Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I

A comparative study

Edward J. Erickson

Cass Series: Military History and Policy

Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I

This book examines how the Ottoman Army was able to evolve and maintain a high level of overall combat effectiveness despite the primitive nature of the Ottoman state during World War I. The volume is structured around four case studies, at the operational and tactical level, of campaigns involving the Ottoman Empire and the British Empire: Gallipoli in 1915, Kut in 1916, Third Gaza-Beersheba in 1917, and Megiddo in 1918. For each of these campaigns, particular emphasis is placed on examining specific elements of combat effectiveness and how they affected that particular battle.

The prevalent historiography attributes Ottoman battlefield success primarily to external factors—such as the presence of German generals and staff officers; climate, weather and terrain that adversely affected allied operations; allied bumbling and amateurish operations; inadequate allied intelligence. By contrast, in this book Edward J.Erickson argues that the Ottoman Army was successful due to internal factors, such as its organisational architecture, a hardened cadre of experienced combat leaders, its ability to organise itself for combat, and its application of the German style of war.

This innovative new book will be of great interest to students of World War I, military history and strategic studies in general.

Lt Col. Edward J.Erickson, US Army (retired), holds a PhD from the University of Leeds. He is the author of three books and numerous articles on the Ottoman Army during the early twentieth century.

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This book is dedicated to the memory of
Professor Briton Cooper Busch Colgate University 1936–2004
My friend and teacher

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> Neither Russia nor Turkey published official histories, the state structure of both empires having been devastated by the war and subsequent civil war.
>
> (John Keegan, *The First World War*, New York: Alfred A.Knopf, 1999, 449)

It is not unexpected that one of the most respected military historians of our times was unaware that the Turks had published official histories of the operations of the Ottoman Army in World War I. In fact, the Turks produced almost thirty volumes of official history (these will be addressed later in this study), which are seldom seen outside of Turkey. This showcases the idea that, eighty-five years after the ending of the Great War, we still know very little about the Ottoman Army at war.

The origins of this study lie in a conference paper that I delivered to the Israeli-Turkish International Colloquy at Tel Aviv University in April 2000. That paper was titled 'Very Good Indeed: Ottoman III Corps Effectiveness at Gallipoli' and it attempted to explain why the Turks were successful at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. At the time, I had a general history of the Ottoman Army in World War I in press and I had done considerable research on the Turks in that war. But, as a regular army officer, I was struck by the fact that the Ottoman Army did not seem to meet any model of military effectiveness that I knew of. Moreover, the Turks seemed to embody the very opposite of what I thought an effective army ought to look like. I knew that, either I did not know as much about the Ottoman Army as I thought I did, or every theoretical model of military effectiveness was wrong—and more likely the former.

At the conference, Professor Yigal Sheffy (who was then also a lieutenant colonel in the Israeli Army's Intelligence Corps and the co-ordinator of the 2000 Colloquy) encouraged me to seek out a doctoral program to continue my research and writing. Later, my good friend Dr. The Reverend Wayne D.Pokorny pointed me to the universities of the United Kingdom. This led to me to Dr Joe Maiolo, then at Leeds and an editor for *The Journal of Strategic Studies*. Joe put me in contact with Professor John Gooch at the University of Leeds, who was willing to take me on as a research doctoral student. This study would never have reached fruition without the advice and encouragement of these men. For this, I am deeply grateful.

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E.J.E.

Abbreviations

ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
ATASE	Genelkurmay Askeri Tarıhı ve Stratejik Etut Başkanlığı, Ankara,
CAB	War Cabinet
EEF	Egyptian Expeditionary Force
FO	Foreign Office
GHQ, AEF	General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Force
LC	Liddle Collection, Brotherton Library, Leeds, UK
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, USA
NDU	National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington DC, USA
RG	Records Group (NARA)
TC	Türk Cumhurriet—Republic of Turkey
TNA	The National Archives, Kew, UK
WO	War Office

Translations of Ottoman and Turkish sources appear in the bibliography

Introduction

> I did not know, to tell you the truth, that they were nearly as good as they turned out to be.
> (General Sir Ian Hamilton to the Dardanelles Commission, 1916)

This study examines how the Ottoman Army was able to evolve and maintain high levels of overall combat effectiveness relative to the British Army during World War I. Despite the primitive nature of the Ottoman state, the Ottoman Army fought a multi-front war against the British, the Russians, and (sometimes) the French. All of these armies badly underestimated the Turks and suffered defeats at their hands. This underestimation is best illustrated by the words of General Sir Ian Hamilton, who told the Dardanelles Commission, 'I did not know, to tell you the truth, that they were nearly as good as they turned out to be.'[1] The eventual allied victory was long in coming, costly, and incomplete.

Ian Hamilton was one of the few senior British officers to compliment the Ottoman Army on its fighting ability. Turning Hamilton's apologia into a question, one might well ask the question, 'Well then, how good were the Turks?' This study examines Ottoman combat effectiveness relative to its principal opponent, the British Army.[2] Additionally, it seeks to explain and partially answer the broader questions, 'What was the strength of the Ottoman Army and how was it that the Turks managed to field an effective army through four years of war?'

The Ottoman Army in 1914 was viewed as either a liability or as easy prey by most European armies. Even the Germans, with whom the Turks had struck an alliance, tended to see their ally in terms of its deficiencies. However, the Turks turned in an astonishing performance by sustaining themselves for four years in a multi-front war against sophisticated enemies. In November 1918, their army remained on its feet and fighting. The prevalent Western historiography in English attributes Ottoman success primarily to external factors such as the presence of German generals and staff officers; climate, weather and terrain that adversely affected allied operations; allied bumbling and amateurish operations; and inadequate allied intelligence or logistics.[3] Moreover, the Ottoman Army's sole redeeming attribute is generally seen as the bravery and dogged determination of the individual Ottoman soldier to persevere to victory. Internal factors, essential to Ottoman success, such as leadership, command and control, doctrine and training, are scarcely addressed.

The Turks had a multi-ethnic peasant army composed of largely illiterate and non-industrialised soldiers. Sometimes, the Ottoman soldiery could not speak Ottoman Turkish and many even had interests overtly hostile to the empire's continued existence. The overall state of peacetime readiness was poor. There was no established corps of long service noncommissioned officers, nor could the army capitalise on a wave of

popular war enthusiasm (which simply did not exist in the empire in 1914). The army had been badly defeated in the recent Balkan Wars and had used nearly all of its reserve munitions and supplies. There was no money in the treasury to replace these losses and as often as not there was little money to pay the troops. There were shortages of everything. This was an army that by any measure of modern combat effectiveness could not hold the field. Yet, in November 1918, the Turks still maintained a combat-capable army in the field of roughly one million men.

In comparison, Austria-Hungary and Russia also had multi-ethnic peasant armies similar to the Ottoman Army but with strong advantages that the Turks lacked. For example, the Austro-Hungarian Army had a fairly sound industrial base and had significant numbers of literate soldiers. It also had undergone a thorough modernisation programme after its defeat at the hands of the Prussians in 1866. The Russian Army had recent combat experience (in the Russo-Japanese War) and had upgraded its artillery and mobilisation procedures. Moreover, both the Austrians and the Russians had sound general staff systems and a corps of proficient general staff officers. Yet, both of these armies were defeated and collapsed from a generalised lack of combat effectiveness before the end of the war.

Even other nations with more robust strengths suffered from problems related to morale and combat effectiveness. Parts of the French Army notably mutinied in 1917 and refused to conduct offensive operations. The Romanian Army was completely shattered in combat and collapsed. Small Bulgaria, thought to be the most militant of the Balkan states, collapsed in 1918 even though it had not suffered a fraction of the casualties associated with trench warfare.

During the course of World War I, the Turks defeated their British enemies (this term will be used to include Australian, Indian, and New Zealand troops) at Gallipoli and in Mesopotamia in early 1916. These defeats came as such a shock to the British government that two Parliamentary Commissions were convened to examine them. Later the British slowly gained the upper hand and, by the end of the war, were able decisively to defeat the Turks.

The report of the Mesopotamia Commission appeared in 1917 as a result of the humiliating surrender of Major General Townshend at Kut Al Amara in 1916. The report fixed responsibility for the defeat on factors internal to the imperial military system, including errors in command, administration, logistics, and the condition of training and equipment within the Indian Army.[4] The Ottoman Army is not mentioned anywhere in this report as a contributing factor in the Anglo-Indian defeat.[5] In the eyes of the Parliamentary Commission, the reasons for Turkish victory had little to do with the Ottoman Army and its operations.

The first report of the Dardanelles Commission also appeared in 1917. This preliminary report mirrored the Mesopotamia report in highlighting flaws in planning, administration, and logistics. However, because of the political sensitivities of the time, the larger question of who was to blame was deferred until after the war ended. The final report of the Dardanelles Commission appeared in 1919 and was very critical of the whole operation and apportioned blame on a wide scale. It is in this post-war document that the British government grudgingly admitted that ‘An opinion had prevailed, in consequence of the events of the Balkan wars and some recent fighting in Mesopotamia, that the Turkish soldiers had deteriorated as fighting men, but the fighting at Helles and

Anzac during the landing and in the following months proved this to be a mistaken view.'[6] In its conclusion, the commission noted that the troops 'were engaged in trench warfare against an enemy possessing freedom of movement, advantages of ground, and the power of concentration and movement'.[7] Furthermore, 'operations intended to follow the landing were abruptly checked owing to a miscalculation of the strength of the Turkish defences and the fighting qualities of the Turkish troops'.[8] In August 1915, 'Hamilton was confident of success, but was again baffled by the obstinacy of Turkish resistance.'[9]

Arguably, during the first two years of war, the Ottoman Army had higher levels of combat effectiveness relative to the British Army in the Near East. This relationship eroded to equality in the third year of the war as the British Army improved its leadership and operational effectiveness. Relative combat effectiveness was dramatically reversed in 1918 as improved tactical doctrines enabled the British Army to utilise fully its immense superiority. In spite of this, the Turks managed to remain in the field and to continue fighting until the very end of the war.

There is no precise definition for the term 'combat effectiveness'. In this study, combat effectiveness is described as the relative relationship between combatants in their ability to accomplish desired objectives. Conceptually, combat effectiveness focuses on the operational and tactical levels of war or the levels of war at which actual fighting occurs, i.e. campaigns and battles. This is distinguished from military effectiveness, which describes a higher level of war that focuses on how nations plan and wage war. Because this study deals with campaigns and battles, two additional descriptors are necessary and will be used throughout this work. The first is 'operational effectiveness' which is defined as the effective selection of objectives and the effective integration of forces necessary to secure that objective, and the second is 'tactical effectiveness', which is defined as the effective use of specific techniques used to secure objectives.[10]

The elements of effectiveness or the metrics used to measure effectiveness are equally difficult to identify with precision. According to American historian and soldier, Colonel Trevor N.Dupuy, 'the most important elements of combat effectiveness are probably leadership, training/experience, morale, and logistics'.[11] In his broad approach to war in the twentieth century, Colonel Dupuy summarised the most important variables of combat effectiveness. This study, however, is much narrower than the colonel's work and revisions to the important variables are necessary. First, it is important to consider that the battles between the Turks and the British were never campaigns of *Materialschlacht* and were distinctly unlike the campaigns on the western front.[12] Second, most of the actual battles in the Middle East were of limited scope and duration, reflecting lower operational tempos than battles in France.[13] Moreover, throughout the campaigns in the Middle East both Ottoman and British commanders often were logistical paupers because of competing national strategic priorities over which they had no control. With this in mind, this study discounts logistics as a significant factor in battles between the Turks and the British except in the final year of the war. Morale is also discounted because, while morale may have shifted temporarily in isolated circumstances, both the Ottoman and British armies exhibited a consistently high degree of bravery and staying power.

There are other elements of military success that cannot be ignored as important elements of combat effectiveness. The impact of changing doctrines and organisational architecture in the last two years of World War I and the later development of *Blitzkrieg*

warfare stand out as important examples in this regard. As this study reveals, doctrines and divisional structure figure prominently in Ottoman combat effectiveness. Therefore, this study redefines the elements of combat effectiveness on the Turkish fronts as (1) leadership: command and staff, (2) training and experience, (3) operational and tactical doctrines, and (4) organisational architecture.

This study presents four case studies, at the operational and tactical level, of campaigns involving the Ottoman Empire and the British Empire: Gallipoli in 1915, Kut in 1916, Third Gaza-Beersheba in 1917, and Megiddo in 1918. These particular campaigns were selected because of the scale of forces involved, their localisation in time and place, and because they represent the major confrontation between Turks and Britons in a particular year. In each case study, particular emphasis will be placed on examining specific elements of combat effectiveness as these affected that particular battle. These elements are: Gallipoli—leadership, training and experience, and organisational architecture; Kut—leadership and organisational architecture (the expansion of the army); Third Gaza-Beersheba—operational and tactical doctrines; and Megiddo—training and experience, and operational and tactical doctrines. This study is a history, but it is also a comparative analysis of what the Ottoman and British armies did to prepare for combat and how they waged war. As such, its component parts are not complete histories of particular battles and campaigns; rather, its component parts are written to illustrate the mechanics of how armies fight.

This is the first work to integrate fully Turkish and British archival materials, official histories, secondary works, and memoirs of the participants in order to explain why battles were won and lost in the Near East in World War I.[14] In each of the four case studies, the official British histories were examined side by side with their Turkish counterparts. The Turkish official histories are substantial works that compare well with their British and Australian counterparts. For example, the Gallipoli campaign is covered by three volumes with a total of 1,429 pages, 124 colour maps, forty-two organisational order of battle diagrams, twenty-three informational charts, dozens of photographs, and ten reprinted original documents.[15] The Mesopotamian and Egypt/Palestine campaign histories are each two-volume sets and contain about the same number of pages, maps, and charts as the Gallipoli set.[16] To the author's knowledge no complete set of the Turkish official histories exists anywhere in the world outside of the Turkish General Staffs archives and library—making them somewhat of an exotic historical resource.[17]

The study also relies on previously unused archival sources, in particular, the rich holdings of the Turkish Army's General Staff Military History and Strategy Institute (Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etut or ATASE for short). ATASE, located near the Turkish General Staff in Ankara, maintains the historical archives of the Ottoman Army and holds over 1.5 million documents of the army in World War I alone.[18] In addition to the archives, ATASE maintains a large number of unpublished staff studies on army units (divisions and regiments). These staff studies were written by Turkish Army officers and were based directly on Ottoman Army war diaries and records held by the archives division. Access to the military archives remains difficult to this day and redtape restrictions in the archives make research slow and sometimes incomplete.[19] As a result even the smallest amount of new information coming out of the military archives significantly adds to our understanding of the Ottomans at war.

This study also makes use of two further important, but little used, Turkish sources. The first is issues of *Askeri Mecmua (The Military Review),* an official professional journal of the Turkish Army published in the 1930s and 1940s. The *Askeri Mecmua* sometimes contained memoirs and campaign histories written as instructional texts for young active duty officers. Second, the study benefits from a welcome change by the modern Turkish publishing industry in the recent reprinting of a large number of memoirs of many of the Ottoman Army's World War I commanders.[20] This is reflective of a recent overall awakening of public interest by the Turkish people in military history.

It also must be noted what this study is not. It is not about 'military effectiveness'—a higher-level term describing a national effort that includes strategy, weapons development and production, mobilisation of the civilian economy, national will, alliances, fiscal decisions and national debt, the integration of minorities, and other such factors that characterise how a nation, rather than an army, wages war. Likewise, it is not a restatement of the well known problems in efficiency that the Ottoman Army had to contend with such as widespread desertion, inadequate railroads and transport networks, and corruption in civil and military administration. The author acknowledges that the Ottoman state and its army were notoriously inefficient on many levels. However, efficiency is not synonymous with effectiveness and this study examines how the Ottomans achieved success by focusing on what they did right rather than what they did wrong. (The author understands that this approach lends the work a rather pro-Ottoman stance.)

As to the question "Why was the Ottoman Army effective during World War I?" the reasons that evolved over the past eighty years fail to answer fully this question. While bravery may be a factor on an individual basis, it is not a generalised condition and does not, in and of itself, win campaigns. Neither is it likely that a handful of Germans materially shifted entire operational and strategic postures in distant theatres. Moreover, even British parliamentary commissions recognised that British mistakes did not fully explain Turkish victories. Indeed, the answer to this question may well be that the Ottoman Army was successful due to internal factors such as its organisational architecture, its hardened cadre of experienced combat leaders, its ability to train and organise itself for combat, and its application of the German style of war.

1
From the ashes of disaster

> Taking the Turkish Army as a whole, I should say it was militia only moderately trained and composed of tough, but slow witted peasants liable to panic before the unexpected.
>
> (P.P.Graves, 10 November 1914[1])

Appreciations, 1913

The Ottoman Army enjoyed but a single year of peace from the end of the Second Balkan War in July 1913 until the mobilisation of August 1914. The world thought that the rag-tag army that emerged from the Ottoman camps and garrisons at the end of that period was poorly trained, inadequately led, and miserably equipped. In fact, the Turks had used their time well to correct many of the deficiencies uncovered by the disastrous defeats of 1912/13 and, although cloaked by a poor reputation, the Ottoman Army was approaching higher levels of combat effectiveness that would surprise the world.

British opinion regarding the failure of the Ottoman Army to meet modern standards was particularly strident.[2] The British military attaché at Constantinople, Lieutenant Colonel Fredrick Cunliffe-Owen, sent numerous dispatches concerning the ineptness of the Ottoman high command in mobilisation and organisation, the failure of the army to adopt modern methods, and its indiscipline.[3] In his section of the annual 1913 report, Cunliffe-Owen characterised the Ottoman Army's high command as showing 'an absolute incapacity for getting such machinery as there was into order'.[4] An informed visitor to Constantinople in October 1913, Colonel Henry Wilson (the British Army's Director of Military Operations), judged that 'the Turkish Army is not a serious modern army…no sign of adaption to western thoughts and methods. The army is ill-commanded, ill-officered and in rags.'[5] Cunliffe-Owen also noted that the army had not returned to its fixed garrisons of 1912 (causing dislocation and inefficiency) and that the army was deficient in all kinds of equipment.[6] Even the Germans of the newly established German Reform Mission formed similar opinions about the Ottoman Army in early 1914.[7]

In addition to these low opinions, there seemed to be a generalised lack of interest on the part of the West in the internal military affairs of the Ottoman Army itself. The British embassy in Constantinople was focused on the arrival and portfolio of German General Otto Liman von Sanders and on the revitalisation of the British Naval Mission.[8] During the period 1 July 1913 to 1 September 1914, the American Army's military attaché in Constantinople, Major J.M.R. Taylor, sent 159 dispatches to the US War Department, of which only twenty dealt directly with the Ottoman Army.[9] The only foreign intelligence service that actively collected information concerning the Turks was

that of the Russians, who maintained an effective spy ring in the Ottoman capital, and collected materials on the ongoing army reorganisation.[10]

In actuality, this period was marked by a frenzy of military activity on the part of the Turks aimed at restructuring their army and increasing its combat effectiveness in light of the lessons learned from the Balkan Wars.[11] Although the Europeans were aware of the huge reorganisation of the Ottoman Army, they remained largely unaware of the many smaller initiatives in the development of improved training, combined arms tactics, dynamic leadership, staff work, and in the standardisation of tactical operating procedures. Moreover, the West failed to recognise the effect that such endeavours would have on the Ottoman Army.

Institutional response and change

After the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman officer corps became immediately interested in analysing the reasons for their defeat at the hands of the Balkan League. Unusually, this was done in a largely public forum and the most lucid exposition of the disaster came from the pen of Staff Major Asım (later Asım Gündüz), a trained General Staff officer who had served on the Ottoman General Staff during the war. Staff Major Asım published a short two-part book in the fall of 1913 titled *Why Were we Defeated in the Balkan Wars?* that clearly identified nine major reasons for the defeat.[12] These were: political mistakes, deficiencies in military preparations, failure to give priority to the navy, national faults, errors in mobilisation, errors in assembly, errors in strategy, ignorance of tactics, and poor morale in the army. In particular, Asım identified poor linkages between active and reserve units, poor reserve training, incompetent officers, incomplete mobilisation, poor co-ordination between infantry and artillery, and poor co-ordination in moving from march columns into combat as the primary culprits in the army's inefficiency.[13] This book was circulated widely and reflected a rigorous and honest understanding of the Ottoman defeat.[14]

Later in the winter of 1913, Staff Major Mehmet Nuri (later Nuri Conker) gave a lecture at a 1st Infantry Division training conference titled 'Officer and Commander' *(Zabit ve Kumandan)*, which likewise addressed the army's problem in the Balkan Wars. In May 1914, Mehmet Nuri's friend, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal, then stationed in Sofia as military attaché, wrote and published a public response titled *Officer and Commander: A Friend's Private View*.[15] The opinions of these men were similar to those expressed earlier by Staff Major Asım.

The loss of the First Balkan War (October 1912-April 1913) was a disaster of huge consequence for the Ottoman Empire and for the Ottoman Army. The empire lost its productive European provinces (modern Albania, Macedonia, Epirus, and Kosovo) that it had held since the early fifteenth century. Moreover, the army lost thirty-six active and reserve infantry divisions and six army corps headquarters as well as casualties approaching 250,000 men. Equally important, it also lost huge reserves of equipment and supplies. Nevertheless, the Turks were determined to reconstitute and retrain their army as quickly as possible. The architect of the work was Ahmet Izzet Paşa, the chief of staff of the Ottoman Army, who began this undertaking in the fall of 1913.[16]

Ahmet Izzet Paşa began by implementing a radical restructuring of the army on 11 December 1913 called the New Organisation of Active Forces according to Army, Independent Corps and Division Areas.[17] This plan was necessitated by the loss of an entire field army and the recruiting districts in which it was stationed, and by the need to recreate the lost European formations in Anatolia. It began the complex process of returning the army from Thrace to its permanent peacetime garrison homes.[18] The plan was, however, more than a simple restationing plan and imposed significant structural changes on the army as well.

In one sweeping change, Ahmet Izzet eliminated all organised reserve units in the army, with the minor exception of a reserve cavalry corps. The reorganisation was contrary to conventional European practices that relied on organised reserve regiments, divisions, and corps to expand peacetime armies to wartime mobilised strength. This was a direct result of the recent poor performance of the Ottoman Army's reserve formations *(Redif),* which had proven unready in the Balkan Wars. Henceforth, all reserve soldiers reported to mobilisation depots as individuals and not as members of organised units.[19] From there they were to be fed into a personnel pipeline to fill active army units to authorised wartime strength.

In peacetime (after December 1913), active Ottoman Army units of division strength and below were maintained in a cadre status of approximately 40 per cent authorised wartime strength and were to be filled with qualified reservists for major field manoeuvres and for combat.[20] For example, in the summer of 1914, the infantry divisions of the III Corps (the 7th, 8th and 9th) contained an average of 175 officers, 5,000 soldiers, and 700 animals in each division (out of an authorised wartime authorisation of approximately 300 officers, 12,000 soldiers, and 2,300 animals).[21] Upon mobilisation, reservists filled the regiments of all Ottoman infantry divisions to wartime authorisations. Consequently, mobilisation in 1914 did not increase immediately the number of infantry divisions (thirty-six) in the Ottoman Army. In comparison, Germany mobilised thirty-one reserve infantry divisions, France mobilised twenty-five reserve infantry divisions, and Britain mobilised fourteen territorial infantry divisions.[22]

December 1913 also saw the arrival of General Otto Liman von Sanders, the newly designated chief of the German Reform Mission, and about twenty highly trained Prussian and Bavarian General Staff officers. The German mission was to assist the Turks in revitalising their army by forming model regiments that the Turks could emulate. Additionally, several of the Germans were tasked to instruct at the Ottoman War Academy and to serve on corps and army level staffs.

Enver Paşa's reforms

On 3 January 1914, the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress replaced Ahmet Izzet Paşa with one of their own, Colonel Enver Paşa, a young nationalist, who was eager to rebuild the Ottoman Army into an effective fighting force. Within two months Enver involuntarily retired almost 1,300 ageing officers, who he felt were obstructions to modernisation or who were opponents of the Young Turks.[23] This cleared the way for Enver to issue specific instructions for retraining the army in line with correcting the deficiencies outlined by Major Asım six months earlier.

Enver released General Orders No. 1 on 14 March 1914, which contained detailed guidance for the conduct of army troop and unit training at the tactical level.[24] The first section of the order dealt with the imperative to exercise direct leadership from the front. Section two dealt with tactical instructions for moving from march columns rapidly into combat formations, offensive operations and immediate counter-attacks, defensive operations, including rapid entrenching, integration of machine guns, and the development of effective artillery fire support. These measures were to be integrated immediately into the training of the army and demonstrated institutional willingness to address problems in a meaningful way.[25] Significantly, General Orders No. 1 showcased a newly found awareness by the Ottoman Army of the importance of firepower by stressing the imperative of quickly establishing combined arms fire superiority over the enemy. The importance of this document and its impact on the Ottoman Army's operations will be shown in Chapters 2 and 3.

In contrast to Enver's tactical thinking it may be useful, at this point, to compare contemporary British tactical thinking as illustrated by the writing of Captain J.F.C.Fuller, who was student at the Staff College in Camberley in 1914. Between January and June 1914 (simultaneously with Enver's General Orders No. 1), Fuller wrote three papers which 'all contained unorthodox views and all met with opposition from the directing staff'.[26] Fuller's inflammatory ideas postulated that direct penetration of enemy lines was dependent on the co-operation of infantry and artillery fire, and that artillery fire superiority was paramount, as was rapid entrenchment.[27] Brian Bond, writing of Fuller's trip to Larkhill, noted that 'It is revealing of the separateness of the three arms in those days that Fuller, though a regular officer and in his thirty-sixth year, had never before seen a battery of guns in action.'[28]

To remedy the strategic problems highlighted by Major Asım, Enver relied on the Ottoman General Staff working under the staff oversight of German Colonel Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf (who was assigned as the Second Assistant Chief of the Ottoman General Staff) to revise the mobilisation and campaign plans.[29] The twelve war plans of 1912 were discarded in favour of a single coherent defensive war plan that was approved on 7 April 1914. A single mobilisation plan and a single concentration plan backed this up. Unlike the war plans of the major European powers, the Ottoman war plan was not tied to events or to a timeline driven by external factors.[30] In truth, mobilisation and concentration were rendered problematic by the antique transport system of the Ottoman Empire and tying the war plan to unrealistic delivery schedules had proven nearly fatal in the Balkan Wars. The Ottoman Army was thus freed from the tyranny of timetable planning that threatened to concentrate prematurely unready forces.

Enver also centralised and accelerated the resurrection of the Ottoman Army's formal schools system. He established three centralised training sites in the First, Second, and Third Inspectorates (or army areas) at Constantinople, Erzincan, and Aleppo, respectively. On 14 April 1914, Enver placed these training sites directly under the Turkish commanders of the I, VI, and X Corps.[31] A week later, in General Orders No. 7, the Ottoman War Academy was placed directly under the supervision of Bronsart von Schellendorf.[32]

On 24 May 1914, the Ottoman General Staff published general orders which contained comprehensive instructions for the writing and formatting of war diaries *(Harp Ceridesi)*.[33] The orders also contained a list of the units required to maintain war diaries.

The format was standardised into seven sections covering organisation and signals; orders, reports, and operations; missions; logistics; personnel and animals; special trials and experiments; and special instructions. The war diaries were classified as secret documents, and were opened and closed for operations or at the end of each calendar quarter. Completed war diaries were sent quarterly to the Ottoman General Staff.[34] At the same time, the formats of written battle reports and situation reports were standardised in the Ottoman Army's Instructions for Field Service *(Hidemati-ı Seferiye Talimnamesine)*.[35] Spot reports also followed a specified format but could be either oral or written.

The army itself spent the autumn, winter, and spring moving the divisions that had been engaged in the Balkan Wars back to their home garrisons. However, a major portion of the army had been destroyed or had surrendered during the war and had to be reconstituted from battered cadres in new garrison locations in Anatolia or Arabia.[36] Twelve active infantry divisions, which had been destroyed, were reconstituted from regiments and battalions evacuated from the Balkans in June of 1913 and two infantry divisions were rebuilt from evacuated divisional cadres. Altogether, fourteen of thirty-six active Ottoman infantry divisions the spring of 1914 were undergoing reconstitution. A further eight infantry divisions had returned from Thrace to their home garrisons in Anatolia.

German influence, 1914

Thus, as the Ottoman Army entered the dangerous summer of 1914, much work had been done to put in place remedies to correct the army's deficiencies as identified in the Balkan Wars. The author believes that most of this work was probably done by Ottoman General Staff officers with little help from the Germans. This idea, however, conflicts with the generally accepted twentieth-century historical view that the Germans played a critical role in the reconstruction of the Ottoman Army in 1914. After the war, Australian historian C.E.W. Bean wrote, 'In six months…the Turkish Army had been completely Prussianized. What in January had been an undisciplined ragged rabble, were now parading with the goose step…' and British historian C.F.Aspinall-Oglander reinforced this idea with 'the work of the German Mission was so far successful that during the spring and summer of 1914 the efficiency of the army rapidly improved'.[37]

Contemporary historical consensus on this point is shifting. British historian Hew Strachan has noted, 'the transformation of the Turkish Army…owed more to Enver than it did to Liman von Sanders', adding that 'the influence of the German Military Mission was marginalized.'[38] In fact the incoming Germans did not begin taking up their duties until 7 January 1914 and the officers sent to the remote Anatolian hinterland could not have started their work until months later.[39] None of the German officers was fluent in Ottoman Turkish and they were probably unfamiliar with the innovative triangular corps and divisions of the Ottoman Army.[40] Moreover, there was considerable resistance to the advice that they gave. Liman von Sanders himself admittedly had a very difficult time in making his weight felt in Ottoman military affairs and was frequently discouraged.[41] The memoirs of Staff Major Kazım (later Lieutenant General Kazım Karabekir) of the Ottoman General Staff Intelligence Directorate noted that Bronsart von Schellendorf was

often intentionally ignored because of his overt tendency to represent German interests.[42] Cumulatively, these factors mitigated against a fully effective military mission.

The German officers were widely scattered throughout the Ottoman Empire.[43] In the late spring of 1914, two officers were assigned to the Ottoman General Staff, four officers were assigned as corps chiefs of staff, two officers commanded infantry divisions, two officers commanded regiments, one officer was assigned as an army chief of staff, five officers were assigned as fortress or logistics advisers, and five officers were assigned to demonstration units.[44] Nine officers were assigned to the corps staff duty. However, no Germans were assigned to the three newly established Ottoman Army training centres.[45]

This wide dispersion of German officers became the dominant assignment pattern and continued until 1918. This scattering of Germans has been likened to manure spread on an infertile field resulting in a bountiful harvest and this has come to be seen as a critical component of Ottoman combat effectiveness.[46] This is a flawed comparison when juxtaposed into other contexts. The Austro-Hungarian Army's General Staff officer corps, in particular, can be seen as a rough comparison with the assignment of German General Staff officers in the Ottoman Army. By 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Army possessed a small, but solid, corps of proficient General Staff officers trained in the Prussian style.[47] This handful of highly trained Austro-German General Staff officers was spread thinly over a multi-ethnic peasant army, similar to that of the Turks, and this did not ensure success in battle. In fact, the Austro-Hungarian Army was riddled with inefficiency and was notorious for its lack of cohesion and combat power. The Austro-Hungarian armies enjoyed scant success and collapsed before the end of the fighting.

It must be noted that the Ottoman Army, in many ways, appeared German. It was, in fact, modelled on the German Army, which had a military mission in the empire since 1882. The Ottoman conscription and reserve system in use until late 1913 was patterned after the German model that had been so successful against the French in 1870–71. The Ottoman General Staff was based on the German General Staff, as were the selection criteria and curriculum of the Ottoman War Academy. Moreover, the War Academy, as well as the tactical and branch schools of the army, used German Army manuals (translated into Ottoman Turkish) in its instruction.[48] The Ottoman Army also conducted annual manoeuvres and exercises using German methods and procedures. Therefore, to allied observers in 1914, who were probably unfamiliar with the profound institutional and trans-generational influence of the German Army on the Ottoman Army, it certainly appeared that Liman von Sanders' mission had an immediate and positive impact.

There are several explanations for the origins of the idea that the Germans were responsible for the Ottoman successes. The first is that the memoirs of the German participants themselves, for example, Liman von Sanders, Kress von Kressenstein, Mühlmann, Güse, and von Kannengiesser, tended to present themselves in an overly favourable light.[49] The second is that their opponents, particularly the British, tended to overplay the role of the Germans in explaining their defeats. This was the result of both an ethnocentric sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority and Social Darwinism that sought to explain defeat at the hands of a lesser race, as well as the lack of adequate Turkish histories that fully explained the war.[50] The resulting eighty-year-old Western historiography, official and unofficial, therefore tends erroneously to present the Germans as the proximate cause of Ottoman Army rebirth and success.[51]

Mobilisation and concentration

The Turks entered into a Secret Treaty of Alliance with Germany on 2 August 1914. The treaty was very loosely worded and was, in fact, invalid upon signature since Germany had previously declared war on Russia. Nevertheless, the treaty served to alienate the Turks from the Entente and moved them closer to the Central Powers and to war.

The Ottoman General Staff declared mobilisation on Friday afternoon, 2 August 1914, effective at 0900 that day. However, for planning purposes the next day was designated as the first numbered day of mobilisation.[52] According to the schedule, most formations were expected to be fully mobilised in about twenty-one days but the staff felt that forty to forty-five days was a more realistic number.[53] In fact, some army corps were not fully mobilised for two months and by September the Ottoman Army was still not prepared for war. However, one of the thirteen Ottoman Army corps did meet the rigorous mobilisation schedule. The III Corps, composed of the 7th, 8th, and 9th Infantry Divisions, stationed in Gallipoli, Çorlu, Luleburgaz, and Kirkkilisse met its mobilisation schedule of twenty-two days. Significantly, III Corps had only a single German officer assigned to its rolls and then only for a very brief time.[54] It had no Germans assigned at divisional or regimental levels. The allies would meet the III Corps on the Gallipoli Peninsula in April 1915.

The Ottoman General Staff began the difficult process of concentrating the army in September 1914. Concentration was a problem because the Ottoman railway net (unlike the railroad nets of Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, and Russia) was not designed for military purposes or to accommodate mobilisation. In fact, foreign entrepreneurs constructed almost all of the Ottoman railroad net for economic profit and the railroads ran not to the frontiers but to the economic epicentres of the Ottoman Empire.[55] Moreover, portions contained different gauge tracks and antique rolling stock (most of which was in a very poor state of repair). Very importantly, the Ottoman railway net had two uncompleted sections in the Taurus and Amanus Mountains, making continuous transit impossible and time-consuming. The Ottoman armies in the Caucasus (the Third) and in Mesopotamia (the Sixth) were completely unserviced by railways of any sort. Concentration took over three months but, by late November, most of the army was deployed in its wartime stations. Taken altogether, mobilisation and concentration of the Ottoman Army was inefficient and slow.

