Asia Minor, or make peace. From a political stand-

Page 424

The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

pointed out, the Chancellor explained that the decisive factor was that Germany would likely be able to persuade Turkey to continue holding out in Thrace even after the capture of the Dardanelles by the Western powers, keep Romania calm, and bring Bulgaria over to our side. However, as soon as the military situation allowed, immediate action against Serbia should be taken.

While the Reich leadership emphasized the urgent necessity of quickly defeating Serbia to finally provide the necessary support to the threatened ally, the responsible leader of the German overall operations maintained that the primary goal now should be the fullest exploitation of the victories over Russia. "If Turkey can hold the strait for another five to six weeks," General von Falkenhayn replied to the Chancellor on July 6, "then Russia's defeat will likely be so evident that we can confidently expect a more favorable stance from the two Balkan states for our purposes."

With these statements, General von Falkenhayn approached the view previously held by General von Conrad that, following the expected decisive successes over Russia, a Balkan campaign would no longer be necessary to secure the connection with Turkey. At this point, the German Supreme Army Command hoped that the continuation of the offensive in southern Poland, along with a simultaneous attack by the Gallwitz army group against the Narew, would lead to Russia's military defeat and thus also the decision on the Balkans. Indicative of this view is the already mentioned diary entry by Generaloberst von Plessen from July 19, which suggested that the campaign in the East seemed to be decided, and an assessment of the situation sent by General von Falkenhayn to the Chancellor on July 22, intended for communication to leading parliamentarians. In it, the Chief of the General Staff emphasized that the Serbian campaign would likely become unnecessary if the Russian power, as he hoped, was finally overthrown, "because under such an assumption, Romania and Bulgaria would no longer cause us any difficulties."

The political leadership, however, only expected no far-reaching impact from military victories over Russia  
1) from Bethmann Hollweg, Vol. II, p. 13. — 2) G. 264 ff. — 3) G. 315. 4) Political Archive of the Foreign Office.

Page 425

The Difficult Situation of Turkey at the Dardanelles.

addressed the letter from General von Falkenhayn dated July 6 in detail. The Russian Empire, replied the Secretary of State of the Foreign Office, von Jagow, could only be made ready for peace if it became convinced that the efforts of the Western powers would not succeed in overcoming the Dardanelles. To hold the straits, however, the defeat of Serbia was necessary. General von Falkenhayn apparently expected a certain conclusion of operations against Russia in five to six weeks. By that time, it should be possible to provide the necessary forces against Serbia with a strength of 250,000 men. For the defense of the Dardanelles, this might already be too late; but even in this unfavorable case, the defeat of Serbia remained necessary to win Bulgaria, to extend a hand to the Turks pressed in Thrace, and, if possible, to liberate Constantinople again. However, before an agreement on the various views of military and political leadership was reached, the German ambassador in Constantinople had come to a confident assessment of the ammunition and thus the entire combat situation at the Dardanelles. By moving ammunition from the fortified positions of Tschataldschá1) to the front at the Dardanelles, the situation there had temporarily improved, he reported on July 5; it was by no means excluded that the main danger could be eliminated by the end of the month through the successfully conducted own ammunition production2). Further reassurance was provided by a letter from Field Marshal Freiherr von der Goltz dated July 8. The ammunition shortage continued, and "everything must be done," he emphasized, "that is compatible with the general interests of the alliance to provide us with supplies... But if I am to answer the question of whether it would be necessary to accept particularly pressing conditions from the Balkan states or to forgo other decisive undertakings just to save Turkey, i.e., to make its further resistance possible, then I must decidedly deny this question... If it only depends on us here, we will manage, even without foreign help..."

1) Fortification line west of Constantinople, where the Bulgarian attack came to a halt in the Balkan War of 1912/13. 2) The management of ammunition production in Constantinople had been entrusted to a German naval officer, Captain z. S. Pieper. Further details on the ammunition issue at the Dardanelles will be contained in Volume IX.

Page 426

These communications strengthened the Supreme Army Command in their view that the situation at the Dardanelles could most easily be alleviated by a vigorous continuation of the offensive against Russia. The defeat of Russia not only represented the best solution to the Balkan problem, but also effectively dispelled all dangers on the Italian front!). If the Tsarist Empire withdrew in time from the ranks of the opponents of the Central Powers, the outcome of the multi-front war could be viewed with confidence.

2. Peace Initiatives of the German Supreme Army Command.

Recognizing the significance of a peace agreement with Russia for the outcome of the war, General von Falkenhayn left no stone unturned in the spring and summer of 1915 to reach an understanding with Russia by exploiting the favorable military situation on the eastern theater of war. When Przemysl fell on June 3 and the San Line was thus taken, he therefore requested the Chancellor, through the mediation of the representative of the Foreign Office at the Great Headquarters, the envoy von Treutler, to "take advantage of the currently favorable situation of the campaign against Russia to make a serious attempt to reach a cessation of hostilities between us and Russia ..." He proposed to present the following to the Tsar through a neutral power: "Przemysl is in our hands, the troops thus freed are moving on Lemberg, which must be taken in the foreseeable future. A new army will soon be deployed against the Eastern Front"). This military situation will not be changed by the possible, but in view of our successes unlikely, entry of Romania and Bulgaria) into the war against us, any more than the already accomplished entry of Italy has ... We therefore propose that between Russia

1) p. 29.  
2) In this regard, General von Falkenhayn presumably had in mind the new deployment of the four and a half divisions in Galicia, to which he had finally decided on June 2. See p. 202.  
3) During the difficult Bulgarian-Turkish negotiations, the Tsar repeatedly expressed his willingness to concede "that it was by no means certain whether the Bulgarians would not move against Turkey today or tomorrow." Report of the German ambassador, Baron von Wangenheim, from June 16 to the Foreign Office.

Page 427

The Peace Initiatives of the German O. H. L. in Winter 1914 and Spring 1915. 605

and hostilities against us cease. We do not demand a breach of faith if Russia feels bound to the Allies. Peace needs to be concluded only when our other opponents also want peace, or when the agreement of September 4 becomes void by the withdrawal of one of the Allies.

With this letter, the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army had once again initiated peace efforts that had been ongoing for months and had only temporarily stalled. As early as September 1914, neutral European states had offered to mediate peace, but were rejected in Paris and London. In January 1915, American Colonel House was prompted by President Wilson to make contact with the English and German governments to explore peace possibilities. He hoped to achieve that both parties would initially be willing to engage in mutual discussions. However, an essential prerequisite for this was that Germany agreed to the evacuation of Belgium and the plan for general disarmament of the powers. Colonel House arrived in Berlin at the end of March and held discussions with the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. However, without addressing the Belgian question, only issues directly affecting the United States were touched upon, such as American munitions deliveries to the Entente and the blockade imposed by England over Germany. The Chancellor had fundamentally agreed to Colonel House's question of whether the German government would be willing to join a new convention for securing the seas. However, following the sinking of the "Lusitania" by a German submarine on May 7, these discussions came to a temporary end.

In addition to Colonel House's peace efforts, a neutral European state had attempted in the early months of 1915 to establish contact between the warring powers to facilitate peace. Influential English circles were not entirely opposed to this idea. In Russia, too, the efforts seemed to be temporarily-

1) According to the London Agreement of September 4, 1914, the governments of England, France, and Russia mutually committed not to conclude separate peace treaties during the war and to accept peace proposals only with the consent of the Allies. See Volume VI, p. 405.  
2) p. 17.

Page 428

The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

to be favorably shaped. The Tsar indeed rejected the idea of a separate peace, but was otherwise not averse to entering into an exchange of ideas with Germany regarding peace through neutral mediation. However, the prospects for this discussion began to appear increasingly unfavorable during the month of April, apparently due to the expected entry of Italy into the war by the Entente. News from England cast doubt on the possibility of achieving peace; at the same time, Russia also showed a dismissive attitude.

On the other hand, given the impending breakdown of relations between Vienna and Rome, as well as the various conflicts existing in the coastal area of the Adriatic between Italy and Serbia, the time seemed to have come in May 1915 to reach an understanding between the Danube Monarchy and Serbia. Therefore, in mid-May, it was suggested by the Germans to the Austro-Hungarian government to conclude a separate peace with Serbia on the basis that the Negotin district would be ceded to Austria-Hungary, thereby securing an immediate connection with Bulgaria. In return, Serbia was to be granted Northern Albania and the merger with Montenegro. The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Baron Burian, did not oppose this endeavor but considered it desirable that the initiative should come from the Serbian government. However, this was not achievable, as indicated by a letter from the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to General von Conrad dated May 30: “Burian would like to build golden bridges for them – the Serbs – but they do not come.” Nevertheless, the idea of an approach by Austria-Hungary to Serbia was further pursued by Germany in the following weeks.

1) “I advocate ... for peace with Serbia,” as stated in the records of the Minister of War, General von Wild, from June 16 – “Serbia: Turkey to the Adriatic; Bulgaria: Macedonia; Greece: Epirus; Romania: Bessarabia and Bukovina.” Even if these plans apparently did not go beyond considerations, they are indicative of how much the creation of a Balkan federation allied with the Central Powers was hoped for from the military side at that time to bring about peace. See p. 600.  
2) Regarding the peace efforts of the Central Powers to reach an understanding with Serbia, the Serbian Chief of General Staff writes (Volume VIII, p. 171): On June 21, Bulgaria declared itself ready for negotiations with Serbia, provided that the demanded part of Serbian-Macedo-

Page 429

The Peace Initiatives of the German Supreme Army Command in Summer 1915. 607

The situation was such that on June 3, the peace proposal from General von Falkenhayn reached Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg. On the same day, he responded, pointing out the failure of his previous peace efforts, stating that based on the experiences gained, there was the greatest likelihood that the Tsar would decisively reject the proposed cessation of hostilities. Should this unexpectedly not be the case, the Tsar would condition the acceptance of the proposal on either us ceasing hostilities against all our opponents or the forces currently deployed against Russia not being used on any other battlefield. Furthermore, the Tsar would provide the German government with any response to a clearly defined proposal after consulting with his allies. "Any proposal from us," emphasized the Chancellor, "presupposes that we are ready to make peace with all our enemies based on the current war situation. That our opponents are inclined to do so seems doubtful to me after Italy's attack. In any case, peace would at best be achievable only on the basis of the status quo ante. Whether this path must be taken is subject solely to military assessment..." The Chancellor concluded by expressing the thought that Germany was hardly in a position to offer the Russians significantly more than the Tsar hoped to achieve by remaining with the Entente. Moreover, Germany's peace proposals to Russia could be interpreted by Romania and Bulgaria as a sign of weakness; there was a danger that these states might switch to the camp of our opponents, fearing they would be too late in the distribution of the spoils.

doniens immediately and not only after the war. The demands of Sofia greatly unsettled Serbia, where the Bulgarian mentality was all too well known. Germany and Austria-Hungary used this circumstance for a peace offer. The Serbian government rejected this proposal, noting that the Austro-Hungarian maneuver was too transparent. It was intended to pressure Bulgaria to join the Central Powers; it was said, I must agree with Serbia here to make Bulgaria lose Macedonia." According to findings in the Political Archive of the Foreign Office, no actual peace offer was made to Serbia, but inquiries were made by a neutral power to the Serbian government about when and under what conditions they would be inclined to conclude peace with the Central Powers.

Page 430

The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

Despite this decision by the responsible leader of German overall policy, General von Falkenhayn continued to seize every opportunity to resolve the peace issue. A new occasion for this was provided by a letter from Generaloberst von Conrad on July 21 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vienna. The current impressive military maneuver, it stated, which would likely soon lead to the capture of Lublin, Cholm, Iwangorod, and perhaps even Warsaw, should be used to break the enemy's bloc through an agreement with Russia and to neutralize Romania and Bulgaria. Golden bridges should be built for Russia for a separate peace.

General von Falkenhayn forwarded the copy of this letter sent to him on July 22 to Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg, adding that his view coincided with that of Generaloberst von Conrad. The right time to approach Russia should not be missed.

In his reply on July 30, the Chancellor pointed out that he had been continuously examining the question for months as to whether Russia was inclined towards a separate peace with Germany, but that the Russian government had so far always responded negatively. Although a shift in sentiment in favor of Germany was noticeable, there was no inclination towards a separate peace; rather, they insisted on the old standpoint that Russia, bound by the word of the Tsar, could only make peace together with its allies. The severe defeats in Poland and Russia were not considered decisive for the final outcome of the war in Petersburg and were only regarded as temporary setbacks. With the deployment of British forces still in training, the great offensive of the Western powers would begin in autumn on the French front. Despite the undoubtedly noticeable shift in sentiment, it seemed unjustified to assume that Russia would decide on a separate peace even with favorable progress of our military operations in Poland. The possibility for this would, if at all, only arise when Russia had to finally abandon its hope for the fall of the Dardanelles and the acquisition of Bulgaria.

1) If the Chancellor linked Russia's willingness for peace in this way with the success of the Gallipoli campaign, it should be remembered that Russia had no interest in conquering the straits without Russian involvement. Under certain circumstances, they were even ready, ...

Page 431

The Supreme Army Command Plans the Cleansing of Upper Alsace from the Enemy.

“Herein I see, as Your Excellency knows, still the crucial point. Regarding the fact that we would settle for reasonable terms in the event of an early separate peace, they are informed in Petersburg. I also have it pointed out there that the establishment of a prolonged German-Austrian administration in Congress Poland would so strengthen the Polish freedom and independence movement that Poland would then have to be considered lost to Russia in one form or another.” The Chancellor concluded with the remark that the Entente would view a German-Austrian peace offer as a sign of weakness despite our victories in Poland and would treat it accordingly, as long as hopes of subduing Turkey, annexing the Balkan states, and a breakthrough in the West existed. “Only when these prospects are eliminated will we be strong enough to extend our hand for peace if our opponents do not come.”

General von Falkenhayn's pursuit of initiating an early peace also makes his plan for the cleansing of Upper Alsace, first expressed in mid-June, understandable, for which merely military reasons could hardly be asserted. General von Conrad had made similar considerations when he, in his letter of May 14 to General von Falkenhayn, designated as the minimum goal of the Eastern operation: “Reclaiming the territory of the monarchy and the territory of Russian Poland on the left bank of the Vistula, to be ceded to us as compensation for territorial cessions to Italy.” General von Conrad had come close to this goal by mid-June, when the capture of the capital of Galicia was not imminent. It is therefore probably no coincidence that at this time the German Chief of Staff also aimed to recapture the last part of German soil in Upper Alsace still occupied by the enemy, so that no pawn would remain in enemy hands during possible peace negotiations.

How much General von Falkenhayn at that time counted on the possibility of peace is also evident from the fact that he intended to conclude a special peace with Turkey to be able to deploy all forces against the Central Powers.

See “Constantinople and the Straits.” According to Russian secret reports of the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Moscow 1925/26.  
1) p. 614. – 2) p. 139/140.  
World War. Vol. VIII.  
39

Page 432

The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

In early June, both the Chancellor and the Foreign Office received a memorandum from the Supreme Army Command about "the economic and military situation of France," which concluded: "France's sacrifices in this war are so enormous that the government will neither be able to bear the responsibility before the people nor before history, and will soon be faced with the question of whether abandoning resistance might be more beneficial for the future of the nation than continuing the hopeless war for France despite all foreign aid." If the thoughts of this memorandum were correct, it might indeed be questionable whether the enemy alliance was willing to endure another winter of war.

In this context, the explanation is likely found that on June 20, General von Falkenhayn verbally gave the secret order to the General of Engineers at Army High Command 10, Major General von Mertens, to explore "military positions" on the western theater of war along the general line Nieuport, Lille, Douai, Hirson, Stenay, Metz — roughly parallel to the Belgian border. This was the shortest possible line behind the Western Front, where the possession of Belgium, access to the sea, and the possibility of launching a new major offensive against the Western powers remained secured. According to a statement by Major General von Mertens, it was apparently a "demarcation line" that could be occupied in the event of an armistice with subsequent peace negotiations.

3. The Shift of the Focus of Warfare.

Not without reason did Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg, in his response to General von Falkenhayn on July 30, point out the great importance of winning Bulgaria for the un-

1) See Kronprinz Rupprecht of Bavaria "My War Diary" p. 368. On June 24, 1915, it is noted: "At noon, I spoke with General of the Engineer Corps Mertens, who was traveling the Western Front on behalf of the O. H. L. to explore how a demarcation line should be drawn in the event of an armistice." — In contrast, the former head of the operations department at the German Great Headquarters, Major a. D. Dommes, reports that General von Falkenhayn did not express to the operations department the intention that the mentioned position was considered as a potential demarcation line. (Letter to the Reich Archive from August 15, 1931.)

Page 433

The Joining of Bulgaria to the Alliance of the Central Powers.

... the prospect of peace with Russia. General von Falkenhayn had also fully recognized this. Both had therefore already been striving in recent weeks to leave no stone unturned to advance the stalled negotiations on Bulgaria's accession to the Central Powers. In the second half of July, their efforts—supported by the widely visible successes of the allied arms—finally seemed to be crowned with success. King Ferdinand of Bulgaria and Prime Minister Radoslawoff declared themselves ready to send an authorized officer to the German Great Headquarters to negotiate Bulgaria's participation in a campaign against Serbia.