Conflicting British opinions

In Constantinople, Lieutenant Colonel Cunliffe-Owen was revising his earlier appraisals of the Ottoman Army based on observations of the unfolding mobilisation. On 10 October 1914, he noted that:

> very considerable progress is being made in efficiency, and that it will be far superior to that in existence before the Balkan War. The continuous training which is being steadily given to the troops and the time which has

> elapsed for the deliberate organisation of mobilisation and administrative arrangements must cause the Turkish forces to be now regarded as a factor in Balkan settlements to be taken seriously into account.[56]

In a follow-up report six days later, Cunliffe-Owen noted that the training of the Ottoman VIII Corps had been 'taken in hand with vigour.'[57]

Another report also alerted London to the fact that the reserve divisions were, in fact, not activating and that the men formerly assigned to these formations were being taken directly into active battalions.[58] This report also characterised the Turkish soldier as 'very much afraid of the enemy's bayonet,' clumsy and dull-witted, and lacking in initiative. Officers were characterised as of inferior physique, nervous, and excitable. While noting that the staff officers produced good work, the report noted that regimental officers were said to be inferior.[59] This report, although criticised by Captain G.Effington Smyth of the General Staff as containing erroneous information on Ottoman Army organisation, was forwarded to Lord Kitchener and the King, who thought it 'very good reading' and 'an excellent report', and resulted in a recommendation to employ the author in the war effort.[60] Thus as 1914 ended there were contradictory opinions about the quality and effectiveness of the Ottoman Army.

More information arrived in the early months of 1915, which reinforced the overall poor opinion of the Turks. The early campaigns of the war had been disastrous for Ottoman arms and included defeats at Sarikamiş at the hands of the Russians, and on the Suez Canal and in Mesopotamia at the hands of the British themselves. These Ottoman defeats were seen as corroborating evidence of a corrupt and inefficient military machine.

In fact, the Sarikamiş and Suez campaigns were aggressive in the extreme and showed advanced and effective organisational skills in moving large numbers of troops in extremely adverse terrain and climatic conditions. At Sarikamiş, in the Caucasian mountains, six Ottoman infantry divisions marched 75km in three days through the winter snow to their objectives before being pushed back by the Russians. In the waterless Sinai the Ottomans marched three infantry divisions, with pontoons and boats, through the desert and crossed the Suez Canal before being forced to withdraw. While suffering defeats the fact that the Ottoman Army possessed this kind of capability is not insignificant. The poor showing in Mesopotamia was due mainly to a deeply flawed strategic posture that left the gateway to the Tigris-Euphrates valley almost unguarded.[61] Nevertheless, this pattern of defeat seemed to justify British opinion that 'Although a great improvement has taken place during the last two years, it cannot be truthfully said that Turkish troops are even now in any way equal, except in courage, to those of the Balkan states with whom they were lately at war.'[62] This misappraisal would cost the British dear in 1915 and 1916.

2
Gallipoli, 1915

> The English officers were brave but inexperienced, and did not seem to know how to command or lead their soldiers in battle.
>
> (Turkish officers to Capt. R.H.Willliams, USA, Gallipoli, 6 November 1915[1])

The Gallipoli Campaign continues to exert a seductive lure for historians and ordinary persons alike.[2] Unique among World War I battles, it combined modern amphibious operations with a sweeping strategic plan on a landscape pockmarked with classical and romantic sites and memories. The name Gallipoli itself evokes controversy and the campaign is, perhaps, the greatest 'what if of the Great War. For the Turks, Australians and New Zealanders the campaign symbolised a coming of age as these peoples entered the mainstream of the twentieth century.

The campaign and its subset of battles have been well documented from the allied side over the past eighty years.[3] The most commonly held notion about the Ottoman victory is that the Turks stubbornly held on long enough for a series of allied mistakes to disable the allied plan.[4] At the tactical level, a 2001 history blames British command failures, friction between the army and navy, and inexperienced troops and commanders as reasons for failure.[5] At the operational level, a 1995 history noted that 'the Turks always managed to concentrate more troops at the crucial points for the simple reason that they had more troops readily available on the peninsula'.[6] At the strategic level, a third history published in 2003, found that the campaign itself was ill conceived and incompetently executed.[7] The older histories contain variants of these themes. Finally, every history noted includes the notion that the Turks won because of the generalship of Liman von Sanders and Mustafa Kemal and because their fighting men were incredibly tough soldiers.[8]

It is only recently that Western historians have begun to reassess the battles from the Ottoman perspective and it is becoming clearer that bravery and German command assistance, although important, were only components of a larger mosaic of Ottoman military effectiveness.[9] This chapter will examine the internal elements of Ottoman performance, including leadership, training and experience, and organisational architecture to explain why the Turks were suc-cessful. By design this chapter begins with the Ottoman mobilisation of 1912 and ends on 5 May 1915. This is because there were no Germans assigned to the tactical manoeuvre units (at corps level and below) on the peninsula during this period.[10] This makes it possible to separate clearly the performance of Turks from Germans. The chapter also develops comparisons and contrasts between the opposing armies to illustrate what tactical and operational capabilities the Turks possessed at this point in the war.

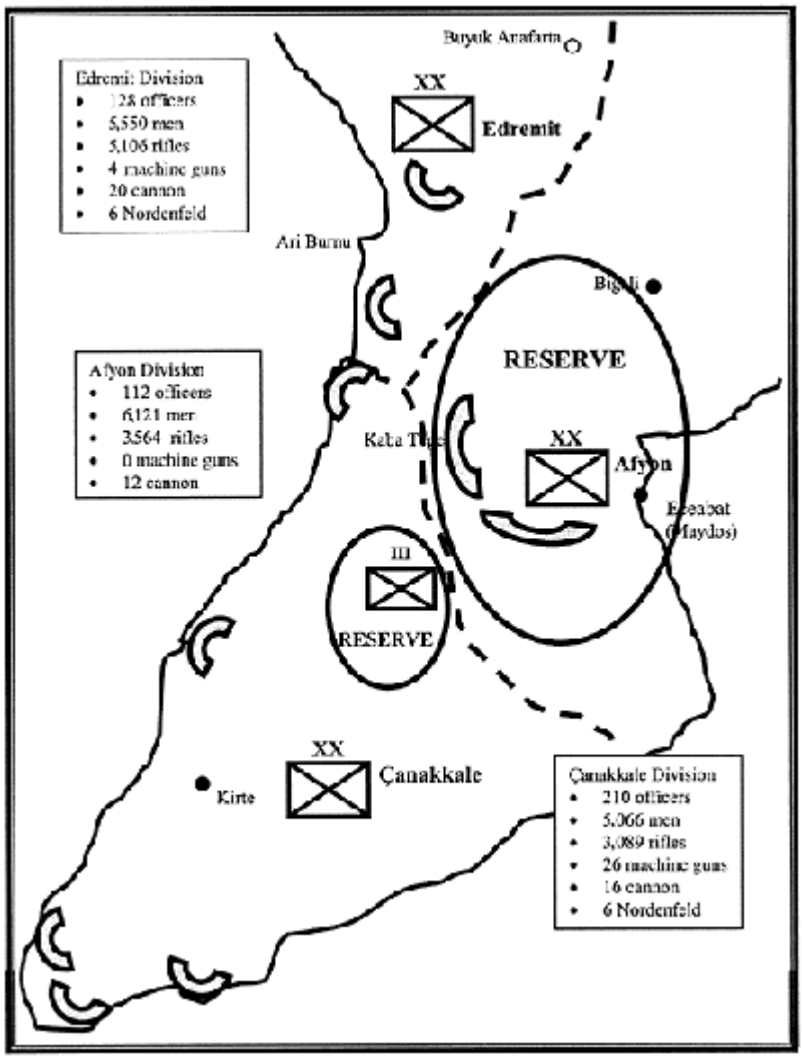
The Dardanelles in the Balkan Wars[11]

The Gallipoli Peninsula was the most heavily defended point in the Ottoman Empire and its defensive works dated back hundreds of years. Its modern defences began to be built during the 1880s and focused on a naval attack on the Dardanelles Straits.[12] Consequently, the defences until 1912 were primarily composed of coast defence guns, underwater minefields, and searchlights. In 1912, under the threat of a Greek amphibious invasion, the Ottoman General Staff ordered the fortification of the Gallipoli Peninsula itself. During the First Balkan War, a corps-level command was created on the peninsula to construct and occupy the defensive works that would guard against an enemy landing.[13]

It is generally unknown that the Dardanelles defences were given a thorough workout during the First Balkan War (1912–1913) and it was during this war that the Ottomans put together the basic defensive plans and concepts used to defend the peninsula in 1915. The Ottomans enjoyed substantial assets with which to defend the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Dardanelles straits and the peninsula fell under the command of the Çanakkale Straits Forces and Fortification Command in 1912.[14] The fortress command was assigned the regular 27th Infantry Division, a provisional infantry division, and three reserve infantry divisions; the Afyon, the (Çanakkale, and the Edremit. The command also disposed the Menderes Detachment (Mufrezesi), a provisional cavalry brigade, three independent batteries of artillery, and the coastal defence guns of the straits fortifications. Altogether for the defence of the peninsula, the Turks had 40,000 men armed with 27,000 rifles, thirty-eight machine guns, and 102 cannons (not counting coastal artillery).[15]

Brigadier General Fahri Paşa commanded the (Çanakkale Fortified Zone in 1912. He determined to defend the peninsula by stationing two of the three reserve infantry divisions in beach defence roles, placing the 27th Infantry Division at Bulair, and maintaining one reserve division as a general reserve at Eceabat. The Menderes Detachment was assigned the role of defending the Asiatic shore. Thus, by the end of the year, the general configuration of the Turkish defence was established. (Map 2.1 shows the tactical dispositions on the peninsula in the winter of 1913.)

The (Çanakkale Reserve Division, composed of men from Gallipoli, Chanak, and the peninsula itself, was assigned the southernmost tip of the peninsula; the area later known as the Cape Helles front. The Edremit Reserve Division was placed on its right flank, covering the area later known as Anzac and Suvla Bay.



Map 2.1 Ottoman defences, December 1912.

The (Çanakkale and Edremit divisions were weaker than regular infantry divisions and together about the same strength as the Ottoman 9th Infantry Division, which defended the peninsula in 1915. These two divisions constructed battalion-sized strong points on the key terrain features overlooking the beaches. The beaches themselves were covered by company-sized elements and the divisional artilleries were positioned centrally to support the divisional sectors. The Afyon Reserve Division was headquartered at Eceabat in reserve and was prepared to support either the (Çanakkale or the Edremit divisions. These troops began to dig trenches, gun pits, develop a road and communications

network, and to rehearse counter-attack plans. The ANZACs would later discover what they called 'the Balkan Pits'[16] in their sector in 1915, which were the remnants of these defensive preparations. On the Asiatic shore, the Menderes Detachment had grown to divisional strength and began similar defensive preparations at Kum Kale and the adjacent coastlines. To the north, the 27th Infantry Division fulfilled a similar mission in the area which, in 1915, would be defended by 7th Infantry Division near Bulair.[17] Serving on the Bulair lines as chief of operations (1 nci Şube Müdürü) was Staff Major Mustafa Kemal (later and more famously known as Atatürk).[18] Finally, a provisional army corps headquarters was established at Eceabat to command and control the three reserve infantry divisions and the Menderes Detachment. After the Treaty of London ended the Second Balkan War in 1913, the peninsula returned to its normal peacetime condition.

The Çanakkale Fortified Area Command, 1914[19]

In peacetime after the Balkan Wars, the defence of the Dardanelles was in the hands of the commander of the (Çanakkale Fortified Area Command. This was a fortress command, which had control over a string of elderly forts and over a brigade of three heavy and medium artillery regiments. The forts and guns were generally clustered at the mouth of the Dardanelles and at the narrows and, in times of peace, were manned at very low levels.

The actual reactivation of the defensive plans for the peninsula began as early as 31 July 1914, when operations conducted by Greek warships near the mouth of the Dardanelles alarmed the Ottoman General Staff.[20] A special mobilisation order from the Ministry of War, issued at 1145 on that day, alerted the fortress commander to begin preparations and to expect reinforcements. The updated defensive plans called for the III Corps to reinforce the fortress and to provide the troops to defend the peninsula.[21] There was one significant revision to the 1913 defensive plan for the peninsula. The northern limit of the 1913 plan was the Bulair front, but in 1914, the Turks had to consider the entire Saros Bay coastline in their defensive planning. In early August 1914, the Turks revised their plans so that three major operational groups—Asia (unchanged), the peninsula south of Bulair (unchanged), and the new Saros Bay sector—would defend the Gallipoli Peninsula.[22]

Neither the fortress nor the corps was ready for war in early August 1914. Following the July Crisis in the summer of 1914, the Ottoman General Staff decided to conduct military mobilisation as a precautionary measure, even though Turkey was not yet at war. The Ottoman General Staff sent mobilisation orders to the commander of the III Corps, in Rodosto, at 0100 on 2 August 1914.[23] He began immediate preparations for war. The following day, which was the first numbered day of mobilisation (3 August), the III Corps began to mobilise.[24] However, its initial strength returns of about 15,000 officers and men reflected the low condition of peacetime readiness that the Turkish Army operated under.[25]

Upon mobilisation, the 9th Infantry Division was attached to the (Çanakkale Fortified Area Command to act as mobile reserve. Technically, it still reported to the III Corps, but for all intents and purposes, fell under the command of the fortress commander. On 27

August, the commander of the 9th Infantry Division began conversations with the commander of the fortress concerning the deployment of his division to the Gallipoli Peninsula and by mid-September 1914 the division was moving towards the peninsula. The 7th Infantry Division followed on 29 October and the III Corps headquarters moved from Rodosto to the town of Gallipoli (modern Gelibolu) itself on 4 November. The 8th Infantry Division was alerted for service on the Sinai front and began preparations for departure. (The 19th Infantry Division was activated on 1 January 1915 to take its place.)[26] Thus, by the time the empire actually entered the war, powerful forces were in place on the peninsula.

In spite of these preparations, the defence of the Dardanelles remained weak due to the poor condition of the fortifications, the antiquity of many of the cannons, the scarcity of ammunition and supplies, and the lack of good co-ordination between the Fortress Command and the corps headquarters. To rectify the technical deficiencies, the Germans dispatched Vice-Admiral von Usedom, who was an expert in sea coast defences. Accompanying the admiral were about 500 Germans who were coastal defence experts specialising in coast artillery, communications, military engineering, and mines. None of these men were assigned to the Ottoman III Corps. The Germans likewise dispatched limited quanities of war material to Turkey through the neutral countries of Romania and Bulgaria. On 3 November the Royal Navy briefly bombarded the Turkish forts at the entrance of the Dardanelles. This attack achieved no objective of military value, and indeed, only served notice on the Turks concerning the vulnerability of the straits. In effect, the British attack thoroughly alarmed the Ottoman General Staff, and provided them with good reason to accelerate the programme of fortification and defensive improvements.

It was very apparent to the Ottoman General Staff that the allies possessed resources on a scale which made the Greek threat of 1912 look ridiculous and they determined to reinforce the peninsula's defences. By mid-February 1915, the 8th Artillery Regiment, consisting of mobile 150mm howitzers, was sent to the straits in an anti-ship role.[27] These cannon, twenty-two in all, were broken into three operational groups and deployed in protected and hidden positions covering the entrance to the Dardanelles. Later fourteen mobile 120mm howitzers reinforced them.

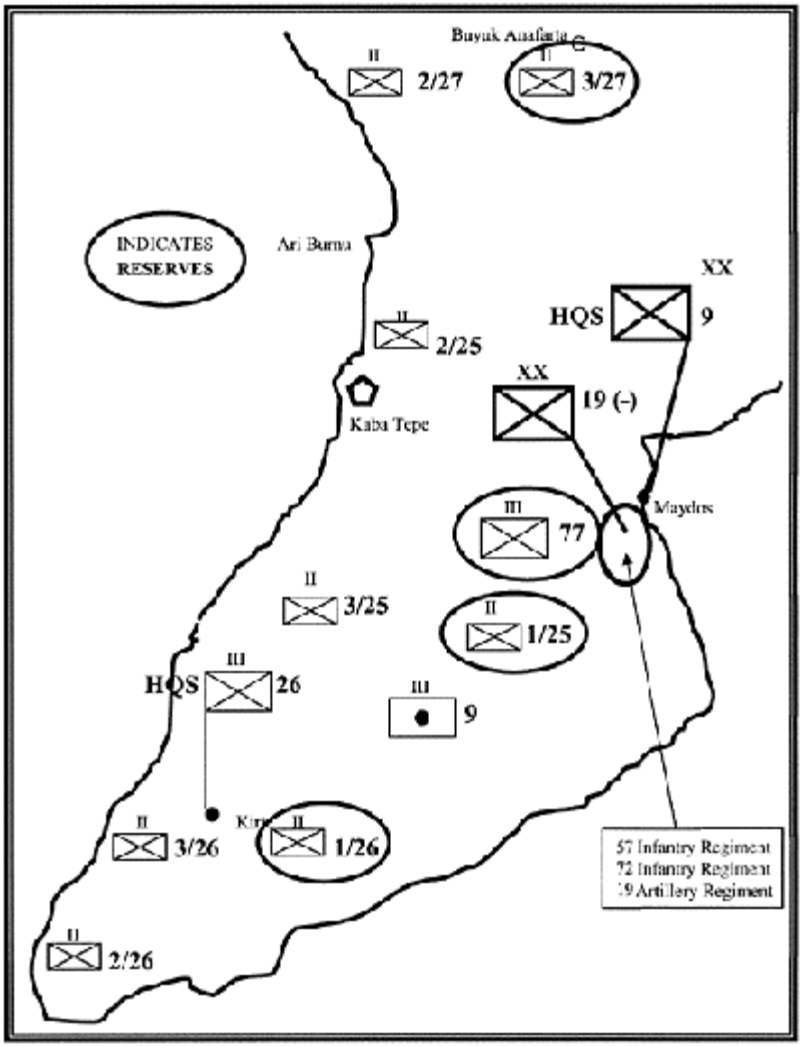
Defence planning and training, particularly anti-invasion drills, now began in earnest, and the troops began to improve the seaward defences and also to construct roads and interior communications. By February 1915, the Fortress Command had (including the 9th Infantry Division) over 34,500 soldiers, armed with 25,000 rifles, eight machine guns, and 263 cannon, on the peninsula. The mobile III Corps (now including only the 7th Infantry Division) had 15,000 soldiers in position, armed with 9,448 rifles, eight machine guns, and fifty cannon.[28] The 19th Infantry Division remained in the Rodosto garrison, where it was undergoing intensive training under its new commander, the young and aggressive Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal Bey. Altogether, by the time of the allied naval attack of 18 March 1915, the Turks had eighty-two guns operational in fixed positions and 230 mobile guns and howitzers available for the defence of the peninsula. Earlier that month Kemal's division moved forward to the peninsula to join the 9th Infantry Division.

Over an eight-month period, under the direction of trained Ottoman General Staff officers, a comprehensive plan was developed and implemented that put entrenched

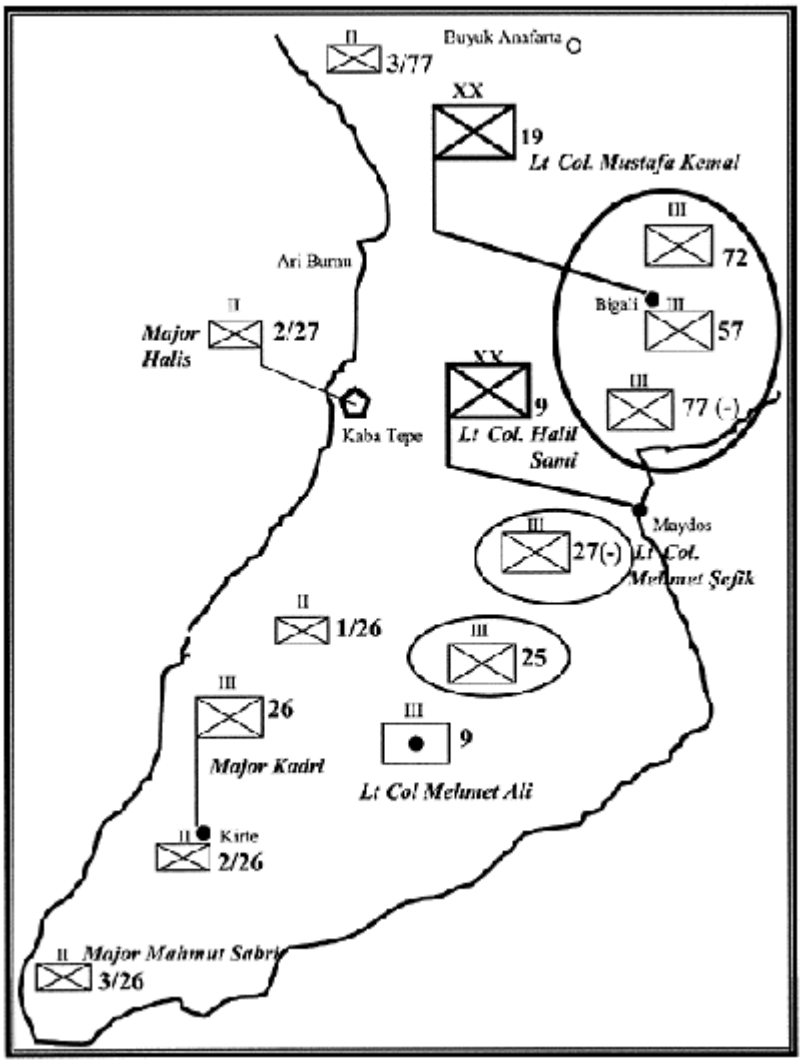
infantry units defending the likely invasion beaches and positioned large reserves in protected positions behind the beaches.[29] The primary objective was to slow the enemy landings and then launch co-ordinated counter-attacks to drive them back into the sea. The Ottoman dispositions were criticised heavily by General Otto Liman von Sanders in his memoirs and the perception that defences were poorly sited and improperly prepared has persisted to this day. (He was particularly critical of the number of reserves available for counter attacks.)[30] In fact, the Ottoman defences were quite robust prior to the arrival of Liman von Sanders on 26 March 1915 and included substantial numbers of well positioned reserves.[31] Map 2.2 shows the Ottoman deployment on that day, which included twelve infantry battalions in immediate reserve. (Readers may wish to compare these dispositions with Map 2.3, which shows Ottoman dispositions on 25 April.) Although Liman von Sanders would shift the 19th Infantry Division north in the coming days he would actually add only a single battalion to the total reserves available on 25 April.[32] Based on this evidence the impact of Liman von Sanders in the pre-battle deployment of the Ottoman III Corps appears minimal.

Ottoman preparation for combat

A perception exists that the Ottoman Army at Gallipoli was poorly trained and poorly prepared for combat.[33] Certainly a case can be made that it was not as efficient as the German or British armies. Nevertheless, by the spring of 1915, the divisions of the III Corps were very well trained. This was reflected by the records of their training programmes, which showed a consistent pattern of tough and realistic battle training. Moreover, the archival record shows that the III Corps units followed the tactical precepts embedded in Enver's General Orders No. 1. To assist the reader in keeping track of the myriad of Ottoman Army formations discussed in this section, the key formations (and leaders) of the III Corps are shown on Map 2.3.



Map 2.2 Location of Ottoman units, 26 March 1915.



Map 2.3 Location of key Ottoman commanders and units, 0500, 25 April 1915.

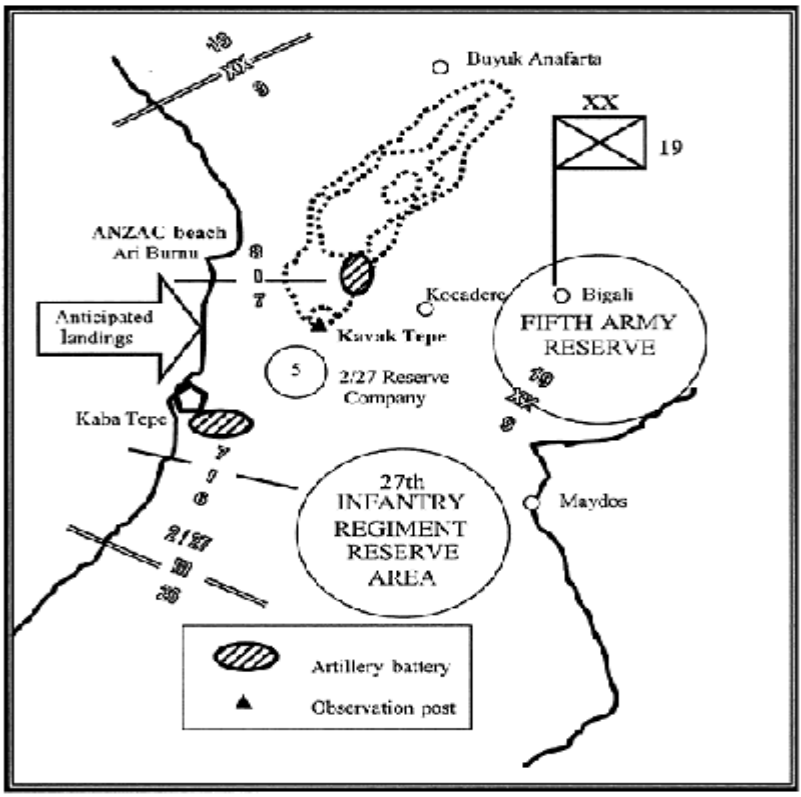
In the 9th Infantry Division, the 26th Infantry Regiment at Gallipoli reported its 2nd and 3rd Battalions at war strength on 12 August 1914. Its 1st Battalion was on detached duty in Basra. By 15 August the regiment had 381 active soldiers, 2,092 reservists, and 199 untrained conscripts assigned to its rolls and on the next day began to organise a new 1st Battalion.[34] Four days later, the regiment was ordered to occupy coastal observation posts and to prepare defensive positions by stationing a company at Seddulbahir, a platoon at

Kaba Tepe (Gaba Tepe), a company at Ece Limani, and to bivouac the remainder at Ecebat (Maidos).[35] The Bursa Field Jandarma Battalion, the divisional mountain howitzer battalion, and a cavalry troop were also attached directly to the regiment on 13 September. Later, on 4 October, the regiment developed fire plans from Alçi Tepe in concert with the 8th Battery, 3rd Mountain Howitzer Battalion and a 105mm howitzer battery.[36]

The 27th Infantry Regiment, also stationed in Gallipoli, was partially mobilised on 31 July 1914, against a possible Greek amphibious threat. It was assigned an immediate mission to observe and screen the Saros Bay beaches.[37] By 1 August, the regiment was at war establishment *(ikmal)*. On 7 August, the Gallipoli Field Jandarma Battalion, the 2nd Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, and a cavalry platoon were attached to the 27th Infantry Regiment.[38] On 10 September, Major Mehmet Şefik, the commander of the 3rd Battalion, took command of the regiment.[39] Under Şefik, the regiment concentrated on individual training for its soldiers throughout September and participated in division and army manoeuvres in October. Beginning on 1 November 1914, the regiment participated in special training with a mountain howitzer battalion and a howitzer battery in the reserve area.[40] As the winter progressed, Şefik's frequent orders to his regiments included specific instructions that insured that the infantry-artillery team co-ordinated training.[41] Later, on 15 February 1915, the newly promoted regimental commander, Lieutenant Colonel Şefik was designated as the Maidos Area Commander and placed in general reserve for the III Corps. Şefik immediately began to co-ordinate and update the artillery fire plans from the centrally located hill mass of Kavak Tepe. The fire plans were developed for the artillery batteries of the 3rd Battalion, 9th Field Artillery and included targets in the regimental sector (which included the area later known as the Anzac beachhead).[42] Map 2.4 shows the fire plan scheme from Kavak Tepe.

The remaining regiment of the 9th Infantry Division, the 25th Infantry, had a similar experience, spending August and September involved in the individual training of soldiers.[43] This regiment remained in training conducting manoeuvres near Erenkoy and on 17 November was moved forward to defend the beaches at Kum Kale. The divisional artillery, the 9th Field Artillery Regiment, was placed in a direct support role to provide fires for the infantry regiments.[44]

Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal's subsequently famous 19th Infantry Division was activated on 1 January 1915 and was composed of the 57th, 58th, and 59th Infantry Regiments. However, the 58th and 59th were sent to the VI Corps and the division was reorganised on 9 February by adding the 72nd and 77th Infantry Regiments. On 6 April 1915, the division was assigned to the new Fifth Army.[45] Probably the most lasting Western impression about this division is that several of the regiments were composed of 'Arabs' and this made portions of the 19th unsteady.[46]



Map 2.4 27th Infantry Regiment fire planning, 15 February 1915.

Notes

a The Ottoman Third Corps expected the allied landing on the beach just south of Art Burnu, in the 9th Infantry Division sector,

b The 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, deployed three companies in position along the coast and 5 Company in immediate reserve,

c The observation post on Kavak Tepe dominated the anticipated landing site and was tied to artillery batteries near Kapa Tepe and Kemal Yeri.

The 57th Infantry Regiment was activated on 1 February 1915 in Tekirdağ (Rodosto) north along the Sea of Marmara coast from Gallipoli and it received its regimental colour *(Sanjack)* on 22 February.[47] One battalion of the regiment was formed earlier on 27 January by combining the 4th Companies of the three battalions of the 19th Infantry Regiment, which had been training since 12 August 1914.[48] To further enhance the training of the newly formed regiment, III Corps ordered the 7th Infantry Division to send three *Mümtaz Yüzbaşıyı* (distinguished captains) to assist in training the men.[49] The regiment was thus composed of very experienced ethnic Turks led by highly trained officers and was regarded by Mustafa Kemal as his most solid regiment. The regiment sailed to Maidos on 23 February and spent the next two months in 'very intensive training undergoing frequent field exercises'.[50] The 77th Infantry Regiment was a VI Corps formation that was mobilised in Aleppo, Syria, on 3 August 1914. By 21 August it had forty-seven officers and 2,347 men assigned to its rolls.[51] Ordered to Constantinople, it departed Aleppo on 28 August and arrived at the Hyderpas, a train station, in Asiatic Constantinople, on 13 September. It was assigned to the Second Army and began undergoing intensive individual soldier training on 27 September 1914.[52] This training consisted of demanding foot marches and field training exercises designed to harden the men. In October the regiment participated in army manoeuvres. On 1 November the regiment had sixty-four officers and 3,179 men assigned, about 1,000 of which came from the local Thracian force pools as replacements. At a ceremony attended by Enver Paşa and Cemal Paşa, the regiment received its colours on 6 November at Çatalca.[53] Due to the high numbers of Arab soldiers, who did not speak Ottoman Turkish, the ceremony was translated into Arabic. The regiment spent the following months participating in field training and in manoeuvres. It departed by train and steamer for Gallipoli on 23 February and came under Mustafa Kemal's command two days later. In its first divisional orders from Kemal, the 77th Infantry Regiment was provided with overlays from adjacent units, situation reports concerning the 9th Infantry Division's units defending the coast, and intelligence that the British would attempt to land during the hours of darkness.[54]

Other regiments had similar experiences to those of the 9th and 19th Infantry Divisions. The 19th Infantry Regiment (7th Infantry Division) mobilised at war establishment on 12 August 1914 and began intensive training shortly thereafter.[55] The division's 20th and 21st Infantry Regiments were also mobilised quickly and began training throughout the fall of 1914. These regiments moved to Gallipoli in early November where they continued field exercises and manoeuvres.[56]

The 15th Infantry Regiment (5th Infantry Division) began its training and manoeuvre cycle on 18 August 1914, with over 3,600 officers and men.[57] The 48th Infantry Regiment (16th Infantry Division) had similar strength returns, began training on 16 August 1914, and on 9 September was entrained for Thrace. By 3 October 1914, the regiment was hard at work training near Kesan.[58]

The 47th Infantry Regiment (16th Infantry Division) was destroyed in the Balkan Wars but was reformed near Mersin on 15 December 1913, by combining the 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry and the 26th Rifle Battalion.[59] On 7 August 1914, the regiment had barely 1,200 officers and men, but eleven days later had its full war establishment of 3,400 soldiers. On 23 August an artillery battalion was attached to it and with the 1st and 2nd Battalions entrained for Constantinople.[60] These troops arrived at Kücük Çekmece on 28 August and began intensive training and exercises. On 5 October VI Corps

commander, Brigadier Ali Riza, inspected the regiment. Meanwhile, at the regimental depot in Tarsus, the 3rd Battalion formed with its authorised strength often officers, 1,036 men, and 105 animals. This battalion followed the regiment to Thrace.

Training went so well for the 47th that the Second Army commander granted the regiment a training holiday on 2 November 1914, and its commanders reported that morale was very high.[61] Thereafter, the regiment went into a four-month period of intensive training that included field exercises and manoeuvres. The regiment was not present during the Gallipoli landings, but was ordered there on 26 April 1915. Its 3,400 officers and men, 373 animals, and 587 cases of ammunition were moved by train to Uzunkopru and then marched by road to the front. While on this journey the men had a hot meal every day and there were adequate rest halts. Marching 25km a day, the entire regiment arrived in Gallipoli on 29 April. Because of 'good order and discipline on the march' the regiment was battle-worthy and eager to fight.[62]

Supporting arms enjoyed similar experiences. Prior to the war, the 3rd Battery of the artillery school's 150mm Howitzer Demonstration Battalion, commanded by Captain Ali Tevfik, fired hundreds of rounds on a daily basis. It was judged by an instructor at the artillery school (Askir Arkayan) as having achieved a very high standard of training.[63] This battery arrived at Erenköy on 23 July 1914, but was later moved to the peninsula itself. Likewise, discipline and training among the coast artillery were judged good because most of the men were experienced.[64]

At higher levels, the experience of the 11th Infantry Division reflected a pattern typical of Ottoman divisions. It reached war strength on 8 August 1914, and began to deploy the following week. On 8 October the division began its training regime near Bandirma.[65] This included very intensive battalion and regiment training, division and corps manoeuvres, hard road marches, and—unusually—the on and off loading of ships. On 14 October, the division participated in First Army field manoeuvres. Training went on throughout the winter and by 3 March 1915, the division was conducting frequent night march training. Twenty days later the division was deployed to positions near Calvert's Farm where it was informed that 80,000 allies (including 50,000 Australians) were expected to invade Çanakkale.[66]

Thus by April 1915, the fighting formations of the newly formed Ottoman Fifth Army were ready to receive the allies. Most of the regiments were composed of combat veterans of the Balkan Wars and they had been training together for periods of up to eight months. The training regimes (in the formations examined here) followed the precepts laid down in Enver's General Orders No. 1 and included combined arms training between the infantry and its supporting arms, plenty of marches, and multi-echelon field manoeuvres. Consequently, confidence levels ran high and the officers and men were alert to the impending allied invasion. The evidence reflects also that very comprehensive training regimes were in place prior to the arrival of Liman von Sanders.