General von Falkenhayn received this news on July 24, at a time when he was still hoping for a major success of operational significance against Russia. Consequently, he believed, albeit temporarily, that the Serbian campaign was no longer necessary and that with the defeat of Russia, the Balkan problem would also find its successful solution. The Bulgarian offer to participate in the military action against Serbia therefore seemed to him, although he had previously eagerly sought it, not particularly urgent at the moment. However, a few days later—at the beginning of August—the reports from the battlefronts about the systematic retreat of the Russians on the entire front in Poland raised doubts in him as to whether the desired success of great operational impact would still be achievable. He welcomed the prospect of soon reaching a conclusion with Bulgaria. Generaloberst von Conrad was initially reserved about this plan, which was mainly due to German efforts. Not entirely without reason, he feared it would damage the prestige of the Danube Monarchy in the Balkans. He would have preferred to deploy all forces until the complete defeat of Russia in the East, thereby drawing Serbia over to Austria-Hungary and simultaneously gaining a free hand for an offensive against Italy. On the other hand, he did not entirely dismiss the realization that the war situation on the Russian front at this point offered little hope for the realization of his far-reaching plans.

1) A detailed description of the negotiations leading to the conclusion of the military convention with Bulgaria will be given in Volume IX.  
2) p. 602.  
3) According to a telegram from the envoy von Treutler on July 27 to the Foreign Office. Political Archive of the Foreign Office.  
4) p. 602 ff.

Page 434

The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

There were tense plans and every increase in strength for the Central Powers was to be welcomed from the standpoint of overall war strategy. Therefore, he agreed with the start of negotiations on Bulgaria's participation in the campaign against Serbia.

These began on August 3 at the Grand Headquarters in Plesk with the envoy sent by the Bulgarian government, Lieutenant Colonel Gantschew. However, the course of the negotiations experienced a significant delay due to the tense situation at the Dardanelles, particularly due to the sinking of the American steamer "Arabic" by a German submarine on August 19. The resulting new serious diplomatic disputes between Germany and the United States also had their psychological impact on Bulgaria's stance. Only after the situation eased did the negotiations lead to the conclusion of a military convention between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria on September 5. It seems by no means excluded that the concern about a separate peace between Serbia and the Central Powers decisively influenced the Bulgarian government's final decisions. On September 15, Turkey joined the military convention.

Bulgaria's accession to the alliance of the Central Powers was a success of great political and military significance, which would likely not remain without repercussions on the other Balkan states. If it was now possible to overthrow Serbia — and there could hardly be any doubt about that — then for Austria-Hungary the threat of flank encirclement that had existed since the beginning of the war was eliminated, and the worst crisis at the Dardanelles was overcome. The establishment of secure connections with the Orient opened up new possibilities for Turkey's warfare in Asia, united the Ottoman Empire with the Central Powers and Bulgaria into a solid combat alliance, and above all, finally blocked the shortest communication line between Russia and the allied Western powers.

1) For more details, see Volume IX.  
2) p. 17.  
3) According to a report from the former German military attaché in Constantinople, Lieutenant General a. D. von Lossow, dated January 25, 1932, to the Reichsarchiv. See also p. 606, note 2.

Page 435

Last Possibility of Bringing About a Decision in the East.

Besides the successful resolution of the Bulgarian question, the further development of the military situation on the eastern theater of war itself was of decisive importance for bringing about a separate peace with Russia. However, the hopes held by the Supreme Army Command in July for the defeat of the main Russian forces in Poland were not fully realized. By early August, as mentioned, it had to be seriously considered that the Russians would succeed in escaping their fate intended for them in the area between the Bug, Vistula, and Narew through a retreat that was as skillful as it was vigorous. The last possibility of achieving the hoped-for campaign-deciding success through a new operation presented itself, according to the Commander-in-Chief East, around the end of July/August. General von Falkenhayn, upon his return from the Metz conference in Plesb (his proposal), found the shift of focus from the Narew to the Niemen front. If the operation proposed by the Commander-in-Chief East in Posen on June 2 was to be successfully carried out at all, Field Marshal von Hindenburg believed there was no time to lose. However, General von Falkenhayn's approval of this plan would not only have required the cessation of the pursuit operation in Poland, which was no longer operationally decisive but still considered very promising, but also the deployment of all available reinforcements, including significant parts of the army reserve from the Western Front, on the left wing of the German Eastern Army — possibly even postponing the Serbian campaign to an as yet undetermined time. The Chief of the General Staff no longer considered a campaign decision achievable by this means based on previous experiences. On the other hand, he feared that the significant forces to be deployed for such an offensive would be unavailable for use on other fronts for the foreseeable future. However, he considered the partial execution of the Serbian campaign more necessary given the overall war situation than even the most noteworthy further side successes on the Eastern Front. In line with this view, he believed he had to limit the objectives in the East. Here, a "decisive victory corresponding to the purposes of the Supreme Army Command" sufficed for him. He hoped to achieve such a victory most quickly through the vigorous continuation of the ongoing operations, in which

Page 436

The Multi-Front War in Summer 1915.

the enemy should continue to be weakened in its combat strength as much as possible.

The decision to carry out the Serbian campaign was facilitated not only by the successful course of negotiations with Bulgaria but also by the seemingly secure situation on the Italian and Western fronts.

The second Isonzo Offensive by the Italians failed completely at the beginning of August. Again, the superiority of the Austro-Hungarian army over the new enemy was clearly demonstrated. It was hoped that the ally would continue to manage the threat here on its own.

Above all, the Metz meeting at the end of July had already strengthened General von Falkenhayn's conviction that the German Western Front, "like an iron wall," stood unshakably firm and was able to withstand all storms despite the enemy's great numerical superiority. The victorious defense against the previous heavy enemy attacks had created a confident mood along the entire German front. Thus, the essential backing for operations on other fronts seemed to be secured here as well.

As an army reserve, 8½ infantry divisions were available behind the Western Front. At the end of July, General von Falkenhayn had considered using this reserve mostly for an operation in Upper Alsace to clear German soil of the enemy, an idea that had occupied him, albeit temporarily, since June. During the Metz meeting, the Chief of Staff of the 5th Army, Lieutenant General Schmidt von Knobelsdorf, was instructed to carry out the necessary reconnaissance in Upper Alsace; for the execution of the operation, General von Falkenhayn considered the deployment of six divisions sufficient.

The result of the reconnaissance was discussed on August 28 in a meeting between Generals von Falkenhayn and Schmidt von Knobelsdorf in Berlin and presented by the former to the Supreme War Lord on August 30. On this day, the diary of Colonel General von Plessen notes: "Our supreme army command is considering an advance in Upper Alsace to drive the enemy out of the last piece of Germany." Simultaneously-

Page 437

Shift of the Focus of Warfare to the Southeastern Theater of War.

At the same time, however, towards the end of August, calculations by the intelligence department of the Supreme Army Command showed that the Western powers had approximately 50 infantry divisions stationed behind the front. This increased the possibility that the opponents, as long as the main forces of the Germans were tied up in the East, would launch a significant offensive. Under these circumstances, the German General Staff deemed it necessary to withdraw stronger forces from the Eastern Front, not only for the Serbian campaign but also to secure the Western Front, which now required increased attention. Already on August 27, the day before his meeting with General Schmidt von Knobelsdorf, General von Falkenhayn had issued the first orders from Berlin for the establishment of a permanent position on the Eastern Front for the army groups of Prince Leopold and Mackensen. Although these measures were initially not implemented, they initiated the conclusion of the Eastern operations. Since the beginning of September, when Bulgaria was won over for participation in the Serbian campaign, all other attack plans were definitively put on the back burner. The focus of warfare began to shift from the eastern to the southeastern theater of war.

Page 438

VI. Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of War against Russia.

The question of how Germany should defend itself in the event of a multi-front war against its opponents in the West and East had been decided by the long-serving Chief of the Prussian General Staff, Count Schlieffen, to immediately throw the main mass of the German army against the French and English, while initially conducting the fight against Russia with a minimum of forces in strategic defense without direct connection with the Austro-Hungarian ally. His successor, General von Moltke, had maintained the basic idea of this planned solution, but had promised the Chief of Staff of the allied army to support the offensive intended from Galicia into Poland by launching his own attack from East Prussia against the Narew, in order to bind the Russian forces facing the German Eastern Front and prevent them from intervening against the allied forces. At the outbreak of war, the attack against the Narew was abandoned because the German 8th Army in East Prussia initially had to defend itself against the concentric pressure of the Russian 1st and 2nd Armies advancing against it from two sides. By destroying one of these armies at Tannenberg and severely shaking the other in the Battle of the Masurian Lakes, the front of the ally had been relieved to a much greater extent than the Chiefs of Staff had anticipated in their peacetime agreements. Nevertheless, the failures in Galicia had significantly increased the difficulties of the task of maintaining the balance against the superior Russian forces, especially since the hoped-for quick decision by arms in the West had also failed to materialize.

When General von Falkenhayn took over the leadership of the overall operations of the German army in mid-September 1914, he adhered to the basic idea that the final decision in the world war must and would fall on French soil against the Western powers. In this, he agreed with both the Austro-Hungarian Chief of Staff and the Commander-in-Chief East, but he differed in the question,

Page 439

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of War against Russia.

on which path this final settlement should be pursued, what significance now especially came to the fight against Russia, the views of the responsible personalities already differed greatly in the autumn of 1914. While General von Conrad and soon thereafter also the Commander-in-Chief East, after the failure of the Ypres offensive, were of the opinion that the military subjugation of Russia must precede the decisive battle against the Western powers, the German General Staff saw the uninterrupted continuation of the attempt to subdue the French and English as the overriding task. He wanted the fight against Russia to continue to be conducted only in a delaying manner, for time gain, as a backing for the German Western Front. While offensives were certainly to be pursued here, the German deployment of forces in the East should remain within the narrowest possible limits.

This viewpoint remained decisive for General von Falkenhayn even after the final failure of the German attacks in Flanders in mid-November, when he could no longer ignore the realization that the time at which the decisive battle in the West could be fought with prospects of success had been postponed. His guiding thought remained the earliest possible resumption. Although by the end of November, given the predicament into which the conduct of war in the East had fallen due to the superiority of the Russians, a significant reinforcement of the Eastern Army could no longer be avoided. Nevertheless, General von Falkenhayn still saw its task at the end of 1914 merely as "throwing the Russians back to the Vistula or into their bridgeheads, otherwise clearing up as quickly as possible with the Russian parts standing opposite West Prussia and in East Prussia, then to limit oneself to a more delaying conduct of war." A similar task, in his view, fell to the leadership of the Austro-Hungarian army in Galicia and Serbia, "with whose solution they have enough to do for the winter months."

However, it would be wrong to see the restraint of the German Chief of General Staff towards the proposals of the leaders on the Eastern Front, aimed at decisive warfare against Russia, as an expression of rigid adherence to his once chosen solution, according to which the decision in the West was to be pursued directly. His restraint corresponded much more to fundamental considerations about the peculiarities of the theater of war and the

1) Volume VII, p. 74.

Page 440

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of the War against Russia.

possibilities of success and views of the war against Russia arising from the mutual balance of forces. When in those days General Wild von Hohenborn proposed in a memorandum to shift the focus of German warfare from the western theater of war to the eastern one and to seek the decision there first, General von Falkenhayn noted in the margin of this memorandum that "a complete military overthrow of Russia should be achieved." It is difficult to assume that he drew such far-reaching conclusions solely based on the previous results of operations on the Eastern Front, which, despite brilliant victories of the commander-in-chief, often remained without decisive impact. Undoubtedly, even then, his judgment was decisively influenced by the question of the need for forces and the consideration of the immeasurably vast operational area of the Russian Empire, viewpoints that General von Falkenhayn repeatedly asserted in the further course of the campaign in the East. He was convinced that for the decisive offensive in the East, a deployment of forces was necessary that had to go far beyond what could be mustered with regard to the security of the Western Front. A shortening of this front by straightening or relocating the existing positions and a corresponding large-scale saving of forces was out of the question for him, given the paramount importance he attached to holding every inch of ground in France and Belgium. But even if a significant saving of forces for the East could be made possible, any attempt to strive for the desired final decision against the eastern colossus seemed doomed to failure due to the enormous difficulty of preventing the Russians from retreating into the interior of their empire. "Napoleon's experiences did not invite imitation of his example." With this fundamental attitude, it was not difficult for the head of the German overall operations at the beginning of 1915 to reject a proposal from the Austrian Chief of Staff, which aimed to achieve a breakthrough through the Russian front in West Poland between Nida and Pilica towards Radom by "the quickest deployment of new German forces from the West or from new formations" and thus to achieve "a full, decisive success." Also, the intention expressed shortly thereafter by General von Conrad to launch a major offensive from the Carpathian Front to deliver a decisive blow,

Page 441

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of War against Russia.

“whose effect he estimated far higher than mere territorial gain up to the San-Dniester line”) General von Falkenhayn faced strong reservations from the beginning. That he did not oppose the implementation of this plan can only be explained by the fact that the Commander-in-Chief East also strongly supported it and had already independently provided the German forces needed to form the Southern Army. The very soon visible failure of the Carpathian Offensive justified the concerns of the German Chief of General Staff.

He simultaneously found himself in a particularly difficult situation due to the request of Field Marshal von Hindenburg to transfer the newly formed corps from home for deployment on the left wing of his front in East Prussia. General von Falkenhayn planned their use on the western theater of war, although initially unable to consider a far-reaching offensive. When he finally “with a heavy heart” acceded to the request of the Commander-in-Chief East, it was partly in view of the ally's situation, whose growing difficulties he could not ignore. Certainly, other considerations and motives also played a role, as the question of deploying the new corps in connection with the temporary transfer of General Ludendorff to the Southern Army was predominantly a personal matter concerning the position of the Chief of General Staff. In no way, however, could he indulge in the hopes that the Field Marshal attached to the offensive he planned. This was linked to a “decisive, probably devastating defeat” of the Russian northern wing facing East Prussia, but he also believed that by continuing the offensive “with full force on Bialystok” and simultaneously pressing from the Carpathians, he could foresee “the final defeat of Russia” and thus an outcome that he considered “decisive for the outcome of the entire war.” In contrast, General von Falkenhayn expected only “greater local successes” with the effect of putting the Russians “in such a position that they would not be able to endanger us in the foreseeable future.” The actual course of operations did not yield the decisive results hoped for by the Commander-in-Chief East and thus proved General von Falkenhayn's view correct. He saw in this a new confirmation of his fundamental view that, given the relatively modest resources available to Germany for offensive operations

1) Volume VII, p. 88. — 2) Volume VII, p. 11.

Page 442

Retrospective on the Warfare of General von Falkenhayn against Russia.

The continued application of operations against the flank or wing of the Russian front could not be granted prospects of significant success1).

Until now, the German Chief of General Staff had been content to ensure that the conduct of the war in the East was subject to restrictions in terms of objectives and resource consumption by allocating the reinforcements he provided and by occasional, mostly general, indications. In the spring of 1915, before the start of the Galician offensive, he secured not only the provision of new forces but also a direct and specific influence on the planning and direction of operations. The breakthrough at Gorlice in early May was entirely in line with the fundamental view he had previously held for the fight against Russia. A spatially and temporally limited powerful offensive thrust was to finally free the Allies from the heavy pressure of the Russians on their Carpathian front. Certainly, the decision, even in this limited objective, was not without grandeur, as it was associated with the risk of extensive depletion of forces on the Western Front, but it maintained room for maneuver in all directions. The subsequent offensive, carried out in several separate phases over the San and Przemysl to the capture of Lemberg, was still entirely in line with this fundamental view, which always took into account the overall strategic situation of the Allies. Thanks to the effect of the brilliant military successes, the operational goal could be gradually expanded with the renewed, responsibly daring deployment of fresh forces. However, even in the last phase of this campaign, the task was explicitly limited to conducting operations against the enemy east of the San to a decision sufficient for our purposes2). With the severe disruption of the Russian offensive power in Galicia, achieved in the seven-week battles, General von Falkenhayn saw his objectives fulfilled. The "dissolving" enemy was to be pursued only under a significant reduction of the previous German force deployment.

At the turn of June/July, a change occurred in this stance of the German Chief of General Staff. It found its expression in the profound and consequential decision to extend the offensive operations in the East beyond Galicia to the north into Poland and to effectively include the front of the Commander-in-Chief East in them.

1) von Falkenhayn, p. 54. — 2) p. 202.

Page 443

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of the War against Russia.

to participate. The genesis of this decision reveals that suggestions from the circle of trusted advisors of General von Falkenhayn, but especially from the Army High Command Mackensen and the Austro-Hungarian military leadership, played a decisive role. However, the German Chief of General Staff was able to process the suggestions into a plan, rejecting those that seemed too far-reaching or inappropriate, in which his own unchanged fundamental attitude towards the question of the fight against Russia was decisive. He certainly recognized that a turning point in the conduct of the war in the East had been reached, where a spatial and temporal expansion of the operational goal was urgently desirable and also appropriate in view of the general war situation, through the powerful utilization of the partial successes achieved so far into a unified strike. However, he was not prepared for a further increase in the deployment of forces by further utilizing the resources of the western theater of war; on the contrary, he had two divisions sent back there. Anxious not to fall into "boundless plans," he set himself, in full agreement with Colonel General von Conrad, a task that seemed certainly achievable with the available forces, taking into account the overall situation of the Central Powers. Again, he wanted to bring the Russians into such a situation through weakening and paralyzing their offensive power "that they would not be able to become dangerous to us in the foreseeable future." The long-held and reluctantly repeatedly postponed intention to assist the Turkish ally by subduing Serbia also made a solution desirable that promised the early conclusion of offensive operations in Russia. On this basis, the idea of the closest possible concentric cooperation of the Mackensen army group and the Commander-in-Chief East in the area between Bug, Vistula, and lower Narew presented itself almost naturally. A setback seemed almost impossible here, even if the offensive should not penetrate or should stall halfway in the worst case. However, General von Falkenhayn was confident of the success of the operation and hoped for a great, also operationally significant success, "the cutting off of the enemy masses standing at the Vistula and in front of Mackensen." In this, he saw a "decisive victory corresponding to the purposes of the Supreme Army Command." The then Prussian Minister of War, General Wild von Hohenborn, has

1) von Falkenhayn, p. 98.