Experience levels

The III Corps was commanded by Lieutenant General Esat Paşa, the hero of the siege of Jannina (or Yanya in Turkish), who had defended the great Ottoman fortress in Epirus in the Balkan Wars of 1912–13.[67] Esat had a very strong and experienced command team, who had likewise served in the Balkan Wars. Table 2.1 shows selected key officers and

their wartime assignments. Balkan War veterans also commanded the remaining III Corps infantry division (the 7th) and its infantry regiments. The corps and divisions of the Fifth Army were similarly staffed and the officer commanding the (Çanakkale Fortress Command (the coast defence forts and batteries) was Brigadier Cevat Paşa, who had commanded the Çatalca Artillery Command during the Balkan Wars. At lower levels the majority of the field-grade and company-grade officers were combat veterans as well.

There was, however, a gaping hole in the leadership fabric of the Ottoman Army and it manifested itself in the absence of a long-service professional corps of non-commissioned officers (NCOs). The NCO corps, the 'backbone of the army' according to Rudyard Kipling, has long been seen as an important component of military effectiveness. Statistics vary concerning the density of NCOs in the European armies of 1914. David Jones noted that (corporals excluded) the peacetime NCO strength of pre-war European infantry companies was Germany twelve, France six, Austria-Hungary and Italy three, and Russia two.[68] Another source suggested higher numbers in the German Army—eighteen to twenty—and in the French Army—eight to nine, but these numbers surely include corporals.[69] In the Ottoman Army, the pre-war authorisation in an infantry company was a single NCO (and three officers).[70]

The men were overwhelmingly illiterate and were, for the most part, from rural or unindustrialised farming villages.[71] This was an obvious problem for which there was little remedy. Those men who could read and write, even minimally, were often quickly promoted to sergeant or corporal. Consequently, much of the training was based on direct instruction by officers or non-commissioned officers, who read to the men from books prepared specially for this situation. Examples of these included *The Ottoman Soldier in History (Tarihte Osmanlı Neferi)* and *Advice to the Brave—Gift to the Veteran (Yiğitlere Öğütler—Gazilere Armağan),* as well as Ottoman Army training manuals.[72] The implications of this situation are far reaching, but unfortunately, neither the official history, the sources examined in this study, nor participant memoirs address this

Table 2.1 Selected key officers, Ottoman III Corps, 1914–1915

Officer	*III Corps assignment*	*Balkan War assignment*
Lt Col. Fehrettin	III Corps Chief of Staff	General Staff Officer, Ottoman GS
Capt. Remzi	III Corps Staff Officer	Chief of Staff, Adrianople fortress
Lt Baki	Aide de Camp to Esat	General Staff Officer, West Army
Col. Halil Sami	Commander, 9th Inf. Div.	Commander, 5th Rifle Regiment
Maj. Hulisi	Chief of Staff, 9th Inf. Div.	Commander, Gümülcine Redif Regt
Lt Col. M.Şefik	Commander, 27th Inf. Regt	Commander, Salonika Redif Div.
Lt Col. M.Kemal	Commander, 19th Inf. Div.	Chief of Operations, Gallipoli Army
Maj. Avni	Commander, 57th Inf. Regt	Chief of Staff, 21st Infantry Div.

Source: Ismet Görgülü, *On Yılık Harbin, Kadrosu, 1912–1922, Balkan-Birinci Dunya ve Istiklal Harbi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1993), 9–85.

particular point. Of course, upon mobilisation, reserve and former NCOs were recalled to the colours to fill the companies to wartime authorisations. In the case of the III Corps, the manpower pool contained recently discharged combat veterans and this probably mitigated some of the adverse effects of the acute shortage of trained NCOs.

The British Army in 1914

To establish a partial context for this study, which concerns the Ottoman Army's struggles with the British Army, it is important to summarise broadly some of the characteristics of the British Army in 1914.[73] There is a large body of recent scholarship about the British Army in World War I, which has extensively mined the official archives, the papers of the primary historical figures, and the doctrinal publications of the army.[74] Recognising that there is continuing controversy about the British Army's operations, particularly command and control, the following major points about the British Army are given.

The British Army was tightly compartmentalised organisationally, intellectually, and professionally. It was not a continental army based on universal conscription, as was the Ottoman Army; rather, it was a small long-service professional force based on the localised recruiting of volunteers into uniquely different regiments. Although the British Army had reserves and a home defence force (the Territorials), these were insufficient for sustained large-scale operations on the continent of Europe. Because of fiscal pressures, the British Army never conducted large-scale manoeuvres in peacetime that tied the active army to its reserves. Corps and division headquarters were few and were manned at minimum levels. Consequently, co-operation between the arms, between senior officers, between some regiments, and between the active and reserve forces was minimal.[75]

The British Army's last full-blown war had occurred in South Africa at the turn of the century in an unconventional setting and the army spent much effort after the war rectifying its deficiencies (some of which were already obsolescent by the time they were implemented). Only recently had a functional General Staff been created. Intellectually, the senior leadership of the army was outdated—the British Staff College at Camberley, until about 1908, stressed the operations of the American Civil War (1861–65) and the Franco-Prussian war (1870–71). In the immediate years prior to the war, the Staff College commandant tried to establish a 'school of thought' for the army based on a study of modern war and tried to modernise the curriculum. While improvements were made, the graduates (those who had passed staff college or 'p.s.c.') were not as up to date or as proficient in staff procedures as their European contemporaries.[76] One history advances the idea that the leadership of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in 1914 was composed of 'Hybrids' or p.s.c qualified officers who were intellectually defined by a mix of Victorian regimental and staff proficiencies that were not complementary with modern war.[77]

Modern command and control was not well understood by the leadership of the British Army in 1914. This stemmed not so much from lack of recent combat experience as from lack of fully staffed peacetime division, corps, and army-level headquarters, and unwillingness to fund large-scale manoeuvres. One historian has advanced the idea that

the army command and control ethos was mired in 'umpiring'—a command method that disconnected higher commanders from actively supervising operations.[78] Others have suggested that leadership patterns were paternalistic and outdated. Moreover, the British Army's ability to pass information (for example reports, instructions, intelligence, and orders, etc.) vertically and laterally throughout its combat forces was almost dysfunctional.[79]

The British Army possessed enough modern weapons and equipment to outfit six infantry divisions and a cavalry division for operations in Europe. These divisions could be characterised as well prepared for war. But other British divisions, as well as the colonial and dominion divisions, sent overseas in 1914 (and in early 1915) were short, to some degree, of weapons or equipment. In fact, the army was plagued in the first year of war by shortages of every kind, especially artillery shells and machine guns.

The British Army as a whole in 1914 was unprepared for modern war.[80] Although the overseas deployment of the British Army went well, its immediate performance in combat in France was below that of the German and French armies. As a result, the BEF narrowly escaped disaster several times and was unable to execute effectively offensive operations. Such success as it enjoyed resulted mainly from the heroic performance of its officers and men at regimental level and below. The British Army's initial performance against the Ottomans in 1914 and early 1915 appeared more positive when it came into contact under locally favourable operational conditions. However, as will be seen in this study, many of the BEF's deficiencies were to be repeated in the outer theatres of war in 1915 against battle-ready units of the Ottoman Army.

Anzac, 25 April 1915

Over-reliance on English and German-language sources has created an inaccurate impression of how the Turks conducted the fight at the Anzac beachhead in late April 1915. The histories of C.E.W.Bean (1923) and Nigel Steel and Peter Hart (1994) run closest to the events recorded by the Turks.[81] Robert Rhodes James (1965), Michael Hickey (1995), and Moorehead (1956) are the least accurate.[82] The most recent historian of the campaign, Tim Travers (2001), used Ottoman sources, but missed some vital aspects of the Turkish response by not examining actions at corps level.[83] All overlooked the vital role of the 27th Infantry Regiment's pre-battle planning and training. As a group, these historians also undervalued the roles of Esat Pasa (III Corps commander) and Colonel Halil Sami (9th Infantry Division commander), and overplayed the role of Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal (19th Infantry Division commander) and Liman von Sanders. Furthermore, none of these works addressed the remarkable interplay of the message flow between the Turkish commanders, which created an enhanced situational awareness of what was happening in the field, and none credited the Turks with anything other than a 'reasonably quick response'.[84] However, a detailed examination of Ottoman records illuminates how the Turks were able to focus decisive combat power at the critical point.

The 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, defended the coastal beaches that came to be known as Anzac. This battalion had three companies along the coast (6, 7, and 8 Companies) and a fourth in immediate reserve (5 Company). They were well dug in,

occupied positions that dated back to 1912, and had spent months improving both their positions and their communications. The commander was Major Halis, who had taken command of the battalion from Mehmet Şefik in September 1914. Halis was a combat veteran of the Libyan War and the Balkan Wars, and had established his command post in the Kaba Tepe strong point.[85]

The remaining two battalions of the 27th Infantry Regiment, under the personal command of Lieutenant Colonel Mehmet Şefik, lay several kilometres behind in the 9th Infantry Division's reserve area. His attached artillery and cavalry had been under his command for almost nine months. Şefik exercised active oversight over his sector and, for example, ordered the 2nd Battalion to forward updated target overlays to his headquarters prior to the landings.[86] Just to the north, in Fifth Army reserve, lay Mustafa Kemal's new 19th Infantry Division. These units had been alerted to the acute danger of an imminent allied invasion and since late February there had been continuous co-ordination between the 27th Infantry and Mustafa Kemal's division.[87]

The Kavak Tepe fire planning exercise of February 1915 indicated that the Turks considered the most likely landing beach was located just to the north of Kaba Tepe (the area later known by the Australians as Brighton Beach). The 2nd Battalion's reserve, the 5th Company, was positioned nearby for a counterattack on this area. (Refer to Map 2.2.) In fact, it was here that the Australians intended to storm ashore, but a misjudged landing cast them ashore instead in the narrow shelf-like cove at Ari Burnu. From the British view, this has long been seen as a serious error that upset the landings. However, had the ANZACs landed in the designated site, they would have found themselves immediately under the guns of the Kaba Tepe strong point and the 5th Company (and in similar dire circumstances to the troops on W and V Beaches at Cape Helles).[88] By fortunate chance, the Australians came ashore in the most protected site in the 27th Infantry Regiment's sector.

Despite allied attempts to remain unseen and unheard, the 8th Company alerted the 9th Infantry Division at 0230 on 25 April that the British were preparing to land.[89] This news sped up the Turkish chain of command and fifty minutes later the III Corps notified the Fifth Army that landings were imminent.[90] Turkish rifle fire began at 0420 against the incoming boats. Five minutes later, effective shrapnel fire from 'batteries further south played havoc with the troops in the pulling boats'.[91] Several boats suffered direct hits with '15 pounder' shells (probably 77mm projectiles) and, by full daybreak, there were two cutters, three lifeboats, and a launch aground on the beach with dead and wounded crews.[92] While not landing in the exact centre of the pre-planned killing zone, there were enough Australians inside the Turkish range fans to validate the target planning that had been previously done.

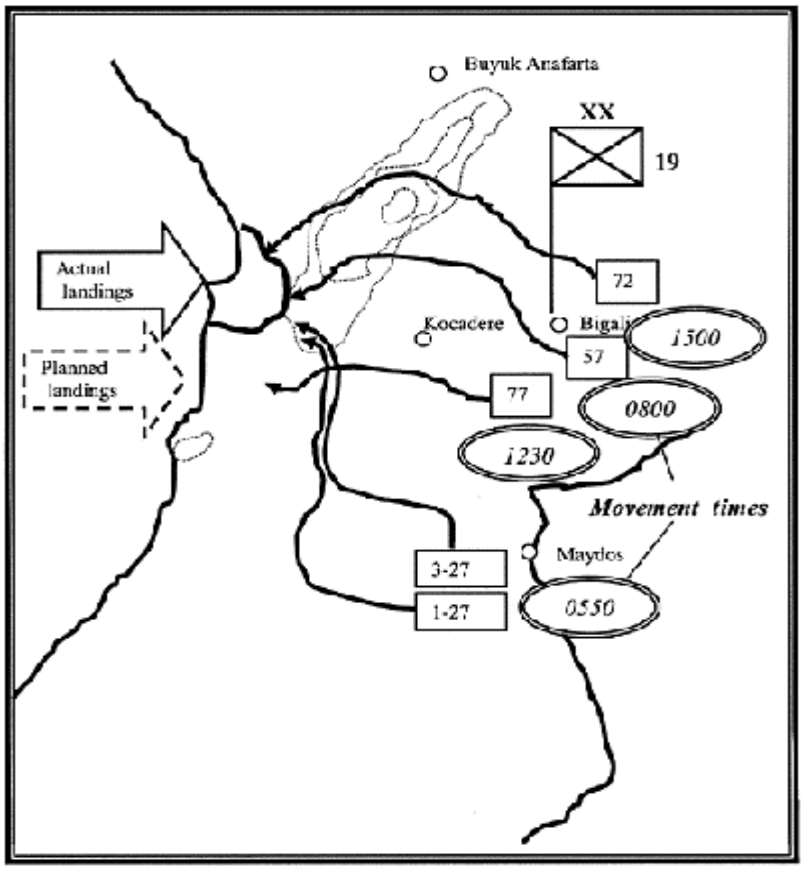
The Australians began to land about 0500 and their location was immediately passed up to the III Corps headquarters. Although his soldiers were tired from night training, Lieutenant Colonel Şefik immediately ordered his infantry and artillery to begin operations to 'throw the enemy into the sea'. Based on Şefik's reports, the 9th Infantry Division commander, Colonel Halil Sami, issued orders at 0555 that (1) noted that the enemy had come ashore thirty minutes before between Ariburnu and Kaba Tepe, (2) formally ordered Şefik with the 27th Infantry Regiment, artillery battery, and machine guns 'to proceed to drive the enemy into the sea' and (3) directed co-ordination measures with other units for fire support.[93] Halil Sami then put a 77mm battery on the road to

support the 27th Infantry Regiment. Copies of these orders were sent to the III Corps and also to Kemal's 19th Infantry Division.[94]

By 0800, Şefik's 1st and 3rd Battalions, as well as his artillery, were moving along parallel routes toward Kavak Tepe. En route, he issued a short combat order that he wanted to attack and ordered his artillery to Hill 165. These were not the only Turkish forces moving into action against the Australians. Earlier, about 0530, Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal alerted his 19th Infantry Division for action and ordered his cavalry forward to conduct route reconnaissance of the roads to Kocaçımen Tepe (north of Kavak Tepe). By 0700 no orders had arrived from the III Corps and the impatient and aggressive Kemal ordered his 57th Infantry Regiment, a mountain howitzer battery, and his medical detachment to Kocaçımen Tepe. He sent a situation report to III Corps outlining his intentions and his troops were marching within the hour.[95]

There were now two separate forces moving on Anzac under different commanders. (Map 2.5 shows these routes.) Realising this, Colonel Halil Sami, the 9th Infantry Division commander, reacted swiftly and issued new orders at 0825 to Lieutenant Colonel Şefik that revised and clarified the chain of command.[96] These orders alerted Şefik that the 57th Infantry Regiment was operating at Kocaçımen under Mustafa Kemal. Şefik was ordered to co-ordinate his operations with Kemal and to receive further instructions in the Kavak Tepe area. About 0900, Şefik's leading elements were nearing Kavak Tepe and were meeting the men of his 2nd Battalion who were conducting a fighting retreat up from the beaches. They brought with them captured enemy soldiers of the '3rd Australian' (probably from the 3rd Brigade) from the initial landings.[97] At 1030, the 27th Infantry Regiment was firmly in contact with the enemy; however, Şefik's planned attack was now held up by the orders to co-ordinate with Mustafa Kemal.

Meanwhile, Mustafa Kemal had reached Conkbayrı at 0940 with his aide, where he was protected by a platoon of Şefik's 2nd Battalion. Here Kemal prepared a short attack order specifying that his 1st and 2nd Battalions (of the 57th Infantry) would attack and holding his 3rd Battalion in reserve. A cavalry officer from the 9th Infantry Division bought him a report at 1100 outlining Şefik's plan to which he wrote a reply outlining his own plan and thus effectively achieving tactical co-ordination. Copies of these orders were sent to III Corps. The essence of Kemal's plan was that he would attack the enemy's left wing with his regiment and artillery, but would wait to begin the attack until Şefik's 27th Infantry Regiment attacked. Şefik replied directly to Kemal at 1130 informing him that the enemy had occupied a 2,000 m beachhead and that he intended to attack and advance his scouts toward Ariburnu. He closed by saying that 'we will attack and advance together'.[98] Şefik then ordered his artillery and machine guns to open preparatory fire. Clearly he understood both Halil Sami's guidance that he fight under Kemal and also Kemal's tactical intent for battle management. At noon, Şefik issued his regimental attack order directing the men to 'fight like lions and drive the invaders into the sea'.[99] He oriented (centred) his regiment on a small valley called the Kanlısırt. He also attached a company from his 3rd Battalion to the 1st Battalion, thus weighting his right flank (nearest to Kemal's regiment).



Map 2.5 Movement to contact Anzac, 25 April 1915.

Notes

a The 1st Battalion and the 3rd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, marched over separate routes and began to move more than two hours prior to the movement of Mustafa Kemal's 57th Infantry Regiment,

b The Turkish reaction contained the ANZACs by placing a reinforced infantry division on the high ground around Kavak Tepe.

Some time between 1230 and 1300, Şefik's skirmishers went forward, followed by waves of infantry with bayonets fixed. Kemal's men went forward as well. They were supported by three batteries of mountain and field artillery from Hill 165, Gok Tepe, and Kavak Tepe. (These were Şefik and Kemal's attached artillery and the 77 mm guns that Halil Sami had sent.) Kemal also took the time to order his 77th Infantry Regiment forward to reinforce the left flank of Şefik's regiment and his remaining 72nd Infantry Regiment to reinforce his own right flank. This attack rocked the Australians and brought their advances to a halt. However, staunch Australian resistance brought the determined but badly outnumbered Turks to a halt. (There were four Turkish battalions attacking over eight Australian battalions.)

Although the Turks had delayed their counter-attack by several hours from its optimum time of around 1000, they had achieved considerable advantages by waiting until co-ordination was complete. Neither Şefik nor Kemal recklessly launched premature and unsupported attacks. Instead, 'on the fly' they had co-ordinated a combined attack fully supported by artillery and machine guns. By releasing control of his 27th Infantry Regiment to Mustafa Kemal, Colonel Halil Sami had effectively and informally cross-attached what might be termed a regimental combat team to the 19th Infantry Division. This insured that the senior man on the spot (Kemal) enjoyed unity of command (as well as enabling Halil Sami to concentrate on the fights then raging on the beaches of Cape Helles). A timely flow of combat reports and orders then enabled Kemal and Şefik to develop an appreciation of the unfolding events. In a six-hour period, these men brought four infantry battalions into action (with a fifth in reserve) complete with supporting arms from reserve positions that were miles apart.

It was an unusual accomplishment and one that could not have been done without a high degree of standardisation in doctrine, reporting systems, and fire support co-ordination. The most vivid descriptions of the result are found in Bean and Travers, who describe the severe punishment meted out to the Australians by very effective Turkish shrapnel fire and sniping. The continuous shelling and the subsequent Turkish bayonet attack initiated a disintegration of morale and effectiveness among the ANZACs which would gather momentum as the day passed. As early as 1250, messages began to arrive at Australian headquarters declaring that they could not stand against the Turks without artillery support.[100]

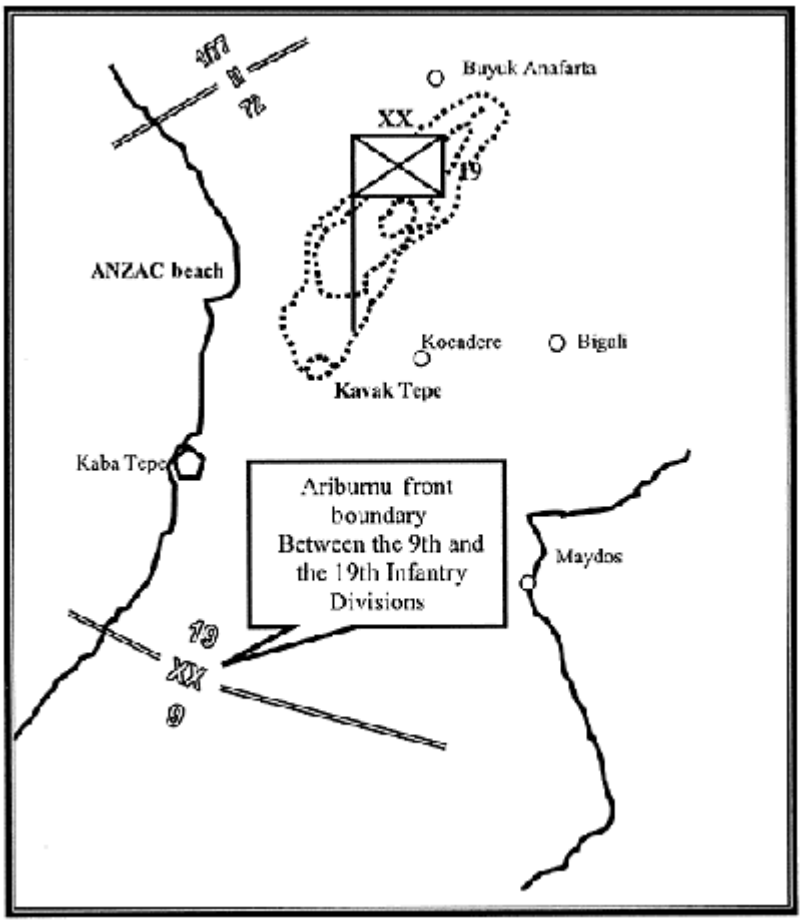
At 1530, two battalions of the 77th Infantry Regiment were in position (the third was assigned coastal defence duties at Suvla Bay and unavailable for operations) and Kemal launched a second powerful counter-attack in concert with the five battalions of the 27th and 57th Regiments. This attack was supported by artillery fire from the area now known as Kemalyeri (Kemal's Place). An hour later, the three battalions of the 72nd Infantry Regiment, now in position, attacked as well. Kemal now had ten battalions in action against the allies' eighteen.

Fortunately for Kemal, the allied battalions were poorly deployed against the Turks. This was a result of ineffective leadership at divisional and corps level. The first brigade ashore was 3rd Australian Brigade commanded by Brigadier MacLagan. Despite landing on the wrong beach, MacLagan aggressively pushed inland toward the high ground. Then, as MacLagan was the first senior commander ashore, the commanders of the incoming 2nd Brigade and the New Zealand Brigade deployed according to his directions.[101] MacLagan, however, did not have a clear picture of the situation or the

terrain and deployed the incoming battalions to reinforce his own brigade's unfolding fight (rather than deploying to expand the beachhead by seizing the key high ground). In effect, a brigade commander negated the effective deployment of his own division and the entire corps by marching toward the sound of the guns, rather than toward key terrain. As a result, the Australians were at their weakest at the point of Mustafa Kemal's attack.[102] Moreover, MacLagan had allowed the battalions to leave their packs and their shovels on the beach, thus forfeiting the ability to dig in quickly when counter-attacked.

Meanwhile, at Esat Paşa's III Corps field headquarters on Mal Tepe it was apparent that all immediate reserves were committed to containing the allied landings and it was necessary to revise the command arrangements to reflect the on-the-ground realities of the battle. From a purely technical perspective, Mustafa Kemal was fighting in Halil Sami's sector. Reacting swiftly to reorganise his corps, Esat designated Kemal as the Ariburnu Front Commander *(Ariburnu Cephesi Komutanlığı)* and attached the 27th Infantry Regiment to his new command.[103] In effect, this transferred the coastline sector of the 2nd Battalion of the 27th (stretching from a point south of Kaba Tepe to a point north of Fisherman's Hut) from Halil Sami's 9th Infantry Division to Kemal's 19th Infantry Division (see Map 2.6). This also formalised the co-operative working arrangement that Sami and Kemal had evolved earlier in the day. Esat Paşa now had Mustafa Kemal focused on the ANZACs at Ariburnu and Halil Sami focused on the British at Cape Helles.

To be sure, the Turks had their share of co-ordination problems. Both Bean and Travers have identified correctly the loss of tactical control within the 57th Infantry Regiment during the noon attack and Kemal's mishandling of the 77th Infantry Regiment in mid-afternoon.[104] Nevertheless, as darkness fell on the battlefield, it was the Australians who were notably demoralised. Encouraged by his success in pushing the enemy back during the afternoon, Kemal ordered his regiments to continue with night bayonet attacks. It was during these night attacks that the Arab soldiers of the 77th Infantry Regiment became disorganised and began to fire wildly into the adjacent friendly sectors. The night attacks were conducted at battalion level and, while tactically unsuccessful, served to keep pressure on the embattled Australians and New Zealanders. Remarkably, that night both ANZAC division commanders (Major General W.T.Bridges and Major General Sir Alexander Godley), although having landed 20,000 out of 24,000 troops during the day, became convinced that the Turks had the advantage and would overrun the corps at daybreak. In particular the Australians were almost paralysed by very effective shrapnel fire from enemy field artillery and by massed enemy infantry assaults.[105] Near midnight, they shocked their corps commander (Lieutenant General Sir William Birdwood) with a joint recommendation to evacuate the beachhead.[106] Birdwood referred the decision to General Sir Ian Hamilton, who famously advised the Australians and New Zealanders to stay put and 'dig, dig, dig'.[107]



Map 2.6 Ariburnu front command, afternoon, 25 April 1915.

Notes

a Esat's revised command and control arrangement at mid-afternoon, 25 April 1915. (Readers may wish to compare it with the previous arrangement on p. 23.)

b By redefining the divisional boundary between the 9th and 19th Infantry Divisions, Esat formally transferred tactical command and

control of the ANZAC beachhead to Mustafa Kemal.

c In creating the Ariburnu front command, Esat formalised the attachment of the 27th Infantry Regiment to Mustafa Kemal's 19th Infantry Division.

Comparison and analysis

The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) was a superbly equipped all-volunteer force of physically impressive soldiers that exuded elan, confidence, and courage. This was not a force that was expected to suffer a collapse of will in a single day of combat. What could be said about its composition, training, and overall preparation for combat?

Generally, the troops were overwhelmingly amateur soldiers. For example, in the 1st Australian Division, 41 per cent of the men had no previous military experience and 15 per cent were nineteen to twenty-year-old trainee militiamen. A further 27 per cent were older or former militiamen and only 9 per cent were former British regulars (7 per cent were former British Territorials).[108] Of the officers in the division 16.5 per cent had seen service in the Boer War (1899–1902) and there were only four Staff College graduates available for the staff.[109] The units formed around 17 August 1914, and departed for Europe on 1 November. The corps was diverted to Egypt as the Ottoman Empire entered the war, and arrived there in early December.

In Egypt, Bridges's 1st Australian Division concentrated on small unit tactics and moved into battalion and brigade exercises in February 1915.[110] No division-level exercises were attempted. However, Godley's 2nd Australian and New Zealand Division began division-level exercises immediately, stressing infantry marches, entrenching, and attacks. There were no corps-level exercises. Significantly, there was no combined arms training between the infantry and the artillery. This reflected outdated tactics that were based on the British Army's *Field Service Regulations,* which tended to view the role of the field artillery as secondary to and separate from the infantry assault.[111]

The Australians and New Zealanders were ill prepared for modern war. They were inexperienced and their training was fragmented and uneven. This was exaggerated by overall lack of standardised doctrine and reporting procedures. Organisationally, they were unable to cross-attach brigades or battalions. Moreover, they were totally unskilled in the art of bringing effective artillery fires to bear in support of the infantry.[112] Finally, they had absolutely no concept of the proficiency levels and determination of their enemy.

In terms of its initial battlefield performance, the ANZAC proved unable to co-ordinate battalion and brigade level-operations. It was unable to get its artillery ashore or to use naval gunfire effectively.[113] It was unable to pass routine messages that accurately conveyed essential information about front-line conditions. Its divisional leaders were unable to affect the situation and the corps commander remained on board a ship until a crisis developed on shore.

The Turks, on the other hand, had learned about war in the hard school of combat during the Balkan Wars. Their performance in those wars was similar to the ANZAC experience, but they had taken care to put their army right after the wars. Leaders in the 9th and 19th Infantry Divisions and in III Corps were on the spot and active. Above all, they maintained what Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery would later call 'grip'. Montgomery would use this term to describe the exercise of firm professional control over the battlefield situation. It meant forcing the battle to conform to his ideas rather than letting the battle exercise control over him, and to have 'grip' meant the difference between victory and defeat.[114] The key aspects in developing 'grip' were realistic and tough training, thorough pre-battle preparation, and the continuous exercise of active command. In this regard, it appears that the Ottoman Army, when given the time to train and prepare, developed 'grip' by successfully implementing Enver Paşa's ideas about leading from the front, co-ordinating effective fire support, and employing standardised procedures.

Finally, the issue of the reduced combat effectiveness of the 'Arab' regiments (see 'Ottoman preparation for combat' earlier in this chapter) must be addressed. It should be noted that the Turkish official military history of this campaign does not mention ethnicity as a factor affecting operations. However, the memoirs of the key officers of the Turkish III Corps command team contain a variety of criticisms regarding the 'Arab' regiments. III Corps chief of staff Fahrettin noted that the 72nd and 77th Infantry Regiments received a minimum of training *(eğitimleri de azdır)*.[115] Esat noted the same and also noted that the regiments were prone to panic.[116] Mustafa Kemal mentioned that the 77th Infantry Regiment made many operational mistakes *(bu alayin birçok yanlış harekati vardır)*.[117]

The criticisms of readiness and training of the 77th Infantry Regiment, in particular, seem to contradict the historical record established earlier in this chapter. Moreover the ethnic composition of the regiment, strongly Yezidi and Nusayrı according to Esat and Fahrettin,[118] is contradicted by the examination of its replacement input and by modern Ottoman Army scholarship as well.[119] Unquestionably, many soldiers in this regiment could not speak Ottoman Turkish and this would have had a most serious impact as the regiment launched hasty operations. (The movement to contact resulting in day and night bayonet attacks on 25 April.)

This study must defer the overall question of the combat effectiveness of the 'Arab' regiments. In this examination, the 72nd and 77th Infantry Regiments received training similar in scope and duration to other Ottoman regiments. Their performance in the movement to contact and their attacks were similar to the 27th and 57th Infantry Regiments and it appears that this issue is overstated.

Anzac, 26 April–1 May 1915

At 0150 on 26 April 1915, the Fifth Army headquarters sent a ciphered telegram to Enver Paşa at the Ministry of War outlining Liman von Sanders' intent for the coming days.[120] The Fifth Army reported that the 19th Infantry Division was conducting night attacks and that the XV Corps (in Asia) was in contact with the enemy and holding the line. The telegram noted that no landing had occurred at Saros Bay and that Liman von Sanders intended to send reinforcing units (two divisional equivalents) from the XV Corps and

7th Infantry Division to the 9th and 19th Infantry Division sectors. The message ended with a notation that the Fifth Army had telegraph communications with both fighting fronts, and wireless communications with the straits fortress command and with the battlecruiser *Goeben*. The first reinforcing units (the 33rd and 64th Infantry Regiments) were alerted for movement concurrently with the dispatch of the telegram.

The cipher to Enver in the early hours of 26 April reflected Liman von Sanders' most important contribution to the decisive defeat inflicted on Hamilton's landing force. The Fifth Army commander had spent the day personally evaluating the diversionary allied operations at Saros Bay and was not deceived by the manoeuvre. With three divisions in contact with the enemy, he boldly committed his remaining two divisions to the fights at Anzac and Cape Helles. In doing so, he stripped away the defenders from the Bulair isthmus and from the French front (itself a diversion) at Kum Kale in Asia. This decision indicates an unusually high degree of situational awareness at army level (by 1915 standards) and reflected the ability of Turkish units to transmit accurate and timely information.

Early in the morning of 26 April (0510), the 19th Infantry Division chief of staff, Staff Major Izzettin, was already co-ordinating with the III Corps concerning the reorganisation of forces.[121] The first of the incoming reinforcements was the mountain howitzer battalion of the 7th Infantry Division (3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery) that would go to the artillery positions at Kemalyeri. Mustafa Kemal's troops were exhausted from twenty-four hours of continuous operations, especially the men of Şefik's 27th Regiment, who had been awake for forty-eight hours. Therefore, Kemal spent the day pounding the enemy with his artillery and preparing to receive several more infantry regiments. He also directed that the regiments take several companies out of the line to establish local reserves, and he placed his divisional cavalry squadron and a III Corps cavalry squadron a kilometre behind his centre (near Kocadere) to dig a secondary line of trenches.

In the late afternoon, the dangerously tired men of the 27th Regiment were barely able to repel an enemy probing attack with their rifles and machine guns and Kemal sent in two infantry companies from the 72nd Infantry Regiment to back them up. Overall, the Turks characterised 26 April as a quiet day and that evening Kemal directed that his formations make preparations for renewing the attack and also to co-ordinate carefully their defences with flanking units. At higher levels, more reinforcements were on the way by ferry to Maidos from Asia (the 64th Infantry Regiment from the 3rd Division and the 33rd Infantry Regiment from the 11th Division—the Fifth Army units of the XV Corps).

The 19th Infantry Division staff worked to prepare a battle plan to assimilate the incoming regiments into the divisional sector. This probably began to strain the overworked division headquarters element.[122] Nevertheless, Kemal and his chief of staff decided to bring the incoming 64th Infantry Regiment around to the northern flank and the incoming 33rd directly into the centre. These hard-marching regiments moved into position in the early hours of 27 April. Both Esat (III Corps commander) and Mustafa Kemal were concerned about the tired condition of the men but were ordered to attack by Liman von Sanders. The attack began at 0730, but the newly arrived regiments were unable to attack on schedule, and only the 57th Infantry Regiment attacked as planned. In spite of this the Turks made progress with determined bayonet assaults and were able to

spread panic in the allied lines. This brought a furious rain of naval gunfire on the Turks that turned them back to their start lines.[123]

Disturbed by the failure of the regiments to attack in concert, Staff Major Izzettin sent new orders to restart the offensive, and at 1000 the 64th Infantry Regiment finally crossed the start lines and attacked the Australians. The remaining regiments joined in as well, except the 33rd, which still was not ready to attack, but again allied naval gunfire blasted the Turkish attacks into oblivion. Throughout the day the Turks attacked fitfully, unable to synchronise their operations. Casualties began to mount and by 1830 losses in the 27th, 57th, and 72nd Regiments amounted to 30–40 per cent. At this point, Mustafa Kemal decided to call off the attacks and prepare for a night assault, which would mitigate the effects of the enemy naval gunfire. He was also, by now, knowledgeable of the severe collapse of morale suffered by the Australians and New Zealanders on the previous night and he hoped to capitalise on this with a force that now numbered fifteen infantry battalions (organised into two tactical groups) and nine batteries of artillery.[124]

The night attack began a little after 2100 as Kemal's northern group, the 57th and 64th Infantry Regiments, swept forward into the enemy's trenches 'like a wave'. There was intense fighting at close quarters but heavy ANZAC rifle and machine-gun fire drove the Turks back. Shortly thereafter, his southern group of the remaining four regiments launched their attack. Kemal committed every available man to the attack (leaving no reserve). Again the Turks broke into the enemy trenches but the attacking regiments, exhausted and depleted from two days of combat, could not break through. Moreover, Turkish soldiers from various regiments became badly mixed in the confusing fighting in the dark. Kemal sent an urgent request to III Corps for reinforcements, but received a negative response that all Esat's forces were committed to action. The night attack then frittered away to series of small actions and eventually collapsed.

The tempo of battle slowed on the following day as each side sought to consolidate gains and stabilise its lines. The ANZAC force had grown to twenty-one infantry battalions and now outnumbered the Turks in the battle area. The operational finesse exhibited by the Turks on 25 April clearly began to deteriorate in the following days. The likely culprit for this degradation of command was the vastly increased number of regiments that the 19th Infantry Division now had under its command, although this is not specifically mentioned as a problem in the extant record. Yet the Anzac beachhead continued to attract incoming reinforcements like a magnet and the 125th Infantry Regiment arrived on 28 April. This regiment was given a brief rest period in the centre of the Turkish positions near the artillery. Good news from Enver Paşa also arrived promising that Ottoman forces held in general reserve near Constantinople would soon be on the way to the front.[125] Encouraged by this development, the Fifth Army ordered the renewal of the attack and ordered the remainder of the 5th Infantry Division south to join the fight. The III Corps ordered the 19th Infantry Division to absorb the incoming 5th Division regiments and to plan yet another major attack to drive the ANZACs into the sea.

Mustafa Kemal now had about twenty-four hours at his disposal to put together a plan for a decisive attack. He decided to launch a three-pronged assault, supported by an artillery preparation, with his main effort in the centre. To accommodate this he organised a right wing column under Major Avni (of seven battalions from four regiments), a centre column under Lieutenant Colonel Ali (of the six battalions of the

14th and 15th Infantry Regiments), and a left wing column under Lieutenant Colonel Ali Şefik (of six battalions from four regiments).[126] Although the main effort seems under strength, it was composed of the fresh and organisationally intact regiments of the 5th Infantry Division, under the command of its divisional commander, Lieutenant Colonel Ali. Backing up the 5th Division regiments was a battalion of the 125th Infantry. Kemal ordered that twenty-two machine guns (from six detachments), three field artillery batteries, and seven mountain artillery batteries support the main effort. The artillery spent most of the day of 30 April repositioning their guns to support the attack. Essentially, Mustafa Kemal was launching a divisional scale main attack of fresh men, supported by two simultaneous divisional-scale supplementary attacks, and he planned to throw over 18,000 men into the fight. The divisional orders reached the company officers in the front-line trenches in the early evening hours.[127]

Kemal reckoned that success was achievable based on his observations that morale among the Australians was almost broken and he felt that once his men broke into the enemy trenches his opponents would collapse.[128] He was also convinced that his artillery would have an especially demoralising effect on the enemy. There were some lingering and worrisome questions about the reliability of the of the Arab soldiers of the 77th Infantry Regiment, but Kemal kept these troops on the right flank where a failure would not endanger the decisive main attack. That night the troops rested in anticipation of the coming attack.

At 0500 on 1 May 1915, the Turkish artillery began to fire preparation fire on the enemy trenches. Because of ammunition shortages, the preparation was scheduled to last fifteen minutes, at which time the infantry would attack. The centre and left columns went over the top on time but the right column was delayed somewhat. The distance between the trenches (No Man's Land) was about 200 m in the critical centre sector, and, unfortunately for the Turks, it was open ground. A 'wall of heavy machine gun and rifle fire' immediately greeted the Turks, although enemy artillery fire was weak and ineffective.[129] The Turks suffered huge casualties, but small groups managed to reach the Australian lines where hand-to-hand fighting using bayonets and knives broke out. The Turkish attacks faltered and ground to a halt in the face of fierce resistance.

Learning that all three attacks were failing. Mustafa Kemal committed his reserves at 1030 in support of his centre column. However, by noon, all of his column commanders reported that the massive attack had failed, although some ground had been gained on the left flank. The Turkish artillery firing had died away to nothing because of ammunition shortages. Kemal was discouraged and was tempted to call off his offensive. But, in the early afternoon, an Ottoman radio detachment intercepted an Australian transmission that indicated that their tactical situation was critical. Enthused by this news, Kemal shared it with Lieutenant Colonel Şefik, the left wing commander, and started to reorganise his command for a night assault.[130]

A division attack order was issued at 1630 that brought two battalions of the 13th Infantry Regiment back from the line as reserves. The day's fighting had resulted in some gains and there were locations along the front where there was a mere 10m between the two armies. Kemal's attack was timed to begin at midnight on the left and then at 0200 in the centre and on the right. By sequencing his attacks in this manner, he hoped to draw enemy reserves away from his main effort. This action became famous as the night attack of 1 May 1915. Unfortunately for the Turks, the ANZACs were alert and were observing

their fronts. Again, the Turks ran into a withering barrage of machine-gun and rifle fire. By 0300, Mustafa Kemal acknowledged failure and called off the attacks. Ottoman losses were horrible and the allies estimated that at many as 10,000 Turks were killed (the Turkish official history admits to 6,000).[131] The attacking regiments were shattered. For example, the war diary of the 15th Infantry Regiment noted that over 960 officers and men were killed and wounded that night.[132]

Of note the Ottoman Army recognised the bravery and achievements of its soldiers and formations. The 19th Infantry Regiment, which had been involved in the night attacks of 1 May, was badly worn down and was committed again in a second night attack on 3 May. On 9 May 1915, the regimental commander was awarded the Silver Battle Medal of Distinction *(Muharebe Gumus Imtiyaz Madeliyi)* for 'high achievement'.[133] Other commanders and regiments received similar honours.

Anzac: reflections

From the Turkish perspective, the Ari Burnu (Anzac) landings and battles were a division-level fight that expanded to a corps-level fight in a matter of days. The Ottoman command structure anticipated a major enemy attack in the area and planned accordingly. As the battle unfolded, the Turks maintained excellent command and control and maintained continuous co-ordination between units. There was a much higher degree of situational awareness and confidence on the Turkish side, which enabled it to maintain the operational and tactical initiative. After the first half day ashore, the ANZACs simply waited, worried, and dug. The Turks failed by a narrow margin to throw them back into the sea. This speaks more to the overall tactical dynamic in 1915 than to poor performance on the Turkish side.

The primary failure on the part of the Turks was that they allowed an unopposed landing on the narrow shelf-like cove at Anzac Beach. This was a result of their careful pre-battle analysis that indicated the Ari Burnu Beach (known as 'Brighton Beach' to the allies) was the logical landing spot. In effect, the Turks disregarded the cove since it was, militarily speaking, an unsuitable landing point. This failure enabled the British to land there (albeit unintentionally) and to put ashore almost an entire corps of infantry in twenty-four hour time span. This brought the Fifth Army to the edge of disaster. Nevertheless, the Turkish plan enabled the Turks to recover from this miscalculation and they, in turn, then brought the ANZAC to the edge of disaster. It was, in Wellington's words, 'a near run thing'.

Cape Helles, 25 April 1915

The story of the battles that raged on the southern tip of the Gallipoli Pensinsula on 25 April 1915 is more accurately told in the British official histories and by later historians than the ANZAC landings.[134] This was a dramatically different battle than the Australians fought that day because it was fought mostly on the landing beaches themselves. The day's fighting revolved around the desperate struggle to get off the landing beaches and on to the high ground beyond. The difficulty encountered by the British as they attempted to land on contested beaches would later be repeated in such exotic locations as Omaha

Beach, Betio, and Saipan. In essence, the British attacked into the heart of the strongest Ottoman defensive field works on the peninsula that were held by well led, well trained, and confident troops.

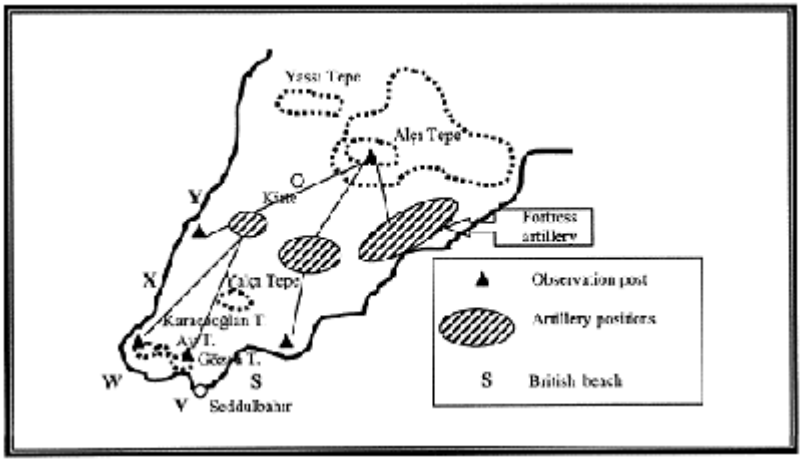
The Ottoman defence of Cape Helles (or Seddulbahir to the Turks) was unitary at the tactical level and was the responsibility of the 26th Infantry Regiment. This regiment had occupied the area on 19 August 1914, and had been working on solidifying the defences for over eight months. Moreover, it was task-organised to include direct support artillery, cavalry, Jandarma, and engineers. During this period, the regiment usually put two battalions into the beach defences and maintained one battalion in reserve.[135] Troops of the regiment came under naval gunfire during the allied naval attacks of 25 February, 3 March (during which it lost four men killed and fourteen men wounded), and 18 March 1915. Although bloodied, morale within the battalions of this veteran regiment remained very high.[136]

As Ottoman Army reinforcements poured into the area in March and April 1915 it was possible to bring the entire 25th Infantry Regiment from Asia to the peninsula (thus consolidating the entire 9th Infantry Division). Halil Sami placed this regiment into the reserve positions occupied by the 26th Infantry Regiment and on 21 April he was able to shift the entire 26th Infantry Regiment into the Cape Helles beach defences.[137] Thus on the eve of the allied invasion, Halil Sami now had a fully trained and fully manned infantry regiment defending the southern beaches of the Gallipoli Peninsula. Notably, the young regimental commander Major Kadri had orchestrated the Alçi Tepe artillery fire planning exercise of 4 October, 1914 (previously discussed) and was fully familiar with the terrain and the associated defensive plans (see Map 2.7).

Major Kadri and his staff went to work on the morning of 22 April to finalise the co-ordination of the defence and rapidly issued orders that would take effect on 24 April. Kadri's regimental order was sixteen paragraphs in length and described in detail the occupation of the defensive works by his men.[138] Kadri paid close attention to his artillery support and tied 150mm and 105mm howitzers, field gun batteries, and 37mm quick-firing guns directly in support of his infantry battalions. He ordered that map overlays showing these plans be made and distributed to his commanders, as well as to the adjacent fortress command. He also personally supervised the relief in place of his reserve battalion by the incoming 25th Infantry Regiment.

As finally configured on the morning of 25 April, Major Kadri deployed his 3rd Battalion in the Seddulbahir defences and his 1st Battalion (sometimes called the 4th Battalion because it was reconstituted on 16 August 1914) in the Kum Tepe defences. In the centre, he maintained three companies of his 2nd Battalion in regimental reserve, while positioning the 6th Company of this battalion on the western coast (thus linking the Seddulbahir and Kum Tepe positions). Kadri positioned his regimental command post and his regimental reserve in the village of Kirte (Krithia). Most of his artillery was positioned on the eastern slopes of the peninsula where it was somewhat protected from allied naval gunfire but the observers remained on the Alçi Tepe high ground that was the dominant terrain feature of the lower peninsula.[139] Behind Kadri's regiment, the 25th Infantry Regiment waited in general reserve. Although well balanced, these dispositions were based on the primary tactical assumption (dating back to 1912) that the enemy would choose to land at the tip of the peninsula and fight northward.

The 9th Infantry Division Artillery Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Mehmet Ali, was likewise making final preparations for the coming battle. After attaching three batteries to the 27th Infantry Regiment, he had forty-four artillery pieces of various types remaining and available in the southern half of the divisional sector.[140] Most of these were attached in direct support of the infantry and



Map 2.7 26th Infantry Regiment fire planning, 4 October 1914.

Notes

a Turkish observation posts overlooked the likely landing beaches and were connected by telephone lines, signal flags, and runners with artillery positions.

b Supporting fire from the howitzers of the fortress artillery could be requested through the observation post on Alçı Tepe.

were sited on the landing beaches.[141] Co-ordination between the guns and the newly positioned infantry was increased. Mehmet Ali also had on call priority for two 105mm and one 150mm howitzer batteries from the nearby Straits Fortress Command. To these batteries he gave orders that their first priority was against allied ships forcing the Dardanelles but, absent that situation, to be prepared to fire on Seddulbahir (to their rear) against allied landing operations. He further reminded all of his artillery batteries that the infantry-artillery team required organisation and discipline in order to be effective.[142]

Whereas the fighting at ANZAC on 25 April proved to be somewhat of a meeting engagment followed by hasty Ottoman attacks, the fighting at Cape Helles was characterised by direct British assaults on an enemy strong point system. It was more like the fighting then raging in France and, consequently, was far more violent, resulted in far more British casualties, and also resulted an a large number of Victoria Crosses being awarded for acts of gallantry. The British threw almost the entire strength of the regular 29th Infantry Division at the very tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula with the objective of driving northward to seize the high ground of Alçi Tepe. Defending against this large array of forces, which was backed up by significant naval gunfire assets, was the single 3rd Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment commanded by Major Mahmut Sabri. (Refer to Map 2.1 for the location of this regiment.)

This battalion had two companies (10 and 12 Companies) employed in beach defence. These companies each deployed two platoons in strong points (fortified with wire and trenches) on the low hills overlooking the landing beaches of Ikiz Koyu (X Beach), Teke Koyu (W Beach), and Ertugrul Koyu (V Beach). The third platoon in each company was positioned in reserve behind the hills. Major Mahmut Sabri maintained his battalion command post, two infantry companies (9 and 11 Companies), and his attached engineer company in general reserve about one kilometre inland from the landing beaches. It was a classic defensive arrangement characterised by the positioning of ready reserves for reinforcement and counter-attacks. Additionally, the battalion had an artillery battery positioned south-west of Kirte for direct fire support.

Alerted to expect an imminent allied landing, Mahmut Sabri wrote new orders for his battalion on 23 April 1915, to ready them for the coming fight.[143] He directed his platoon strong points to engage the enemy ships and landing craft at ranges of 200–300m with violent fire. He told his platoons that they would be reinforced by his reserves once he knew the direction of the main enemy attack. He told them to be brave and patiently to make their preparations. This was not a ‘do or die’ order—Mahmut Sabri identified the location of his battalion first aid station at Harapkale and, furthermore, identified the ‘middle road’ as being the best route to take there because it was covered from enemy fire. The men of his battalion received this order on the morning of 24 April. It was the last one that they would receive before the British began landing.

The night of 24/25 April was quiet and moonlit. In spite of the light breeze and waves, the Turkish sentries could hear enemy ships and, occasionally, an enemy aircraft. At 0430, the British naval bombardment began from three directions, fully alerting the Turkish defenders. Although he had suspicions about where the British would actually land, Major Mahmut Sabri decided to await reports from his company commanders, which arrived about 0600. These added nothing to his situational awareness but he sent a situation report to the regimental command post outlining the strength of the naval forces bombarding his positions. He completed his report with the words, ‘the battalion is ready and will perform to the final degree’.[144]

At the same time, the 12th Company’s platoons observed over forty boats in lines heading for Teke Koyu (W Beach). At the 400m range line, Turkish heavy machine guns begn to engage the lead boats, but the riflemen withheld their fire until the British were with 40m of the shore. The British landing was centred on the beach and, therefore, directly into the centre of a prearranged Turkish beaten zone.[145] The forward Turkish

platoon reported at 0705 that an actual landing (as opposed to a demonstration or feint) was under way.[146]

At nearby Seddulbahir (V Beach) at 0600, the men of the 10th Company observed, with great puzzlement, in the middle of masses of boats, a steamship (the converted collier *River Clyde*) heading inshore. At the 400m mark, the Turks began to engage the enemy with machine guns and light artillery. At 0630, five of twenty enemy boats became separated from the main body and the Turks engaged them with very heavy rifle fire. The steamship continued on until it grounded out in the surf and it was apparent to the Turks that it contained hundreds of enemy soldiers as well as numerous machine guns. The ship immediately became a magnet for heavy Turkish fire as the company commander directed rifles and machine guns against it. The Turkish official history refers to the *River Clyde* as a Trojan Horse.

Reports reached Major Mahmut Sabri at his battalion command post at 0907. From the 10th Company that indicated that the *River Clyde* was a 'bankrupt operation'.[147] Nevertheless, Mahmut Sabi felt that the presence of this ship confirmed that Seddulbahir was the enemy's main effort and he ordered the 11th Company forward (then in battalion reserve). This would give him about 300 rifleman on his critical left flank.[148] Meanwhile and simultaneously the enemy also landed at Ikiz Koyu (X Beach), Zengindere (Y Beach), and Morto Koyu (S Beach). In doing so, the British hoped to confuse the Turks and cause them to disperse and expose their reserves. Of these landings, only Y Beach fell outside of the 3rd Battalion's sector.

Responding to this dangerous situation with his remaining 9th Company, Mahmut Sabri decided to reinforce the hills north of Teke Koyu. From the high ground there, his 9th Company could dominate Ikiz Koyu (X Beach). He ordered the company to make haste and deploy to Karacaoglan Tepe in order to restore the situation.[149] Major Mahmut Sabri now had his entire battalion committed to the fight and it was barely 1000 in the morning. However, he had taken the time to request reinforcements earlier and the 26th Infantry Regiment ordered the 7th Company (from the 2nd Battalion) forward from Kirte at 0650 that morning.[150] Mahmut Sabri initially planned to place this company in battalion reserve and sent a message to the company commander en route ordering him to make haste. In an unusual display of initiative, with heavy enemy fire falling along his intended route of march, the 7th Company commander decided to bring his company into action immediately and attack the enemy landings at Ikiz Koyu (X Beach). The Turks regarded this as a fortunate decision since it placed an infantry company on the north flank of the British landings there, thereby preventing a break-out.[151]

As has been described in the extant literature of the Gallipoli Campaign, the battles for the V, X, and W Beaches were bloody in the extreme. These actions brought the British main effort directly into the teeth of the Major Mahmut Sabri's well prepared defences. The Turks in the strong points on the high ground held the British on the beaches for most of the day of 25 April and it was not until the early evening that the British managed to seize the positions of the 10th and 12th Companies. Throughout the day a constant stream of reports and orders connected the Turkish defenders with their higher headquarters.

At 0930, the commander of the 26th Infantry Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Kadri, urgently requested reinforcements from the 9th Infantry Division by telephone.[152] This was followed by a stream of situation reports forwarded from Major Mahmut Sabri that

described the deterioriating situation in his area. The official Turkish history characterised the division commander, Colonel Halil Sami, as slow to react to the situation at Cape Helles.[153] 'Finally' (according to the official history) at 1415, the 9th Infantry Division headquarters issued orders to the 25th Infantry Regiment (the division reserve) to advance its 3rd Battalion for a counterattack.[154] It appears that Halil Sami was focused on the Ari Burnu (ANZAC) landings and was hesitant to commit his only reserves.[155] Nevertheless, thirty minutes later, the soldiers of the 3rd Battalion were on the road from Sarafim Çifğili. Travelling through Kirte, the battalion came under enemy naval gunfire, turned west toward Sari Tepe (Y Beach) and moved into attack positions.

The artillery co-ordination and preparations of Lieutenant Colonel Mehmet Ali paid off around 1400 when the guns of the fortress began to fire in support of the two divisional artillery batteries then in action. A five-piece 105mm howitzer battery and a five-piece 150mm howitzer battery pounded S and Y Beaches.[156] Additionally, several 120mm howitzers captured from the Bulgarians in 1913 fired 250 rounds as well.

The situation on the tip of peninsula grew steadily worse for the Turks. At 1500, Major Mahmut Sabri reported that he had committed his entire command and that the situation on Aytepe was in doubt. Colonel Halil Sami still retained two reserve battalions of the 25th Infantry Regiment as well as their supporting field artillery battery, but was reluctant to commit them since they were his only remaining reserves. Once they were committed, Halil Sami would lose any ability to influence the battle. However, he decided to execute a counter-attack from Zengindere with these last remaining reserves and he informed his commander at III Corps of his decision.[157]

Casualties were mounting rapidly. The 7th Company experienced many soldiers killed, including the company commander, who led a bayonet charge against the British.[158] Halil Sami hesitated again and, for reasons that are not clear, did not issue attack orders immediately (as he had indicated to III Corps) to the waiting battalions of the 25th Infantry Regiment. This was a serious mistake that cost the Turks dear. Halil Sami's early morning stellar performance seemed to deteriorate as the day progressed.[159]

At 1740, Ay Tepe fell and the adjacent strong point on Gozcubaba came under direct attack.[160] Written and telephonic reports to this effect from both regiments reached Halil Sami, who was north of Kirte in the artillery area, confirming this tactical disaster and pointing out that the piecemeal commitment of reserves was at fault. At 1830, Colonel Halil Sami belatedly issued orders deploying the remaining two battalions and the machine-gun detachment of the 25th Infantry Regiment to Teke Koyu and Seddulbahir. He also ordered them to move rapidly and close on the enemy landing areas that night.[161]

In a very complex division order, Halil Sami directed two companies of the 1st Battalion, 25th Infantry Regiment and a machine-gun platoon to reinforce the 3rd Battalion (then marching on Zengindere or Y Beach) for a night attack on the British. He ordered the 1st Battalion headquarters and the remaining two companies and machine-gun platoon to Seddulbahir to reinforce Mahmut Sabri's badly battered 3rd Battalion, 26th Infantry, with orders to 'clean up the beaches'.[162] The 2nd Battalion, 25th Infantry and two companies were sent to reinforce the 8th Company at Eskihisarlik (S Beach), and its remaining two companies were kept in reserve at Yassi Tepe (where Halil Sami himself intended to spend the night). Clearly, Colonel Halil Sami was unsure exactly where the allied main effort was and, consequently, felt compelled to disperse his scarce reserves to cover all of the landing beaches.

Halil Sami's apparent lack of situational awareness contrasts significantly with Mustafa Kemal's heightened situational awareness that the ANZACs had conducted a single massive landing at Ari Burnu. Halil Sami had also detached previously the 27th Infantry Regiment to Mustafa Kemal (or about one-third of his combat power), leaving the 9th Infantry Division with only two infantry regiments to oppose the Cape Helles landings. The British plan to stage multiple landings on Cape Helles to confuse the Turkish defenders was, therefore, very successful at the tactical level.

At 0100 on 26 April 1915, runners (messengers) from the 1st Battalion, 25th Infantry, arrived at the command post of Major Mahmut Sabri. Sabri quickly crafted a plan to retake the lost high ground of Ay Tepe and sent it back by runner to the incoming battalion commander. Mahmut Sabri's plan envisioned that the fresh troops of the 1st Battalion, 25th Infantry, would march directly to attack positions by 0230 and begin preparations for a night bayonet assault on Ay Tepe.[163] To ensure maximum control, Mahmut Sabri linked the incoming 3rd Company with his own 9th Company and the incoming 4th Company with his own 12th Company. This insured that the incoming troops were aware of where the enemy and the tactical objectives were located. His 11th Company was ordered to retake Gozcubaba. The incoming machine-gun platoon (two guns) was ordered to support the advance on Ay Tepe. Finally, the incoming battalion commander was directed to remain in reserve at Harapkale with one platoon of infantry. Mahmut Sabri's attack was scheduled to begin at 0330.

The night bayonet attack began on schedule, but a wall of British rifle fire, machine-gun fire, and grenades hit the advancing Turkish infantry.[164] This was soon followed by naval gunfire. Mahmut Sabri committed his reserve platoon under the 3rd Battalion commander. The battle seesawed back and forth, and Mahmut Sabri received conflicting reports of success on his left flank. Although some parts of the British trenches were taken, Mahmut Sabri's attack collapsed after an hour's fighting. The difficult first twenty-four hours of the battle then ended with Sabri's battalion of about 1,000 men having lost over 500 soldiers killed. Significantly, the battalion did not collapse and maintained its cohesion.

Although Mahmut Sabri's attack failed, it was a remarkably ambitious undertaking. It must be noted that his combat orders ensured that the incoming fresh troops were taken in hand by his experienced men who knew the terrain. Taken overall, Sabri's plan was sound and maximised the troops that he had available. The plan showcases the flexibility with which the Turks were able to cross-attach companies and battalions from one regiment with another. Mahmut Sabri was able to orchestrate on short notice the integration of a battalion from the 25th Infantry Regiment with his own battalion of the 26th Infantry Regiment. Moreover, he was able to maintain his 'grip' on the situation throughout the first twenty-four hours. Considering that Mahmut Sabri's single battalion fought almost twelve British infantry battalions to a standstill, his achievement was singularly impressive.

Comparison and analysis

The British 29th Infantry Division was composed of eleven regular army infantry battalions drawn from garrisons in India (its twelfth battalion was a Territorial Scottish infantry battalion). These battalions were replaced by garrisons of Territorials from home

and were pulled back to England in the fall and winter of 1914. The 29th was the last regular army division formed in the war and was slated originally for the western front.[165]

Because it was composed almost entirely of regulars, the 29th has been characterised as the best allied formation sent to the Dardanelles, and, compared with the rest, it was. However, the 29th was a division in name only and suffered from serious deficiencies. It was hastily formed in Warwickshire and, like the ANZAC divisions, never had an opportunity for brigade and division level training. Moreover, except for a division parade before King George V on 12 March 1915, and in stark contrast to its Ottoman opponent, the division artillery and signals never practised with the infantry until the Gallipoli landing.[166] Although treated well in the unofficial 29th divisional history, the commander, Major General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, was overly aggressive, obstinate, and did not fully understand the tactical reality of modern war.[167]

The experiences of the 1st Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers, were typical of the battalions of the 29th Infantry Division.[168] The Fusiliers left India in October 1914 and briefly stopped in Aden to relieve the 1st Royal Irish Rifles. They landed at Avonmouth on 2 January 1915 and went into barracks at Nuneaton. All ranks received a short leave and then were refitted with new uniforms and kit. There was some time for training, which was limited to marching in the new gear, after which the battalion was inspected by the King near Rugby on 12 March. The battalion embarked for the war four days later and arrived in Egypt on 27 March 1915.

During the first five days of April, the troops conducted training in disembarkation and landing stores and ammunition. They also went to the ranges for shooting practice.[169] The battalion reembarked on 7 April and sailed to the wide anchorage at Mudros. The men remained on board ship, mostly writing letters and cleaning their kit, while the officers studied their inaccurate maps of Gallipoli and toured the island.[170] On the evening of 24 April the Fusiliers set sail for Tenados and transloading into Royal Navy warships. At dawn on the following day they landed on W Beach in small boats.[171]

The tactical performance of the regulars was mixed. On the toe of the peninsula, W and V Beaches turned into deathtraps, yet the battalions fought their way ashore. On S, X, and Y Beaches, there was scant or no opposition and the infantry came ashore easily. However, at these locations, the British failed to exploit their success by pushing inland. Throughout the first twenty-four hours of the battle Hunter-Weston remained fixated on W and V Beaches.[172] Travers identified this failure as an institutional trait within the British Army's system of command that focused on where the opposition was strongest rather than where the enemy was weakest.[173] Highlighting this, Travers noted that on Y Beach alone there were more British soldiers than the Turks had in Mahmut Kadri's entire regiment, yet the British failed to push these men forward. Hunter-Weston himself remained afloat on HMS *Euryalus*, designating Brigadier Marshall as commander on shore.[174]

Cape Relies, 26 April–1 May 1915

On the morning of 26 April, the British 29th Infantry Division had its infantry ashore and was preparing to bring in its artillery. Some of the infantry battalions had suffered terrible casualties in the landings but, nevertheless, the division intended to push inland toward its main objective of Alci Tepe. It was quiet in the early hours and the Turks spent the

time preparing supplementary trench lines in their rear. At 0900 British machine guns opened up on the Turks and infantry began to push off the high ground. The Turkish positions were still under the control of Major Mahmut Sabri. With his limited and tired forces, he fought a delaying battle throughout the day that slowed the British advance to a crawl. Mahmut Sabri had the remnants of about three infantry battalions under his tactical command and was opposed by fourteen weakened British infantry battalions. There were no other Turkish troops available in the lower peninsula to reinforce him. Throughout the day, he conducted a deliberate withdrawal to a new defensive line centred on the high ground of Yalçi Tepe. Here the front stabilised on the supplementary trenches that Sabri had prepared. Sabri reported at the end of the day that he had lost six officers and 630 men from his pre-battle strength of 1,128 officers and men.[175] However, he estimated that he had inflicted between 2,600 to 3,000 casualties on the enemy. Colonel Halil Sami reported that night to III Corps that the 9th Infantry Division had lost ten officers and 1,887 men from the 25th and 26th Infantry Regiments.[176] However, reinforcements were about to arrive.

Travers claimed that the allies could have advanced much farther on 27 April because 'Liman von Sanders and the Turks were a little slow to react to the landings'.[177] In fact, help was already on the way and the first reinforcement arrived about noon on 27 April—the Bursa Jandarma Battalion, which was sent to the 26th Infantry Regiment. Later that afternoon, the 20th Infantry Regiment (from the 7th Infantry Division) arrived after a hard march from the neck of the peninsula (Bulair). This regiment was very experienced and very well trained.[178] Colonel Halil Sami decided to employ the 20th Infantry Regiment on his right flank and to consolidate the remainder of his forces under the command of the 26th Infantry Regiment on his left flank.[179] Later in the day, Major Mahmut Sabri's troops were pulled off the line as the 20th Infantry conducted a relief in place and were repositioned in the 26th Infantry's sector. In sum, the 9th Infantry Division now had a fresh regiment (over 3,000 men) on the west side of the Gallipoli Peninsula and a composite regiment of equal strength on the east side.

Because of the relative calm on 27 April, Halil Sami decided to conduct a local attack with his fresh troops before the allies could consolidate their gains.[180] Halil Sami ordered a night attack by the 20th and 26th Infantry Regiments with the bayonet to seize the enemy trenches. His intent was to push the allies out of their trenches and he scheduled the attack for 0100 on 28 April. In his orders Halil Sami directed that the attacking regiments bring up the divisional engineer company and that defensive trenches were to be prepared by the time dawn broke.

The divisional order was passed down the chain of command but it 'choked on the details'.[181] There was considerable confusion concerning previous orders and tactical dispositions that conflicted with the attack order. In particular, the commander of the fresh 20th Infantry Regiment was concerned that one of his three battalions had been previously placed by Halil Sami in division reserve. The division resolved this by giving the 20th Regiment command of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Infantry Regiment. The 26th Infantry Regiment retained its 2nd and 3rd Battalions and was given the 1st Battalion, the 25th Infantry Regiment and the Bursa Jandarma Battalion. These changes were made in the evening and resulted in the finalised attack order being considerably delayed. The result was that pre-combat preparations were incomplete and some units were notified of the attack only an hour before its start.[182]

The attack began on time but was poorly organised because of the haste with which the division had co-ordinated the operation. The preparations necessary for a difficult night attack (route reconniassance, rehearsals, and troop rest) were incomplete. The predictable result was a failed attack that made only a slight impression on the allies.[183] In fact, the Turkish attack failed to give pause to a major allied attack that began at 0800 on 28 April.

The allies, under Major General Hunter-Weston, had spent the day of 27 April preparing for a corps-level attack designed to seize the village of Kirte (Krithia). Hunter-Weston had fourteen British infantry battalions and five French infantry battalions, and although he had scant field artillery ashore, he had the guns of the combined allied fleet at his disposal. Halil Sami had ten badly battered infantry battalions, but the fresh 2nd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment (from the 5th Infantry Division) and two battalions of the 19th Infantry Regiment (from the 7th Infantry Division) were arriving from the north. These reinforcements gave the Turks even odds against their enemy.

Undeterred by the failure of his night attack, Halil Sami issued new combat orders to his men. His orders confirmed that 'the assault forces scattered by the night attack should withdraw to the defensive lines'.[184] He placed the 20th Infantry Regiment in command of the western wing and the 26th Infantry Regiment in command of the eastern wing (thus dividing his front into two halves). Then he ordered the incoming battalions and machine-gun detachment of the 19th Infantry Regiment to take over the defensive line on the east flank of the 20th Infantry Regiment. Moreover, the Bursa Jandarma were attached to the 19th Infantry Regiment as well and the 2nd Battalion, 15th Infantry, positioned in reserve near the village of Kirte. Halil Sami directed that the reorganisation for combat must occur rapidly and he ordered that the trenches be held to the 'final degree'.[185] Finally, Halil Sami ordered his regimental commanders to provide map overlays of their positions to him at his command post on Yassi Tepe.

There was much confusion as incoming troops received contradictory information concerning their route. This was because the roads south of Alçı Tepe were dangerous because of allied naval bombardment. This caused the march tables to appear 'eccentric' and the confused reinforcements turned around several times before revised orders correctly identified the route.[186] This delayed them by about three hours. Nevertheless, the head of the incoming 19th Infantry Regiment passed Yassi Tepe about 0400 and arrived at the front at 0700 on 28 April 1915. With difficulty, the reinforcements began to filter into the forward trenches. Other forces were moving forward as well and Halil Sami attached two heavy machine gun detachments to the forward regiments.