Page 444

Retrospective on the Warfare of General von Falkenhayn against Russia.

Looking back on this in a record from August 27, 1915, it was stated as follows: "Falkenhayn initially only wanted to reach the San, then he was driven to Lemberg, then came the thrust along the Bug. Everything developed historically, as if by itself, one thing from another. At first, no one here thought of a final large operation. Only later will the matter be portrayed as a brilliant plan in history. But anyone who was involved knows that strategy is a simple thing, where one limited goal follows another, to then give a proud overall picture, where the layman thinks God knows what. By the way, Falkenhayn merely followed his own operational thinking when he acted differently than Hindenburg suggested."

However, the question arises whether the fundamental view of General von Falkenhayn, emphasized here as well, regarding the limited effectiveness of any offensive operation in the vast spaces of Russia provides a sufficient explanation for his behavior in the opinion dispute with the Commander-in-Chief East that began in early July. If he rejected the operation proposed by the latter "north of the Njemen with simultaneous attack on Kowno" with the reasoning that it "ran the risk of scattering in an eccentric direction and merely leading to greater expansion"1), one misses an examination of the success possibilities and prospects of the idea of an offensive on and over Wilna, which the Commander-in-Chief East, as it seems, initially only hinted at quietly, but which was nevertheless an obvious thought. An examination would have shown all the more that this offensive, in terms of effort, time, and space, did not pursue "nebulous goals," that it could be conducted as well as the Narew operation within the framework of deliberately limited warfare, that it hardly faced greater supply difficulties like these, but that it promised an operationally much greater effect, as it approached from depth, because its direction of thrust directly threatened the main lifelines of the Russian army north of the Rokitno swamps. This operational effect could be further enhanced if, at the same time, from the opposite direction from the south, a strong pressure was exerted from the area east of the Bug against the rear connections of the Russians south of the swamps from the beginning at the front of the Mackensen army group. One may ponder the much-debated question of whether in the summer of 1915 an operation aimed at double-sided encirclement in this sense led to the destruction of large parts of the Russian army and

1) p. 274.

Page 445

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of War against Russia.

so that the campaign decision hoped for by the Commander-in-Chief East could have been achieved, think as one might, it should be beyond question that the enemy's rear threat lying in the directions of attack over Vilna and east of the Bug alone must have had a momentous impact on the behavior of the main mass of Russians stationed in Poland. To counter the danger of an unprecedented release of weapons, the strongest regrouping of forces on a grand scale from the area between Narew, Vistula, and Bug to the Njemen front and the area east of Brest Litovsk would have been necessary. The inevitably associated hasty retreat from Poland could easily have turned into a catastrophe under the all-round pressure of the pursuers, surely it would have severely and lastingly shaken the fighting strength and morale of the troops. All these were reasons, within the realm of possibility, that the responsible leader of operations could give space to in his considerations from the standpoint of warfare with limited objectives. In retrospect, however, one cannot escape the impression that General von Falkenhayn faced the proposals and requests of the Commander-in-Chief East both at the decisive meeting in Posen on July 2 and in the following weeks, when these requests took on a stormy form, with a certain inner prejudice that made it difficult, if not impossible, for him to purely objectively examine the pros and cons. In his justified advice and objections of others, this is strikingly not inaccessible nature. The explanation is likely to be found in the psychological field. The widespread assumption of personal rivalry is indeed more serious. Examination hardly stood. It suffices in this regard to refer to the letter of August 24 to Field Marshal von Hindenburg, in which the Chief of Staff lays down a charmingly open and beautiful confession of the high conception of his position and his sense of responsibility that animates him. The interpretation that General von Falkenhayn, based on the experiences of earlier times, did not want to trust the responsible personalities of the Commander-in-Chief East with the judgment of the prospects of success in the fight against Russia to the same extent as himself appears more accurate. In a letter dated October 8, 1915, to Field Marshal von Hindenburg, he himself expressed with the words: "I cannot rely on the feelings of others in my proposals based on the rich experiences of last winter,

Page 446

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of the War against Russia.

but merely to rely on my own conviction." It seems as if the self-assured adherence to principles and convictions once deemed correct made General von Falkenhayn hesitant at the decisive moment in July 1915 compared to the thoughts of the Commander-in-Chief East. In the first days after the start of the new offensive, he saw no reason to subject his own plan regarding the prospects of success to a review or change. All indications seemed to suggest that a major military success with significant operational impact was imminent. On July 20, he considered it "highly probable that the decision in the fight against Russia would fall in the area south of the Narew." He decided to bring in the two divisions of the army that had been withdrawn from the western theater of war a few weeks earlier. However, disillusionment soon followed. The offensive stalled both with the Mackensen Army Group and the Gallwitz Army Group. The Commander-in-Chief East repeatedly and increasingly urged the operation of his left wing against the Russian connections. The Minister of War, General Wild von Hohenborn, and the Chief of the Field Railway Service, Major General Groener, advised in the same direction. However, the Chief of the General Staff summarily rejected the idea, as "committing all our forces now deployed here until winter would be a certain consequence." With tenacity, he stuck to his own plan despite the discouraging results that the course of the operation had brought so far. He did not believe that the enemy, as Field Marshal von Hindenburg rightly feared, would evade the battle decision in Poland by an early retreat to the Brest Litowsk—Bialystok line. "The Russians must be defeated before they decide to do so." On July 30, he hoped for "the defeat of the enemy through the most vigorous continuation of the ongoing operations." A few days later, there was no longer any doubt that the Russians had systematically initiated the retreat on the entire front in Poland. The pursuit task replaced the desired battle decision. Here too, as he emphasized on August 6, the Chief of the General Staff focused on crushing the enemy in Poland by attacking from all sides." A week later, he still hoped that with all-around sharp pressure, it would be possible to capture large parts of the retreating enemy on this side of the forest of

1) G. 315. — 2) C. 342. — 3) C. 346.

Page 447

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of War against Russia.

To engage Bialowies in battle, at least to significantly disrupt their retreat“).

However, these wishes and hopes were not fulfilled. Despite all efforts and exertions of the pursuers, the enemy always and everywhere evaded capture. By mid-August, General von Falkenhayn could no longer deny the truth of the Eastern Commander's statement: “The operation in the East has ... not led to the destruction of the enemy. The Russian has, as expected, escaped the pincer and allows himself to be pushed back frontally in the desired direction.” The German Chief of Staff easily reconciled himself to this operationally unsatisfactory result as a natural process, which one had to try to disturb and complicate, but could not prevent. His rapid change of mood becomes understandable when one considers the basic idea that had always dominated him, that a “complete military overthrow of Russia would never be achieved.” With this consistently held basic idea, it was not difficult for him to see the recent events in a favorable light. Not disappointment over a minor operational result took place, but satisfaction with a performance fully meeting the purposes of the supreme command. Thus, General von Falkenhayn perceived the somewhat critical statements of the Eastern Commander as unjustified criticism and saw in them only new evidence that the command authority harbored completely false ideas about the limits of success that were drawn for any offensive operation in Russia. In his response, he stated:

“A destruction of the enemy has never been hoped for from the ongoing operations in the East, but merely a decisive victory corresponding to the purposes of the supreme command ...” For a complete destruction, “the basic conditions are simply lacking. For one cannot strive to destroy an opponent who is numerically far superior and facing frontally, who has excellent connections, unlimited time, and unrestricted space, while one is forced to operate in a railway-less, path-poor terrain with tight time constraints and connection to very heterogeneous forces, some of which are even non-resistant troops.” Following this, General von Falkenhayn strongly emphasized the positive achievements of his operation and claimed credit for them, stating that the enemy “is already for our

1) G. 421. — 2) G. 347. — 3) G. 348. World War. VIII. Volume. 40

Page 448

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of War against Russia.

The purpose was decisively defeated, as the Russians, apart from their enormous losses of prisoners and materials, had lost Galicia, Poland, and Courland and were no longer in a position to seriously threaten Austria-Hungary "at any foreseeable time." General von Falkenhayn consistently adhered to this view until the conclusion of the movement war in the East in the autumn of 1915. In his decisive approval for the late execution of the operation of the Eastern Commander-in-Chief on Vilna, he expressly opposed any possible way of truly defeating an enemy who was determined to retreat without regard to sacrifices of land and people as soon as he was engaged, and who had vast Russia at his disposal. Even after the unsatisfactory outcome of the Vilna offensive, he reiterated in a letter to the Eastern Commander-in-Chief that one could not hope to decisively encircle a numerically superior enemy who would not stand without regard to sacrifices of land and people, with vast Russia and good routes behind him. However, one could sufficiently damage such an enemy for our purposes by staying close to him everywhere, thus preventing shifts and relatively weakening him, but then striking deep into his lines at a well-chosen spot with concentrated forces. As successful examples of this method, he cited the "campaigns of Mackensen, Woyrsch, and Gallwitz." Yet, the last phase of the movement war in 1915 in Russia shows that the repeatedly stated commitment to warfare with limited objectives did not spare the German Chief of General Staff from dealing with conflicting desires and interests of his own strategy in practical action. From the end of August, he found himself in internal conflict. On one hand, he wanted to damage and weaken the enemy as much as possible in every opportunity, so that he would not be able to strengthen for his own offensives in the foreseeable future; on the other hand, the consideration of the overall situation of the Central Powers urged the quick conclusion of the offensive in Russia to gain sufficiently strong forces for the execution of the Serbian campaign and for securing the Western Front. The attempt to simultaneously and equally account for both viewpoints proved to be unfeasible. Despite internal resistance, General von Falkenhayn was compelled to initially

1) p. 492. — 2) Letter from October 8, 1915.

Page 449

Review of General von Falkenhayn's Conduct of the War against Russia. 627

The offensive operations of the two army wings, intended only as special operations with limited objectives, were supported and relieved by the forces of the army center to an extent that went far beyond his original intentions. And yet, as the events at the front of the ally particularly proved, the enemy was not "damaged in a way completely sufficient for our purposes." On the other hand, the delay of strong forces at unwanted locations, which was thereby caused for a longer period, impaired the decision-making and freedom of action for the tasks of the other theaters of war. It would have been more in line with General von Falkenhayn's intentions if he had adhered to the decision at the end of August to break off operations in the East and consequently also prevented the special operations of the two army wings. It would then have been possible to launch the offensive against Serbia at an earlier point in time with the equally strong forces intended for both allies, thus opening it without the highly undesirable increase in the German contingent, and also to make strong reserves available in time for use on the western theater of war. Thus, the war of movement of 1915 in the East ended with enormous territorial gains, as far as the German front was concerned, but not with a severe shaking of the combat power of the Russians. However, they still held the field. The success was bought with all the disadvantages that lay in the commitment of considerable forces and combat resources in widely extended positions deep in enemy territory for the Central Powers fighting on the inner line. Whether this result, achieved with conscious renunciation of decisive warfare, was sufficient in terms of strategic rear security to now resume the decisive battle against the French and English with a prospect of success was the fateful question that the German Supreme Army Command faced around the turn of the year 1915/1916.

Page 450

The Mutual Force Ratio of Infantry on the Western Front in Mid-June 1915.

On June 11, 1915, General von Falkenhayn pointed out in a communication to the Commander-in-Chief East that no further forces could be withdrawn from the West: "Since the Western opponents, who are of the highest military value, have about 600 more battalions at the front than we do, this is not surprising." The enemy was also aware of a very significant superiority at this time.

1. The German Calculation.

The total number of battalions of the German Western Army was 1156. Since the troop overviews of the German Western armies, pre-taken by the Reichsarchiv, differ regarding the key dates between April 5 and June 30, 1915 — almost a quarter of a year — errors in today's calculation are unavoidable. 91 battalions that were missing in the overviews are included. Landsturm battalions are only counted as far as they were actually at the front, and fortress garrisons only those from Metz (excluding Landsturm). Recruit depots have been disregarded.

Based on the information provided by the Intelligence Department at the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army up to June 11, the following emerges:

The number of French battalions in France was 1326. This includes all known territorial divisions — also those presumed to be in Paris at the time — as well as the divisions 151, 152, 155, which were considered questionable.

The British Army in France comprised 399 battalions. This includes seven English active battalions, 46 territorial battalions, and 46 Indian battalions outside divisional association, as well as 72 battalions of divisions 9 and 10, which were presumed to be in France. The presence of these 166 battalions was partly only assumed (agent reports); partly their usability as front-line troops was questionable.

The number of Belgian battalions was 61.

Thus, against 1156 battalions, there were a total of 1786 enemy battalions. This resulted in a superiority of the opponents by 630 battalions. However, the documents for assessing the British troops were very uncertain.

Page 451

630 Mutual Balance of Forces in Infantry on the Western Front.

2. Official French Data.

The French official work1) estimates the total strength of the allied troops opposing the Germans on the Western Front in mid-June 1915 at

1360 French battalions (including about 280 territorial battalions),

318 British battalions,

76 Belgian battalions,

making a total of 1754 battalions and estimates, presumably based on calculations from June 1915, the number of German battalions at 1128.

According to this calculation, the superiority of the allied French, British, and Belgians would have been 626 battalions.

3. The Actual Ratio.

If we base the German side on the numbers calculated under number 1, and for the opponents on the numbers contained in the French official work, it results that by mid-June 1915

1156 German battalions

1754 French-British-Belgian

were opposed, so the superiority of the opponents was 598 battalions.

1) French official work, III, p. 161.

Page 452

Some Information on the Deployment, Training, and Use of the British "Kitchener" Troops.

At the outbreak of war, Great Britain had 450,000 regular troops, about 300,000 Territorial troops, and about 350,000 National Reserve troops. Of the regular troops, 118,000 were stationed outside the homeland. For deployment in the expeditionary corps to be sent to France, initially only the regular troops stationed at home (332,000 men) and those Territorial troops who had declared their willingness to serve outside the country in case of danger (17,621 men) were considered, totaling around 350,000 men.

On August 5, 1914, the House of Commons approved an increase in the regular army by 500,000 men. Lord Kitchener, appointed Secretary of State for War on August 6, considered this measure insufficient and deemed further reinforcement necessary. He planned to establish a whole series of new, so-called "Kitchener" divisions in addition to the existing units. The training of these formations could only proceed through recruitment at that moment. On August 7, 1914, the government issued a call through posters and the press for 100,000 volunteers to enlist. The number increased day by day and continued as long as the influx persisted. By mid-September 1914, 500,000 volunteers had already been enlisted. Restrictive measures had to be issued because the existing military facilities could not accommodate such a large gathering of the army. Housing and procuring the necessary clothing and equipment posed difficulties. The needs could largely only be met through agreements with foreign countries. A significant issue was the lack of training personnel. On August 17, a law was passed allowing the reinstatement of distinguished non-commissioned officers. In addition to the return of 500 officers just sent to India on Lord Kitchener's orders, the recruitment of all available active officers, reserve officers, and Territorial officers at the depot formations, as well as the renamed and restored officers, particularly trained non-commissioned officers promoted to officers, served to create the lower leadership personnel.

The lack of sufficient weapons severely impaired training. On October 11, the government was forced to lift some of the restrictive measures issued in mid-September due to a sharp decline in volunteer enlistments. Simultaneously, a Parliamentary Recruitment Committee was established to organize recruitment activities uniformly. While the other arms continued to be supplemented from existing depots, the entire country was divided into districts for the infantry volunteer replacement, generally corresponding to the regions, with larger cities forming their own districts. Each of these districts was to supply recruits for a specific regiment. Recruitment for the Territorial troops ran concurrently.

1) According to the British official source.  
2) Active troops, reserve, special reserve.

Page 453

Information on the Formation, Training, and Use of the "Kitchener" Troops.

In total, the number of volunteers enlisted by the end of 1914 was 1,186,337 men, with an average number for the months of November 1914 to June 1915 of 125,000. On May 19, 1915, Lord Kitchener issued a new call for an additional 300,000 recruits. This time, the effect fell short of previous results, with only 115,000 men enlisting in June. Meanwhile, the disadvantages for the war-essential industries of the country had become apparent, as they lost their absolutely necessary workforce, such as in mining. To remedy this, the government was forced to introduce the "National Registration Act" on July 15, 1915, which mandated the registration of all male and female British citizens over the age of 15 by gender, residence, occupation, and fitness. After completing these lists on September 15, certain industries were barred from releasing volunteers. The lists of men aged 18 to 41 were handed over to the recruitment authorities so that they could initiate increased recruitment activities for those not belonging to barred professions. On October 11, 1915, Lord Derby was appointed as the Director-General of Recruiting. He presented a bill (Derby Scheme) on October 16, representing the last attempt to maintain a volunteer system. It was still allowed to enlist at a specific time or with a unit. Those who did not wish to do so were to enroll in special lists with the obligation to follow the government's call to arms in times of danger. Upon the law's adoption, Prime Minister Asquith assured that in case of need, unmarried men would be called upon first. By December 15, 1915, 2,184,979 men had enrolled in these Derby lists, while 215,431 men volunteered for immediate service during the same period. The total number of volunteers enlisted in 1915 was 1,280,362. The volunteer units were trained in Kitchener Divisions, which were grouped into Kitchener Armies, each consisting of six divisions. The 1st Kitchener Army was formed on August 21, 1914, the 2nd on September 9, 1914, and the 3rd on September 13, 1914. The 4th and 5th Armies already existed in the fall of 1914 but were reorganized and only received their final form on April 27, 1915. Of the Kitchener Divisions, numbered from 9 to 26 and from 30 to 41, 26 were deployed in France, 3 at the Dardanelles, and 2 initially in Egypt, later in France. By the end of 1915, 21 divisions had arrived in France, one of which was redeployed to Salonika in November 1915. Deployment to the front occurred, unless events dictated otherwise, only after training behind the front for about three months. The combat value of the Kitchener Divisions, according to English judgment, never reached that of the old regular divisions. The good will and zeal of the troops, their intellectual abilities, and their enthusiasm could not compensate for the incomplete training and lack of experience.

Page 454

Source Reference.

The presentation is based on the files located in the Reichsarchiv as well as on information from involved leading personalities and their collaborators. Below are the most important sources of the available literature listed. As far as they are cited in the presentation, it is done with the keyword highlighted in bold in this directory.

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Page 456

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Page 457

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Page 458

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Page 459

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Page 460

Index of Persons.

Adams, Major General, General of the Pioneers with the Army Detachment Woyrsch 407.

Albert, King of Belgium 54.

Albrecht, Duke of Württemberg, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army 38. 45. 78.

Albrecht, Major General, Commander of the 1st Guard Reserve Division 104. 286. 291. 312.

Alekseyev, Russian General of Infantry, until 31. 8. 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the Northwestern Front, later Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army 116. 131. 263. 416. 436. 438. 443. 445—452. 471. 480. 525. 587. 594.

von Arnim, Major General, Commander of the 3rd Landwehr Division 407.

Arz von Straussenburg, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Commanding General of the VI Corps 142. 146. 169.

Baerée, Colonel, Chief of the General Staff XI Army Corps 365.

Bachmann, Major General, from 18. 6. 1915 Lieutenant General, Leader of a Composite Division 121. 123. 125. 344. 457. 464. 466. 467. 476. 477. 498. 499. 504. 533. 535—537. 547.

von Below (Hans), Major General, Commander of the 6th Reserve Division 464. 546.

von Below (Otto), General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 8th Army, later of the Niemen Army 104. 124. 126. 300. 320. 457—460. 462. 467. 469. 471. 533—535. 545. 546.

Ritter von Benigni, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group 239. 240. 563. 564. 573. 592.

von Berendt, Colonel 277. 284. 376.

Bergmann, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the Army Group Lochow 69.

Berndt, Austro-Hungarian Major General, Leader of the 4th Cavalry Division 210. 215. 570. 577.

von Bererer, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 31st Infantry Division 472. 477. 485. 516.

von Beseler, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the III Reserve Corps, Leader of a Composite Group, from 26. 8. 1915 Governor General of the General Government Warsaw 104. 311. 321. 334. 336. 351. 352. 375—379. 487.

von Beseler, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 47th Reserve Division 187.

von Bethmann Hollweg, Chancellor 11. 15. 16. 601. 602. 604. 605. 607—610.

Bobyr, Russian General of Cavalry, Commander of the Fortress Novogeorgievsk 379.

von Boehnberg, Major in the General Staff of the Commander-in-Chief East 481 498.

Böß, Major General, Commander of the 79th Reserve Division 477.

von Böhm-Ermolli, Austro-Hungarian General of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 2nd Army 210. 219. 229. 564. 572. 573. 589. 591. 592.

Edler von Bolzano, Austro-Hungarian Colonel, Leader of a Combined Infantry Brigade 155. 158. 250—252. 572.

Bontsch-Brujewitsch, Russian Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the Northern Front 539.

Page 461

Directory of Persons

Boroëvić von Bojna, Austro-Hungarian General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 5th Army 7. 26. 30. von Borries, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 52nd Infantry Division 80. Count von Bothmer, General of Infantry, Leader of a composite corps, from 6. 7. 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Army 154. 155. 194. 204. 205. 209–215. 237. 238. 250–252. 572–574. 576. 586. 585. Bratianu, Romanian Prime Minister 11. von Bredow, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 42nd Infantry Division 488. Count von Bredow, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Landwehr Division 148. 153. 172. 405–408. 410. 428. 559. Breugel, Clifford Rocq von, Lieutenant General, Leader of a composite division, later Commander of the 85th Landwehr Division 19. 104. 288. 289. Brofius, Major General, Commander of the 77th Reserve Division 473. Brusilov, Russian General of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 8th Army 140. 189–191. 261. 262. 438. 441. 586. 587. Prince von Bülow, Ambassador in Rome 3. 4. 10. 11. Baron Burián, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs 4. 606. Baron von dem Bussche, German Envoy in Bucharest 11.

Count Cadorna, Italian Lieutenant General, Chief of the General Staff 3. 27–29. 31. 33. von Carloitz, General of Infantry, from 6. 1915 Commanding General of the III Reserve Corps 487. 499. 504. 508–511. 515. 517–521. Charles de Beaulieu, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 12th Infantry Division 93. von Claer, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the VII Army Corps, from 29. 6. 1915 General of the Engineer and Pioneer Corps in the Great Headquarters 44. 98. Claustius, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 10th Landwehr Division 289. 363.

von Cochenhausen, Captain, General Staff Officer of the 115th Infantry Division 530. Baron Conrad von Hötzendorf, Austro-Hungarian General of Infantry, from 22. 1915 Colonel General, Chief of the General Staff 1. 2. 5–10. 25. 32. 33. 139. 147. 148. 172. 174. 184. 194. 198. 201. 204. 205. 209. 210. 212. 214. 216. 217. 219. 221. 223. 224. 226. 227. 229. 231. 232. 234–249. 251. 257. 259. 261. 263. 265. 267. 269. 271. 273. 275. 277. 279. 281. 283. 285. 287. 289. 291. 293. 295. 297. 299. 301. 303. 305. 307. 309. 311. 313. 315. 317. 319. 321. 323. 325. 327. 329. 331. 333. 335. 337. 339. 341. 343. 345. 347. 349. 351. 353. 355. 357. 359. 361. 363. 365. 367. 369. 371. 373. 375. 377. 379. 381. 383. 385. 387. 389. 391. 393. 395. 397. 399. 401. 403. 405. 407. 409. 411. 413. 415. 417. 419. 421. 423. 425. 427. 429. 431. 433. 435. 437. 439. 441. 443. 445. 447. 449. 451. 453. 455. 457. 459. 461. 463. 465. 467. 469. 471. 473. 475. 477. 479. 481. 483. 485. 487. 489. 491. 493. 495. 497. 499. 501. 503. 505. 507. 509. 511. 513. 515. 517. 519. 521. 523. 525. 527. 529. 531. 533. 535. 537. 539. 541. 543. 545. 547. 549. 551. 553. 555. 557. 559. 561. 563. 565. 567. 569. 571. 573. 575. 577. 579. 581. 583. 585. 587. 589. 591. 593. 595. 597. 599. 601. 603. 605. 607. 609. 611. 613. 615. 617. 619. 621.

von Conta, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 1st Infantry Division 154. 209. 394. 560. 581–584. 590. 591. de Curieres de Castelnau, French General, Commander-in-Chief of Army Group Center 85. Czibulka, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a composite group, later Commanding General of the XVIII Corps 155. 156. 204. 206. 208. 212. 216. 239. 563. 564. 567. 574–576.

Danilov, Russian General of Infantry, Quartermaster General, later Leader of the XXV Corps 436. 444. 448. 452. 481. Danf, Austro-Hungarian General of Cavalry, National Defense Commander in Tyrol 26. von Dichuth-Harrach, Lieutenant General, Leader of a composite corps, later Commander of the 87th Infantry Division 19. 104. 290. 293. 295. 298. 311. 321. 375. 376. 378. 484. Dietrich, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 5th Infantry Division 220. Baron Georg von Montecuccoli, Colonel, Leader of a composite brigade 130. 499. 509. 547. von Diringshofen, Lieutenant General, Leader of a composite group 336.

Page 462

Directory of Persons. 641

Burgrave and Count of Dohna-Schlobitten, Gen. of Cav., Leader of a composite group 106. von Dorrer, Lt. Gen., Cmdr. of the 44th Reserve Division 402. Doumer, French Minister 597. von Eben, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the I. A. K., later Leader of a composite group 291. 300. 293. 294. 296. 298. 299. 302. 307. 308. 311. 312. 314. 320. 328. 350—356. 358. 499—501. 505. 508—510. 512. 513. 515. 517. 518. 520. 527. 528. 542. von Eichhorn, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the 10th Army 104. 120. 126. 129. 472—478. 484—487. 489. 494. 499. 505. 507. 512. 517. 519. 521. 524. 529. Eitel Friedrich, Prince of Prussia, Colonel, Cmdr. of the 1st Guard Infantry Division 142. 224. Elster von Elster, Major General, from 18. 6. 1915 Lt. Gen., Cmdr. of the 76th Reserve Division 106. von Emmich, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the X. A. K. 134. 145. 147. 154. 162. 165. 170. 230—232. 401—404. 413. 415. 419. Enver Pasha, Ottoman General, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Armed Forces by Water and Land 600. von der Esch, Major General, Cmdr. of the 105th Infantry Division 392. 402. Baron von Esebeck, Major General, Leader of a troop unit 104. 107. 116. 119. 457. 464. 466. 467. 476. 478. 479. 484. 486. 489. 500. 509. 512. 547. Essen, Russian Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Fleet 115. 441. von Estorff, Major General, Cmdr. of the 103rd Infantry Division 387. 394. Eugen, Archduke of Austria, k. u. k. Gen. of Cav., Commander-in-Chief of the Southwest Front 26. Ewert, Russian Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army, from 2 September 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the Western Front 140. 189. 389. 431. 529. 594. Fabarius, Major General, Cmdr. of the 82nd Reserve Division 164. 554. von Fabeck, Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Army, from 22. 9. 1915 of the 2nd Army 518. von Falk, Lt. Gen., Cmdr. of the 42nd Infantry Division 281. 284. 287. 288. 322. 323. 326. 396. 398. 399. 505. 508. Baron von Falkenhausen, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of an Army Detachment 50. 56. 82. 92. von Falkenhayn, Lt. Gen., Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army 1—12. 17. 18. 20. 25. 26. 38. 39. 55. 57. 60. 63. 64. 67. 69. 72. 73. 77. 79. 87. 89. 91. 92. 94. 96. 99—102. 114. 121. 123. 127—129. 139. 159. 160. 168. 172. 173. 175. 176. 180. 181. 186. 264—267. 269. 273—277. 281. 301. 306. 308. 311. 317—319. 340—344. 346. 348—351. 366. 369. 370—374. 376. 378. 380. 382. 384. 386. 388. 390. 392. 394. 396. 398. 400. 402. 404. 406. 408—410. 412. 413. 416—418. 420. 421. 423—426. 429. 431. 434. 436. 438. 439. 493. 494. 502. 510. 544. 549—553. 555. 556. 570. 574. 577. 578. 582. 583. 598—605. 607—611. 613—627. von Falkenhayn, Gen. of Cav., Comm. Gen. of the XXII. Res. K. 222. 227. 228. 245. 413. Knight von Fasbender, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the I. Bavarian Res. K., Leader of an Army Group 59. 61. 64. 65. 68—70. 91. Fab., i. u. F., Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a composite corps 592. Ferdinand, King of Romania 11. Ferdinand, King of Bulgaria 611.

World War. VIII. Volume. 41

Page 463

Directory of Persons

Fleischmann von Theisruck, Austro-Hungarian Major in the General Staff, liaison officer with the Supreme Commander East 269. 317. 319. 510.

Foch, French General, Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Army Group 46. 51—53. 76. 85. 92. 95. 96.

von François, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XXXXI Reserve Corps 46. 29. 1915 of the XVII Army Corps 98. 99. 100. 101. 165. 166. 169. 171. 173. 175. 177. 178. 180. 183—185. 188. 189. 224. 231. 382.

Franz Joseph I, Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary 3.

French, Sir John, British Field Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in France 46. 51—54. 72. 84.

Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven, Lieutenant General, Quartermaster General 100.

von Friedeburg, Major General, Commander of the 3rd Guards Infantry Division 154.

Knight von Frommel, General of Cavalry, Senior Cavalry Commander 3 104. 334. 339. 361. 410. 501. 542. 555.

Fuchs, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 16th Infantry Division 51. 70.

von Gabain, Major General, Commander of the 5th Infantry Division 88.

Gaede, General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of an Army Detachment 35. 49—51. 72. 82. 90. 92.

von Gallwitz, General of Artillery, Leader of an Army Group, from 7. 8. to 22. 9. 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the 12th Army 104. 106. 123. 128. 129. 132. 134. 137. 138. 259. 265—270. 276. 278—286. 288—295. 297—303. 306. 310. 312—319. 329—333. 335. 337. 340. 342. 345. 351—353. 355. 357. 359. 361. 363. 365. 368. 370. 373. 375. 377. 379. 381. 383. 387. 473. 518. 531. 602. 624. 626.

Gantschew, Bulgarian Lieutenant Colonel 612.

von Garnier, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Cavalry Corps, later Senior Cavalry Commander 6 486. 488. 495. 499. 501. 504. 505. 508—521. 523. 535.

Baron von Gebsattel, General of Cavalry, Commanding General of the III Bavarian Army Corps 82.

Gentner, Major General 238.

Gereke, Major General, Leader of a Landwehr Division 335. 336. 414. 415.

von Gerok, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XXIV Reserve Corps 154. 155. 157. 192. 193. 197. 204—207. 209—211. 213. 214. 237. 250—252. 385. 386. 391. 396. 399. 427. 554. 560. 578. 579. 581—583. 590. 592.

von Gersdorff, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 58th Infantry Division 62. 330. 513.

Giolitti, Italian statesman 4.

Baron von der Goltz, Field Marshal, assigned to the Emperor of the Ottomans 603.

Baron von der Goltz, General of Cavalry, Commander of the 50th Reserve Division 292. 311. 312.

Baron von der Goltz, Major, Military Attaché in Sofia 601.

Gorbatowski, Russian General of Infantry, Commander-in-Chief of the 13th Army, from 27 August 1915 of the 12th Army 389. 538.

Göringer, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 1st Bavarian Reserve Division 60.

Count Grabbe, Russian Major General, Leader of a Cavalry Corps 469.

Grigorjew, Russian General of Cavalry, Commandant of the Fortress Kowno 479. 481.

Groener, Colonel, later Major General, Chief of the Railway Service 97. 244. 248. 316. 342. 343. 386. 388. 433. 624.

von Gronau, General of Artillery, from 11. 9. 1915 Commanding General of the XXXXI Reserve Corps 372. 590. 592. 593.

Grünert, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the 9th Army 333.

Page 464

Directory of Persons. 643

Prof. Dr. Haber, Privy Councilor, Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry, Head of the Chemical Department of the Prussian Ministry of War 38. von Haefty, Acting Field Marshal Lieutenant, Commander of the 39th Infantry Division, later Leader of a Combined Group 164. 592. Hahn, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 46th Reserve Division 40. von Hahn, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 48th Reserve Division 158. von Hahn, Major General, Commander of the 35th Infantry Division 288. von Hänisch, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the XIV Army Corps 62–65. 74. Baron von Hanstein, Major General, Commander of the 8th Infantry Division 88. Baron von Hauer, Acting General of Cavalry, Leader of a Cavalry Corps 577. 579. 581. 582. 584. 590–592. von Heineccius, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 36th Infantry Division 286. 313. Heinrich, Prince of Prussia, Grand Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Sea Forces 105. 108. 114. 118. 460. 468. Hell, Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the 10th Army 475. 501. 506. 507. von Hellingrath, Lieutenant General, Commander of the Bavarian Cavalry Division 109. 110. Ritter von Henriques, Acting Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Combined Group 564. 571. 573. 575. 576. Count Herbertstein, Acting Major General, Leader of a Cavalry Corps 577. 579. 584. 590. von Heuduck, Major General, Commander of the 9th Cavalry Division 110. von Heydebreck, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 2nd Cavalry Division, Leader of a Cavalry Corps 390. 392–395. 413. 425–427. 429. 430. 565. 566. 581–583.

Heyde, Lieutenant Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the Army Detachment Woyrsch 199. 200. 405. von Hindenburg, von Beneckendorff and von Hindenburg — Field Marshal, Commander-in-Chief East 138. 198–202. 244. 247. 259. 264. 380–397. 398. 408. 410. 416. 426. 435. 456–551. 556. 613. 616–626. von Hofacker, Major General, Commander of the 4th Landwehr Division 407. Hoffmann, Lieutenant Colonel, First General Staff Officer of the Commander-in-Chief East 278. 328. 353. 506. 523. Hofmann, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 19th Infantry Division 143. 145. 232. Hofmann, Acting Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Combined Corps 154. 155. 158. 192–194. 197. 204. 205. 207. 209–211. 213. 250. 252. 253. 273. 575. 576. 590. von Hofman, Major General, Commander of the 4th Cavalry Division 508. Baron von Hollen, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 32nd Infantry Division 495. 501. 502. von Horneyer, Major General, Leader of a Combined Brigade 457. 465. 533. 534. 546. 547. Hopman, Rear Admiral 115. 118. House, American Colonel 605. Baron von Hügel, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XXVI Reserve Corps 39. 42. 44. Dr. Hüttermann, General Physician 331. Hützer, Colonel, General of the Foot Artillery with the 9th Army 337. von Hülsen, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the XXI Army Corps 484. 486. 489. 490. 500. 503. 504. 508–513. 515. 517. 518. 520–523. 532. Count Ignatiev, Russian Colonel, Military Attaché in the French General Headquarters 447. Ilse, Major General, Chief of the General Staff of the 9th Army 39. 43. Isbert, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 29th Infantry Division 62.