For artillery support, the fire control centre on Alçı Tepe was modified as the 9th Infantry Division's artillery was centralised into two groups supporting the eastern and western wings of the front. The Turkish official history of the campaign notes that this was an 'elastic arrangement' that placed all of the guns supporting the western wing (20th Infantry Regimental sector) under a single battalion command.[187] This command was then operationally disconnected from the Alçı Tepe observation and command posts and re-established on Yassi Tepe. In the eastern wing (26th Infantry Regimental sector), the Alçı Tepe posts remained in operation and were augmented by a heavy artillery group from the Straits Fortress Command.[188] This badly needed reinforcement added about twenty-four artillery tubes to the divisional artillery.

Not all of Halil Sami's defensive arrangements were complete when the allies attacked at 0800 on 28 April. Making matters a bit worse, III Corps identified Mustafa Kemal's attempt to drive the ANZACs into the sea as the Ottoman main effort.[189] This relegated Halil Sami's fight to a secondary effort (although Esat Paşa intended to eliminate the Cape Helles beachhead after dispensing with the ANZACs) and, consequently, he received fewer reinforcements and support than Kemal. Halil Sami reported to III Corps headquarters that morale was very high but that his forces had not yet completed their preparations. Moreover, he was worried about the reinforcement flow drying up.[190]

Hunter-Weston's attack was hastily co-ordinated and employed British regulars, Indians, Royal Naval infantry, and the French.[191] The attack lacked adequate field artillery support (only twenty-eight field guns were ashore) and was not rehearsed. The British 29th Infantry Division was ordered to push north to seize Kirte and Yasi Tepe, while the French attacked to shield their right flank. Once these objectives were in hand, Hunter-Weston intended to wheel east and seize Alçı Tepe (or Achi Baba as the British called it). By 1915 standards, the plan was tactically complex and, moreover, required multi-national co-ordination.[192]

Over ten battalions of British infantry stormed the 20th Infantry Regiment's forward trenches. In many locations, they broke thorough but were confronted immediately by locally positioned platoon-sized Ottoman reserves. However, the local reserves were quickly decimated by Royal Navy gunfire and the Ottoman regimental commander requested the release of the 9th Infantry Division reserves. Halil Sami ordered the reserves forward (2nd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment) at 1000.[193]

On the Turkish eastern flank, the allied attack enjoyed more success. This sector of the Ottoman line was held by the tired soldiers of the 25th and 26th Infantry Regiments, which had been severely handled on 25 April. At 1130, the sector commander reported that the enemy was collapsing his front and that his men had been forced to retreat from the forward trenches. He had committed almost all of his reserves and he urgently requested assistance.[194] Halil Sami responded by ordering the 19th Infantry Regiment forward from its position 5 km behind the lines. While moving, this regiment was taken under heavy naval gunfire that slowed its advance and caused casualties.

Thus by about noon, the Ottoman 9th Infantry Division was in serious trouble and Halil Sami decided to authorise a withdrawal to the Alçı Tepe-Yassı Tepe line. Orders to this effect were sent out to the regimental commanders.[195] Fortunately for the Turks, however, the regimental commanders were not yet ready to concede their positions and, in fact, the commander of the 20th Infantry Regiment kept the retreat authorisation secret from his company commanders. In the eastern sector, the intrepid Major Mahmut Sabri was put in charge of a hastily scraped together reserve force. Sabri launched a company-sized counter-attack at 1500. Simultaneously, the delayed 19th Infantry Regiment, after a brief consolidation on Uç Tepe at 1300, arrived and launched a timely bayonet attack to the right of Mahmut Sabri's men. These attacks were well supported by the Ottoman artillery and 'great results were achieved with fire and target plans'.[196] This counter-attack was the death knell of Hunter-Weston's offensive and the 'tired and disorganised' allies began to retreat and dig in.[197] This ended the first phase of the Gallipoli Campaign at Cape Helles.

Actions at III Corps

The western historiography of the Gallipoli Campaign focuses on two levels of Ottoman command—the tactical level (or division and below) and the strategic level (or army and above). Conspicuously absent from British, Australian, and German works on the campaign are detailed discussions of Ottoman actions at the operational level (or army corps). In this case the Ottoman III Corps under the command of Esat Paşa.[198]

The III Corps itself was organised in January 1911 under the sweeping changes of the 1910 army reorganisation instruction in Kirkillise (near Adrianople).[199] Caught up in the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, the corps established itself by participating in every major battle of that war in the Thracian theatre. In a war that destroyed large portions of the Ottoman Army, it was the only army corps to survive the war organisationally intact. (It began the war with the 7th, 8th, and 9th Infantry Divisions and ended the war with the same divisions.) During the war, the corps never moved more than 70 km from its peacetime epicentre of Çorlu. Consequently in 1913, the III Corps did not have to conduct a major movement nor did it have to reconstitute new formations. Thus it was the only Ottoman Army corps (of thirteen) that was able to concentrate exclusively on operations and training in 1914.

The effects of the reorganisation of the army in December 1913 further enhanced the III Corps. This eliminated the organised structure of reserve corps and divisions and ensured that the infantry divisions of the Ottoman Army were filled initially with experienced men. The mobilisation of the 9th Infantry Division was typical of this generalised pattern in the army in 1914. About a quarter of the men were on active service in August 1914, most of them newly conscripted and undergoing basic training. The mobilisation called to the colours the remaining men necessary to bring the regiments to war establishment. In the summer of 1914, this pool of experienced reservists was unique (at least compared with the British) in that most of the men had all participated in the recent Balkan Wars and had only recently been released from active duty. The 7th and 9th Infantry Divisions, in particular, had earned strong fighting reputations in the great battles of Kirkkilise, Pinarhisar-Lüleburgaz, and First Çatalca while under the command of the aggressive and talented Mahmut Muhtar Paşa.[200] So, in the case of these divisions, the bulk of the men were not only experienced combat veterans, but also they enjoyed a reputation as members of highly regarded fighting formations. Arguably, in 1914, the III Corps was the most experienced and well prepared corps in the Ottoman Army.

Brigadier General Esat Paşa assumed command of the III Corps on 10 December 1913.[201] He had just returned from captivity in Greece on 2 December and was already being hailed in the empire as the Hero of Janina (or Yanya in Turkish). There are no comprehensive biographies of this man in either Turkish or English and he remains a rather obscure figure. Although a central figure in the campaign, he was overlooked by Western historians and writers, who focused on the aggressively charismatic Mustafa Kemal and the capable Liman von Sanders. Nevertheless, Esat was the ‘man on the spot’ commanding the III Corps on 25 April 1915 and was responsible for the initial Turkish operational posture and response at Gallipoli.

Born in 1862 in Yanya (modern loania, Greece, or Janina as it was called in 1912), Esat attended the Military Academy (Harp Okulu) in 1884 and then served as a

regimental officer.[202] In 1887, he was selected to attend the Ottoman War Academy (Harp Akademisi), and graduated with the class of 1890. His performance was so exceptional (his military record reflected that he spoke German, French, and Romanian) that he left for Germany on 10 November 1890 to attend the Prussian War Academy. He graduated and returned on 27 May 1894. Now a major, Esat was assigned to the Ottoman General Staff, but was promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1895 and assigned to the Ottoman War Academy. In 1897, he was a colonel and participated in the Greek War as a regimental commander. Upon his return in 1899, Esat was assigned as the chief of training at the War School. He was promoted to brigadier in 1901 and spent the next several years in command of a brigade and on the Ottoman General Staff. By 1908, he was the chief of staff of the Ottoman Third Army and in 1909 Esat accompanied Colmar von der Goltz on his famous inspection tour. He was assigned as the chief of infantry in 1910 and in 1911 Esat briefly commanded the 5th Infantry Division and then the 23rd Infantry Division in the Balkans.

On 26 September 1912, at the beginning of the First Balkan War, Esat was abruptly pulled from division command and assigned as the commander of the Provisional Yanya Corps. The Yanya Corps and its fortress were the linchpin in the Ottoman defences of western Macedonia and Albania. The fortress was modern and self-sufficient, with a corps-sized garrison of several infantry divisions, which swelled to six infantry divisions as reinforcements arrived. Over the course of the war, Esat conducted a skilful defence as the Greek Army of Epirus besieged the city. Of note, Esat's performance in corps-level command steadily grew better as the siege progressed. His command was characterised by an ability to form quickly ad hoc groups of divisional size to hold key terrain features. These provisional groupings were assigned to senior officers and were tailored to the specific tactical mission. Esat was able to fend off numerically superior attacks and he also grew in his understanding of the modern battlefield. Although he was forced to surrender in the debacle of the Ottoman disaster, Esat emerged from the war as a genuine Ottoman hero and returned from captivity to be awarded the honorific Paşa.[203] On 25 April 1915, Esat had been in command of the III Corps for over sixteen months and he had six months of recent combat experience as a corps-level commander in the Balkan Wars, as well.

Photos of Esat, who appeared somewhat grandfatherly, belied his active nature and his aggressive command style. Liman von Sanders, who was no great admirer of senior Ottoman officers, used the words, 'determined and far-seeing' and 'knightly and valorous' to describe Esat.[204] Anecdotal, but reflecting his personality, Esat roused himself out of bed at 0245, 2 August 1914 to read personally the Ottoman Army's mobilisation orders.[205] In terms of objective performance indicators, as mobilisation progressed, Esat's III Corps was the only corps of thirteen in the Ottoman Army to meet its scheduled mobilisation timetable of twenty-two days.[206] In late August the corps concentrated around Tekirdağ (Rodosto). The 9th Infantry Division moved to the Gallipoli Peninsula on 9 September 1914, the 7th Infantry Division deployed there on 29 October, and Esat's headquarters followed on 4 November.[207] The 9th Infantry Division was assigned to the Fortress Command for the defence of the mouth of the Dardanelles, while the III Corps assumed control of Bulair and the Gulf of Saros.

Esat wrote and issued training guidance on 8 November 1914 to his III Corps formations.[208] He specified that units conduct training that included observation

techniques, combat and spot reporting procedures, alarm situations, battle drill rehearsals, co-ordination with the Jandarma, and tactical deception measures. Throughout the winter, Esat's troops trained for war. The naval attacks of 25 February and 18 March 1915 heightened the sense that a major allied assault on the Dardanelles was imminent.

On 7 April, Liman von Sanders returned control of the 9th Infantry Division to the III Corps and assigned Esat the mission to defend the peninsula.[209] Esat immediately prepared and issued orders to two of his three infantry divisions (the 7th and 9th) that assigned them revised coastal defensive sectors and designated regiments in reserve.[210] He also directed that the division commanders co-ordinate artillery support and conduct artillery training with the Straits Fortress Command. Esat designated Mustafa Kemal's 19th Infantry Division as the general reserve and directed Kemal to be prepared to fight either on the peninsula or on the Asian side of the straits. Importantly, he also included training guidance concerning how his units would prepare themselves for the coming fight. Esat directed that units would rehearse the manning of their fortifications during day and night. He ordered that three days a week every unit would practise rapidly moving from its reserve areas to its battle position (again during both day and night). He specifically directed that the 9th Infantry Division's reserves at Sarafim Çiftliği (Sarafim Farm)—the 25th Infantry Regiment—would practise route-marching to Seddulbahir at night for operations and then return on the following night.[211] Esat was also concerned about fatigue among his troops on coastal observation duty and ordered that commanders frequently rotate them to rest areas. He was concerned about communications and directed that his divisions and independent formations practise sending messages frequently and for a selected officer to become expert in these procedures. Furthermore, he ordered them to be prepared to send messages by telephone, written reports, horse messenger, lamp and signal flags in the event of a breakdown in communications. He closed his instructions with an injunction to feed the men well during marches and the notation that his headquarters was located in the town of Gelibolu (Gallipoli).

Also in early April Esat turned his attention to the population of the peninsula. Prior to the battle of Çatalca in the First Balkan War (1912), the Ottoman General Staff ordered the army to evacuate the Christian population of Thrace.[212] This was done because the Turks felt that the numerous Greek and Bulgarian Christians living in the rear areas of the Ottoman Army might rise in revolt or aid (directly or indirectly) the attacking Bulgarian Army. The Gallipoli Peninsula was the historical home of thousands of Greeks who, as in 1912, were thought to be a threat to the army. By 10 April 1915, Esat had evacuated most of them to villages across the Sea of Marmara in Asia.[213] In all, about 22,000 Greeks were evacuated from the peninsula.

On 25 April 1915, a constant stream of combat reports began to flow into III Corps headquarters, beginning about 0300. As has been previously described, Esat's staff passed on all reports to the Fifth Army headquarters. Within several hours, as the scope of the ANZAC landings clarified, Esat became concerned that the landings at Ari Burnu endangered the original plan that gave defensive priority to the southern end of the peninsula.[214] About 0800, Esat rode out by automobile from Gelibolu to Bulair to brief Liman von Sanders with maps and overlays, and to make a case to shift reinforcements south. He met the Fifth Army commander in the central redoubt of the Lines of Bulair where Liman von Sanders was observing the allied deception operation in Saros Bay. Esat requested the release of his 7th Infantry Division, which was refused by Liman von

Sanders; however, the Fifth Army commander agreed to give priority of effort to the Ari Burnu landings.[215] Liman von Sanders then directed Esat to take a ship to Maidos and take command of the southern part of the peninsula, while he remained at Bulair to judge for himself whether the British were conducting a feint there.[216]

Esat wrote a hasty order to his 7th Infantry Division ordering them to remain in place, but informing them that his headquarters was moving to Maidos. He also warned them to be prepared to move south quickly if ordered.[217] He returned to Gelibolu and boarded Steamboat No. 62 at 1100 bound for Maidos. He arrived and proceded to Mal Tepe, a hill nearer the Ari Burnu front, where he established his headquarters at 1400.[218] In the late afternoon at Mal Tepe, Esat made his most important contribution to the fight by changing the divisional boundaries and sectors to accommodate mixing of the 9th Infantry and 19th Infantry Divisions at Ari Burnu (refer to Map 2.3 and previous text). This formalised the ad hoc Ari Burnu front under Mustafa Kemal.

Esat's actions at this stage of the battle reflected an understanding of modern command and control that was unusual for its time. Within a span of twelve hours, Esat had identified the enemy's main effort, approved the execution of very successful decentralised counter-attacks, briefed the Fifth Army commander and requested reinforcements, restructured his divisional sectors in the heat of battle, and moved to the critical point where he could personally control the III Corps' main effort. In an era of detached high command, Esat's performance was uniquely active and reflected his understanding of the modern tactical dynamic.

Ottoman tactical reorganisation, Anzac, 5 May 1915

In early May 1915, the Ottoman III Corps found itself fighting on two separate fronts (Anzac and Cape Helles) and commanding regiments that cumulatively totalled over seven infantry divisions. At Anzac, Mustafa Kemal, a lieutenant colonel, was commanding a corps equivalent of troops with his tiny divisional headquarters. A similar situation existed at Cape Helles. Clearly the time had arrived for the Fifth Army tactically to reorganise its forces to fit the ongoing campaign. On 5 May 1915, Liman von Sanders issued orders creating tactical groups overseeing particular zones of the battle area. The Asian shore was designated as the Anatolian Group *(Anadolu Grubu)*, the Cape Helles area was designated as the Southern Group *(Guney Grubu)*, the Anzac area was designated as the Northern Group *(Kuzey Grubu)*, and the vulnerable northern Aegean beaches were designated as the Saros Group *(Saros Grubu)*. Group commanders assumed full tactical authority over all forces in their sectors regardless of unit affiliation or organisation.

The III Corps staff became the nucleus of the new Northern Group and Esat Pasa took over the direct control of the fighting from Mustafa Kemal. The III Corps formations fighting at Cape Helles were detached from his command at the same time. On 17 May Esat moved his corps headquarters from Maltepe to Kemalyeri to better command the battles.[219] Mustafa Kemal returned to his role as a division commander, but would later emerge as a group commander.

The Ottoman Army replacement system

One point that must be noted here, which will stand as a reference point for further comparisons in this study, is the issue of unit strength. At the beginning of the Gallipoli Campaign the infantry divisions of the Fifth Army were maintained at full strength; likewise, reinforcements sent to the peninsula were at full strength. But as trench warfare ground down these Ottoman formations, they were worn down to shells of their original strength. To compensate for this, the Ottoman Army had a replacement and training system that periodically infused the combat divisions with freshly trained officers and men.

Casualties at battalion level frequently ran into the hundreds of killed and wounded, especially during offensive operations. The army's replacement system then responded by filling the vacant ranks. The case of the 48th Infantry Regiment is illustrative of this. In a night attack on 18/19 May 1915, the regiment lost 311 men killed, 477 men wounded, and 319 men missing (out of a total assigned strength of about 3,500 soldiers).[220] The regiment continued to take casualties from artillery fire during the following weeks as well. On 28 June 1915, the regiment received 331 trained and eighty-four untrained replacements, for a net loss of some 700 men.[221]

The Ottoman Army's wartime training and replacement system has never been explained in English.[222] Recruits and draftees were sent to training centres *(Eğitim Merkezleri)* for six weeks of basic training. There they were organised and received training classes *(sinif eğitim)* under the supervision of sergeants. The Fifth Army received its replacements from the 3rd Training centre in Davutpaşa, the 7th Training centre in Konya, the 8th Training centre in Eskişehir and the 9th Training centre in Adapazara. After the completion of training, the men were shipped to depot regiments *(depo alay)* for the fitting of uniforms, medical checks and treatment, and a further fifteen days of tactical training.

Ottoman Army depot regiments were branch-specific and servicing the Fifth Army there were six infantry depot regiments in Ankara, Manisa, Konya, Bursa, Smyrna, and Yeşilkoy (San Stefano), and two cavalry depot regiments at Yildiz and Bandirma. Additionally, there was an engineer depot battalion at Haskoy, two heavy artillery depot battalions at Hadimkoy and Taksim, three infantry depot battalions at Tekirdağ, Eskişehir, Erenkoy, and a cavalry depot battalion at Bandirma. The number of men in a depot battalion was about 1,000 (or 3,000 in a depot regiment). Many of the replacements were shipped by sea to either Gallipoli or Tekirdağ by the I and V Corps Area Commands *(Askeralma Bölgeleri)*. Others came by way of the Uzunköprü-Keşan road. The maximum output of trained men for the Fifth Army was, in theory, about 1,000 per day, but of course this depended upon input.

Training in the depot regiments was physically demanding and harsh. The American Army attaché in Constantinople was a frequent observer of the local training centres. He noted that corporal punishment was common and observed instances of Turkish officers and NCOs slapping and punching recruits who were sloppy in drills.[223] He also observed that the recruits were pushed hard, that the training hours were long, included much physical exercise, and that 'it is really surprising what a great difference is made in a short time in these slouchy peasant recruits'.[224] Running was an integral part of the

training regime and recruits who could not keep up were sometimes struck with leather belts to spur them on.[225] Otherwise, training in the Ottoman Army was similar to that of other armies and included bayonet drill, first aid, and rifle marksmanship.[226]

The Ottoman replacement system was a 'pipeline system' that did not link specific garrison cities with specific combat formations, unlike the British line regiment replacement system, which trained men in regimental depots for service with their own linked battalions. In this sense, the Ottoman Army's system was akin to the system that the US Army used during World War II and thereafter. In both of these systems, a replacement training scheme provided a stream of trained men to the units that needed them the most. In a letter to his father on 7 May 1915, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Fahrettin (Altay), chief of staff III Corps, noted that some battalions were reduced to two officers and 200 men. However, he noted that replacements were on the way to bring the battalions back up to strength.[227] Furthermore, he noted that without the timely arrival of replacements within three days of the initial landings (25 April) the straits would have been lost.

To understand the success of the Ottoman Army's replacement system, it is necessary to jump ahead in time and examine some of the combat divisions that took very heavy casualties in the battles of April-June 1915. One of the original Fifth Army infantry divisions was the 3rd Infantry Division, which fought the French at Kum Kale on 25 April and then was transferred by regiments to the peninsula. By early June 1915, the 3rd Infantry Divison was pulled out of the line to reconstitute behind Alçı Tepe and was then sent back to Kum Kale on the Asian side on 10 June.[228] On 4 July, the division returned to the peninsula to participate in the attack on Cape Helles scheduled for the following day. Table 2.2 shows that the 3rd Infantry Division returned to combat with its infantry battalions at full authorised strength.

The 3rd Infantry Division left three infantry battalions in Asia, but it is probable that those formations received replacements in equal numbers as the battalions reported in the Table 2.2. The 5th Infantry Division, which also participated in the 5 July attack, had been sustained by the replacement system at nearly full strength as well. The 5th Infantry Division averaged eleven officers and 973 men per infantry battalion. (The 3rd Infantry Division averaged thirteen officers and 1,038 men per infantry battalion.)[229]

The 5 July attack was a bloody failure and the 3rd Infantry Division lost eight officers and 1,393 men killed, twenty-six officers and 1,555 men wounded, and had 226 men missing for a total butcher's bill of 3,182 casualties (or a casualty rate of almost 50 per cent).[230] The 5th Infantry Division lost a total of 1,843 killed, wounded, and missing in the attack as well. Additionally, the Southern Group lost another 10,858 casualties during the period 28 June through 5 July 1915, making an overall total losses in excess of 16,000 for a single week. (This does not include any casualties from the Esat's Northern Group at Anzac.)[231]

Needless to say, casualties on this scale far exceeded the normal replacement system capacity necessary to reconstitute these formations and the divisions involved in the attacks of early July 1915 took months to be rebuilt.

Table 2.2 3rd Infantry Division assigned strength, 5 July 1915

Unit	*Officers*	*Soldiers*	*Total*	*Rifles*	*Animals*
Div. HQ	10	60	70		
1/31 Inf.	7	1,050	1,057	973	45
3/31 Inf.	11	1,050	1,061	954	75
2/32 Inf.	15	1,039	1,054	1,020	55
3/32 Inf.	14	1,025	1,039	1,020	52
2/39 Inf.	10	1,000	1,010	1,003	57
3/39 Inf.	20	1,065	1,085	1,020	66
3 MG Coy	5	118	123	4 MG	39
3 Med. Coy	6	158	164		13
5 Eng. Coy	5	262	267		31
Total	103	6,827	6,930	5,990	489

Source: ATASE Archive 3849, Record H-22, File 1–35 reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1915-Ocak 1916)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1980), 205.

Note
Coy company, *Eng.* engineer, *Med.* medical, *MG* machine gun.

Medical support and morale

The Ottoman Army maintained a surprisingly robust medical system in the Fifth Army Area.[232] Each infantry division had an organic medical company as well as a field hospital. Ottoman Army corps also had an assigned field hospital. Behind these forward facilities, there were twenty-two area hospitals in the towns of southern Thrace the capacity of which was 11,080 beds.[233] Additionally, there were four hospital ships with an additional 1,600 beds. Medical supply depots completed the system of support for the army's wounded and sick.

On 28 July 1915, 4.7 per cent of the 250,818 soldiers of the Fifth Army were in hospital (11,788 men). Given that some of the men must have been located at divisional or corps medical facilities, it appears that the Ottoman medical system, as it existed in close proximity to Constantinople, was not saturated beyond its capacity. Unlike the British, the Turks did not seem to suffer excessively from sickness. According to the official Turkish history of the campaign, in operations from 25 April through 1 July 1915, the ratio of wounded to sick men in the Ottoman hospital system was about 24:1 (see Table 2.3). It is unclear why the rate of wounded to sick was so lopsided. It is possible, given the high casualty rates, that going sick was kept to a minimum.

Lieutenant Colonel Abil wrote in a letter to his father that the medical services were excellent and that no wounded were overlooked.[234] He described a

Table 2.3 Hospitalisation of Ottoman soldiers, Gallipoli, 25 April-1 July 1915

Month	*Wounded*	*Sick*
April	25,065	207
May	16,298	1,192
June	15,031	959
Total	56,394	2,358

Source: TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanli Devri Birinci Dunya Harbinde Türk Harbi Vnci Cilt 3ncu Kitap, (Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1915-Ocak 1916)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1980), 549.

system that took the wounded by stretcher to ambulances and thence to hospitals. On most days, the number of dead and wounded evacuated by the Ottoman medical service from the Gallipoli batlefields averaged 300 soldiers.[235]

In spite of the high casualties, the morale of the Turkish soldiers, in this time and place, was extremely high. Many Ottoman soldiers prayed with their regimental Imams before going into battle and the Imams then went forward with the men.[236] The importance of religion as a central aspect of Ottoman combat effectiveness is a unifying factor in the Turkish interviews of the Liddle Collection.[237] There were other factors at work as well. In the III Corps area, there was enough to eat and drink and the divisional bands played every day. Moreover, regular mail enabled families to send packets of supplies to soldiers at the front.[238] Many soldiers lived in roomy dugouts, roofed with planks and earth, that included shelves, tables, field telephones, and cupboards.

Although severe problems in morale at Gallipoli were not mentioned as an issue in the modern Turkish official histories, there is a vignette from Colonel Fahrettin (Altay) concerning the crew of the famous minelayer *Nuseyret*, who had been sent to the front to assist the army.[239] These sailors were posted to an Arab battalion and threatened to flee to the rear. Fahrettin claimed that 'three of them were shot which brought the others to their senses'.[240] Desertion, at least in the controlled geographical conditions of a peninsula, does not appear to have been a significant problem for the Ottoman Army at this point in the war.

Conclusions: combat effectiveness

The limitations of this study preclude detailed analysis of the massive Ottoman frontal offensives of May and June 1915 (which failed) or of the Ottoman response to the Suvla Bay operation (which succeeded). In any case, the British chose to evacuate the peninsula by January 1916, thereby lending credibility to the idea that the Turks were effective opponents and soldiers. There are three elements of combat effectiveness that this chapter

has focused on (leadership, training and experience, and organizational architecture), which contributed to the operational and tactical effectiveness achieved by the Ottoman Army at Gallipoli.

The Ottoman Army was operationally effective in the III Corps sector at Gallipoli because its commanders selected realistic objectives and effectively integrated the forces necessary to secure those objectives. This stemed primarily from its experienced leadership and its advanced and flexible organisational architecture.

In terms of leadership the Turkish officers in the Ottoman III Corps proved to be highly effective. Importantly, there were no Germans assigned to the III Corps or its divisions during the long mobilisation or during this phase of the Gallipoli Campaign. Therefore, it is possible to examine how the Turks fought by themselves or separately from their German allies.

The British expected to encounter an army that was 'ill-commanded and ill-officered'.[241] Instead they encountered officers at company, battalion, regiment, division, and corps level who were aggressive and skilled in the conduct of war. Major Kadri (battalion), Lieutenant Colonel Şefik and Major Mahmut Sabri (regimental), Colonel Halil Sami and Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal (division), and Esat Paşa (corps) are examples of the proficiency levels in the Ottoman chain of command.

Specifically, as a group, what could the Ottoman command team do that the British could not? They could pass reliable reports up and down the chain to provide a clear picture of unfolding events. They could plan, co-ordinate, and execute artillery fire support. They could act without direction, but within the commander's overall intent. They led from the front and personally made on-the-spot decisions. They could cross-attach companies, battalions, and regiments with ease. They could concentrate and move.

As a group these were young men. Halil Sami was a forty-year-old colonel. His opponent, Hunter-Weston, was a fifty-year-old major general. Birdwood was a fifty-one-year-old lieutenant general and his opponent was a thirty-four-year-old colonel named Mustafa Kemal. The same age disparity existed when comparing British brigadiers against their opponents who were Ottoman battalion commanders.

The organisational architecture of the Ottoman Army lent itself to the effective ability to cross-attach regiments and battalions. The original triangular architecture of Ottoman infantry divisions, dating from 1910 and refined in the Balkan Wars, proved highly flexible and allowed the Turks to concentrate forces effectively. It was possible for the Turks to take a regiment or battalion from one division and attach it to another division with no real loss of capability. Artillery, Jandarma, engineers, and cavalry enjoyed a similar ability. This ability enabled the Turks to tailor their forces by assigning 'troops to task' or 'troops to terrain', unlike the British, who had to work mainly with infantry brigades within a divisional context.

Similarily, the Ottoman Army in the III Corps sector at Gallipoli was tactically effective in its effective use of specific techniques to secure objectives. This capability stemmed mainly from the army's firepower based doctrines and from its multi-dimensional combined arms training programmes. In terms of training, the Ottoman Army laid down detailed training guidance in the spring of 1913 based on its experience in the Balkan Wars. This guidance was relevant to modern war. During the mobilisation, and in the months prior to the battle, the army continued to adhere to this guidance. The men were hardened by long marches. Artillery, engineers, machine-gunners, and cavalry

worked with their infantry counterparts to iron out how to achieve mutual support. Commanders held terrain walks and fire planning exercises. Detailed rehearsals were conducted. All of this was based on the experience of the Balkan Wars. Combined arms training was encouraged and was executed at all levels. This was reinforced by the experience of the commanders, who were themselves combat veterans of those wars and who understood the dynamics of modern firepower. Time after time, relatively small groups of Turks were able to seize fire superiority and devastate their enemies with effective machine-gun and artillery fire.

By way of contrast, the British Army was trapped inside antiquated doctrines that stressed the individuality of the separate combat arms. Moreover, the training cycles of the ANZAC and the 29th Infantry Division did not include any combined arms training or exercises. The strength of that army was its magnificent infantry, especially the regulars. The Turks themselves felt that the British were unsuccessful because of '(1) The use of too small forces at different attacking points. (2) The poor quality of English commissioned officers'.[242] Moreover, the Turks 'all agreed that these officers were brave but inexperienced, and did not seem to know how to command or lead their soldiers into battle'.[243]

In overall terms, the Ottoman Army, which was generally outnumbered and outgunned at Gallipoli, was not outfought by its British enemy. As the campaign progressed, the Turks proved resilient and formidable opponents. The Ottoman Army was well trained, adhered to standardised and well understood doctrines, and possessed an appreciation of the reality of modern war. Its commanders were, likewise, experienced and well trained, and they led from the front. In combination, these factors provided the Ottoman Army with high levels of military effectiveness. In ending, however, it should be noted that the examination of the III Corps during this phase of the Gallipoli campaign likely represents the best-case scenario in terms of the Ottoman Army's relative combat effectiveness in World War I.

3
Kut Al Amara, 1916

> The Turk though good behind a trench is of little value in the attack.
>
> (Communiqué, Maj. Gen. Charles Townshend, Kut Al Amara, 20 January 1916[1])

Between Yorktown in 1781 and Singapore in 1942, the largest capitulation of British troops occurred at Kut Al Amara in Mesopotamia in 1916. To a nation steeped in a tradition of successfully withstanding sieges by 'lesser races', it was singularly humiliating because the force surrendered to an Ottoman Army.[2] Closely following on the heels of the defeat at Gallipoli, these twin disasters caused the appointment of parliamentary commissions to examine what went wrong. For the British, early 1916 was a time of self-doubt concerning peripheral campaigns. For the Turks, Kut was a triumph and lent their tired forces renewed vigour.

The standard Western view of the campaign remains fixated on the siege of Major General Charles Townshend's Indian Army 6th Infantry Division in Kut and the privations it suffered while waiting for a relief force.[3] In fact, the campaign was an extended encirclement operation, of which one component was the isolation of Townshend's force in the town of Kut Al Amara. This point, however, is neglected in the discussion of the operation in the extant Western history of the campaign.[4]

The long campaign in Mesopotamia between the Turks and the British has attracted few historians and it remains to this day largely ignored in the vast literature of World War I. The available books in English about the campaigns and battles that raged there in 1914 through 1918 number a bare handful (including the four volumes of British official history). To this may be added the two-volume Turkish official history, a German official history, and several German memoirs. It is a scant menu from which to draw meaning and comparison.

This chapter presents a fresh viewpoint on the Ottoman Army's campaign in Mesopotamia from November 1915 through April 1916 and frames Kut Al Amara as a component part of a larger deliberate campaign of encirclement.[5] While the chapter on Gallipoli detailed operations at the tactical level of war, this chapter details operations at the operational level of war. The chapter will examine Ottoman leadership, the expansion of the Ottoman Army, and opera-tional and tactical doctrines as factors of military effectiveness contributing to British defeat.

Origins

The war in Mesopotamia began on 5 November 1914 with the landing of Force D, under Brigadier General W.S.Delamain, at Fao on the entrance to the Shatt al Arab. Force D was organised previously on 4 October in India from the 16th Brigade of the Indian Army's 6th (Poona) Division.[6] Delamain quickly brushed aside weak Turkish resistance and established himself ashore. A week later the division commander and a second infantry brigade arrived to push up the river to Basra and Qurna. This was the beginning of an unintentional campaign lasting four years that would draw in over half a million Indian and British soldiers. At the end of the war, the British would have little to show for their effort.

The original mission of the expedition to Mesopotamia was simply to protect the oil refinery, oil tanks and oil pipeline at Abadan at the head of the Persian Gulf (thereby ensuring a reliable supply of fuel oil for the Royal Navy's new ships). Oddly, this job fell to the Indian Army General Staff, which under a pre-war planning agreement was responsible for the Persian Gulf and Basra.[7] Thus, as war with the Ottoman Empire appeared imminent in the autumn of 1914, it was the India Office rather than the War Office that assumed control of planning and operations in the Persian Gulf. Adding complexity to the equation there were competing demands from the Foreign Office, which had plans for the Arabs along the border with Persia; from the Admiralty and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, which had designs on the oilfields around Mosul; and from the Government of India, which wanted some measure of control over its soldiers in the forthcoming war.

The Turks, for their part, misread the strategic situation badly and sent the better part of their army elsewhere under an obsolete war plan designed to hold Thrace and Constantinople against the Bulgarians and the Greeks.[8] At the end of October 1914, the Ottoman Army had only a single active infantry division remaining in Mesopotamia of four that were there in August. This division, the 38th Infantry, was headquartered at Basra, but had its troops scattered along the Tigris from Baghdad to Fao. The landing of Force D at Fao pitted a reinforced Indian brigade against a half-strength and unsupported Ottoman battalion in poorly prepared positions, which crumbled as the British came ashore.