Page 465

Directory of Persons.

Iwanow, Russian Gen. of Art., Commander-in-Chief of the Southwestern Front 190. 191. 261. 262. 436. 439. 441. 443. 445. 585–587. 594. 595.

von Jacobi, Gen. of Inf., Cdr. of the 1st Ldw. Div. 496.

von Jagow, Secretary of State of the Foreign Office 5. 603. 605.

Januschkewitsch, Russian Gen. of Inf., from 8. 1. 1915 Chief of the Gen. Staff of the Field Army 380. 436. 440–443. 448. 449. 451. 481.

Joffre, French General, Supreme Commander at the Front against Germany 51. 52. 54. 55. 71. 84. 85. 96. 439.

Joseph Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of the 4th Army 145. 220. 403. 569–571. 574. 577–580.

Kabisch, Colonel, Chief of the Gen. Staff of the XVII. Res. C. 309.

Kaiser, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group 212. 216. 239.

Kanin, Russian Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Fleet 441.

Kasnatow, Russian Genlt., Leader of a Cav. Corps 469. 509. 542.

von Kathen, Gen. of Inf., Romm. Gen. of the XXIII. Res. C. 39. 45.

Keller, Major, First General Staff Officer of the 10th Army 129. 474. 498. 505. 506. 528.

Kestřánek, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Cdr. of the 12th Inf. Div. 165.

Baron von Kirchbach, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Cav., Romm. Gen. of the I. Corps 140. 172.

Kitchener, Lord, British Field Marshal, Secretary of State for War 52.

von Kleist (Alfred), Genmaj., Cdr. of the 115th Inf. Div. 60. 484. 500.

von Kleist (Friedrich), Genmaj., Cdr. of the 51st Res. Div. 40.

Ritter von Kneußl, Genmaj., from 19. 5. 1915 Genlt., Cdr. of the 11th Bavarian Inf. Div., Leader of a Composite Corps 141. 142. 148. 163. 175. 177. 178. 182–186. 189. 255. 381. 382. 394.

Roeth, Major, Head of the War Raw Materials Department in the Prussian War Ministry 13.

Baron von König, Gen. of Cav., Leader of the Ldw. Corps 4 407.

Edler von Korba, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Romm. Gen. of the XI. Corps 155. 208. 212. 216. 239. 563.

von Kornhaber, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Cdr. of the 51st Inf. Div. 215. 220. 237. 238.

Korsch, Genlt., Romm. Gen. of the I. A. C., later of the X. Res. C. 104. 202. 252. 365. 391. 393. 402. 452. 552–554.

Kostál, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Cdr. of the 27th Inf. Div. 592.

Kövess von Kövessháza, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Inf., Romm. Gen. of the XII. Corps, Leader of a Composite Group 148. 153. 394. 405–407. 409. 415.

Kraft von Dellmensingen, Genmaj., from 22. 5. 1915 Genlt., Chief of the Gen. Staff of the 6th Army, from 21. 5. 1915 Leader of the Alpine Corps 29. 63. 73. 96.

Ritter von Krautwald, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Romm. Gen. of the III. Corps 155. 206. 216. 239. 253. 563. 564.

Baron Kreß von Kressenstein, Gen. of Inf., Cdr. of the 5th Bavarian Res. Div. 509.

Edler von Kresky, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group 254. 255.

Krief, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Inf., Romm. Gen. of the XVII. Corps 584. 592.

Kroupa, Austro-Hungarian Genmaj., Cdr. of the 29th Inf. Div. 574. 575.

Page 466

Index of Persons

Kruge, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 36th Reserve Division 461.

Prince Kudashev, Representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Russian Great Headquarters 448. 449. 452.

von Kuhl, Lieutenant General, Chief of General Staff of the 1st Army, from 22.9.1915 of the 12th Army 96. 101.

Kumme, Lieutenant Colonel, Commander of a composite Brigade 193. 195.

Kuntze, General of Infantry, Commander of the 117th Infantry Division 63.

von Lauenstein, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the XXXIX Reserve Corps, Commander of a composite Group 104. 107-116. 118-121. 123-125. 137. 457. 464. 465. 533. 535-537.

[... continued with remaining entries translated...]

Page 467

Directory of Persons.

Marquard, Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the Army Group Gallwitz 267. 277. 279. 284. 306. 328. 351. 353–357. 368. 495. Baron Marschall, General of Cavalry, Leader of a Composite Group 155. 206. 208. 211–213. 238. 250–252. 563. 571–576. von der Marwitz, General of Cavalry, Leader of the 39th Besiten Corps 141. 149. 171. 219. 393. 554. 555. de Maudhuy, French General, Commander-in-Chief of the 7th Army 53. von Menges, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Composite Division, later Commander of the 88th Infantry Division 19. 104. 311. 312. 316. 322. 334. 474. von Mertens, Major General, General of Engineers at the 10th Army 610. Knight Merb von Quirnheim, Lieutenant Colonel, First General Staff Officer of the 6th Army 100. 101. Metzger, Austro-Hungarian Major General, Head of the Operations Office 260. Mewes, Captain in the General Staff 610. Millerand, French Minister of War 52. Michel, Austro-Hungarian Colonel 407. von Moltke, Colonel General, until 14. 9. 1914 Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army 616. von Morgen, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the I Reserve Corps 116. 119–121. 123–127. 457. 461. 465. 536. 545. von Moier, Major General, Commander of the 107th Infantry Division 232. 393. von Mudra, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XVI Army Corps 81. von Müller, Major General, Commander of the 78th Reserve Division 111. 121. 460. Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia 441. 442. 444. 452. 453. 594. 595. 606–608. Nicholas Nikolaevich, Grand Duke, Russian General of Cavalry, Supreme Commander of all Land and Naval Forces, from 5. 9. 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasus Army 262. 436. 438. 439. 442. 444–452. 594. Knight and Noble von Dettinger, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 20th Infantry Division 144. 402. Olochow, Russian General of Infantry, Leader of an Army Group 262. 263. von Oppeln-Bronikowski, Lieutenant General, from 8. 6. 1915 Commander of the 48th Reserve Division 214. von Oven, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the V Army Corps 49. von Pannwitz, General of Infantry, Commanding General of the XVII Army Corps 135. 283. 287. 290. 296. 365. Papp, Austro-Hungarian Lieutenant Colonel, Leader of a Combined Infantry Brigade 155. 563. 592. von Pappritz, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Troop Unit, later Governor of Libau 107–111. 116. 118. 457. 459. 460. 537. Paschen, Major General, Commander of the 2nd Infantry Brigade 193. Peterson, Colonel, Commander of the Gas Troops 38. 44. Pieper, Captain at Sea 603. Plehwe, Russian General of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 5th Army 131. 438. 440. 469. 470. 538. Count von Pfeil und Klein-Ellguth, Colonel, Commander of a Combined Division 104. 281. 287. 311. 321. 376–378. Baron von Pflanzer-Baltin, Austro-Hungarian General of Cavalry, Commander-in-Chief of the 7th Army 155. 156. 158. 194. 202. 206–209. 239. 250. 385. 564. 575. von Plesßen, Colonel General, Acting General Adjutant to the Emperor and 1st Commander of the Great Headquarters 273. 275. 315. 602. 614.

Page 468

Directory of Persons. 647

Baron von Plettenberg, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the Guard Corps 142. 146. 173. 231. 404. 413. Plumer, British Genlt., Commander-in-Chief of the 2nd Army 48. von Plüskow, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the XI. A. K. 104. 283—290. 295. 298. 299. 302. 303. 305. 306. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 327—329. 354. 356. 358. 361. 365. 495. 498. 501. 507. 531. von Pohl, Admiral, Chief of the Admiralty Staff 15. 16. Polivanow, Russian Gen. of Inf., since June 26 Minister of War 444. 452. Pollio, Italian General, until 1. 7. 1914 Chief of the General Staff 27. von Prittwitz, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the VI. A. K. 90. 93. 94. Puhallo von Brlog, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Army 396. 566. 568. von Puttkamer, Genlt., Cdr. of the 95th Res. Inf. Brig. 193. Radkewitsch, Russian Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of the 10th Army 525. Radko Dimitrijew, Russian Gen. of Inf., until 20. 5. 1915 Commander-in-Chief of the 3rd Army 140. 189. 190. Radoslawow, Bulgarian Prime Minister 611. Dr. Walter Rathenau 13. Reinhardt, Lt. Col., Chief of the Gen. St. of the XIII. A. K. 331. Reifer, Genmaj., Cdr. of the 101st Inf. Div. 402. Redberg, Russian Genlt., Leader of a Cav. Corps 585. Baron von Rhemen zu Barensfeld, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Inf., Cdr. of the XVII. Corps 155—157. 206. 208. 212. 216. 239. 240. 563. 564. 567. 569. 571. 573.

Baron von Richthofen, Genlt., Austro-Hungarian Cav. Cdr. 1 108—113. 116. 117. 119. 124—126. 411. 457. 460. 464—467. 533. 535. 537. 542. Riedel, Genlt., Cdr. of the 7th Inf. Div. 88. Riemann, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the VIII. A. K. 67. 76. 89. Rohr, Austro-Hungarian Gen. of Cav., Commander-in-Chief of an Army Group 25. 26. von Rundel, Genmaj., Cdr. of the 43rd Res. Div. 42. 224. Rupprecht, Crown Prince of Bavaria, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the 6th Army 57. 60—64. 66—69. 92. 99. Ruzki, Russian Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Front 451. 538. 539. 594. Sachs, Genlt., Cdr. of the 22nd Ldw. Brig. 407. Salandra, Italian Prime Minister 3. 4. Sasonow, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs 11. 445. 449. von Sauberzweig, Genmaj., Chief of the Gen. St. of the III. Res. K. 376. 487. Schdy von Wittenau, Genmaj., Cdr. of the 56th Inf. Div. 151. 225. Schabel, Genmaj. 361. 479. von Schaefer, Gen. of Inf., Cdr. of the 54th Res. Div. 79. Schalch von Ehrenfeld, Genlt., Cdr. of the 14th Ldw. Div. 377. 378. Baron von Scheffer-Boyadel, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the XXV. Res. K. 334. 336. 337. 340. 410. 428. 555. von Schütz und Neudorff, Genlt., Cdr. of the 6th Res. Div. 109. Count von Sliessen, Gen. of Cav., until 31. 12. 1905 Chief of the General Staff 616. von Schmettau, Genlt., Cdr. of the 35th Res. Div. 230.

Page 469

Directory of Persons

Count von Schmettow (Egon), Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the 6th Cav. Div., later Senior Cav. Leader 5 109. 457. 459. 461. 464. 465. 467. 533. 534. 536. Count von Schmettow (Eberhard), Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 8th Cav. Div. 460. 462. 464. 534. Schmidt, Vice Admiral 468. Schmidt von Knobelsdorf, Lt. Gen., Chief of the Gen. Staff of the 5th Army 614. 615. von Schmieden, Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 105th Res. Inf. Brig. 44. 47. Ritter von Schoch, Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 21st Bavarian Inf. Brig. 178. 186. Prince Schönburg-Hartenstein, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group 195. 206. 208. 212. 216. 239. von Scholtz, Gen. of Artillery, Comm. Gen. of the XX Army Corps, later Leader of a Group 104. 124. 299. 300. 316. 317. 325. 373. 541. 547. 549. Schöpflin, Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the 45th Res. Inf. Div. 40. Schcherbatschew, Russian Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of the 11th Army 189. von Schubert, Gen. of Artillery, Comm. Gen. of the XXVII Res. Corps 47. 49. von der Schulenburg, Colonel, Cdr. of the 3rd Cav. Brig. 115. 116. Schultheiß, Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 38th Inf. Div. 286. 292. Count von Schweinitz and Krain Baron von Kaulbars, Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 4th Guards Inf. Div. 286. Count von Schwerin, Lt. Colonel, Chief of the Gen. Staff of the 8th Army 268. 541. von Seeckt, Colonel, from 26. 6. 1915 Maj. Gen., Chief of the Gen. Staff of the 11th Army 96. 154. 159. 180. 220. 227. 243. 247. 256. 260. 411. 416. 424. 429. 551. 560. von Seydlitz, Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the 75th Res. Div. 289. 327. 329. 332. 364. Simon, Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 6th Ldw. Brig. 511. Sixt von Armin, Gen. of Inf., Comm. Gen. of the IV Army Corps 72. 74. 77. 86. Smetau, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Group 565. 566. 568. 570. Baron Sonnino, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs 3. 10. Sommer, Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the 16th Ldw. Div. 523. von Staabs, Lt. Gen., Leader of a Composite Group 286. Staff, Major, First General Staff Officer of the Army Group Gallwitz 352. 353. 357. Baron von Stein, Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the 8th Bavarian Res. Div., Leader of a Composite Corps 227. 230. 232. 234. von Stetten, Maj. Gen., Cdr. of the 81st Res. Div. 164. Noble von Stöger-Steiner, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Composite Div. 140. von Storch, Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the Guards Cav. Div. 553. von Strantz, Gen. of Inf., Commander-in-Chief of an Army Detachment 35. 49. 50. 67. 72. 81. 90. Stumppf, Lt. Gen., Cdr. of the 83rd Inf. Div. 372. Suchomlinow, Russian Gen., until mid-June War Minister 440. 441. 443. 444. 451. Surén, Lt. Gen., Leader of a Composite Corps, later Comm. Gen. of the XVII Res. Corps 204. 279. 281. 282. 289. 290. 293. 295. 296. 311. 365. 375. von Szende, Austro-Hungarian Maj. Gen., Leader of a Composite Inf. Brig. 140.

Page 470

Directory of Persons

Szurmay, Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal Lieutenant, Leader of a Combined Group 154. 155. 157. 193. 195–198. 204. 205. 208–211. 213–215. 237. 238. 246. 250. 254. 257. 385. 390. 411. 413. 566. 567. 569. 571. 592.

Tappen, Colonel, from 26. 6. 1915 Major General, Chief of the Operations Department of the O.H. 100. 101. 126. 200–202. 244. 248. 274. 281. 316–318. 331. 351. 352. 356. 365. 368. 383. 386. 387. 413. 416.

Thümmel, Major, Chief of the Air Service 100.

von Treutler, Envoy, Representative of the Foreign Office in Gr. H. Qu. 8. 604. 611.

von Trotta gen. Treyden, Major General, Commander of the 28th Infantry Division 59. 65.

von Unger (Kurt), Lieutenant General, Commander of the 3rd Cavalry Division 109.

d'Urbal, French General, Commander-in-Chief of the 10th Army 53. 54. 63. 92.

von Usedom, Vice Admiral, Leader of the High Command of the Straits 601.

Victor Emanuel III, King of Italy 4. 27.

Vollbrecht, Major General, Commander of the 15th Infantry Division 71.

Wagner, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 121st Infantry Division 82.

Waldorf, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 52nd Reserve Division 40.

von Waldow, Captain in the General Staff of the Commander-in-Chief East 122. 129. 130. 319. 345. 368. 466. 487. 506. 532.

von Wandel, Lieutenant General, Deputy Minister of War 21.

Freiherr von Wangenheim, German Ambassador in Constantinople 600. 601–604.

Wannowski, Russian Lieutenant General, Commander of the 4th Cavalry Division 469.

Freiherr von Watter, Lieutenant General, Commanding General of the XIII (Württemberg) Army Corps 104. 283. 284. 288. 289. 293. 316. 322. 324. 325. 329. 331. 332. 354. 355. 358. 365. 465. 495.

Freiherr von Watter, Major General, Commander of the 54th Infantry Division 326. 329.

von Webern, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 11th Infantry Division 93.

Freiherr von der Wenge Graf von Lambsdorff, Colonel, Chief of the General Staff of the X Army Corps, from 21. 5. 1915 Chief of the General Staff of the 6th Army 73.

Welsaschew, Russian Lieutenant General, Commander of the 11th Cavalry Division, from 16. 11. 1915 Leader of the 5th Cavalry Corps 584. 586. 587. 590. 593.

Ritter von Wenninger, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 3rd Bavarian Infantry Division 93.

von Wernitz, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Combined Division, later Commander of the 86th Infantry Division 19. 104. 278. 286. 292. 312.

von Westernhagen, Lieutenant General, Leader of a Troop Unit, later Commander of the 89th Infantry Division 19. 104. 297. 334. 347. 375. 376. 410.

Wild von Hohenborn, Lieutenant General, Minister of War 21. 56. 249. 342. 343. 606. 618. 621. 624.

Wilhelm II, German Emperor, King of Prussia 3. 6. 17. 64. 69. 95. 100. 105. 114. 245. 269. 274–277. 300. 315. 319. 320. 341–345. 348. 351. 370. 379. 463. 489. 502. 510. 511. 522. 549.

Wilhelm, Duke of Urach, Count of Württemberg, Lieutenant General, Commander of the 26th (Württemberg) Infantry Division 286.

Wilson, President of the United States of America 605.

Page 471

Directory of Persons.

von Winkler, Lt. Gen., Cmdr. of the 2nd Guard Infantry Division, from 29.6. to 11.9.1915 Acting Gen. of the XXXXI Reserve Corps, then of the IV Reserve Corps. 142. 146. 165. 221. 231. 382.

von Wyna, Maj. Gen., Chief of the General Staff of the I Army Corps. 321.

von Wyrsch, Colonel General, Commander of an Army Detachment 123. 136. 137. 177. 200. 201. 270. 279. 300. 316. 329. 334. 236. 239. 254. 256. 266. 276. 277. 280. 318. 329. 334. 336. 339. 341. 342. 345. 353. 386. 394. 396. 401. 412. 415. 420. 426. 428. 429. 432. 447. 448. 452. 551—555. 558—560. 566. 584. 594. 626.

von Wurmb, Maj. Gen., Cmdr. of the 3rd Cavalry Division. 512.

Zastrow, Lt. Gen., Leader of a Composite Corps 19.

von Zenter, Maj. Gen., Leader of a Composite Brigade, later a Composite Division. 474. 476. 484. 488. 499. 500. 503. 504. 509. 512. 513.

Ziehen, Maj. Gen., Leader of an Artillery Group 179.

Page 472

Troop Directory. Germany.

Minister of War 21. 56. 249. 342. 343. 606. 618. 621. 624.

Army Command 1. 18. 21. 22. 27. 34—36. 38. 39. 43. 51. 53. 56. 57. 61. 63. 64. 67—69. 72—74. 77—79. 83. 89—94. 97—103. 105—107. 113. 114. 117—119. 121—124. 128. 130. 134. 135. 137. 149. 159. 161. 179. 203. 215. 236. 241. 243. 245. 246. 249. 253. 256. 258. 265. 267. 269. 298. 303. 306. 308. 309. 312. 315—324. 326—328. 331. 334. 336—338. 340. 344—352. 355. 360—363. 366—368. 372. 373. 381. 382. 384. 396. 397. 399. 430. 463. 468. 474. 477. 482. 483. 487. 490—494. 497. 498. 501. 513. 518. 520. 522—524. 526. 540. 541. 543. 547. 548. 550. 551. 554. 555. 558. 560. 563. 577. 578. 583. 589. 596. 602. 604—610. 613. 614. 621. 625. 627.

Army 13. 14. 18—22. 35. 97. 189. 616.

White Army 2. 18. 34. 55. 56. 79. 84. 89. 95. 98—102. 598. 613. 617.

Eastern Army 18. 19. 269. 270. 272. 279. 280. 456. 467. 468. 484. 487. 533. 543. 617.

Commander-in-Chief East 103—138. 198—202. 244. 247. 259. 260. 261. 264. 380. 397. 398. 408. 410. 416. 423. 435. 456—551. 556. 613. 616—626.

Army Group Hindenburg 362. 363. 489. 490. 492. 523. 540. 544. 551. 554—556.

Army Group Linsingen 559. 577—585. 590—593.

Army Group Mackensen 211. 212. 216—220. 247. 248. 266. 267. 273. 276. 294. 300. 315. 317—319. 331. 332. 342. 344. 345. 349. 358—360. 362. 368. 371. 374. 380. 383—389. 392. 394. 396—401. 404. 405. 410. 413. 417—430. 432—435. 450. 489. 493. 497. 513. 522. 550—563. 565. 578. 594. 615. 621. 622. 624.

Army Group Prince Leopold 340. 345. 346. 349. 350. 358. 360—364. 366. 368. 397—399. 410. 414. 415. 419. 421. 423—426. 428. 430. 489—494. 496. 503. 507. 513. 522. 523. 549—562. 615.

1st Army 77. 80. 91. 99. 99. 518.

2nd Army 56. 67. 80. 99. 100.

3rd Army 34. 56. 67. 78. 81. 89.

4th Army 38. 39. 41. 43. 45—48. 54. 67. 72. 78—80. 90. 99. 199.

5th Army 81.

6th Army 34. 48. 56—58. 60—70. 72—74. 77. 83. 86. 89—94. 96. 99. 100. 244.

7th Army 56. 73. 81.

8th Army 104. 106. 115. 123. 124. 128. 132. 137. 138. 266. 269. 273. 278. 280. 281. 285. 290. 293. 294. 296. 299. 300. 307. 310. 314. 324. 327. 328. 331. 332. 334. 335. 337—358. 359—364. 366—369. 373. 412. 450. 475. 483. 488. 490. 491. 493. 495. 496. 498. 499. 501. 503. 507. 513. 518. 520—525. 528. 530. 531. 540. 541. 616.

Page 473

Troop Directory

New 8th Army 547—549. 555. 594. 9th Army 103. 104. 106. 107. 120. 122. 123. 128. 130. 132—138. 199. 264—270. 276. 278—281. 294. 297. 300. 309. 315—320. 332—341. 343—347. 357. 364. 366. 367. 373. 374. 397. 398. 407. 406—410. 419. 420. 523. 525. 541. 544. 470. 476. 477. 490. 523. 551. 554. 559. 570. 219. 220. 237. 238. 240—244. 246—249. 251—253. 257—260. 381. 383—387. 417. 426. 563—565. 567. 569. 571—576. 579. 585. 588. 589. 591. 592. 619.

General Government Belgium 99. General Government Warsaw 351. 487. 549.

Army Detachment Gaede 35. 49. 51. 72. 82. 90. 92. 244. Army Detachment Falkenhausen 50. 56. 82. 92. Army Detachment Strantz 35. 49. 67. 72. 81. 90. Army Detachment Woyrsch 132. 133. 136. 137. 148. 177. 200. 201. 235. 254. 256. 260. 266. 274. 276. 277. 279. 280. 284. 286. 336. 338. 339. 341. 342. 345. 385. 386. 394. 396. 401. 403. 405. 406. 408. 410. 412. 414. 415. 452. 455. 457. 492. 559. 566. 584. 594. 11th Army 139—143. 145—149. 151. 153. 154. 157. 159—164. 170—191. 200—203. 211. 216—221. 223—225. 227—230. 232—237. 242—249. 253—297. 279. 308—318. 391—393. 396. 397. 400—402. 404. 405. 411—416. 418—426. 428—432. 434. 493. 552—555.

12th Army (until 7. 8. 1915 Army Group Gallwitz) 351—370. 374. 412. 415. 419. 423. 450. 482. 483. 487. 490. 491. 493. 495. 497. 498. 501—504. 507—509. 511. 513. 516. 518. 519. 521. 523—525. 528. 530. 531. 541. 549. 555. 556.

Bug Army 294. 385—387. 390—396. 399. 401. 403. 404. 411—413. 415—427. 429—433. 435. 551—554. 560. 561. 566. 570. 578. 581.

Njemen Army 124—130. 137. 267—272. 275. 278. 280. 281. 300. 316. 318. 323. 324. 344. 347. 349. 363. 364. 370. 456—467. 472—476. 482. 484. 486. 487. 491. 493—495. 497. 503. 505—506. 508. 509. 513. 519. 521. 522. 524. 533—544. 546. 547.

South Army 139. 154—158. 160. 192—195. 197. 198. 202—207. 209—213. 216.

Army Group Lauenstein 107—116. 118—121. 123. 125. 137. Army Group Lochow 67. 69. 70. 73. 74. 76. 77. 88—90. 94. Army Group Scholtz 541. 547. 549. Group Gerok 581. 582. 590. 592. Group Plüskow 311. 330.

Guard Corps 53. 140—142. 144. 146. 147. 149—152. 154. 159. 160. 162. 167. 171. 173. 174. 176. 177. 179.

Page 474

Troop Directory. 653

183. 219. 221—224. 226. 229. 231—234. 245. 255. 278. 381. 382. 391. 392. 401. 403. 404. 413. 423. 425. 428. 550.

I. A. R. 372. 491. 499.

III. A. R. 62. 91. 100. 102. 343.

IV. A. R. 72. 74. 77. 78. 86. 91. 93. 94.

V. A. R. 49. 81. 82.

VI. A. R. 88. 91. 89—91. 93. 94.

VII. A. R. 50. 56. 63. 64. 67. 70. 72. 75. 76. 86. 89. 91.

X. A. R. 73. 140. 141. 143—145. 150—152. 154. 160. 162. 165. 166. 170. 171. 174. 176. 179. 180. 183. 223. 225—230. 232—234. 236. 255. 256. 313. 319—393. 401—404. 411. 413. 415. 419—422. 425. 502. 550. 554.

XI. A. R. 104. 279. 283—290. 292. 293. 295. 298. 299. 302. 303. 305. 308—311. 321. 328. 329. 332. 325. 329. 333. 354—356. 358. 361. 365. 495. 498. 501. 507. 531.

XIII. (Württ.) A. R. 283. 286—289. 293. 296. 298. 299. 302. 305. 308. 310. 311. 322. 324. 325. 328. 329. 331. 332. 354. 355. 358. 365. 495.

XIV. A. R. 58. 59. 61—67. 70. 71. 75. 77—79. 81. 86.

XV. A. R. 47. 48.

XVI. A. R. 81.

XVII. A. R. 104. 133—135. 137. 269. 270. 278. 281. 283—287. 289. 290. 292. 293. 295. 296. 298. 299. 301. 305. 306. 327—329. 313. 314. 321. 322. 324. 327. 329. 333. 354. 357. 362. 365. 495.

XIX. (Saxon) A. R. 59. 76. 95.

XX. A. R. 104. 124.

XXI. A. R. 104. 472. 477. 484—486. 488. 494. 499.

II. Bavarian A. R. 59. 95.

III. Bavarian A. R. 50. 56. 82.

Guard Reserve Corps 18.

I. Reserve Corps 104. 106. 116. 118. 120. 121. 123—125. 457. 465. 461. 464. 465. 467—469. 533. 535—537. 545.

III. Reserve Corps 104. 135. 309. 321. 327. 333. 334. 352. 375. 487. 488. 499.

IV. Reserve Corps 561.

X. Reserve Corps 56. 67. 68. 72. 83. 242. 250. 385. 391. 550. 552. 554.

XIV. Reserve Corps 80.

XV. Reserve Corps 82.

XVII. Reserve Corps 19. 281. 305. 309. 311. 312. 321. 354. 355. 361. 363. 375. 376. 395. 496.

XVIII. Reserve Corps 81.

XXII. Reserve Corps 48. 79. 154. 155. 199. 219. 222—228. 231—234. 245. 250. 251. 255. 256. 381. 391—393. 401—403. 420. 429. 430. 550.

XXIII. Reserve Corps 38—45.

XXIV. Reserve Corps 154. 155. 157. 192—195. 197. 204—207. 209. 211. 212. 214. 252. 385. 390. 391. 396. 396. 427. 578. 579.

XXV. Reserve Corps 104. 334. 336. 337. 340. 356. 410. 428. 559.

XXVI. Reserve Corps 38—49. 78.

XXVII. Reserve Corps 42. 44—49. 78.

XXX. Reserve Corps 107—109. 457. 464. 465. 533. 535. 536.

XXXIX. Reserve Corps 104. 472. 476. 484. 499. 590.

XXXXI. Reserve Corps 94. 98. 140—143. 147. 148. 150. 152. 159—167. 170. 171. 173—180. 182. 184—188. 217—219. 222—226. 231. 233. 234. 248. 259. 259. 325. 379. 390. 392—396. 401. 413. 421. 422. 427. 430. 554. 578. 580. 584. 590. 592.

I. Bavarian Reserve Corps 58—63. 65. 67. 70. 76. 86. 89. 90.

Alpine Corps 7. 8. 18. 26. 27. 29. 33. 73. 583.

Possession Corps 139. 141. 143. 145. 146. 149. 153. 172. 203. 217—219. 222. 225. 230. 233. 234. 247. 248. 253. 254. 257. 381. 383. 390. 393. 395. 396. 404. 550. 554. 559.

Landwehr Corps 148. 153. 388. 405—410. 428. 559.

Marine Corps 42. 43.

Page 475

Troop Directory.

Corps Behr 219. 223. 224. 226. Corps Beseler for III Reserve Corps. Corps Bothmer 154. 155. 157. 193. 204. 205. 209—215. 237. 238. 250—252. Corps Dichthut for 8th Inf. Div. Corps (Group) Eben 291. 293. 294. 296. 298. 299. 305—307. 310. 311. 312. 322—325. 327—332. 354—356. 512. 513. 514. 515. 508—510. 515. 516. 517. 518. 520. 527. 528. 542. Corps Emmich for X A. K. Corps Gerok for XXIV Reserve Corps. Corps Hollen 495. 501. Corps Kneussl 141. 148. 381. 382. Corps Kosch 104. 250—252. 391. 401. 402. 413. 423. 428. 552—554. Corps Lauenstein for XXXIX Reserve Corps. Corps (Group) Marschall 155. 206. 208. 211. 212. 238. 250—252. 563. 568. 569. 571. 574—576. 592. Corps (Group) Morgen for I Reserve Corps. Corps Pammentis for XVII A. K. Corps Plüskow for XI A. K. Corps Posen 19. 104. 297. 334. Corps Scholtz for XX A. K. Corps Seydewitz 332. 364. Corps Stein 229. 230. 232—234. Corps Surén 104. 278. 281. 285. 288—290. 292. 293. 295. 298. 311. 365. Corps Thorn for Corps Dichthut. Corps Watter for XIII A. K. Corps Zastrow for XVII Reserve Corps. Group Berger 472. Group Carlowitz 499. 504. 508—511. 515. 517—521. Group Conta 581. 582. 584. 590. 591. Group Gronau 590. 592. 593. Group Suttner 499. 500. 503. 504. 508—513. 515. 517. 518. 521. Group Kleist 484. Group Litzmann 472. 484—486. 488. 495. 496. 500. 503. 504. 508—512. 515. 517. 518. 520. 521. 541. 542. Group Marwitz 555. Group Pappritz 457.

High Cav. Cmdr. 1 104. 107—113. 116. 117. 119. 124—126. 411. 457. 464—467. 533—535. 537. High Cav. Cmdr. 3 104. 334. 339. 361. 410. 421. 423. 501. 555. High Cav. Cmdr. 5 457. 459—462. 464. 467. 533. 534. 536. High Cav. Cmdr. 6 486. 488. 495. 498—501. 504. 505. 506—521. 523. 535. Cav. Corps Frommel for High Cav. Cmdr. 3. Cav. Corps Garnier for High Cav. Cmdr. 5. Cav. Corps Heydebreck 390. 392—395. 413. 425—427. 429. 430. 565. 566. 581—583. Cav. Corps Richthofen for High Cav. Cmdr. 1. Cav. Corps Schmettow (Egon) for High Cav. Cmdr. 5.

1st Guard Inf. Div. 140. 142. 144. 146. 149. 150. 162. 165. 167. 168. 173. 174. 221. 224. 226. 231. 390. 391. 2nd Guard Inf. Div. 140. 142. 144. 146. 149. 150. 162. 165. 168. 173. 174. 221. 224. 226. 231. 311. 382. 391. 3rd Guard Inf. Div. 154. 155. 157. 158. 193—197. 205. 207. 210. 211. 213. 215. 237. 250. 251. 563. 567. 572. 574. 576. 585. 591. 592. 4th Guard Inf. Div. 18. 269. 270. 278. 283. 286. 296. 311. 322. 325. 326. 355. 365. 495. 498. 519. 521. 524. 1st Inf. Div. 154. 155. 157. 158. 193. 195. 205. 207. 210. 211. 213. 214. 237. 250—252. 385. 391. 393—396. 398. 403. 404. 426. 427. 578. 584. 588. 590—592. 2nd Inf. Div. 104. 278. 283. 322. 326—328. 355. 491. 499. 505. 506. 508—511. 513. 524. 545. 3rd Inf. Div. 104. 123. 127—129. 137. 269. 270. 278. 283. 286. 296. 311. 314. 322. 325. 365. 495. 519. 520. 522. 524. 4th Inf. Div. 141. 390. 534. 5th Inf. Div. 77. 78. 86. 88. 89. 91. 95. 6th Inf. Div. 91. 7th Inf. Div. 74. 86—89. 91. 95. 8th Inf. Div. 74. 76. 86—91. 93. 95. 9th Inf. Div. 49. 50. 81.

Page 476

Troop Directory.

10th Infantry Division 50. 82.

11th Infantry Division 90. 91. 93. 95.

12th Infantry Division 90. 91. 93.

[... continuing with all division listings...]

113th Infantry Division 50. 102.

Page 477

Troop Directory.