The Turks never recovered from this strategic blunder. Once ashore the 6th Infantry Division worked its way upstream, capturing Qurna in early December 1914. By April 1915, a second Indian Army division (the 12th) had arrived and the Turkish 38th Infantry Division was badly smashed. The Turks were now seriously outnumbered on their own ground. Nevertheless, they attempted a three-pronged attack on the delta but were driven back with heavy losses. The active British then followed them up river to Amara and kept on going for 200km, taking the well fortified Kut Al Amara position in a brilliant battle on 29 September 1915.[9]

For reasons of political and military prestige, stemming from the failing Dardanelles campaign, it was thought important to advance on and capture Baghdad. Thus, the 6th Infantry Division advanced to Aziziye on 23 October, outflanking the Turkish defenders, and came to within 50km of Baghdad. There, it came up against a strong Turkish position

at Ctesiphon on 12 November 1915. In the Ctesiphon lines, the reinforced Turks had the 35th, 38th, and 45th Infantry Divisions and the arriving 51st Infantry Division of the Ottoman Army's Iraq Area Command.[10]

The Ottoman Iraq Area Command

In August 1914, the Ottoman Army maintained substantial forces in Mesopotamia that made up the Fourth Army. This army was composed of the XII Corps (35th and 36th Infantry Divisions) and the XIII Corps (37th and 38th Infantry Divisions). However, by September, the Fourth Army and the XII Corps (and its infantry divisions) deployed to Syria and the XIII Corps (and the 37th Infantry Division) deployed to Caucasia. Mesopotamia was converted to the Iraq Area Command *(Irak ve Havalisi Komutanlıgı)* that retained only the 38th Infantry Division and a handful of Jandarma and border battalions.[11]

Mesopotamia was the backwater of the Ottoman Army. The two army corps stationed there had two infantry divisions each in an army that set the corps standard at three infantry divisions. Likewise, artillery regiments in Mesopotamia contained one or two battalions instead of the standard three battalions.[12] There were absolutely no aircraft or heavy artillery in the entire theatre.[13] The army corps in Mesopotamia likewise suffered under a system of low priorities that short-changed them of key combat support assets (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Comparison of corps assets, summer 1914

Army corps and (area)	*Light trans. company*	*Heavy trans. company*	*Field hospital*	*Ammunition column*
I, II (Constantinople)	8	8	6	25
III (European Thrace)				
IX, X, XI (Caucasia)	8	8	6	19–22
IV, V (Anatolia)	6	6	4	15–17
VI, VIII (Syria/Palestine)				
XII, XIII (Mesopotamia)	4	4	2–3	10–12

Source: ATASE, Organisation of Army Corps Assets in Peacetime, ATASE, Archive 65, Record 325, File 15, reprinted as Ek 3 (Document 3), TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanlı Devri Birinci Dünya Harbi Idari Faaliyetler ve Lojistik, Xncu Cilt* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1985).

The regiments of the XII and XIII Corps were composed of local Arab levies that were maintained at minimal strength in peacetime. None of the effort put into establishing the army schools or training centres in 1913 and 1914 went to Mesopotamia. There was a

terrible shortage of experienced officers that directly affected mobilisation. For example, the XII Corps was supposed to mobilise within twenty-three days, but actually took thirty-one days, reflecting its poor operational posture.[14] This is not to say that the Ottoman commanders in Mesopotamia did not use fully the resources at their command. A ciphered report to the Ministry of War from the XII Corps on 28 September 1914 reveals that the commander was concerned about the integration of reserve soldiers into battalions, the locations of support units for his infantry regiments, and the number of animals required to move the corps.[15]

Reinforcements for the Iraq Area Command

The early disasters that befell the Iraq Area Command involved the under strength and poorly equipped 38th Infantry Division (from the Basra garrison).[16] This was not unexpected, as Cavit Paşa, commander of the Iraq Area Command, had pointed out the grave weaknesses in strength and position should the English and the Russians attack.[17] These warnings seemingly went unheard in Constantinople. Reacting belatedly to this strategic disaster, Enver Paşa hurried to deploy troops to Mesopotamia by returning some of the XII Corps from the Fourth Army. The 35th Infantry Division (from the Mosul garrison) was ordered home to Mesopotamia and arrived in Nasiriye in late February 1915.[18]

Later, other forces were sent to Mesopotamia from the Fourth Army as well. On 22 August 1915, Enver Paşa ordered the newly organised 45th Infantry Division, then staging near Pozanti, forward to the Iraq Command by way of Aleppo.[19] The cadre of the 141st Infantry Regiment and three batteries (four guns each) of the 1st Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment came by road from Syria through Mosul to Baghdad on 2 September.[20] This first echelon was sent to Kut. The second echelon (again from the Fourth Army) was composed of the 25th Artillery Regiment and the First Artillery Battalion (QF), and was sent to Kut (along with 2,000 replacement soldiers).[21] On 11 November the first battalions of the 3rd Infantry Regiment arrived at Selman Pak and, shortly thereafter, the 142nd Infantry Regiment arrived in Mesopotamia.[22] The 45th Infantry Division differed significantly from the other Ottoman divisions in Mesopotamia because it was composed mostly of European and Anatolian Turkish infantry (see Table 3.2). The composition of the 45th Infantry Division also illustrates how the Ottoman Army expanded its infantry division base from thirty-six in peacetime to sixty-two over the course of the war by combining active regiments from existing divisions with reservists to form new divisions.

The first echelons of 45th Infantry Division arrived in Mesopotamia too late to participate directly in the Ottoman defeat at the First Battle of Kut in September 1915.

After this battle, the Ottoman Army fell back to a defensive position near the famous Arch of Ctesiphon, where more reinforcements arrived.

Table 3.2 Origins of the 45th Infantry Division

Regiment	*Home garrison*	*Composition and source*
3rd Infantry	Constantinople	Active regiment from the 1st Infantry Division
141 st Infantry	Smyrna	1st Battalion—reservists from Hillah 2nd Battalion—renumbered 2/109th Infantry 3rd Battalion—renumbered bn from 130th Infantry
142nd Infantry	Smyrna	1st Battalion—renumbered 4/61st Infantry 2nd and 3rd Battalions—reservists
25th Artillery	Damascus	Active regiment from the 25th Infantry Division 1/27 Artillery—from 27th Infantry Division

Sources: TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi IIIncü Cilt, 6ncı Kısım (1908–1920), 1nci Kitab* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1971), 220–225.

Battle hardened reinforcements for Iraq

The account must shift at this point to Caucasia in order to present the origins and records of the 51 st and 52nd Infantry Divisions, which played an important part in the Kut Al Amara campaign. The narrative may appear off-track, but is provided to illustrate the battle hardening of new divisions, the emergence of seasoned commanders, participation in group operations and pursuit operations, and the development of rapid marching capabilities.

The story of the formation of these two divisions goes back to December 1914 when Enver Paşa ordered the organisation of two expeditionary forces for an invasion of Persia.[23] Enver intended that these forces deploy to Baghdad and then campaign over the Zagros Mountains and take Tehran. The Ottoman General Staff was then in the process of expanding the army from thirty-six peacetime infantry divisions to over fifty infantry divisions to meet the exigencies of war against the Entente powers. Since the Ottoman Army had no organised reserve divisions since 1913, the army expanded by taking regiments or battalions from existing host formations and assigning them to a newly formed headquarters. (Previous sections detail this process.) In this case, the new expeditionary forces were built from Anatolian Turkish formations. (Table 3.3 shows how these forces were assembled.)

The British were initially quite confused about the formation of the expeditionary forces, which were effectively three-regiment infantry divisions.[24] This was mostly due to the work of *Times* correspondent Phillip Graves, who after his 27 November 1914 report on Turkish mobilisation had indeed found employment in the war effort.[25] Graves wound up in Cairo, where many of his observations on the Ottoman Army and its mobilisation 'were embodied in the Cairo Edition of 1915' of the General Staff War Office's *Handbook of the Turkish Army*.[26] In the first year of the war, British intelligence never quite caught on to the fact that the Turks had given up their organised reserve divisions in favour of cadres reinforced by reservists. In particular, the Cairo intelligence community developed an erroneous notion that the Turks were forming paired active and reserve infantry divisions, while assigning them the same divisional number.[27] These duplicate

infantry divisions were labelled 'bis' divisions by the British.[28] The First Expeditionary Force, for example, due to the preponderance of 3rd Infantry Division regiments, was known as the 3rd bis Infantry Division.[29]

The Ottoman General Staff selected two very experienced commanders for

Table 3.3 Origins of the First and Fifth Expeditionary Forces

First Expeditionary Force	*Host unit*	*Location*
7th Infantry Regiment	3rd Infantry Division	Izmit
9th Infantry Regiment	3rd Infantry Division	Adapazara
44th Infantry Regiment	15th Infantry Division	Kayseri
3rd Battalion (Mt How.)	4th Artillery Regiment	Edirne
4th Artillery Regiment		
Fifth Expeditionary Force	*Host unit*	*Location*
37th Infantry Regiment	13th Infantry Division	Ankara
40th Infantry Regiment	14th Infantry Division	Daday
43rd Infantry Regiment	15th Infantry Division	Yozgat
3rd Battalion (Mt How.)	10th Artillery Regiment	Ankara
10th Artillery Regiment		

Source: TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, Kafkas Cephesi, 3ncü Ordu Harekatı, Cilt I* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1993), 570–577.

Note
Mt How. mountain howitzer.

the new expeditionary forces. Staff Lieutenant Colonel Kazım commanded the First Expeditionary Force and Staff Lieutenant Colonel Halil commanded the Fifth Expeditionary Force.[30] Both officers were graduates of the Ottoman War Academy's class of 1905 and both had combat experience in the Balkan Wars. In the siege of Edirne (Adrianople), Major Kazım served as the 10th Infantry Division chief of staff and in the Gallipoli Peninsula battles, Major Halil served as the commander of a detachment of volunteers.[31]

Both of the expeditionary forces were entrained from Constantinople by mid-December 1914, bound for Aleppo. However, after the disastrous winter campaign at Sarakamiş, Enver Paşa decided that the Ottoman Third Army in the Caucasus required immediate reinforcements, and sent new orders to Halil and Kazım. On 11 January 1915 the Fifth Expeditionary Force was ordered north to Erzurum and eleven days later the First Expeditionary Force was ordered there as well. By February and March 1915, the Fifth and First Expeditionary Forces had arrived in the Caucasus.[32]

By April 1915, both the expeditionary forces were in action in the area around Lake Van against Russian and Armenian forces. Fighting was heavy. In the Battle of Şorgel,

1/2 May 1915, the First Expeditionary Force lost fifteen officers killed and twenty-eight wounded from 271; 453 killed and over 1,200 men wounded from 13,515 men.[33] In early June, the First was heavily engaged in the Battle of Bitlis while the Fifth Expeditionary Force was engaged in the fighting near Hınıs. These offensive operations ground down both expeditionary forces to mere shadows of their original strength, with losses approaching 50 per cent.[34] In late June, they were committed to defensive operations near Malazgirt and Coruh in the centre of the Ottoman front to stop a major Russian offensive.

Although the expeditionary forces were a sorely needed reinforcement to the Ottoman Third Army, the operational situation in the Caucasus remained critical. On 7 June 1915, the Ottoman General Staff activated the Right Wing Group (a corps-level operational command) and elevated Lieutenant Colonel Halil Bey to command the new group. Both expeditionary forces as well as the 36th Infantry Divisions were assigned to the Right Wing Group.[35] Lieutenant Colonel Kazım was placed in command of the 36th Infantry Division, Lieutenant Colonel Ali Insan was given command of the First Expeditionary Force and Lieutenant Colonel Bakir Sami was given command of the Fifth Expeditionary Force.[36] In late June and throughout July 1915, Halil's Right Wing Group fought off heavy Russian offensives by the Russian 4th Corps in the area north of Lake Van. However, the operational situation was about to change.

In a rearrangement of operational field commands, the Third Army commander, Brigadier General Mahmut Kamil Paşa, redesignated Halil's command as the Provisional Halil Corps. Mahmut Kamil then gave overall command of the Right Wing Group to Brigadier General Abdülkerim Paşa a and added the reconstituted IX Corps to reinforce the Right Wing Group.[37] Planning had begun for a large-scale offensive to push the Russians back to the 1914 frontier. The plan was finalised on 20 July 1915 and envisioned the IX Corps attacking from the north and the Provisional Halil Corps attacking from the west to trap the Russians against Lake Van.[38] The operation was set to begin at 0500 on 22 July 1915 and committed eight infantry divisions (or equivalents) and two cavalry divisions to the fight. Within Halil's sector, the expeditionary forces carried the weight of the attack and were assigned initial objectives 30km beyond the start lines.[39]

The operation began on schedule and over the next five days the expeditionary forces punched through the Russian defences and made advances of 50km.[40] By 1915 standards this was an unusual achievement. Abdülkerim Paşa recognised that his Right Wing Group had an opportunity to shatter the rapidly crumbling Russian position in the Caucasus and he took advantage of it. On 27 July, Abdülkerim Paşa a ordered the group into a pursuit operation *(takip harekati)* aimed at pushing the Russians back to the 1914 frontier.[41] It was an ambitious undertaking, but Halil and his expeditionary forces wheeled north and, fighting through, drove forward another 50km by 2 August 1915.[42]

Over the next several days the fighting stabilised, with the expeditionary forces pushing the Russians another 20km north of Karaköse. The Turks had reached the limit of their capability and the Russians launched a strong counterattack on the Right Wing Group's left flank (IX Corps) on 4/5 August 1915.[43] Faced with a breakthrough into his rear area, Abdülkerim Paşa ordered the group to retreat. Simultaneously, the Russian Army attacked the Provisional Halil Corps from the north. Under enemy pressure, Halil's formations fought a delaying action while they retreated over the next several days (5–7 August).[44] Under relentless Russian pressure, the retreat continued as the Right Wing

Group was forced back to the Russian positions that it had taken during the battles over 22–27 July.[45] By 12 August 1915, Halil's corps had fought and marched over 200 km in a two-week period.

The marching and fighting had reduced both expeditionary forces to shells of their former selves. The 1st Expeditionary Force could muster only a quarter of its men and animals on 12 August at the end of a non-stop 58km march.[46] The Fifth Expeditionary Force was in similar straits, having marched 80km in a twenty-four-hour period.[47] The expeditionary forces then settled into a period of defensive position warfare that enabled them to regain some of their strength.

On 20 September 1915, the Provisional Halil Corps was redesignated as the XVIII Corps of the Ottoman Army and the First and Fifth Expeditionary Forces were redesignated as the 51st and 52nd Infantry Divisions respectively.[48] This was nothing more than officially presenting these veteran formations with colours *(sanjacklar),* since they already contained nine infantry battalions, artillery, and supporting arms. It was, however, an important statement about the effectiveness of these provisional formations, which by being activated as infantry divisions became a permanent part of the Ottoman force structure. The XVIII Corps, under Halil, who had been promoted to colonel, continued to conduct defensive operations in the vicinity of Bitlis.

On 4 October 1915, Enver Paşa ordered the XVIII Corps to move to move to Baghdad for possible operations in Mesopotamia or Persia.[49] Halil had approximately 15,000 riflemen in his two divisions, indicating strengths of about 7,500 riflemen per division. In fact, in the 51st Infantry Division, the infantry battalions were operating with about 800 men out of the 1,000 that were authorised.[50] The Ottoman General Staff ordered 2,000 replacements from Hınıs and two batteries of 180mm artillery to fill the vacant ranks before the division departed for Mesopotamia.[51] Ali Insan moved up to command the IX Corps, Colonel Mehmet Ali took command of the 51st Infantry Division, and Bekir Sami remained in command of the 52nd Infantry Division. Finally, on 9 October, after the artillery battalions traded in their mountain howitzers for field artillery pieces, the divisions began to move.[52] The artillery was also directed to bring as much extra ammunition as possible and the 51st brought 2,800 extra rounds and the 52nd brought 5,600 extra rounds.[53] It would be a long road to Mesopotamia and the troops had to march on foot the entire distance. They marched back through Diyarbakır and then down the Tigris road to Baghdad. The total time on the road for some formations of the 52nd Infantry Division lasted seventy-three days.[54]

The decision by the Ottoman high command to reinforce the beleaguered Iraq Command would prove to have been taken just in the nick of time.[55] The timely arrival of the 45th, 51st, and 52nd Infantry Divisions in Mesopotamia tilted the tactical balance in favour of the Turks. As will be seen, the presence of these divisions proved to be the undoing of Major General Charles Townshend's ambitious offensive aimed at taking Baghdad.

The 45th Infantry Division was newly formed but was composed mostly of pre-war infantry battalions from western Anatolia and Constantinople. Based on the training regimes of other regiments assigned to the host divisions, it may be assumed that the battalions of the 45th Infantry Division were probably as well trained as many of the Ottoman Fifth Army infantry battalions at Gallipoli.

The 51st and 52nd Infantry Divisions were composed of regiments from host infantry divisions that would turn in a fine fighting record at Gallipoli.[56] The pre-war active regiments of the 51st and 52nd were well trained and had the benefit of Enver's 1914 training programme. Although formed as provisional expeditionary forces, they were, in fact, fully capable infantry divisions. Both divisions spent eight months in the Caucasus Mountains fighting the Russian Army under a variety of extremely severe climatic conditions. During these campaigns, the divisions participated in defensive operations, offensive operations, a pursuit operation, and a particularly long retreat. Furthermore, they were brought up to strength before deployment to Mesopotamia. Thus, by October 1915, the 51st and 52nd Infantry Divisions were fighting divisions with experience in an unusually wide array of operations.

The battle of Ctesiphon

The battle of Ctesiphon (or Selman Pak to the Turks) was the high-water mark of the first British offensive in Mesopotamia. The Turks had drawn up in defensive positions astride the Tigris River with the 35th Infantry Division on the west bank and the 38th and 45th Infantry Divisions on the east bank. Townshend approached the Turkish positions and concentrated his force at Lajj on 20 and 21 November 1915.

Townshend had been directed on 24 October to begin his advance on Baghdad by 14 November 1915. For this task he had a single reinforced Indian Army infantry division and he was almost 400 miles from the sea. Although Townshend expressed unease to his higher headquarters about how few troops he had available, he outwardly exuded confidence to those around him in Mesopotamia.[57] In early November, Townshend began to receive intelligence reports that a Turkish force under Halil Bey of about 7,000 men was being sent from Bitlis to Mosul. Within a week, these estimates were adjusted upwards to 15,000 men with at least twelve cannon.[58] As he closed on Lajj, Townshend was reasonably sure that Halil's '3rd Composite Division' was on the road to Baghdad and that Colmar von der Goltz was on the way to Mesopotamia to command an invasion of Persia.[59]

Much of Townshend's high level of confidence came from his direct experience in beating the Turks in every battle that he had engaged in with them. In fact, when writing about the First Battle of Kut, Townshend noted that:

> Nureddin Pasha fared in this battle as most generals do who seek by extensive fortified lines to supply the want of training and hardihood of their troops. Lines may prevail against undisciplined troops & savages, but never when the assailants are the better soldiers. But Nureddin is apparently not satisfied with his first experiment and wishes to try again.[60]

This, of course, was based on his experience of an enemy who proved unsteady in the defence and prone to collapse and rout.

There was, however, by the fall of 1915 considerable evidence to the contrary from Gallipoli about Ottoman capabilities. British intelligence in Mesopotamia ignored this

and compounded Townshend's appraisal by misreading the Turkish order of battle. In 1924, Colonel W.H.Beach noted:

> The kaleidoscopic activities of the Turkish Adjutant General's Branch rendered the maintenance of an accurate enemy order of battle a matter of extreme difficulty; regiments were continually being renumbered or merged into other units; strengths of establishments constantly varied, and the great difference in fighting value of Arab and Turkish personnel was misleading. Thus at Ctesiphon…the strengths of these newly arrived formations were much in excess of those of their predecessors and the personnel of almost immeasurably greater individual value.[61]

If Townshend was misapprised about the Ottoman fighting divisions facing him, he was also ill informed about the changing nature of the Iraq Area Command itself. Technically the Iraq Area Command was replaced organisationally by a new Ottoman Sixth Army on 5 October 1915 under a directive from the Ottoman General Staff.[62] This new army was given to German Field Marshal Colmar von der Goltz, who was then in command of the Ottoman First Army (in Thrace). Enver Pasa's intent for the new Sixth Army was to stabilise the Mesopotamian front by collecting up all of the various independent units in the theatre and simultaneously to attack Persia with the reinforcing 51st and 52nd Infantry Divisions.[63]

Von der Goltz's journey from Constantinople took a considerable amount of time and he did not arrive in Mesopotamia until well after the battle of Ctesiphon. Command of the Ottoman forces in Mesopotamia remained in the hands of Colonel Nurettin, who is referred to in the British histories as Nur-ud-Din.[64] Colonel Nurettin was one of the few Ottoman officers to reach high command without the benefit of a staff college education and connections.[65] Although he spoke Arabic, French, German, and Russian, Nurettin had only graduated from the Military Academy in 1893 and had no further formal military education. He was, however, well versed in the practical art of war. Nurettin served in the Ottoman-Greek War of 1897 as an aide to the commander-in-chief and then fought guerrillas in Macedonia in 1902. In 1907, he was assigned to the prestigious Third Army headquarters in Salonika. By 1910, Nurettin had served as a regimental second-in-command and had commanded a regular infantry battalion. On 11 January 1911, Nurettin was sent to the XIV Corps staff in Yemen to fight in the bitter counter-insurgency campaign that raged there, returning in the summer of 1913 to command the 9th Infantry Regiment. He was selected for an assignment with Liman von Sanders' German Military Mission and assumed command of the 4th Infantry Division on 29 April 1914. After a year in command Colonel Nurettin was ordered to assume command of the Iraq Area Command on 20 April 1915.[66] He arrived in mid-June to take over a badly battered army.

As he withdrew north along the Tigris, Nurettin fought several small battles with the British over the summer of 1915. On 26–28 September 1915, Townshend defeated him at the First Battle of Kut. In this battle the forces were very evenly matched, but Nurettin's 35th and 38th Infantry Divisions were unable to hold the line against Townshend's British and Indian division.[67] The Turkish official history attributes the defeat to low morale among the fighting troops.[68] This had been a recurrent problem for the Turks

throughout the campaign and, in fact, the original Ottoman commander in Mesopotamia, Süleyman Askeri Paşa, had shot himself in despair over the failure of his Arab levies.[69]

Digging in at Ctesiphon, Nurettin deployed his forces in a large L-shaped configuration. The new 45th Infantry Division held the vulnerable leg of the L, which was Nurettin's left flank. The 45th maintained a regiment in the line and kept two in reserve. In general reserve Nurettin maintained the incoming and fresh 51st Infantry Division. With these reinforcements the numerical balance shifted in favour of the Turks, as Nurettin could deploy over 18,000 riflemen to Townshends's 10,000.[70]

Townshend held the operational and the tactical initiative. He organised his attack to employ every soldier that he had available in four columns and he left nothing in reserve. Townshend intended to attack the position at apex of the L (the 'VP', or the Vital Point, as he called it, or Strong Point 11, as the Turks called it). This would draw in Nurettin's reserves, at which time Townshend's Flying Column would cut around the rear of the Turkish position and end the battle. It was a decisively bold plan and it placed almost all of the British strength against about a third of the Ottoman line.[71] In fact, for the main attack (columns A, B, and C), Townshend concentrated about 9,000 British and Indians against about 3,000 Turks.[72]

After moving through the night into attack positions, the British attack began about 0630 on 22 November 1915. The early stages of the battle went according to Townshend's plan, capturing the 'VP' by 1000. The battle was confusing but the timely commitment of the 45th Infantry Division's reserve regiments halted further British advances. Nurettin also moved most of his unengaged 35th Infantry Division from the west bank to the east bank of the Tigris River, where it occupied the Turkish reserve trenches. Later in the day, Nurettin committed the 51st Infantry Division to halting Townshend's enveloping Flying Column. Townshend himself spent most of the day under fire at the 'VP' trying to sort out what was happening. Casualties on both sides were severe. Under pressure Nurettin withdrew to his second line of trenches, where his defence solidified.

On the following day the fighting resumed and Townshend made a renewed attempt to break through the Turkish lines. This attempt was unsuccessful and was followed by a general Turkish counter-attack that threw all of Nurettin's army against the British. As night fell both armies were exhausted but the Turkish line had held Townshend back. On 24 November 1915, a discouraged Townshend concentrated on consolidating and evacuating his wounded while he considered his army's situation and withdrawal. He did not know that Nurettin was equally discouraged and was also considering withdrawal. In any case, it was Townshend who blinked first and by mid-day ordered a general withdrawal to Lajj. The British began to pull back on 25 November, as did Nurettin, who had also decided to withdraw to the Diyala River. However, Nurettin received reports from his cavalry about Townshend's retreat and in a timely manner reversed his own army's withdrawal. The battle ended with the Turks in possession of the field and the British in retreat.

One British historian noted 'Thus ended the Battle of Ctesiphon. It had been a totally unnecessary battle, and, when it had ended, neither side knew who had really won.'[73] Townshend had lost about 4,300 men (about 40 per cent of his infantry) and Nurettin had lost about 6,100 men (about 30 per cent of his infantry). No source in English posits a reason for Townshend's defeat except to say, 'the number of occasions on which the

respective commanders took important decisions on incorrect intelligence was exceptional'.[74] Moberly portrayed Nurettin as confused about the overall situation and largely unable to control his battle.[75] Yet, it was Nurettin who won.

The Turkish official history attributes the victory at Ctesiphon to two key elements, the defensive plan and the use of artillery.[76] Nurettin's defensive plan and his preparation of the battle space began on 28 September 1915 after losing the First Battle of Kut to Townshend. His order to retreat to Ctesiphon laid the groundwork for the defensive layout.[77] The advance elements of the 35th Infantry Division began to arrive there at 1600 on 1 October. Then, over the following fifty-five days, Nurettin prepared a very well fortified line that contained twelve heavy strong points, which was backed up with a complete second line of reserve trenches.[78] Moreover, he positioned the fresh 45th Infantry Division in the most vulnerable spot in the line and kept the veteran 51st Infantry Division in a reserve position to thwart any flanking movement.

Nurettin positioned the bulk of his scarce artillery in a central position from which it could support his main line or his vulnerable left flank. His orders to his artillery on 24 November were very clear.[79] He noted that Townshend's force was 'in our hands' and that the army would continue to attack to force the enemy to retire. He directed his heavy artillery group *(Deriye Grubunu)* to fire on the enemy gunboat flotilla and, on order, to shift fire to support his reserves. Nurettin directed that the XIII Corps artillery 'concentrate its fire' on the enemy occupying his first line of trenches. He ordered the XVIII Corps artillery to reinforce the XIII Corps artillery and to concentrate on Strong Points 11 and 12.

Townshend himself blamed his Indian soldiers for not being as steady as his English soldiers.[80] He also noted the 'remarkable rapidity with which the Turkish army entrenched… If one wanted to fight the Turkish army in the open it was necessary to strike immediately, and…the Turks could dig trenches three times as fast as the English troops.'[81]

In terms of how he managed the battle, Nurettin committed both his local and general reserves at the decisive points that stopped both Townshend's break-in of the Turkish main line of resistance and his flanking attack. Nurettin also transferred the 35th Infantry Division across the Tigris River at a decisive time to reinforce his battered line. Taken in total, Nurettin wrested the initiative away from Townshend in two days of intense combat. This achievement, unfortunately, was marred by Nurettin's premature decision to retreat before truly understanding that he had beaten Townshend. Nevertheless, the battle was characterised by the hallmarks of the Ottoman Army's training guidance laid down by Enver Paşa in 1914: preparation of strong entrenchments with overhead cover, positioning and commitment of reserves at the decisive point, and close co-operation between the infantry-artillery team.

As a battle fought within the context of a campaign, Ctesiphon bears a similarity to Bernard Montgomery's victory at Alam Haifa in August 1942. Montgomery took a broken army, plagued by defeat and retreat, and put it in a carefully prepared defensive position. He positioned his artillery to achieve mutually supporting fire and he placed his mobile reserve to block flanking attacks. In a bitterly fought battle lasting several days, he blasted the Afrika Korps to a halt. It was the turning point in the campaign for North Africa. Ctesiphon was, likewise, a turning point that galvanised the Ottoman Army.

Townshend and his army

Major General Charles V.F.Townshend, fifty-four years of age at Ctesiphon, was a typical British officer schooled in the small wars of the Victorian era.[82] Commissioned into the Royal Marine Light Infantry, Townshend served in Egypt and the Sudan with the Gordon Relief Expedition and participated in several battles. In 1886, he transferred to the Indian Army, where he served in infantry and mounted regiments. He took part in several frontier punitive expeditions. He was entertaining, ambitious and restless and his first moment in history came in command of Chitral Fort in 1895. There, in a siege that lasted from 4 March until 21 April, Townshend orchestrated a successful defence. Townshend received a CB and a brevet majority, and the fame that he had been seeking. He transferred to the Egyptian Army and commanded a Sudanese battalion in Kitchener's army against the Mahdi. He briefly served in the Anglo-Boer War and by 1914 had served in England, India, France (as an attaché), South Africa, and was finally in Rawal Pindi in India when the war began. He lobbied for a fighting command and was given the Indian Army's 6th Poona Infantry Division on 22 April 1915.

Townshend was not a Staff College graduate, but he did speak fluent French and had served in Paris. He was an ardent admirer of French military science and Millar noted that 'he revered Foch and the training of his troops was somewhat coloured by that of St Cyr'.[83] Townshend was ill prepared for modern war and had no direct experience in command of soldiers in a continental (or European) environment against a regular army.[84] Nevertheless, by the time of Ctesiphon, he had driven hundreds of miles into enemy territory and won several major battles against the Turks. His plan at Ctesiphon was sound and he personally went to the decisive point in the battle (the 'VP') and stood there for a day under heavy fire. He demanded that his brigadiers demonstrate similar personal leadership in combat (which they did). His decision to retreat from Ctesiphon was based on personal observation and solid tactical thinking. Although postwar British public opinion tended to judge Townshend severely, it is hard to fault his personal actions or his judgement in command.[85]

Townshend's 6th Poona Infantry Division was a regular Indian Army formation from India's Southern Command. It was one of nine numbered infantry divisions organised in 1904 by Lord Kitchener.[86] The 6th had three brigades of infantry (the 16th, 17th, and 18th) that were each composed of three regular Indian Army battalions and one regular British Army battalion. Artillery presented a problem, since there were no Indian Army artillery regiments as a result of the experience of the Sepoy Mutiny (although, by 1914, there were some pack howitzer batteries in the army). When alerted for overseas service in 1914, the War Office assigned the Poona Division a polyglot force composed of a single Royal Field Artillery brigade and some batteries from the Royal Garrison Artillery (about thirty-two guns and howitzers in total). Townshend was also given the 30th Brigade and the 6th Cavalry Brigade, enhanced signals and engineers, an aviation section, and a river gunboat flotilla.

The Indian Army was neither trained nor equipped for modern war.[87] Nevertheless, by 1915, the India Office had sent two infantry divisions and two cavalry divisions to France, an infantry division to Egypt, a brigade to Gallipoli and one to East Africa, and two infantry divisions to Mesopotamia (including the Poona Division). Like their British counterparts, there was no combined arms training, nor was there any kind of realistic

tactical field training. Training standards were fixed at individual level.[88] At battalion level, the Indian Army was under-equipped with machine guns and modern rifles. In wintry and wet France, the Indians 'suffered from the cold and from homesickness'.[89] Institutionally, the Indian Army was fragile, since it possessed neither a well organised reserve nor a replacement system designed to provide the large numbers of replacement soldiers necessary in attritional warfare.[90] Compounding this fragility was the fact that each Indian Army infantry battalion was assigned sixteen British officers (as well as sixteen Indian officers) for whom there were literally no trained replacements. In fact, the total reserve in 1914 for this critical element of tactical leadership was a mere forty British officers.[91]

In the first year of the war the Indian Army battalions sent to Mesopotamia performed well, especially in the victories at Basra, Qurna, Shaiba, and First Kut. In fact, compared with the lack-lustre performance of the 3rd Lahore and the 7th Meerut Infantry Divisions against the Germans in France, the Indian Army seemed to fare very well against the Turks in Mesopotamia. When the War Office decided to withdraw the Indian Army divisions from France, it ordered them to Mesopotamia. However, important as the victories in Mesopotamia were, the Indian Army fought there against second-rate troops (the Ottoman 35th and 38th Infantry Divisions) in locally favourable circumstances. It was not until Ctesiphon that the Indian Army in Mesopotamia encountered serious resistance.

Nurettin's pursuit and encirclement

On 26 November 1915, the orders of the Iraq Area Command showed that Nurettin was alive with optimism. In his daily order Nurettin thanked and complimented his officers and men for their victory, and he asked that the war diaries be updated and sent to his headquarters.[92] He ordered that the names of the dead and wounded be provided to the corps headquarters and that their weapons be redistributed expeditiously. He directed that the corps and division headquarters mark their locations with pennants and lanterns to accommodate these orders. Finally, Nurettin warned the headquarters to expect further orders and further reorganisation, and to redistribute the surviving divisional officers within the XVIII Corps. More important, Nurettin outlined his operational intent by sending word to his left flank cavalry brigade commander that he intended 'to pursue the enemy, who was retreating in disarray'.[93] Later that day he sent an urgent telegram to his cavalry division commander, Fazil Paşa, stating that he wanted to pursue Townshend day and night and cut off elements of the enemy army in its retreat.[94]

This may seem to be a remarkable turnaround for a commander who had almost given up the fight on the previous day. In reality, Nurettin was proving to be a flexible tactical thinker and a resourceful commander. While not a war academy or staff college graduate, Nurettin had a tremendous amount of recent military experience in an army that was undergoing a transformation to modernity. His rapid transition from a defensive operational posture to an offensive operational posture showcases a strength of the Ottoman Army—that it was operationally agile.[95]

Townshend's army began to pull out of its lines at 1930 on 25 November, followed closely by Nurettin's soldiers, who reoccupied their trenches. Townshend's retreat was orderly and well managed. Troop morale was high and his main problem was in moving

his casualties in a timely manner. He halted at Aziziya on 28 and 29 November to evacuate as many wounded as possible and to evacuate supplies down river. By now, Townshend was acutely aware of the substantial size of the Turkish forces opposing him.[96]

Nurettin spent 27 November bring his army forward and reorganising it for a pursuit and on 28 November set it in motion toward Aziziya.[97] He placed his XIII Corps (35th and 38th Infantry Divisions) on the river and placed his XVIII Corps (45th and 51st Infantry Division) on his left. He located himself with Halil's XVIII Corps headquarters and he positioned his 2nd Tribal Cavalry Brigade on his open desert left flank. This configuration put the 51st Infantry Division, which had participated in a pursuit operation in the Caucasus, and his cavalry to his left in order to encircle Townshend's army. The operational initiative had passed to Nurettin, who deployed infantry experienced in rapid marching and cavalry on his enveloping flank.

As the Turks approached Townshend and prepared to encircle his army, the British pulled back on 30 November and established a fortified camp at Umm at Tubul (Delabiba). Townshend had removed most of his stores and his wounded, and had telegraphed to his immediate commander, General Sir John E.Nixon, that he intended to retreat to Shadi (which was two marches from Kut). He also informed Nixon that 'I regard it as most unlikely that enemy *[sic]* will follow south of Aziziya.'[98] But follow they did, taking Aziziya as the British pulled out and launching an immediate pursuit.[99] In a confusing encounter after dark the Turks bumped up against the British camp several hours later.