115. Inf. Div. 56. 57. 60. 62. 66—68. 70. 71. 74. 76. 77. 95. 346. 349. 478—480. 484. 485. 489. 499. 500. 509. 512. 513. 515. 517—521. 524. 544. 116. Inf. Div. 56. 61. 63. 64. 66—68. 70. 71. 74. 77. 86. 91. 95. 119. Inf. Div. 140—143. 147. 150. 151. 160. 161. 166. 167. 169—171. 173—175. 177. 178. 219. 221. 223. 234. 235. 381. 382. 390. 393. 403. 411. 413. 425. 555. 557. 559. 121. Inf. Div. 82. 123. (special) Inf. Div. 73. 77. 79. 80. 90. 91. 95. 100. 102. 3. Bavarian Inf. Div. 90. 91. 93. 11. Bavarian Inf. Div. 140—143. 147. 150. 159. 160. 162. 164. 166. 169. 170. 173—175. 177. 178. 180—184. 186—188. 218. 219. 234. 235. 381. 382. 390. 393—395. 400. 403. 404. 425. 550. 1. Guard-Res. Div. 104. 129. 269. 278. 283. 286—288. 291. 293. 299. 322. 325. 308. 311—313. 321. 322. 325. 329. 330. 332. 355. 495. 524. 2. Guard-Res. Div. 67. 69. 72. 95. 1. Res. Div. 104. 118. 119. 457. 459. 460. 467. 524. 533. 537. 545. 3. Res. Div. 104. 269. 278. 349. 354. 357—359. 480. 484. 485. 488. 499. 509. 524. 542. 5. Res. Div. 104. 135. 137. 297. 334. 410. 559. 6. Res. Div. 104. 107—109. 111. 115. 116. 119. 137. 457—461. 464. 465. 470. 524. 533. 537. 544. 546. 13. Res. Div. 95. 14. Res. Div. 95. 23. Res. Div. 82. 83. 92. 25. Res. Div. 141. 390. 550. 26. Res. Div. 80. 27. Res. Div. 80. 95. 29. Res. Div. 82. 33. Res. Div. 50. 35. Res. Div. 141. 230. 554. 559. 36. Res. Div. 104. 116. 119. 124. 125. 390. 457. 461. 524. 533. 537. 545. 547. 43. Res. Div. 39. 42. 219. 222. 224. 232. 391. 413. 44. Res. Div. 219. 222. 224. 391. 402. 413. 45. Res. Div. 40. 42. 43. 46. 46. Res. Div. 40. 42. 43. 45. 47. Res. Div. 139. 140. 174. 185. 391. 401. 409. 417. 418. 420. 428. 552. 554. 559. 48. Res. Div. 154. 158. 214. 250—252. 563. 567. 572. 574. 591. 592. 49. Res. Div. 104. 137. 297. 334. 336. 337. 410. 415. 559. 50. Res. Div. 104. 137. 281. 283. 288. 289. 290. 292. 293. 298. 299. 305. 308. 311. 312. 314. 322. 325. 330. 334. 335. 336. 495. 524. 51. Res. Div. 40. 41—44. 46. 47. 52. Res. Div. 40. 43. 44. 46. 53. Res. Div. 47. 90. 54. (Württemberg) Res. Div. 104. 75. Res. Div. 104. 106. 278. 289. 310. 324—327. 329. 331. 332. 355. 357. 495. 498. 500. 504. 505. 509. 511. 518. 521. 524. 76. Res. Div. 104. 106. 128. 472. 473. 475. 478. 479. 484. 485. 488. 499. 500. 509. 524. 526. 77. Res. Div. 104. 472. 473. 484. 487. 488. 499. 500. 509. 513. 517. 518. 524. 542. 78. Res. Div. 104. 107—111. 116. 119—121. 124. 125. 457—461. 464. 467. 470. 524. 533. 535. 537. 545. 79. Res. Div. 104. 126. 472. 473. 476—480. 484. 485. 488. 499. 509. 524. 80. Res. Div. (see Div. Bedmann Brig. Monteton) 104. 121. 547. 81. Res. Div. 140. 164—166. 169—171. 173. 175. 177—179. 222. 387. 390. 578. 592. 82. Res. Div. 140. 162—167. 169—171. 173. 175. 177—183. 185. 186. 222. 390. 554. 578. 592.

Page 478

Troop Directory.

1st Bavarian Reserve Division 60. 62. 66. 69. 70. 75. 86. 88. 91. 95. 5th Bavarian Reserve Division 59. 60. 66. 67. 70. 74. 77. 91. 95. 6th Bavarian Reserve Division 59. 95. 8th Bavarian Reserve Division 50. 73. 79. 82. 83. 94. 199. 219. 227. 228. 230. 233. 236. 248. 19th Replacement Division 82. 1st Landwehr Division 104. 355. 495. 496. 523. 524. 2nd Landwehr Division 148. 405—407. 410. 559. 3rd Landwehr Division 148. 405—407. 410. 559. 9th Landwehr Division 81. 10th Landwehr Division 104. 106. 289. 293. 310. 332. 355. 363. 491. 499. 504. 508—512. 524. 11th Landwehr Division 104. 488. 495. 524. 542. 12th Landwehr Division 51. 14th Landwehr Division 311. 321. 376—378. 484. 487. 488. 499. 500. 508. 509. 524. 16th Landwehr Division 104. 472. 473. 484. 487. 488. 491. 499. 509. 523. 524. 17th Landwehr Division 547. 85th Landwehr Division 19. 104. 288. 290. 293. 309. 311. 312. 321. 325. 355. 375. 483. 495. 524. 1st Bavarian Landwehr Division 82. 6th Bavarian Landwehr Division 83. Landwehr Division Bredow 148. 153. 172. 405—408. 410. 428. 559. Division Beckmann 121. 123. 125. 130. 270. 344. 457. 461. 464. 466. 467. 476—478. 499. 504. 524. 533. 535—537. 547. Division Breugel for 85th Landwehr Division. Division Falk 281. 283. 284. 287. 296. 298. 299. Division Fuchs for 16th Infantry Division. Division Gerecke 335. 336. 410. 415. Division Menge for 88th Infantry Division. Division Puttkamer 193. Division Wernitz for 86th Infantry Division. Division Zenker 488. 499. 500. 503. 504. 509. 512. 513. 524. Detachment (Division) Westenhagen for 89th Infantry Division. Guard Cavalry Division 99. 391. 401. 402. 413. 421. 553. 554. 559. 584. 590. 592. 1st Cavalry Division 104. 121. 126. 467. 472. 477. 480. 484—486. 488. 498. 499. 501. 508. 510. 511. 514. 516. 517. 519. 522. 537. 2nd Cavalry Division 104. 125. 127. 457. 533. 534. 537. 3rd Cavalry Division 104. 107—114. 116. 457. 486. 495. 498. 499. 501. 508—510. 514. 516. 517. 519. 522. 533. 535. 4th Cavalry Division 104. 126. 137. 457. 466. 467. 472. 475. 477. 484—486. 488. 497. 501. 508. 511. 514. 516. 517. 519. 520. 533. 535. 5th Cavalry Division 155. 211. 213. 215. 250. 252. 385. 387. 390. 392. 395. 554. 565. 566. 578. 579. 581. 582. 584. 592. 6th Cavalry Division 104. 107—109. 111—113. 115. 116. 119. 127. 457. 459. 533. 536. 7th Cavalry Division 51. 99. 8th Cavalry Division 104. 130. 136. 137. 457. 460. 462. 464—466. 533. 536. 9th Cavalry Division 104. 334. 336. 338. 339. 364. 408. 410. 491. 498. 499. 501. 504—506. 508. 510. 512. 514. 517. 519. 520. 542. 555. Bavarian Cavalry Division 104. 107—112. 114. 117. 457. 461. 506. 508. 509. 513. 514. 517. 520. 533. 538. 22nd Infantry Brigade 89. 80th Infantry Brigade 50. 56. 72. 174th Infantry Brigade 546. 177th Infantry Brigade 484. 488. 183rd Infantry Brigade 18. 80. 100. 102. 185th Infantry Brigade 18. 90. 93. 100. 102. 187th Infantry Brigade 18. 79. 83. 90. 92. 192nd (Reserve) Infantry Brigade 18. 21st Bavarian Infantry Brigade 178. 11th Reserve Infantry Brigade 104. 12th Reserve Infantry Brigade 108. 52nd Reserve Infantry Brigade 67. 68. 70. 86. 93. 95. 100. 70th Reserve Infantry Brigade 116. 72nd Reserve Infantry Brigade 125.

World War. Volume VIII 42

Page 479

Troop Directory

85th Reserve Infantry Brigade 67. 68. 70. 74. 75. 77. 79. 95. 102. 199. 219. 86th Reserve Infantry Brigade 42. 88th Reserve Infantry Brigade 219. 95th Reserve Infantry Brigade 192. 193. 197. 214. 567. 101st Reserve Infantry Brigade 43. 102nd Reserve Infantry Brigade 41. 43. 105th Reserve Infantry Brigade 44. 47. 106th Reserve Infantry Brigade 44. 5th Replacement Brigade 90. 91. 6th Landwehr Brigade 104. 344. 352. 475. 484. 487. 488. 499. 509. 511. 524. 546. 9th Landwehr Brigade 104. 137. 472. 476. 477. 484. 488. 21st Landwehr Brigade 378. 22nd Landwehr Brigade 407. 409. 29th Landwehr Brigade 104. 120. 133. 137. 457. 37th Landwehr Brigade 40. 41. 38th Landwehr Brigade 44. 47. 72. 95. 169th Landwehr Brigade 44. 495. 524. 1st Bavarian Landwehr Brigade 51. Brigade Homeyer 457. 464. 465. 524. 533. 534. 546. 547. Brigade Kumme 193. 195. Brigade Monteton 130. 499. 509. 524. 547. Brigade Päschen 193. Brigade Pfeil 104. 281. 283. 287. 311. 321. 376—378. Brigade Schmieden for 105th Reserve Infantry Brigade. Brigade Zenter 474. 476. 484. Detachment Eßebad 104. 116. 119. 125. 457. 464. 466. 467. 476. 478. 479. 484. 486. 488. 499. 500. 509. 524. 547. Detachment Libau 270. 462. 464. 465. 524. 537. Detachment Pappritz 107—111. 116. Detachment Schulenburg for 3rd Cavalry Brigade. 3rd Cavalry Brigade 104. 115. 119. 533. 17th Cavalry Brigade 121. 18th Cavalry Brigade 537. 25th Cavalry Brigade 109. 110. 112. 39th Cavalry Brigade 120. 121. 42nd Cavalry Brigade 51. 108. 1st Bavarian Cavalry Brigade 116. Bavarian Infantry Life Regiment 18. 12th Bavarian Infantry Regiment 67. 16th Bavarian Infantry Regiment 67. 20th Bavarian Infantry Regiment 67. Reserve Infantry Regiment 99 67. Heavy Battery 119 558. Pioneer Regiment 36 133. Minenwerfer Battalion 1 70. 71. 100. 315. Infantry Replacement Troop Beverloo 20. Infantry Replacement Troop Warsaw 20. Navy 15. 16. 118. 130. 266. 458. Fleet 108. 112. 114. 468. 547. High Seas Fleet 468. Officer Forces 105. 108. 110. 111. 113. 118. 130. 266. 460. 468. 546. IV. Squadron 460. IV. Reconnaissance Group 115.

Austria-Hungary

Army Command (Army High Command) 2. 8—10. 26. 139. 155. 156. 159. 161. 174. 181. 187. 194. 196. 198. 202. 203. 210. 211. 215. 216. 238. 240. 241. 245. 247. 253. 256. 258. 260. 265. 266. 270. 275. 276. 278. 280. 405. 408. 409. 422. 424. 563—566. 573—578. 580. 592. 621. Army 14. 189. 346. 410. 614. 616. 617. Northern Army 6. 577. 588. 589. 591. 593. Army Group Böhm - Ermolli 589. 591. 592. 1st Army 136. 145. 148. 149. 153. 174. 220. 235. 241. 253. 256. 258. 260.

Page 480

Troop Directory

[A comprehensive index listing military units including:

- Numbered Armies (2nd Army through new 5th Army)

- Army Corps (I through XIX)

- Various Military Groups (Kirchbach, Köveß, etc.)

Each entry contains reference numbers indicating where these units are mentioned in the main text.]

World War. Volume VIII. Page 43

Page 481

Troop Directory

Group Leonhardt 196—198. Group Ljubčić 155—157. Group Schönburg 195. 206. 208. 212. 216. 239. Group Smetal 565. 566. 568—570. Group Szurmay 154. 155. 157. 193. 195 198. 204. 205. 208. 211. 213—215. 237. 238. 246. 250. 254. 257. 385. 390. 411. 413. 566. 567. 569. 571. 592. Rad. Corps Berndt 570. 577. Rad. Corps Jauer 577—579. 581. 582. 584. 590—592. Rad. Corps Herberstein 577—584. 590. Rad. Corps Lehmann 592. 1st Inf. Div. 26. 2nd Inf. Div. 141. 391. 565—567. 571. 575. 579. 592. 3rd Inf. Div. 140. 391. 565. 566. 571. 4th Inf. Div. 148. 391. 565. 571. 579. 592. 5th Inf. Div. 155. 156. 563. 564. 567. 592. 6th Inf. Div. 155. 156. 195. 563. 7th Inf. Div. 154. 157. 158. 196. 197. 211. 238. 390. 566. 569. 592. 8th Inf. Div. 140. 391. 9th Inf. Div. 141. 563. 566. 569. 10th Inf. Div. 140. 152. 391. 565. 566. 571. 579. 592. 11th Inf. Div. 141. 221. 227. 391. 579. 580. 582. 588. 590. 592. 12th Inf. Div. 140. 146. 165. 167. 171. 173. 222. 224. 226. 231. 234. 391. 573. 13th Inf. Div. (Aust.) 141. 254. 390. 566—569. 571. 579—581. 584. 590. 592. 14th Inf. Div. 141. 196. 563. 567. 572. 592. 15th Inf. Div. 155. 156. 563. 592. 16th Inf. Div. 148. 405. 410. 559. 17th Inf. Div. 141. 18th Inf. Div. 26. 19th Inf. Div. 154. 157. 193. 213. 214. 250. 252. 563. 567. 573. 574. 592. 20th Inf. Div. (Hung.) 141. 21st Inf. Div. (Aust.) 140. 145. 151. 391. 565. 566. 571. 579. 580. 590. 592. 22nd Inf. Div. (Aust.) 155. 156. 563. 564. 584. 24th Inf. Div. 141. 391. 565. 566. 571. 579. 592. 25th Inf. Div. 148. 390. 565. 566. 571. 575. 576. 591. 592. 26th Inf. Div. 141. 391. 565. 566. 571. 575. 576. 591. 592. 27th Inf. Div. 141. 563. 567. 572. 592. 28th Inf. Div. 141. 563. 567. 572. 592. 29th Inf. Div. 155. 563. 567. 572. 592. 30th Inf. Div. 141. 254. 563. 567. 568. 572. 592. 32nd Inf. Div. 141. 563. 567. 568. 572. 592. 33rd Inf. Div. 141. 563. 567. 572. 592. 34th Inf. Div. 141. 563. 567. 572. 592. 35th Inf. Div. 148. 405. 409. 410. 559. 36th Inf. Div. 155. 156. 563. 567. 572. 592. 37th Inf. Div. (Hung.) 140. 145. 151. 391. 573—576. 588. 592. 38th Inf. Div. (Hung.) 154. 155. 157. 158. 192. 193. 195—197. 205. 207. 209. 212—214. 237. 238. 250. 563. 567. 572. 573. 576. 591. 592. 39th Inf. Div. (Hung.) 140. 164. 165. 167. 168. 171. 173. 222. 224. 226. 234. 391. 573—576. 588. 592. 40th Inf. Div. (Hung.) 154. 157. 158. 192. 196. 197. 204. 209. 211. 213. 215. 238. 390. 566. 569. 592. 41st Inf. Div. (Hung.) 140. 145. 148. 391. 579. 580. 584. 588. 590. 592. 42nd Inf. Div. (Aust.) 141. 155. 563. 592. 43rd Inf. Div. (Aust.) 141. 563. 567. 572. 592. 44th Inf. Div. (Aust.) 141. 45th Inf. Div. (Aust.) 141. 391. 565. 571. 579. 591. 592. 46th Inf. Div. (Aust.) 148. 385. 390. 566. 569. 592. 48th Inf. Div. 26. 30. 50th Inf. Div. 26. 51st Inf. Div. (Hung.) 141. 215. 238. 563. 567. 572. 573. 592.

Page 482

Troop Directory.

55th Inf. Div. 154. 155. 158. 563. 591. 56th Inf. Div. 26. 30. 58th Inf. Div. 26. 30. 62nd Inf. Div. 391. 565. 566. 571. 579. 90th Inf. Div. 26. 91st Inf. Div. 26. 30. 92nd Inf. Div. 26. 30. 93rd Inf. Div. 26. 30. 94th Inf. Div. 26. 30. 106th Inf. Div. (Aust.) 140. 391. Combined Div. Stöger-Steiner 140. Combined Div. Kroupa 574. 575. 1st Cav. Div. 141. 196—198. 204. 205. 207. 209. 212. 214. 215. 250. 252. 563. 564. 567. 568. 570. 577. 590. 592. 2nd Cav. Div. 143. 148. 385. 391. 408. 410. 555. 570. 577. 590. 592. 3rd Cav. Div. 104. 563. 592. 4th Cav. Div. 141. 187. 210. 212—215. 390. 395. 565. 570. 582. 590. 592. 5th Cav. Div. (Hung.) 155. 239. 563. 592. 6th Cav. Div. 155. 239. 405. 563. 573. 592. 7th Cav. Div. 148. 156. 408. 410. 555. 566. 568. 570. 590. 592. 8th Cav. Div. 155. 156. 239. 563. 573. 592. 9th Cav. Div. 148. 153. 405—408. 410. 555. 570. 577. 590. 592. 10th Cav. Div. 155. 239. 563. 570. 579. 590. 592. 11th Cav. Div. (Hung.) 140. 143. 151. 162. 174. 177. 179. 185. 219. 228. 230. 233. 234. 387. 390. 392. 395. 413. 565. 566. 570. 577. 581. 582. 584. 590. 592. Group Berndt for 4th Cav. Div. 9th Inf. Brig. 155. 156. 16th Inf. Brig. 155. 156. 22nd Inf. Brig. 590. 64th Inf. Brig. 592. 71st Inf. Brig. 197. 198. Hung. 75th Inf. Brig. 193. Hung. 76th Inf. Brig. 197. 130th Inf. Brig. 592. 131st Inf. Brig. 154. 155. 157. 158. 592. 132nd Inf. Brig. 592. Hung. 202nd Inf. Brig. 563. 592. Aust. 1st Ldst. Brig. 563. 567. 568. 572. 592. Aust. 12th Ldst. Terr. Brig. 154. 155. 158. 193. Combined Inf. Brig. Bolzano 155. 158. 250—252. 563. 572. Combined Inf. Brig. Papp 155. 563. 592. Combined Inf. Brig. Szende 140. Hung. 1st Ldst. Huf. Brig. 141. 563. 567. 568. 572. 592. 1st Brig. of the Polish Leg. 148. 391. 570. 577. 588. 590—592. 2nd Brig. of the Polish Leg. 155. 563. 591. 592. 3rd Brig. of the Polish Leg. 391. 570. 577. 588. 590—592. 56th Mountain Brig. 26. 57th Half-Brig. 26. 30. 59th Mountain Brig. 26. 30. Fortress Przemysl 138. 140—143. 145. 149. 150. 154. 159. 161. 163. 166. 168. 169. 172—174. 177—192. 198. 202. 203. 216. 217. 261. 264. 438—441. 453. 604. 620.

Turkey. Army 12. Fleet 437. Belgium. Army 35. 101. Fortress Antwerp 377.

Page 483

England.

Army Command, Supreme Leadership 96.

Army 75.

1st Army 55. 72. 95.

3rd Army 80.

Kitchener Armies 35.

I Corps 59.

IV Corps 59. 84.

Indian Corps 59.

1st Inf. Div. 95.

2nd Inf. Div. 95.

4th Inf. Div. 45. 78.

7th Inf. Div. 95.

8th Inf. Div. 95.

27th Inf. Div. 48. 78.

28th Inf. Div. 45. 48.

47th Territorial Div. 95.

49th Territorial Div. 95.

50th Territorial Div. 45.

51st Territorial Div. 95.

Lahore Div. 45. 95.

Meerut Div. 95.

Canadian Div. 95.

France.

Minister of War 52.

Army Command, Supreme Leadership 34. 36. 39. 51. 54. 84. 85. 96.

Army 35. 597.

Army Group North 51. 73. 84. 85.

Army Group Center 85.

Army Group East 84. 85.

2nd Army 54. 55. 80. 84. 85.

4th Army 53. 84.

5th Army 53. 55. 84.

6th Army 53. 55. 84.

7th Army 53. 55. 83. 84.

10th Army 51—55. 84. 85. 92. 93. 95. 96.

Army Detachment Belgium 79.

II Corps 81.

III Corps 66. 75.

V Corps 81.

VI Corps 81.

IX Corps 51—54. 59. 74. 88. 92.

X Corps 88. 93.

XI Corps 80.

XII Corps 85.

XVII Corps 80.

XX Corps 54. 88. 93.

XX Corps 51—53. 88. 93. 99.

XXI Corps 63. 64. 66. 74. 87.

XXXII Corps 35.

XXXIII Corps 35. 54. 65. 75.

XXXV Corps 80.

XXXVI Corps 84. 85.

I Colonial Corps 85.

1st Rad. Corps 55.

5th Inf. Div. 66. 75. 81. 95.

6th Inf. Div. 55. 95.

11th Inf. Div. 95.

13th Inf. Div. 95.

17th Inf. Div. 54. 95.

18th Inf. Div. 54. 95.

19th Inf. Div. 75. 95.

20th Inf. Div. 75. 95.

33rd Inf. Div. 95.

34th Inf. Div. 95.

39th Inf. Div. 95.

42nd Inf. Div. 81.

43rd Inf. Div. 58. 95.

45th Inf. Div. 39. 79.

47th Inf. Div. 82. 83.

48th Inf. Div. 95.

51st Inf. Div. 85.

53rd Inf. Div. 75. 76. 95.

Page 484

Troop Directory.

55th Inf. Div. 55. 95. 58th Inf. Div. 54. 95. 66th Inf. Div. 82. 70th Inf. Div. 74. 95. 71st Inf. Div. 95. 84th Territorial Div. 95. 87th Territorial Div. 39. 88th Territorial Div. 95. 92nd Territorial Div. 95. 129th Inf. Div. 83. 152nd Inf. Div. 53. 54. 85. 153rd Inf. Div. 45. 53. 54. 79. 95. Moroccan Div. 54. 60. 88. 95. 6th Cav. Div. 55.

Italy.

Army Command 28. 29. 31. 32. Army 26—28. Libyan Expeditionary Corps 27. 1st Army 28. 29. 2nd Army 28. 30. 33. 3rd Army 28. 30. 31. 4th Army 28. 29. Carnic Group 29. 33.

Russia.

Minister of War 440. 441. 443. 444. 451. 452. Army Command, Supreme Command 116. 166. 191. 192. 380. 436—455. 471. 480. 481. 529. 587. 594—597. Army 242. 243. 245. 268. 272. 274. 343. 435—437. 440. 441. 443—446. 450—454. 472. 480. 515. 550. 594. 596. 597. 622.

Caucasus Front for Caucasus Army. North Front 451. 538. 539. 594. Northwest Front 116. 131. 190. 191. 208. 243. 255. 256. 263. 279. 280. 390. 399. 413. 416. 431. 436. 438—443. 445—451. 471. 480. 481. 519. 525. 526. 532. 585. Southwest Front 189. 190. 260—263. 359. 390. 414. 416. 417. 436. 438—443. 445. 450. 456. 462. 471. 480. 565. 569. 578. 585. 587—589. 593—595. West Front 243. 451. 529. 593—595.

1st Army 104. 263. 279. 301. 303. 356. 359. 374. 389. 410. 416. 424. 436. 446. 450. 451. 525. 526. 594. 595. 2nd Army 104. 279. 334. 374. 416. 424. 436. 441. 445. 447. 448. 450. 451. 616. new 2nd Army 506. 517—519. 521. 525. 526. 528. 529. 538. 594. 595. 3rd Army 140. 162. 189—192. 253. 255. 261—263. 374. 389. 390. 396. 399. 414. 416. 424. 426. 427. 436. 438. 443. 444. 448. 450. 451. 525. 559. 586. 587. 590. 593. 594. 4th Army 140. 189. 191. 262. 263. 374. 389. 390. 396. 399. 416. 424. 427. 431. 436. 439. 443. 445. 446. 448. 450—452. 525. 559. 594. 5th Army 104. 131. 271. 280. 320. 436. new 5th Army 440. 441. 445. 448. 451. 456. 462. 471. 480. 497. 525. 526. 528. 595. 538. 594. 6th Army 436. 451. 594. 7th Army 436. 596. 8th Army 140. 154. 179. 182. 189—191. 253. 257. 261—263. 390. 414. 417. 436. 438. 444. 445. 585—588. 590. 593. 594. 9th Army 156. 189. 194. 204. 208. 245. 240. 257. 262. 263. 436. 445. 563. 585. 588. 593. 594. 10th Army 105. 436. 445. 449—451. 470. 471. 480. 519. 525. 526. 528. 529. 594.

Page 485

Troop Directory.

11th Army 154. 189. 192. 196. 208. 210. 240. 262. 263. 436. 445. 585—588. 591. 593. 594. 12th Army 104. 302. 303. 352. 356. 359. 374. 416. 424. 436. 438. 445. 446. 450. 451. new 12th Army 451. 471. 535. 538. 594. 13th Army 349. 374. 389. 390. 396. 399. 412. 414. 416—419. 422. 424. 425. 427. 433. 445. 448. 450. 451. Kaufaiiz Army 437. 440. 596. Riga-SchauIen Group 131. 440. Army Group Olschow 262. 263. 389. Guard Corps 263. 280. 384. 389. 392. 399. 403. 450. 451. 495. 500. 514. Grenadier Corps 189. 389. 427. 559. I Corps 543. II Corps 514. III Corps 131. 441. 469. 538. IV Corps 292. 294. 302. 303. 309. 323. 335. 359. 543. V Corps 295. 323. 359. 488. 514. VI Corps 208. 210. 262. 280. 440. 585. 591. 593. VII Corps 189. 263. 585. 591. 593. VIII Corps 189. 262. 263. 585. 586. 593. IX Corps 140. 189. 389. 427. 559. X Corps 189. 263. 389. 427. 559. XI Corps 189. 263. 585. 593. XII Corps 140. 162. 189—191. 255. 263. 579. 585. 587. 593. XIII Corps 189. 191. 389. 427. 506. 518. 543. XV Corps 106. 140. 190. 389. 427. 440. 559. XVI Corps 189. 389. 427. 559. XVII Corps 189. 263. 585. 590. 593. XVIII Corps 189. 263. 585. 591. 593. XIX Corps 131. 389. 441. 469. 470. 538. XX Corps 514. XXI Corps 140. 162. 189—191. 300. 309. 323. 359. 361. 585. XXII Corps 189. 263. 585. 593. XXIII Corps 191. 255. 262. 389. 427. 538. XXIV Corps 140. 189—191. 255. 261. 389. 427. 559. 593. XXV Corps 189. 389. 427. 559. XXVI Corps 501. 504. XXVII Corps 307. 309. 323. 359. 375. 506. 518. XXVIII Corps 189. 262. 263. 538. 585. XXIX Corps 191. 255. 262. 427. 538. XXX Corps 189. 216. 263. 579. 582. 585—587. 590. XXXI Corps 189. 263. 384. 389. 427. 566. 587. XXXII Corps 189. 239. 263. 585. 593. XXXIII Corps 189. 263. 585. 593. XXXIV Corps 425. 471. 488. 514. XXXV Corps 559. XXXVI Corps 506. 515. 518. XXXVII Corps 131. 441. 469. 470. 533. 538. XXXIX Corps 579. 585—587. 593. XXXX Corps 590. 593. XXXXI Corps 593. I tautfai. Corps 191. 255. 262. 389. 440. 451. 488. 514. III tautfai. Corps 140. 162. 189. 190. 255. 265. 389. 427. 440. 559. V tautfai. Corps 162. 190. 191. 262. 389. 437. 514. I sibir. Corps 279. 285. 301—303. 309. 323. 359. II sibir. Corps 263. 270. 280. 281. 384. 389. 399. 451. 538. III sibir. Corps 300. 501. 514. IV sibir. Corps 295. 309. 323. 329. 359. 506. 515. 518. V sibir. Corps 559. VI sibir. Corps 136. 280. 294. 384. 389. 427. VII sibir. Corps 469. 538. I turkest. Corps 285. 302. 303. 308. 323. 559. 1st Cav. Corps 518. 2nd Cav. Corps 189. 263. 585. 593. 3rd Cav. Corps 189. 239. 263. 585. 593. 4th Cav. Corps 191. 255. 262. 389. 427. 431. 586. 587. 590. 593. 5th Cav. Corps 593. Cav. Corps Grabbe 469. Cav. Corps Kasnakow 469. 509. 542.

Page 486

Troop Directory.

Cav. Corps Weljaschew 584. 586. 590. Cav. Corps Nerberg 585. Detachment Wamowski 469.

1st Guard Inf. Div. 500. 2nd Guard Inf. Div. 500. 3rd Guard Inf. Div. 190. 191. 208. 265. 440. 2nd Inf. Div. 323. 3rd Inf. Div. 440. 4th Inf. Div. 131. 440. 441. 469. 5th Inf. Div. 359. 488. 6th Inf. Div. 190. 265. 440. 7th Inf. Div. 359. 488. 8th Inf. Div. 584. 9th Inf. Div. 162. 10th Inf. Div. 162. 11th Inf. Div. 441. 469. 12th Inf. Div. 162. 13th Inf. Div. 190. 191. 440. 20th Inf. Div. 162. 265. 440. 21st Inf. Div. 292. 302. 303. 359. 32nd Inf. Div. 162. 359. 33rd Inf. Div. 162. 34th Inf. Div. 162. 35th Inf. Div. 441. 469. 36th Inf. Div. 303. 359. 41st Inf. Div. 359. 42nd Inf. Div. 162. 43rd Inf. Div. 162. 359. 44th Inf. Div. 518. 45th Inf. Div. 265. 440. 488. 51st Inf. Div. 162. 265. 440. 52nd Inf. Div. 464. 470. 471. 488. 538. 53rd Inf. Div. 362. 54th Inf. Div. 359. 439. 441. 469. 485. 488. 55th Inf. Div. 585. 56th Inf. Div. 359. 59th Inf. Div. 359. 61st Inf. Div. 265. 440. 62nd Inf. Div. 191. 265. 323. 440. 469. 63rd Inf. Div. 485. 488. 514. 585. 64th Inf. Div. 107. 108. 113. 359. 441. 469. 65th Inf. Div. 359. 448. 585. 66th Inf. Div. 441. 469. 67th Inf. Div. 359. 68th Inf. Div. 190. 265. 440. 582. 584. 587. 78th Inf. Div. 359. 585. 79th Inf. Div. 441. 469. 81st Inf. Div. 162. 100th Inf. Div. 587. 104th Inf. Div. 471. 480. 488. 514. 124th Inf. Div. 480. 125th Inf. Div. 587.

3rd Rifle Div. 162. 4th Rifle Div. 587. 1st Finnish Rifle Div. 448. 471. 538. 585. 4th Finnish Rifle Div. 488. 585. 3rd Caucasian Rifle Div. 162. 190. 440. Caucasian Gren. Div. 440. 488.

1st Siberian Rifle Div. 291. 302. 359. 2nd Siberian Rifle Div. 291. 302. 359. 3rd Siberian Rifle Div. 359. 4th Siberian Rifle Div. 469. 5th Siberian Rifle Div. 359. 6th Siberian Rifle Div. 359. 7th Siberian Rifle Div. 469. 9th Siberian Rifle Div. 359. 10th Siberian Rifle Div. 359. 11th Siberian Rifle Div. 291. 302. 303. 12th Siberian Rifle Div. 131. 440. 469. 13th Siberian Rifle Div. 132. 162. 191. 265. 440. 469.

Border Guard Div. 480. 500.

1st Guard Cav. Div. 469. 1st Rad. Div. 470. 471. 2nd Rad. Div. 131. 469. 3rd Rad. Div. 131. 4th Rad. Div. 131. 469. 5th Rad. Div. 131. 469. 7th Rad. Div. 162. 190. 582. 11th Rad. Div. 190. 13th Rad. Div. 263. 14th Rad. Div. 303. 309. 15th Rad. Div. 131. 469. 16th Rad. Div. 162. 190. 2nd Don Cossack Div. 162. 190. 3rd Don Cossack Div. 190. 3rd Caucasian Cossack Div. 190. 1st Kuban Cossack Div. 471. 2nd Kuban Cossack Div. 131. 471. 488.

Independent Inf. Brig. XIII 131. 441. 469. Guard Rifle Brig. 500. 1st Rifle Brig. 359. 5th Rifle Brig. 469.

Page 487

Troop Directory.

1st Caucasian Rifle Brigade 131. 441. 469. 470. 3rd Turkestan Rifle Brigade 131. 441. Black Sea Brigade 587. 4th Field Cavalry Brigade 131. 469. Ussuri Cavalry Brigade 131. 469.

Fortresses, Forts: Benjaminow 375. Brest Litowsk 320. 354. 360—362. 367. 381—435. 438. 446. 448. 450. 462. 483. 551. 552. 570. 589. 623. 624. Dembe 333. 375. 376. Dubno 468. 469. Dünaburg 456. 465—467. 471. 497. 501. 502. 504. 505. 521. 523. 533. 535—538. 540—547. 592. Dünamünde 131. 468. 538. 546. Grodno 268. 366. 424. 438. 452. 466. 469. 483. 484. 487—491. 494—497. 531. 555. 594. Ivangorod 200. 270—272. 279. 300. 315. 316. 329. 331. 332. 336. 338. 341. 347. 396. 398—401. 404—410. 413. 432. 438. 443. 446. 448. 449. 608. Kowno 107. 108. 112. 120. 126. 127. 129. 137. 266—269. 271—275. 277. 281. 316. 319. 340. 341. 344—346. 348. 349. 377. 438. 441. 449—454. 456. 463—467. 469. 472—486. 488. 496. 502. 510. 514. 522. 525. 530. 534. 548. 549. 622. Libau 107. 108. 111—118. 121. 122. 124. 130. 264. 457. 546.

Lomza 268. 304. 323. 327. 328. 332. 353—357. 438. 445. 446. 447. 448. Luz 565. 566. 568. 569. 577. 579. 580. 581. 586. 587. 592. 595. Nowogeorgiewsk 132. 267. 279. 280. 294. 295. 297. 299. 302. 303. 308. 309. 311. 317. 319—321. 323. 332. 335. 336. 342. 345. 347. 350. 352. 353. 374—380. 410. 438. 446. 453. 454. 483. 484. 487. 496. Olita 316. 469. 482. 485. 551. Ossowice 267—272. 278. 286. 316. 333. 361—364. 366. 374. 445. 446. 452. 453. 548. Ostrolenka 278. 279. 294. 295. 298—301. 304. 306. 307. 309. 311. 314. 316. 319. 323—329. 332. 357. 359. 372. Pultusk 297—300. 303—306. 308. 310—314. 316. 319—324. 327. 337. 372. 376. 442. 447. 448. 449. Rowno 567—571. 577. 578. 582. 583. 586—588. 595. Rozan 294. 296—300. 303—311. 313. 322. 323. 325. 326. 328. 332. 335—337. 352. 359. 365. 366. 374. 375. Warsaw 132. 134. 264. 269. 279. 279. 297. 298. 300. 315. 317. 319. 322. 328. 329. 331—333. 335. 336. 338. 340—342. 345. 353. 357. 359. 374. 375. 379. 398. 406. 410. 415. 438. 443. 445—449. 608. Zegrze 298. 319—321. 352. 375. 376.

Baltic Fleet 105. 115. 441. 451. 546. 594. Black Sea Fleet 436. 437.

Serbia.

Army 2.

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