The next morning (1 December), Nurettin launched an attack and tried to outflank Townshend with his cavalry. The British broke contact and avoided encirclement by sending the 6th Cavalry Brigade to stop the Turkish cavalry. Although characterised by Moberly as conducting a disorganised attack, the Turks forced Townshend downstream and reported capturing three officers and 500 men, many of whom were wounded, on barges abandoned in the retreat.[100] Townshend then decided to conduct what amounted to a 40 km twenty-four-hour forced march to Shadi, arriving there on 2 December 1915. Townshend had now been forced to evacuate his division from three separate positions or face encirclement and 'annihilation'.[101] Twice he carried it off well, but at Umm at Tubul Townshend was stung badly and, making matters worse, the Turks were close on his heels.

While these battles had been raging, the War Office and the India Office came to the inescapable conclusion that the Turks had achieved a decisive local superiority in Mesopotamia that was likely to increase over the next several months. Consequently, they agreed to reinforce Mesopotamia by sending significant forces there that included the 3rd (Lahore) Infantry Division and the 7th (Meerut) Infantry Division from France and Egypt. These forces would be added to the Indian Army's 12th Infantry Division, which was then forming in Mesopotamia as well. In early December these forces were inbound and were expected in their entirety by the new year.[102]

There were many messages between Generals Townshend and Nixon about whether to continue the retreat or to bring the Poona Division into Kut and remain there. It was well understood by all concerned that massive reinforcements were inbound and that Kut offered a logistically secure and defensible base.[103] Although he had mixed feelings about the viability of a stand, it was Townshend who decided on 2 December 1915 to bring his

division into Kut and to await relief there. He continued his march downstream and his advance elements entered the town of Kut on the next day. Townshend's men had retreated about 140km in eight days. The retreat was conducted skilfully and with good order and discipline.[104]

General Nixon approved Townshend's decision but the General Staff in India had misgivings about the Poona Division remaining in Kut. From Townshend's perspective, however, remaining at Kut had many advantages. There were several months of supplies and ammunition available there. The division could go over to the defensive and (finally) tend to its wounded. Moreover, as Townshend himself could attest, the British Army had a grand tradition of successfully conducting siege defences and concurrent relief operations. And with three fresh Indian Army infantry divisions (two of which were seasoned in combat against the German Army) coming up the Tigris in early 1916, Townshend was confident that he had made the correct tactical decision.

Nurettin, although in pursuit, was unable to maintain the tempo of operations necessary to match Townshend's retreat. This was primarily due to logistical problems involving bringing ammunition, supplies, and fodder forward with his combat troops.[105] Nurettin and his staff accompanied the XVIII Corps in the pursuit and were in close touch with the tactical situation. On 3 December, Nurettin's army had reached Beyti Resif, about 15km west of Kut. The next day, he knew that Townshend had withdrawn into Kut and he ordered the Ottoman pursuit to continue.[106]

On 5 December 1915, Nurettin began an encirclement of Kut. He ordered his tribal cavalry, the 2nd Battalion, 104th Infantry, and a mountain howitzer section under the command of Mehmet Fazil Paşa a on a wide flanking movement south of Kut.[107] He also formed a provisional detachment (the *Bedre Müfrezesi*) composed of a cavalry squadron and two mountain howitzers and sent them north and east past Kut. These forces were directed to meet near two old Ottoman forts (Makasis and Medhi) on the Tigris River about 20 km east of Kut (see Map 3.1).[108] The 45th Infantry Division moved forward to invest the town of Kut. By the evening of 6 December Townshend was bottled up in Kut by the 45th Infantry Division and the Turks held both banks of the Tigris 15km downstream. Townshend was not yet fully encircled, since Nurettin was unable to garrison the right bank to the south of Kut.

Nurettin began to move his XIII Corps headquarters and the 35th Infantry Division across the river on 7 December, while the 38th Infantry Division remained on the left bank.[109] Both divisions began to push downstream beyond Kut. The XVIII Corps began to dig trenches across the peninsula that framed the town of Kut. Thus, by evening, Nurettin had several infantry battalions in position on the right bank to physically encircle the British and Indians. He reported this to Colmar von der Goltz, who had finally arrived in Baghdad on 6 December.[110] Nurettin also reported that he had enough artillery and machine guns in place to make resupply of Townshend by river flotilla impossible.

While the British expected a local encirclement of Kut, they were unprepared for what amounted to the creation of classic lines of contravallation and lines of circumvallation.[111] Nurettin sealed Townshend within a peninsula but also pushed his forces far downstream to prevent enemy relief forces from affecting his operations against Kut. The British were surprised by the 'unexpectedly rapid' build-up of the

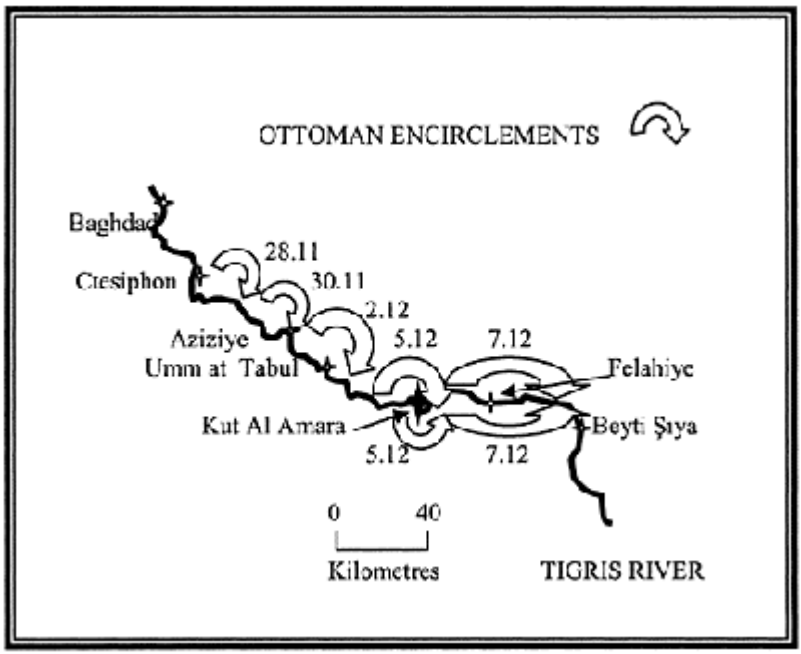
Ottoman strength below Kut.[112] This action by Nurettin was to prove of decisive significance as the campaign matured.

Nurettin's attacks on Kut

The 8th of December passed quietly while Nurettin consolidated his grip on Kut and prepared to attack. There were two points that appeared especially vulnerable, namely the British bridgeheads on the right bank of the Tigris.[113] On Townshend's east flank a boat bridge connected the peninsula with the right bank and a detachment maintained a bridgehead there. On his west flank, Townshend maintained a detachment in the small village of Elhan (or Woolpress village as the British called it) which provided an anchorage of sorts for his riverboat flotilla. Nurettin ordered the 35th Infantry Division to attack both positions simultaneously. The division sent two and a half regiments against the bridgehead and a regiment against Woolpress village. Artillery and machine guns reinforced both. In a bitter and close-fought battle, Nurettin's men took the bridgehead, which was defended only by hasty trenches, but were unable to take the village. Townshend was concerned that the Turks would force their way across the boat bridge and had it blown up later that night. Meanwhile, Nurettin's main force prepared for a major attack on the neck of the peninsula.

At 1705, 9 December 1915, Nurettin issued orders to the XVIII Corps to attack the British lines with three infantry divisions.[114] Nurettin's staff judged the British trenches to be poorly prepared (which they were) and vulnerable. Nurettin attached the 38th Infantry Division to the XVIII Corps (augmenting its own 45th and 51st Infantry Divisions). The attack was scheduled to begin at 0600 the next day. Later in the day, Nurettin sent a report to Enver Paşa a outlining his intention to attack Townshend and noting that he had enjoyed success against Townshend's bridgehead the day before.[115] Nurettin also mentioned that he had written to Townshend requesting that he surrender but that he had not heard anything back. He closed by saying that the 52nd Infantry Division headquarters, the 37th Infantry Regiment, and the divisional cavalry squadron had arrived.

The Turkish attacks of 10 and 11 December 1915 failed to make much of an impression on the British in Kut. The first attack began with Turkish artillery raking the British lines and pounding the British artillery area. This was followed at 1100 by a heavy infantry attack from all three Turkish infantry divisions on the northern portion of the enemy lines. Their attack focused on the old fort beside the Tigris that marked the northernmost defensive work on the peninsula. The line of hasty Turkish trenches lay between 400m and 600m from the British, but these were pushed up to about 200m.[116] The Ottoman artillery and supporting machine-gun barrage was unable to suppress the enemy fire and as the Turks attempted to cross hundreds of metres of barren no-man's-land they were mown down in large numbers. The attacks were called off at 1630, but Nurettin ordered the attack to be renewed the following morning at 0530.[117]



Map 3.1 Ottoman encirclement operations, November-December 1915.

Notes

a At the tactial level the encircling left wing of Nurettin's army was composed of the Halil's XVIII Corps, which contained the 45th and 51st Infantry Divisions and the 2nd Tribal Cavalry Brigade,

b Halil and his 51st Infantry Division were very experienced in the conduct of pursuit operations from their tour in Caucasia.

Heavy fire and hand grenades greeted the Turks on 11 December 1915, as they once again attempted to storm Townshend's thin lines. Enfilading fire from the old fort was particularly devastating to the Turks and the attack was called off at 1115. On this day, Nurettin also sent a renewed attack of four infantry battalions to storm Woolpress village, which also failed. The losses were heavy: the XVIII Corps lost four officers and sixty-six

men killed, and fourteen officers and 1,054 men wounded in the main attacks.[118] An additional thirty soldiers were killed and 167 wounded in the attack on Woolpress village.

The attacks failed for several reasons.[119] The primary reason was shortage of ammunition, which reduced the volume and duration of the artillery bombardment. Second, the large distances between the trenches (no-man's-land) were flat and offered no cover or concealment. In concert, these factors allowed the British and Indian soldiers to maintain deadly fields of fire against which the Turkish attacks foundered. Third, the attacks were simple frontal attacks without any benefit of tactical or operational surprise. The British, although in poorly prepared hasty trenches, were awake and ready to repel the Turks, who were unable to suppress their fire. It was a tactical dynamic that would stymie offensive operations until 1918.

Overall, it was a disappointing performance by the Turks. Townshend himself, at Ctesiphon, against a much more sophisticated defensive line, had penetrated the Turk's first line of trenches. A similar showing by Nurettin would have surely initiated the collapse of the Kut defences. There were other factors that militated against Ottoman success, which should be noted. Nurettin's soldiers were exhausted after conducting a vigorous 140km pursuit operation in a nine-day period followed by several days of digging trenches. Moreover, their army always ran on lean logistics and, beyond being tired, the men were probably hungry as well. More important, Nurettin's army was run down by attrition.

Table 3.4 Strength returns, Iraq Area Command, 16 December 1915

Unit	*Officers*	*Men*	*Rifles*	*Machine guns*	*Artillery*	*Animals*
35th Inf. Div.	94	3,751	2,910	4	8	728
38th Inf. Div.	137	4,106	3,082	4	8	992
45th Inf. Div.	132	4,577	3,001	4	8	1,295
51st Inf. Div.	234	6,534	4,386	8	6	2,081
52nd Inf. Div.	183	6,442	4,606	6	On roads	1,389
Army units	248	7,158	1,512		23	2,928[a]
Total	1,028	32,568	19,497	26	53	9,413

Source: ATASE, Archive 3644, Record H-32, File 1–31 reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, III ncü Cilt, Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918, 1nci Kısım* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1979), 463.

Note
a Includes 701 cavalry.

Table 3.4 shows the strength of the Iraq Area Command shortly after the attacks of 10/11 December 1915. It is obvious that the casualties lost at Ctesiphon, Um at Tubul, Woolpress village and the bridgehead, and Nurettin's initial attacks on Kut had not, on that date, been made up with replacements.

The effect of this situation was that the Ottoman regiments and battalions went into offensive operations at 30–40 per cent of their authorised strength. It is obvious that the Ottoman replacement system, which had proven very effective in European Thrace at Gallipoli, had broken down in Mesopotamia. For comparative purposes, a full-strength Ottoman Army infantry division was authorised 310 officers, 12,228 men, and 2,322 animals (with an infantry strength of about 9,500 men).[120] Townshend's 6th Poona Infantry Division (including the 30th Brigade, but excluding the 6th Cavalry Brigade) was authorised about 715 officers and 23,674 men (with an infantry strength of about 16,200 men).[121]

It should be noted that Townshend was, likewise, tremendously weakened by constant combat. When he arrived in Kut on 6 December Townshend's division had 301 British and 225 Indian officers, and 2,851 British and 8,230 Indian soldiers, for a total of 11,607 combatants assigned.[122] Townshend's effective infantry rifle strength was somewhere around 7,000 men.

From a military perspective, when formations are badly under strength, it is far easier to conduct defensive operations than to conduct offensive operations.[123] Offensive operations required more aggressive tactical leadership and (especially in the 1914–18 period) incurred high casualty rates. The effect of committing worn-down infantry to an attack in World War I meant that they had reduced tactical leadership (due to prior casualties among company-grade officers) and they had a very reduced ability to suffer additional losses. In the end, both armies suffered from the effects of attrition, but it certainly must have negatively affected Townshend at Ctesiphon and Nurettin at Kut as they conducted offensive operations.

It should also be noted here that the quantity of available artillery on both sides, in comparison with contemporary operations in France, was ridiculously small. In Mesopotamia, Indian and Turkish infantry divisions were launching attacks on prepared trench positions with forty or so cannon (with very limited supplies of ammunition, made worse because the shells were mostly shrapnel, rather than the more effective high-explosive shells). Making matters worse, both sides' artillery park was heavily laden with field guns as opposed to howitzers. Townshend had but a single howitzer battery and Nurettin had two batteries of light mountain howitzers.[124] The allied armies in France had already found out, to their dismay, that they were underequipped with howitzers, which enabled indirect shell fire on enemy trenches.[125] And, in comparison with Mesopotamia, France was lavishly equipped with artillery. The absence of strong artillery support effectively foreordained any frontal attack to failure.

The new Ottoman Sixth Army commander, German Field Marshal Colmar von der Goltz, arrived at Nurettin's headquarters on 12 December 1915, in time to observe the aftermath of the failed assaults. Given the circumstances, von der Goltz might have been expected to remain there at Kut, but he did not. Instead, he told Nurettin to shift from 'direct assaults to grinding down the English in Kut'.[126] Von der Goltz also directed Nurettin to form a provisional detachment for service in Persia, which he did, sending it by boat to Baghdad on 17 December.[127] Shortly thereafter von der Goltz, eager to begin

combat operations in Persia, departed for Baghdad. Nurettin remained in command of the Iraq Area Command, which was neither inactivated nor subsumed into the new Sixth Army.

In the ten days that followed, the Turks mounted a minor attack on Woolpress village and there was a British sortie from the old fort. Turkish casualties were heavy, given the scale and duration of operations, and they lost thirteen officers and 325 men killed, and eighteen officers and 551 men wounded or missing.[128] British casualties for the same period were 498 in total.[129] Clearly the grinding down of the British, as envisioned by von der Goltz, was not happening as expected.

Moberly noted that von der Goltz had given Nurettin distinct orders not to mount major attacks on Kut in his absence.[130] This is based on the memoirs of German Lieutenant Colonel Von Kiesling, who accompanied von der Goltz. The Turkish official history of the campaign does not interpret von der Goltz's comments to Nurettin as an absolute order, but rather as something akin to 'tactical suggestions'.[131] Reinforcing this idea was a circular sent out from Nurettin's headquarters on 15 December 1915 to the civilian governor of the Baghdad Province *(vilayet),* the replacement depots, the line of communications command (in Aleppo), and the local military garrison commands in Mesopotamia.[132] In this circular, Nurettin noted that the encirclement of Kut was complete and that he was continuing the pursuit downstream. He mentioned that his army had taken numbers of enemy prisoners. He also noted that heavy attacks would continue day and night until the enemy was destroyed. Nurettin also mentioned that 'the famous English division commander, Lt General *[sic]* Townshend' occupied a battle area that included the town itself. Nurettin expressed great concern about the danger to the civilian population that remained inside the town. He concluded the circular with a highlighted phrase, 'I am not indifferent to the innocent Arab civilians.'

It is clear that Nurettin intended to continue his heavy attacks on Kut. His circular served notice on the local Arab civilian population that their relatives in Kut were in danger and notified the replacement system and the lines of communications command that heavy combat was expected. In many ways, the circular was a fine piece of public relations work in that it forewarned the Arabs that civilian casualties might be expected. In any case, such a widely circulated public announcement negates the idea that von der Goltz prohibited Nurettin from mounting further general attacks on Kut.

On 17 December 1915, Nurettin issued orders to his corps and cavalry commanders that outlined his intent for future operations.[133] He noted that Townshend had sent his cavalry out of Kut towards Basra and that 3,000–4,000 enemy were near Aliülgarbi (Ali Gharbi). He directed his cavalry brigade to advance from Şeyhsaid (Shaikh Saad) and make contact with the enemy at Ali Gharbi to ensure that the lines of communications to Kut were cut off. He ordered XVIII Corps to maintain heavy fire on the enemy trenches and to prepare an attack. Nurettin ordered XIII Corps to close on the right bank and to direct its energy on the enemy artillery and on Woolpress village. He also ordered the corps to bring artillery into flanking positions surrounding the peninsula. Finally, he noted that Kut remained in contact with the enemy force at Ali Gharbi and that action was required to paralyse their communications.

Nurettin had the relatively fresh 52nd Infantry Division available as an attack force and he decided, once again, to attack the old fort (known to the Turks as the Kudeyra Kale) in the north-east corner of the Kut peninsula. The location of the main attack was a

function of the vulnerability of the old fort, which lay in an exposed location. Over the next several days, XVIII Corps staff worked to develop a plan and decided to conduct a supplementary attack on Woolpress village and a supporting attack on Townshend's main lines to pin the British reserves.[134]

The Ottoman plan enabled Nurettin to pit the entire strength of the 52nd Infantry Division, under Lieutenant Colonel Bekir Sami, against two reduced battalions of Townshend's 17th Infantry Brigade. Additionally, the Turks could fire their artillery from the opposite bank of the Tigris, thus flanking the enemy with artillery fire. It was a good plan, but it suffered from a fundamental lack of mass. The entire infantry strength of the 52nd Infantry Division was returned as ninety-four officers and 3,678 soldiers, and artillery support was listed as eighteen guns on the left bank and ten guns on the right bank. (There were six machine guns available as well.)[135] Thus what appears on maps as a large divisional-scale attack was, in actuality, a brigade-equivalent attack. Moreover, seven of the twenty-eight supporting artillery pieces were light mountain howitzers and there was a shortage of high-explosive ammunition. Final attack orders went out to the 52nd Infantry Division on 23 December 1915 with a start time set at 0630 the next morning.

In fact, the artillery bombardment began at 0640 and was concentrated on the old fort. Because of the small number of guns and limited ammunition, the Turkish artillerymen co-ordinated their fire to maintain more or less continuous, but light, fire on the British positions.[136] To confuse the British, the firing plans and firing times of the field guns, mountain howitzers, and heavy guns (three 120mm) alternated to ensure that a variety of different types of shells fell on the enemy at varying times. The artillery firing stopped at 1130 and the Ottoman infantry went over the top, laden with rifles and hand grenades. Once again, the well prepared Indians and British were alert and ready to resist. The Turks planned to attack in two phases. (The 37th and 43rd Infantry Regiments went in first with the 43rd Infantry Regiment designated as the second wave or division reserve: a classic 'two up and one back' deployment.)[137] Additionally, the 44th Infantry Regiment (from the 51st Infantry Division) was designated as the XVIII Corps general reserve and was on call to reinforce the 52nd Infantry Division's attack.

The British and Turkish official histories align well in the descriptions of the failed Christmas Eve attack. Both detailed the hard hand-to-hand fighting with grenades, rifles, and bayonets that finally resolved itself in Townshend's favour. And both spoke of the dramatic efforts of the Oxfords (*Oksfort Taburu*, 'Oxford Battalion'), whose counter-attacks restored the lines. By dark the engagement was over, although minor Turkish attacks continued until 0230 on Christmas Day. British histories suggest that the Turks lost about 2,000 men, but the modern Turkish official history noted about 1,000 total casualties (including 490 dead).[138] Total British and Indian casualties were 315 and sixty-seven elsewhere in the fort (probably Woolpress village, which was subjected to a shorter supplementary attack).

Moberly presented no reasons for the Turkish failure other than the gallantry and hard fighting of the British and Indian soldiers.[139] After the battle, Townshend noted that 'the Turk though good behind a trench is of little value in the attack'.[140] Millar was especially critical of Nurettin's mistakes in execution, noting that the bombardment merely alerted the garrison, who waited until it stopped before taking to the firing steps.[141] Millar also noted Townshend's remarks from his autobiography that Nurettin committed no reserves

to reinforce success and also that the Turk did not conduct a supporting operation to pin the enemy reserves. In response to Townshend's criticism, it should be noted that the 51st Infantry Division retained a regiment as its second wave and the XVIII Corps maintained a regiment in corps general reserve (which was actually sent to assist in the supporting attack). The Turks, for their part, credit the English artillery with yeoman service, the Oxfords' counter-attack, and imperfect preparations for the attack as causing failure.[142] Finally, a British observer in Kut noted that the Turkish artillery fire, although accurate, was ineffective because 50 per cent of the shells burst too early or too high.[143]

Nurettin did not fight this battle. The battle was fought by Lieutenant Colonel Bekir Sami (52nd Infantry Division commander) and Colonel Halil (XVIII Corps commander), both very experienced commanders, who adhered to the plan and executed it faithfully. In fact, the Turks were very surprised at the levels of resistance that they encountered because they believed that the English morale was badly broken.[144] In ordering the attack, Nurettin repeated Townshend's error at Ctesiphon by sending infantry with minimal support against trenches held by determined men.

Christmas Day 1915 marked the final Turkish attack on the Kut peninsula, although harassing fire and probes would continue until the very end. The 45th, 51st, and 52nd Infantry Divisions, although well trained, experienced, and manned by Anatolian Turks, had not proven to be a decisive advantage in the Iraq Command's offensive operations. Now these divisions had been badly worn down by combat, and by early 1916 the Ottoman Army's combat infantry divisions in Mesopotamia were reduced to the strength of brigade groups.

Command and logistics

Field Marshal von der Goltz's Sixth Army issued General Order No. 1 on 21 December 1915, reorganising the Ottoman forces in Mesopotamia.[145] This had no real effect on Nurettin, and his Iraq Area Command was simply redesignated as the Army of Iraq. (The other components of the Sixth Army were the Persia Column, the 12th and 13th Corps Garrison Commands, the River Flotilla, and the 6th Support Command.) Shortly thereafter, on 1 January 1916, von der Goltz again redesignated Nurettin's Army of Iraq as the Iraq Group (as well as renaming the Persia Column as the Baghdad Group). There was no particular reason for doing this except to conform with standard Ottoman Army practice in other theatres of war (the Ottoman Fifth Army at Gallipoli used subordinate groups, as did the Third Ottoman Army in Caucasia), and this subtlety probably reflected the influence of von der Goltz's Ottoman Army staff officers.

In some ways, the Sixth Army was an 'army' in name only. Of interest, the returns of the Ottoman Sixth Army at the end of December 1915 showed 20,018 combat soldiers and 11,656 support soldiers.[146] The ratio of 'teeth to tail' was, therefore 2:1. The Ottoman General Staffs Army Office reported in November 1915 that more than 11,000 soldiers serving with the Sixth Army were reservists.[147] It is probable that most of the reservists were assigned to infantry battalions, since the technical branches of the pre-war Ottoman Army were filled with a higher level of active manpower. In actuality, the entire Sixth Army was smaller than a British two-division army corps.

The year 1915 was to be the worst of the war for the Ottoman Army in terms of combat-related casualties. In fact, 64 per cent of all Ottoman soldiers killed in action were killed during the first year of the war (about 113,000 men).[148] Consequently, there was a huge demand for replacements to fill the vacant ranks. Unfortunately for Nurettin, the priority theatres were, quite naturally, Gallipoli and Caucasia, and the Fifth and Third Armies there received the priority of fill coming from the replacement depots.

In November 1915, there were 3,632 men assigned to the 9th Depot Regiment in the replacement pipeline for Mesopotamia.[149] Additionally, 2,000 replacements and 900 replacements had been sent from Smyrna and Ankara previously during the year. The Baghdad replacement depot was able to send 1,200 replacements to the army in the last week of December 1915, which was barely enough to replace the losses of the Christmas Eve attack. (These men were probably a portion of the 3,632 mentioned as assigned to the depot regiment.)[150] In overall terms, the combat losses in Iraq could not be made up by the Ottoman Army's replacement system and it is apparent that the system, which worked well in the densely populated western provinces of the Ottoman Empire, was failing to provide adequate soldiers in Mesopotamia. Once again, the low priority of the Ottoman Army in Iraq crippled the Ottoman forces on the Mesopotamian front.

Logistically, the Ottoman Sixth Army remained at a priority level below that of the Fifth Army (Gallipoli) and the Third Army (Caucasia). When the war began, the Iraq Area Command had a total of 17,193 rifles, 11,203 cases of rifle ammunition, forty-three hand grenades, and 5,953 artillery shells of all types on hand.[151] In the entire year of 1915, the following arms and munitions were shipped to the Iraq Area Command: 4,919 rifles, ten artillery pieces, eight machine guns, 8,200 cases of rifle ammunition, 40,000 hand grenades, and 16,000 artillery shells of various types.[152] All of this material was shipped by train to the Pozanti Gap, where it was laboriously carried by animals over the Taurus Mountains to be reloaded aboard trains. After several hundred kilometres, the material was again taken by animals through the Osmaniye Gap and put back on trains to the Euphrates Valley, where it was loaded on barges or animals and brought to Baghdad.

Because the replacement and logistical system was unable to provide adequate soldiers and munitions for the Iraq Area Command, Enver Paşa ordered additional reinforcements to Mesopotamia. On 28 December 1915, Enver gave movement orders for the 2nd Infantry Division, then at Gallipoli, to deploy to Mesopotamia.[153] Enver also directed that the incoming division would join the XIII Corps. This would evenly balance the two army corps of the new Iraq Group at three infantry divisions each, which was the Ottoman Army's standard.

British reinforcements

As has been related previously, substantial reinforcements were en route to Mesopotamia from France. These were the 3rd (Lahore) Infantry Division and the 7th (Meerut) Infantry Division, which were originally from the Indian Army's Northern Command. On the positive side, the number of British and Indian battalions in Mesopotamia would almost double and the extra 30,000 combat troops were expected to tip the operational balance in favour of the British.

It might be thought that these two infantry divisions, coming as they did from the cockpit of the war, might possess relatively higher military capabilities than the Indian

Army's 6th and 12th Infantry Divisions, which were already in Mesopotamia. Moberly noted just the opposite, stating that the two divisions were badly depleted of experienced men (who had become casualties from fighting the Germans) and, consequently, had numerous inexperienced replacements, that they had learnt to place great reliance on artillery (which was in short supply in Mesopotamia), and that many of the men felt that they had been transferred to a 'side show' (negatively affecting the morale).[154] He also noted that many of the battalions and brigades had been 'trained along different lines', coming as they did from various garrison locations in India.[155]

The Indian Corps (composed of the 3rd and 7th Infantry Divisions) had previously arrived in Marseilles in late September 1914 and by the third week of October was already in the line near Ypres. In the desperate 'race to the sea' during the early autumn of 1914, the Indian Corps performed a vital role, holding about a third of the BEF's defensive line.[156] Although the Indian Corps was under-equipped in artillery, machine guns, and hand grenades, it performed adequately in the defensive battle of La Bassée and earned a fighting reputation from its German opponent.[157] Later in the offensive battle of Neuve Chapelle in March 1915, the Indians took four successive lines of German trenches before being turned back by counter-attacks. In overall terms, the performance of the Indian Corps on the western front has been characterised as 'undistinguished', largely due to its fragility in combat operations, leading to heavy casualties without commensurate returns.[158] Despite these issues, by the time of its redeployment to Mesopotamia in the fall of 1915, the Indian Corps had accumulated a substantial amount of modern combat experience in both defensive and offensive operations against a first-class enemy army. Unfortunately, this experience came at the cost of the loss of many of the experienced pre-war British and Indian officers upon whom the morale and effectiveness of Indian Army infantry battalions was built.[159]

It must also be mentioned that Moberly noted 'a further disadvantageous factor was the feeling among officers and men who had come from France…of some contempt at what they deemed the lower class of fighting they were now called upon to undertake'.[160] This attitude is reminiscent of the disregard displayed toward the Turks by the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in April 1915. Moberly went on to describe an antagonistic attitude between the soldiers coming from France and the soldiers who had been fighting in Mesopotamia.

Upon arrival at Basra, the Indian Corps was redesignated as the Tigris Corps and placed under the command of Lieutenant General Sir F.J.Aylmer, who had arrived in early December 1915 and was the commander of the relief force for Kut. Organisationally, the 3rd and 7th Infantry Divisions were standard and thus very powerful Indian Army formations composed of twelve infantry battalions (three British and nine Indian). Their principal organisational weakness was a lack of field artillery and they were equipped with only one artillery brigade instead of the normal four artillery brigades that were authorised British Army infantry divisions.[161] Aylmer was also given the unassigned 35th and 36th Infantry Brigades as corps troops. Finally, it must be mentioned that the Indian Corps was under-equipped with sufficient transport, medical services, and support troops.[162] The Tigris Corps, in general terms, could be characterised as 'infantry rich' and 'artillery and support poor'.

Counting Townshend's Poona Division, the British would have four infantry divisions in Mesopotamia with a combined total of forty-eight infantry battalions (4×12). The

Turks had five infantry divisions in Mesopotamia with a combined total of forty-five infantry battalions (5×9). While some of the British strength was distributed along the river in garrisons, the Turks had sent a brigade-sized element to Baghdad for operations against the Russians in Persia. This infusion of the fresh Tigris Corps enabled the British to attempt to regain the initiative in early 1916.

January–April 1916

British relief operations in the winter and spring of 1916 tend to blur into one another in a series of failed attacks by the Tigris Corps. In general terms, there were three major attacks in January, mostly on the left bank, and no attacks in February. In March, the British made a single major attack on the right bank. In April, the British mounted four major attacks, first with two on the left bank, one on the right bank and then a final push on both banks. None of these attacks was well resourced (or well planned) and all of these attempts by the Tigris Corps failed to break through to Townshend. In particular, at the tactical level, the 3rd and 7th Indian Divisions lacked sufficient artillery and ammunition, were unable to co-ordinate effective fire support, and launched clumsy frontal attacks.[163]

A little-researched aspect of these battles is the cost of the Anglo-Indian effort in casualties relative to the Turks. Casualties remain difficult to tabulate, since the start and end of some of the battles overlapped according to the British or the Turkish view. At the end of the campaign, the British and Indians thought that they had killed or wounded a fairly high number of Turks. However, according to the official Turkish history of the campaign, the Turks suffered only half as many casualties as the allies—8,835 compared with 19,863 (see Table 3.5). These totals do not include Townshend's losses at Kut, which further skew the data in favour of the Ottoman Army.

The number of British and Indian casualties suffered from January to April 1916 highlights the strength of Nurettin's basic operational premise. By isolating Kut and putting the Turks on the defensive well below on the Tigris, Nurettin forced the British into a premature offensive posture. In doing so, he was able to play to the strengths of the Ottoman Army.

Conclusions: combat effectiveness

The focus of this chapter has been on Ottoman leadership, the expansion of the Ottoman Army, and operational and tactical doctrines in the Mesopotamian theatre of war. While the Gallipoli Campaign represents the Ottoman Army operating in optimum circumstances, the campaigns in Mesopotamia showcase the Ottoman Army operating under very adverse and austere circumstances.

Table 3.5 British and Turkish combat casualties, January–April 1916

Date	*Battle (Turkish name)*	*British casualties*	*Turkish casualties*
January			
7–10	Sheik Saad (Sag Sahil)	4,262	1,200
13	Wadi (Vad-I Kelal)	1,600	527
21	First Hanna (Felahiye)	2,741	503
March			
8	Dujaila (Sabis)	3,500	1,290
11	(Zemzir)		157
April			
5	Second Hanna (First Felahiye)	1,885	144
6	Fallahiya (Second Felahiye)	1,168	457
9	Sannaiyat (Third Felahiye)	1,807	325
17	Bait Isa (Beyti Isa)	1,600	3,541
22	Sanniyat (Fourth Felahiye)	1,300	691
Total		19,863	8,835

Sources: A.Kearsey, *A Study of the Strategy and Tactics of the Mesopotamia Campaign 1914–1917* (Aldershot: Gale & Polden, n.d.), 58; Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914–1918*, 212–438; and TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 494–773.

Note
These totals exclude Townshend's forces and the Turkish forces investing Kut.

The forces assigned to the Ottoman Army's Iraq Area Command (for the first year of the war) were the least prepared and worst equipped in the empire. Mesopotamia was regarded as a strategic backwater and the forces garrisoned there enjoyed none of the Ottoman efforts in 1913–14 to rebuild the efficiency of the army. Because of its low military priority and provincial nature Mesopotamia was unattractive as a top choice in the assignment preferences of the Ottoman Army's professional officer corps. Mesopotamia was at the end of an inefficient logistical and administrative network that failed, even in peacetime, to deliver the material necessary for the proper maintenance of combatready forces. Moreover, and compounding the theatre's complexities, much of the population was native Arab rather than ethnic Ottoman Turk (especially from Baghdad south to Basra). Finally, but not the least important, the Tigris-Euphrates river basin was a hot, humid, swampy region known for its pestilential diseases and fevers.

In Mesopotamia in the fall of 1915 and early 1916, the Ottoman Army proved demonstrably combat-effective by inflicting humiliating defeats on an Anglo-Indian army. This chapter examined Ottoman leadership, organisational architecture, and

operational doctrines, which contributed to the Ottoman Army achieving both operational and tactical effectiveness.

The Ottoman Army in Mesopotamia was operationally effective in its selection of a campaign of encirclement that forced the British to fight unsuccessful offensive battles. The Turks planned and conducted an offensive campaign at the operational level that put their army on the tactical defensive (doctrines). Consequently, the fighting tended to play to the strengths of the Ottoman Army. This result was primarily a function of effective command (leadership) and the institutional creation of effective fighting forces that could execute the tasks asked of them (organisational architecture).

The commander throughout most of the campaign was Nurettin Paşa. Although Nurettin was a very experienced and energetic soldier, he was not one of the favoured staff academy graduates. Replaced in the final stages of the campaign by Enver's uncle, Halil Paşa, Nurettin was responsible for the pursuit and encirclement of Townshend's army. He was also responsible for the push downstream and the establishment of solid defensive lines to thwart British relief efforts. Importantly, Nurettin had no German advisers or assistance in his Iraq Area Command.

Nurettin's leadership shows the consistent application of the tenets of modern war prescribed by Enver in the spring of 1914 and the operational art prescribed by contemporary German doctrines. Nurettin had a clear appreciation of defensive warfare, as evidenced by the construction of the position at Ctesiphon and by his execution of decisive counter-attacks with well positioned reserves. He was able to shift rapidly to the offensive and conduct a vigorous pursuit operation with the portion of his army that was experienced in such operations (Halil's XVIII Corps from Caucasia). Nurettin was able to encircle and isolate his enemy in the river town of Kut Al Amara. He was then able to fight the relief force on terms of his own choosing. Although denied the final victory, it was Nurettin's operational vision of how the campaign would be fought that was executed by Halil in the late spring of 1916.

Nurettin's opponent, Major General Charles V.F.Townshend, was likewise not a member of a charmed inner circle of Staff College graduates. Like Nurettin he was very experienced and had studied war, but unlike Nurettin, he had no practical and recent experience with modern war. Propelled up river toward Baghdad by political directives, Townshend underestimated his Ottoman opponents and was unable to deal with the consequences of his failed offensive at Ctesiphon. He repeated his underestimation of Nurettin by retreating into Kut Al Amara to await relief. Given time, Townshend, with his dynamic physical presence under fire and his intellectual knowledge of war, might have matured into a fine battlefield commander.

The Ottoman Army demonstrated significant institutional strengths in Mesopotamia, the underpinning of which was its organisational architecture that enabled the effective formation of new combat units. The wartime expansion process of the Ottoman Army was singularly unique among the major combatants and the process was of major importance to the army's efficiency and ability to field combat-ready forces. Three of the Iraq Area Command's infantry divisions were the products of wartime expansion (the 45th, the 51st, and the 52nd). These divisions were created by taking regiments from existing divisions and combining them to form new divisions. These new divisions were committed to combat within months after their formation. The lost regiments of the preexisting infantry divisions were then reconstituted from battalions drawn from the

remaining regiments (as well as depot regiments) to form new regiments. This pattern was repeated throughout the war.

The Ottoman expansion system ensured that there was ‘one army’ rather than a mixed army of distinct active and reserve army corps and divisions. Practically speaking, the Ottoman Army’s twenty-six infantry divisions raised in wartime were uniformly constructed by mixing well trained, experienced regiments with newly raised regiments. Likewise, the professional leadership of the Ottoman Army was distributed evenly throughout the newly raised forces as experienced young professionals were given command of the new fighting formations.

The expansion mechanism of the Ottoman Army was a direct result of Ahmet Izzet Paşa’s decision in December 1913 to eliminate the organised reserve system. This, of course, was itself a result of the lessons learned from the First Balkan War when the Ottoman Army fielded unready reserve corps and divisions. In doing so, the Ottoman Army ensured that inexperienced and unready forces were rarely committed to combat during World War I.

Although not seen in its entire spectrum in Mesopotamia, the British fielded four distinct armies in World War I—the pre-war regular army, the Territorial Army, Kitchener’s New Armies, and the Indian Army. In effect, the British rejected the notion of uniformly distributing their extremely well trained professionals throughout their newly raised armies. Instead, many of the professionals were slaughtered in the first year of the war, leaving the reservists and volunteers to learn how to fight in the brutal school of war.

The Indian Army divisions sent to Mesopotamia were, of course, pre-war regular formations. Their principal weakness was unevenness of training and preparation, and lack of combined arms training. As the campaigns developed, these divisions suffered from a lack of readily available replacements, especially officers and NCOs. In combination, a case can be made that the Indian Army formations in Mesopotamia were less tactically effective than their Ottoman counterparts. The lopsided casualty rates sustained by the imperial forces during these campaigns lend credence to such an assertion, although the casualties were perhaps more a result of operational processes than tactical processes.

In terms of operational doctrines, the shifting tactical situation after Ctesiphon provided the Ottoman Army in Mesopotamia with opportunities to demonstrate its flexibility to shift rapidly from defensive to offensive operational postures. Nurettin’s vigorous pursuit and successful encirclement demonstrated a firm grasp of conventional German ideas about encirclement battles of annihilation. Nurettin’s choice of the destruction of Townshend’s army as his objective in December 1915, rather than a terrain-oriented or geographic-based objective, further demonstrates German-style thinking. Importantly, Nurettin’s plans were formulated by himself and Ottoman Army staff officers without the assistance of German advisers.

The Ottoman Army’s performance in Mesopotamia in early 1916 surprised the world and added lustre to a tarnished reputation. Colonel Halil was acclaimed as the victor of Kut and was awarded the honorific Paşa a. Eventually, the meagre Ottoman forces in Mesopotamia would be defeated by Anglo-Indian armies, but only after major reinforcements and at significant cost.

4
Third Gaza-Beersheba, 1917

> I should require twenty divisions to drive the enemy and capture Jerusalem.
>
> (General Sir Edmund Allenby to CIGS, WO GHQ Egyptfor, 5 October 1917[1])

The British campaign in Palestine in early 1917 was marked by failure when powerful British forces were unsuccessful in their attempts to break the Ottoman Army's Gaza-Beersheba line. There were two humiliating defeats—the first, in March 1917, came to be called First Gaza and the next, in April 1917, was called Second Gaza. In both battles the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) was greatly superior to the opposing Ottoman Fourth Army.[2] After these failures, General Sir Archibald Murray, the EEF's commander, was relieved of his command.

General Sir Edmund Allenby, who arrived from the western front on 27 June 1917, replaced Murray. Allenby's assumption of command marked a turning point in the war in Palestine much like Bernard Montgomery's assignment to the Eighth Army marked a turning point in the desert war of 1942. Allenby turned the Turks out of their defensive positions and went on to capture Jerusalem. Later, at Megiddo in September 1918, he fought the only successful allied campaign of manoeuvre in the entire Great War. Moreover, Allenby had large political and diplomatic responsibilities in addition to his operational duties. He had a compelling personality and he was successful in a time when success was rare. This combination of diplomatic, military, and command success in a complex operational environment set the conditions for the creation of a large historiography of the Palestine Campaign. Unlike the Mesopotamian campaigns, which attracted few historians, Allenby and his campaigns continue to attract new historians today.

In the decade after the ending of the war, numerous memoirs were published in England and in Germany about the war in Palestine. During this period the exploits of Colonel Thomas E.Lawrence became widely known and Captain Cyril Falls published his official history of the Palestine Campaigns in 1928 and 1930.[3] During World War II, Sir Archibald Wavell's famous study of Allenby appeared (1941), as did a serious campaign study by Clive Garsia (1940).[4] Later, as B.H.Liddell Hart's theories of the indirect approach appeared, there was again renewed interest in Allenby's campaigns.

The most recent scholars to examine aspects of the Palestine Campaign are Matthew Hughes and Yigal Sheffy, who examined Allenby's strategy and British intelligence respectively.[5] Anthony Bruce's narrative overview appeared in 2002, thereby rounding out recent work in English with a general history of the campaign.[6]

This chapter begins the process of explaining how the British Army in the Near East became a learning organisation in its own right. The balance of power in the Near East

began to shift in late 1917 primarily as a function of the growing change in combat effectiveness of the British and imperial forces. For its part the Ottoman Army will be presented as an institution that had reached the limits of its military potential and limited logistical capacity.

First Gaza

The defeats at First and Second Gaza in the spring of 1917, after nearly two and one half years of war against the Ottoman Empire, proved how little the British had learned about fighting the Turks and were 'Murray's doing'.[7]To be sure, Murray had met with success in driving across the Sinai Desert and his forces had decisively defeated a small and isolated Ottoman force at Magdhaba in December 1916. This performance was repeated at Rafa on 9 January 1917. Murray pushed east and closed on the Wadi Gaza defences. He also consolidated his logistical infrastructure and ran a water pipeline forward to El Arish. The Turks pulled back to the towns of Gaza and Beersheba on 5 March 1917.

Murray's force of three infantry divisions (all veteran formations of the Gallipoli Campaign), a Yeomanry division, and two cavalry divisions was greatly superior to the Turks. The Turks were organised as the First Expeditionary Force, commanded by German Colonel Kress von Kressenstein, who had been in the desert for several years. Kress had two infantry divisions and a cavalry division of which 3,500 riflemen, forty-two machine guns, and twenty-two artillery pieces were located in the town of Gaza itself.[8] The remainder of the Ottoman force was located in three major groups to the east, near Beersheba.

Murray's force was broken down into two elements, the Desert Column (a mix of the 53rd Infantry Division and the two cavalry divisions) that would attack Gaza and encircle it and the Eastern Force (the 52nd and 54th Infantry Divisions) that would screen and guard the eastern flank of the Desert Column. The 74th Yeomanry Division guarded Murray's lines of communication, particularly the vulnerable and important water pipeline and railway. Importantly, overly optimistic British intelligence believed that von Kressenstein did not intend to put up a determined fight at Gaza because his army was demoralised.[9] Murray himself remained in his railway car near El Arish, some 70km to the south of Gaza. His first attack began on 26 March 1917.

The battle went very much as Murray intended and by 1830 the Desert Column almost completely encircled Gaza. At this critical point, when the battle was all but won, the British commanders on the ground (Lieutenant General Sir Philip Chetwode, GOC Desert Column, and Major General Sir Charles Dobell, GOC Eastern Force) decided that the conditions necessary for the continuation of the battle had not been met. This was principally a reflection of the vigour with which the Turks defended Gaza and of the fact that 10,000 Turks were advancing on the right flank. Consequently, Chetwode and Dobell issued orders that pulled the British cavalry back to their start lines. Murray, of course, was out of contact with the tactical situation and could not retrieve the victory that had been thrown away. When the final rolls were counted on 27 March, the British found they had suffered about 2,400 casualties.

The defeat at Gaza seemed to indicate that the British Army fighting the Turks failed to learn and adapt to the demands of modern war.[10] The Egyptian Expeditionary Force

was overly optimistic and underestimated the determination of the Turks. Murray himself even portrayed his defeat as somewhat of a victory, noting that the Turks lost about 9,000 men while he lost about 4,000 men.[11] Actual Ottoman casualties were 294 killed and 1,078 wounded (interestingly, 184 animals were killed or wounded and 109 went missing).[12] Intelligence was weak and contributed to an erroneous picture of the Ottoman force at Gaza. British commanders at all levels lacked clear situational awareness and were unable to communicate effectively. Co-ordination between the infantry and the artillery was weak. This was almost two full years after Gallipoli.

Second Gaza

Under intense political pressure to continue his offensive, Murray tried to break the Gaza line once again. Unfortunately for the British, large numbers of Ottoman reinforcements reached the front in early April 1917, enabling von Kressenstein to turn Gaza into a very strongly fortified position. Murray's best opportunity to break into Palestine had evaporated.

For his forthcoming attack, Murray designated Dobell's Eastern Force of three experienced infantry divisions to attack Gaza. Dobell planned a direct frontal attack on the well prepared Ottoman defences. For this some eight tanks and extra artillery (170 pieces altogether) reinforced him, and he had some 4,000 poison gas shells.[13] Dobell's attack began at 0530 on 19 April 1917, with an artillery bombardment that lasted one hour and forty-five minutes. The British also employed naval gunfire and unleashed their gas shells. The attacking British infantry rushed forward, only to meet ferocious Turkish machine-gun and artillery fire. The tanks broke down or were destroyed by artillery. The British attack was shot to a halt and by nightfall Murray called off the attack. The British lost 6,444 casualties.[14] Murray and Dobell were sent home to England.

Once again, there were glaring shortcomings that indicated lack of attention to detail concerning the characteristics of the Ottoman Army. In particular, the British artillery was very ineffective. The bombardment was too short and knocked out very few Turkish guns. Moreover, the Ottoman defences were almost untouched by the bombardment and it proved impossible to knock out the Turkish machine guns in strong points. Murray's Fourth Dispatch places the blame for failure on the shoulders of General Dobell but, other than repeatedly mentioning 'heavy shelling and machine gun fire', virtually ignored the role of the Ottoman Army in the battle.[15] Matthew Hughes rightly called the British assault an 'unsupported infantry attack'.[16] Moreover, the battle was a serious failure in command in that Murray launched his offensive without the preparation and forces that he felt necessary for success.[17]

The performance of Murray's army in March and April 1917 was dismal. Once again, in the face of determined Ottoman defences, the British Army was unable to take advantage of its tremendous physical superiority to achieve success. The momentary success in the Sinai against isolated enemy detachments proved to be an illusion of Ottoman weakness and, once again, the overconfident British were defeated.

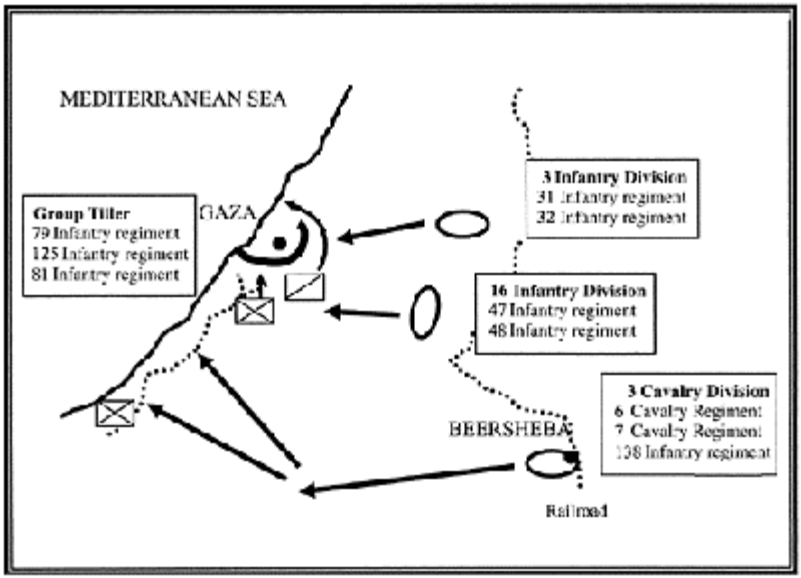
The Turkish view

First Gaza

Murray's first attack was no surprise to the Turks, who observed the British concentration from the air on 26 March.[18] This was because von Kressenstein directed his airmen, somewhat against their will, to provide him with continual updates of Murray's progress.[19] The deployment of most of the First Expeditionary Force out in the desert away from Gaza was no accident. In fact British intelligence was correct in its assessment that the Turks did not intend to fight hard for Gaza.[20] This was because von Kressenstein intended to conduct instead a dramatic encirclement operation of Murray's army, an idea that does not appear in any non-Turkish source. A Fourth Army report to Constantinople on 22 March 1917 outlined von Kressenstein's intent to use the 3rd and 16th Infantry Divisions and the 3rd Cavalry Division to attack deliberately the British right flank with a view towards cutting the railroad and water pipeline.[21] Map 4.1 depicts the First Expeditionary Force's plan of operations.

In the week before the battle, von Kressenstein reorganised his meagre forces, gave the Gaza Group orders to dig in, and gave the remainder in the desert orders to be prepared to move immediately and attack.[22] In effect, von Kressenstein intended to isolate the British once Murray committed his forces. Alerted to the movement of British cavalry around the eastern side of Gaza by his airmen at 0900 on 26 March, von Kressenstein had the 16th Infantry Division moving to the west an hour later.[23] He ordered the 3rd Infantry Division to move at noon and the 3rd Cavalry Division to move at 1530.[24] Altogether, 12,000 out of 16,000 available Ottoman soldiers were moving west to attack Murray's right flank by nightfall on 26 March 1917.[25] Von Kressenstein called off his attack the following afternoon when it became fully apparent that the British had withdrawn to safety.

In an operational sense, von Kressenstein used Gaza simply as a lure to put Murray in a vulnerable position for envelopment. Whether 12,000 Turks would have prevailed over the two full-strength British infantry divisions that Murray had positioned for this very contingency is problematic. But, given that the British were not in prepared defences, a tactical situation somewhat akin to the first day at ANZAC Beach might have developed in the desert east of Gaza. Moreover, the Ottoman Army's 53rd Infantry Division was arriving as reinforcement from the north and would have added distress to Murray's overextended cavalry.



Map 4.1 First Expeditionary Force plan, 22 March 1917.

Notes

a Kress von Kressentein positioned most of his forces in the desert along the railroad.

b He envisioned a British infantry assault on the town of Gaza in co-ordination with a cavalry flanking attack.

c When Murray's army was committed to the fight for Gaza, von Kress intended to launch an encirclement of the British force.

d The 3rd Cavalry Division, reinforced with infantry, was tasked with the longest movement.

Second Gaza

Heartened by the victory, Ottoman Fourth Army commander, Cemal Paşa, ordered a major counter-offensive on 28 March against Murray's army, which sat in trenches behind the Wadi Gaza. To accommodate this operationally, Cemal inactivated the First Expeditionary Force and activated the XXII Corps in its place. He also brought down from the north the XX Corps and its 7th and 54th Infantry Divisions. These forces began to flow slowly into the area between Gaza and Beersheba and, by mid-April, constituted a line stretching east from Gaza. On the night of 14 April, in the midst of the offensive preparations, Cemal was alerted to the fact that Murray intended to attack Gaza a second time.[26] Noting the enemy's artillery concentration, Cemal ordered his troops to construct bombproof shelters. Cemal also ordered his XII Corps to send forward 3,000 replacements from the 23rd and 24th Infantry Divisions.[27]

The movement of the British 52nd and 54th Infantry Divisions forward of the Wadi Gaza on 17 April fully confirmed Cemal's intelligence and gave the Turks several days to shift into a defensive configuration. Firing between the two armies was intense at times as the British closed on the Turkish works.[28] Two days later Murray's morning attack fell mostly on the Ottoman 3rd Infantry Division, which had taken over the Gaza defences in early April. In the words of the Turkish official history 'it was not a surprise for the Turks'.[29]

As fully described in all English sources, Murray's frontal attack was repulsed and the tanks proved surprisingly easy for the Ottoman artillery to knock out.[30] The Turks reported that their soldiers fought well. A report from the Ottoman 53rd Infantry Division noted that 'The English had attacked three times along the entire front and were repelled. Our officers and men displayed the utmost heroism.'[31] Once the battle began, the Turks noted that British artillery fire was minimal and was generally ineffective.[32] Moreover, British sea, land, and air operations were poorly co-ordinated. As for the British gas attack, the Turks noted that 'poison gas was apparently used…[but] it failed to reach the resolute Turkish soldiers'.[33] In the battle, the Turks lavishly expended (by their standards) 11,500,000 rifle bullets, 30,000 artillery shells, and 617 hand grenades.[34]

An American civilian, working as a secret agent for the American Constantinople embassy, was present in Jaffa during Second Gaza and was able to interview British prisoners after the battle. A British PoW said, 'We were ordered to attack a strongly entrenched position without any artillery preparation.' He also told the agent, 'We certainly had no idea how strong the Turks were.'[35] Once again, this was two years after Gallipoli.

The Ottoman Army in Palestine, summer 1917

As a result of the formation of the Yildirim Army Group in June 1917, the Turks began to send substantial forces to Syria and Palestine.[36] In addition to the 3rd, 7th, 16th, and 54th Infantry Divisions in Palestine already, the 26th, 27th, and 53rd Infantry Divisions arrived in the summer of 1917. This gave the Ottoman Eighth Army, which had been activated to take over the Palestine Front, a total of seven infantry divisions and one

cavalry division. Of these, the 3rd, 7th, 16th, and 26th Infantry Divisions were veterans of the Gallipoli Campaign and the 3rd Cavalry Division was a veteran of the Caucasian Campaigns.

The activities of the newly arriving divisions reflected a high command that maintained an active interest in preparation for combat. Incoming formations conducted a myriad of complex activities. They engaged in multi-echelon com-bined arms training, organisational restructuring, presentations on fresh combat methods from the western front, and sent officers to local training courses.

The 7th Infantry Division's experience was typical. It departed Constantinople on 14 January 1917 and reorganised en route in Aleppo in the middle of April.[37] The division began to arrive at Beersheba on 7 May and completed its movement there on 14 June 1917.

The 7th Infantry Division's 20th Infantry Regiment arrived in Jerusalem (Kudüs) in early May and began company-level training immediately.[38] The regiment remained in reserve and training until late June, when it went into the line. During the lulls in fighting, the regiment underwent training in fortification, reconnaissance, and counter-reconnaissance. Its sister regiment, the 21st Infantry, underwent similar training. Following four months of strategic movement and a month of theatre-specific training, the division conducted a counterattack at Yuksek Tepe on 15 July under the command of Colonel Kazım. After the battle, the division was reminded of its history at divisional ceremonies on 6 August when the regimental colours of the 20th and 21st Infantry Regiments were awarded military medals for the Gallipoli Campaign.[39]

Tactical innovations from the western front were also introduced on a routine basis in Palestine. On 25 October 1917, German Colonel Hergote, fresh from the western front, delivered a presentation to the 21st Infantry Regiment on the principles of assault and battle training, and also on reconnaissance training.[40]

The 7th Infantry Division was simultaneously engaged in a major restructuring of its tactical organisational architecture. After its arrival in Beersheba, the division inactivated the 4th Company of each infantry battalion on 28 June.[41] On 10 August reflecting the most current tactical thinking, the division activated a machine-gun company, armed with light machine guns, in every infantry battalion.[42] This reorganisation was repeated in every Ottoman infantry division in Palestine. Thus as the 7th Infantry Division lost a quarter of its rifle strength it gained offensive and defensive capability by the addition of light machine guns within infantry battalions.[43]

On 17 July 1917, the division activated an assault detachment *(hücüm müfrezesi)* of fifty men. (This was the Turkish version of German *Stosstruppen*.) This was a local initiative implemented by von Kressenstein, who wanted to introduce the most current western front tactical innovations into his army. He assigned Major Kiehl to supervise the training of the Ottoman assault troops, 'with good results'.[44] Kress inspected the companies in September 1917 and mentioned, 'it is evident that proper training and grooming would bring out the best in these brave, obedient, and humble Anatolian soldiers'.[45] In the absence of written doctrinal information, an unofficial manual on assault troop tactics was written and distributed by the 19th Infantry Division commander, which was based on the experiences of that division in Galicia.[46]

The fact that the Ottoman Army raised, trained, equipped, and employed storm troops has escaped general notice in the English language historiography of World War I.[47]

However, in 1994, Dr. David Nicolle published a clear photograph of a platoon of Ottoman Army storm troops in Palestine in the summer of 1918.[48] The men are outfitted in well fitting uniforms, German-style steel helmets, have under-arm grenade bags with stick grenades, German Mauser rifles, and puttee leggings. This unique photograph is important because the men look confident and fit, well fed, and are thoroughly equipped—indeed, a picture that is at odds with our historical perception of the Ottoman Army in Palestine. Although it is dangerous to draw a generalised conclusion from Nicolle's photograph, it is obvious that the Turks, at least in one locality, gave a high priority to the selection of men for, and to the maintenance of, its assault troop formations.

On 1 September 1917, Enver Paşa ordered the general activation of assault troops within the Ottoman Army. Enver directed the XV Corps, the First Army, and the Fourth Army to activate the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Assault Battalions respectively.[49] Additionally, he ordered each infantry division in the Yildirim Army Group and in the Fourth Army to activate assault detachments. Enver was very specific that only the best officers, NCOs, and men ('from the best units in the division, who were intelligent, healthy and hardy, and not more than twenty-seven years of age') were selected for these elite units. Additionally, the assault units received better rations, a distinctive badge (an embroidered hand grenade), and conducted a one-month assault course.[50] Later the divisional assault detachments matured into assault battalions. Initially, the Ottoman armies in Mesopotamia, western Anatolia, and Caucasia were excluded from the requirement to activate assault troops.

In the creation of assault battalions the Ottoman Army returned to an organisational architecture that it had abandoned in 1913. One of the Ottoman General Staffs organisational changes in 1914 was the abolition of the organic rifle regiment at army corps level and the organic rifle battalion at infantry division level.[51] These highly specialised regiments and battalions were the Ottoman Army's equivalent of German *Jäger* or French *chasseurs*.[52] The reason for this action was the inability of the army during the Balkan Wars to utilise effectively the rifle regiments and battalions in their proper doctrinal role. In fact, during the First Balkan War, Ottoman commanders tended to misuse their rifle battalions as immediate reserves or as a nucleus for ad hoc provisional formations. They were almost never used properly in reconnaissance, screening, or flank guard missions. Consequently, the Ottoman General Staff deactivated the rifle units in the spring of 1914 because the misuse of concentrations of hand-picked men degraded the overall quality of the regular infantry regiments.[53] It should be noted that after World War II the US Army deactivated its Ranger battalions for the same reason—the concentration of elite soldiers in specialised units weakened the army's regular infantry establishment and there did not seem to be an appropriate tactical return on such an investment.

The activation of the assault battalion *(hücüm tabur)* essentially returned the Ottoman Army to the elitist organisational architecture of 1910–14. Each infantry division had three infantry regiments (of three infantry battalions) and one assault battalion, within which there was a high concentration of aggressive and fit officers and men. Unlike the German Army, the Turks formed no specialised assault or storm troop divisions.

By the end of 1917 the strategic and operational initiative in Palestine had passed to the British. Consequently, both the practical and technical need of the Ottoman Army to

possess assault troops also passed. Nevertheless, the assault troop battalions of the Ottoman Fourth, Seventh, and Eighth Armies were retained, possibly with a view to future offensive operations of the Yildirim Army Group. It should be remembered that until the failure of the Ludendorff offensives in the spring of 1918, the strategic posture of the Central Powers appeared favourable.

In 1917 in Palestine, Ottoman unit strength became a significant problem. The 21st Infantry Regiment noted on 26 October 1917 that its infantry companies were at half strength in trained men and that its sick and battle casualties were not being replaced at a rate that would keep up with the losses.[54] The 16th Infantry Division departed from Constantinople in September 1916, with 200 officers, 400 NCOs, 10,900 men, and 2,500 draught animals, arrived in Jerusalem in February 1917, and was heavily involved in the Second Gaza battle.[55] By 15 October 1917, the 16th Infantry Division numbered only 5,017 officers and men.[56] The three infantry battalions in its 78th Infantry Regiment numbered about 400 men each (out of an authorisation of about 750 men per battalion).[57]

Another division sent to Palestine was the 3rd Cavalry Division, which was originally stationed with the Ottoman Third Army in the Caucasus Mountains, where it participated in most of the major campaigns fought there. On 2 October 1916, Enver ordered the division sent to Palestine. On 8 November 1916, the cavalry arrived in Aleppo and shortly thereafter its 7th Cavalry Regiment and a mountain artillery battery went forward to join the First Expeditionary Force at Beersheba.[58] While at Beersheba, this division conducted training in fortifications, screening missions, and maintenance activities. It was in action near Tel Şeria on 1 March 1917.[59]

Four days later, the cavalry division received the 1st Battalion, 138th Infantry, and a machine-gun company and was ordered to prepare for pursuit operations (in preparation for von Kressenstein's planned flanking attack—refer to Map 4.1).[60] This marked an important point of departure for this hitherto purely cavalry division. From early March 1917 until the end of the war, this cavalry division always had infantry attached to it, making it somewhat of a mixed or composite division.[61] Its commander, Colonel Esat Paşa, was very successful in forging a well trained team in which 'infantry and artillery co-operation was very good'.[62] Of note, like men, horses were at a premium in Palestine and the newly arrived 3rd Artillery Regiment was ordered to exchange its horses for camels at the rate of one camel for every two horses (most of which went to the cavalry division).[63]

Morale on the Palestine front was a problem for the Ottoman Army command.[64] This was mainly a function of logistics and climate; there was little water or food and the climate was terribly hot in the summer. Postal, recreational, and health services were particularly deficient and desertion plagued units sent to the desert. And, for the first time in the Turkish official histories, morale among the Arab units was noted as being 'depressed and vulnerable to enemy propaganda'.[65]

In addition to the unit training described previously, the Fourth Army established some central training facilities.[66] The main facility was located at Teleşşeria and was staffed with German and Austrian instructors. There was a fifteen-day course for commanders and a six-week course for divisional officers. These courses taught the most current tactics and weapons mastery based on methods then in standard use on the western front (especially machine gunnery, which was vital to the newly reorganised Ottoman infantry battalions). Turkish officers with experience on the European fronts

(Galicia, Romania, and Macedonia) were also brought in to assist with the training. Particular attention was paid to artillery training, which seemed to suffer from inexperienced officers who were using out-of-date methods and tactics.

Ottoman manpower, summer 1917

As of May 1917, the Ottoman Army mobilised sixty-one infantry divisions.[67] However, as early as 1915, as was seen previously in Mesopotamia, the Ottoman Army experienced serious problems in maintaining the strength of its combat divisions. Beginning in 1915, the Ottoman Army inactivated the 37th Infantry Division in Mesopotamia and in 1916 inactivated the 35th and 38th Infantry Divisions there as well. In 1917, the Ottoman Third Army, in Caucasia, inactivated twelve infantry divisions, but reactivated six reduced-scale 'Caucasian Divisions' in their place. In 1917, the 4th, 8th, 45th, and 52nd Infantry Divisions were inactivated in Mesopotamia. In Palestine and Syria, the 54th and 59th Infantry Divisions were inactivated in 1917 for a net loss of fifteen infantry divisions in three years of war.

Significantly, all of these inactivations occurred in distant theatres of war on the fringes of the empire. This highlights the continuing problem that the Turks had in supplying their army in Caucasia, Mesopotamia, and Palestine. This was primarily due to the single-track railroad, incomplete until 1918 in the Taurus and Amanus Mountains, that inadequately serviced these three major theatres of war.

The inactivation of combat divisions in the Ottoman Army reflected the overall declining manpower pool available to the empire. Although there had been an actual surplus of men for the original thirty-six-division Ottoman Army, wartime expansion quickly drew this down and losses quickly depleted the force pool further.

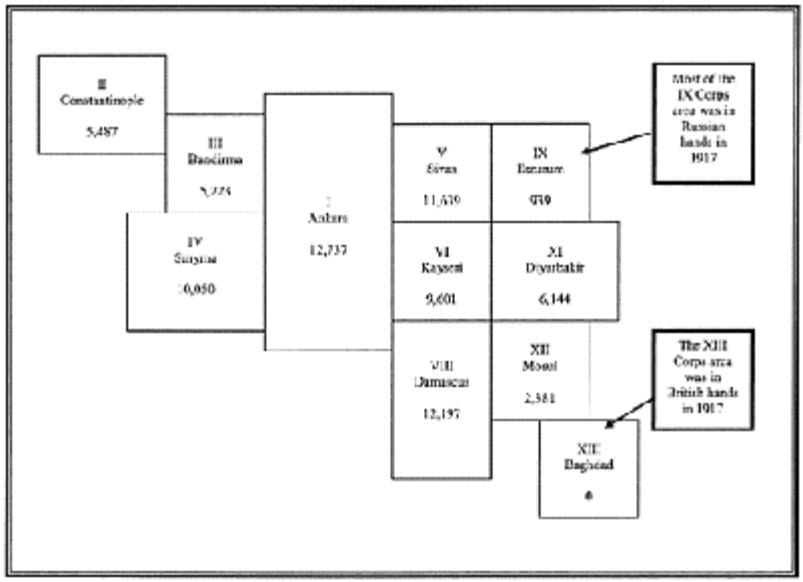
In the first two years of war, the Ottoman Empire lost over 500,000 men (dead, missing, and prisoners) and as many as 750,000 wounded.[68] This came from a total mobilised strength of about 2,900,000 men (Jandarma included) and there was an annual input of newly conscripted men estimated at about 100,000 men.[69] The year group of 1900 was conscripted in 1917 and there were 90,767 of these young men available in training depots by mid-year.[70]

As the active Ottoman army corps deployed to their war stations in 1914, their fixed-site pre-war administrative architecture remained in place for conscription, home defence, and logistical duties. Thus, the Ottoman Army's conscription system that was used throughout the war maintained the pre-war army's numbered army corps areas (I–XIII) as administrative areas. Map 4.2 shows the thirteen corps administrative areas and the intake of conscripts for the year 1917.[71] Army Corps areas VI (South-east Anatolia) and VIII (Syria and Palestine) directly serviced the Palestine front and together took in about 22,000 conscripted men (see Map 4.2).

The forty-five active combat divisions of the Ottoman Army on 3 August 1917 reported shortages of 190,000 men and the Yildirim Army Group reported a deficit of some 70,000 soldiers.[72] At that time some 24,046 men of the class of 1900 were considered as trained men and, of these, 9,000, 5,000, and 2,000 were sent from the Constantinople area to the Second Army (Caucasia), the Fourth Army (Palestine), and the Sixth Army (Mesopotamia) respectively.[73] Altogether the Yildirim Army on the Palestine

front could count on about 27,000 new soldiers (from all sources) to fill the vacant ranks in the Seventh and Eighth Armies—for a net shortage of some 40,000 men.

Many of the conscripted men from the VI and VIII Army Corps areas were of Arab ethnicity and by 1917 the Arab Revolt was in full swing. Matthew Hughes has commented on the Arab composition of the Ottoman divisions defending the Gaza line using data from Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir's *Yıldırım*.[74] In the summer of 1917, Captain Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir was assigned as the assistant chief of staff of Falkenhayn's Yildirim Army Group and was in a position to observe directly the staff operations of the Yildirim Army Group. Emir's data are relevant because they highlight the fact that the army group staff maintained such information and speak of its interest in the reliability of ethnic minorities at this point in the war. (Table 4.1 presents this information in its entirety.)



Map 4.2 Ottoman conscription, 1917, class of 1900: number of conscripts, by army corps area. Total number of conscripts available in 1917:90,767.

Other senior Turkish officers expressed concern over ethnicity. The memoirs of Colonel Ali Fuat (Erden), Fourth Army chief of staff, distinctively identified those battalions, which were ethnically Turkish, that were sent to Palestine and Syria in 1917.[75] General Fahri Belen wrote in 1966 that the Arab units in Syria in 1917 were 'to a certain degree combat ineffective because of British propaganda, disease, and shaken morale'.[76] Kress von Kressenstein also expressed concern over his Arab units. (His comments will be addressed later in this chapter.)

Commentary on the reliability of Arab units was not limited to professional Ottoman staff officers and British intelligence (see Chapters 2–4). A 1917 report from the American Army attaché in Constantinople to the US War Department noted, 'The first line troops in Palestine are composed exclusively of Turks… they are a hardy, thoroughly reliable body of men whose remarkable staying power and uncomplaining submissiveness make up for their lack of dash and intelligent initiative'. Moreover, the reported continued, 'There are, of course, regiments composed of Arabs, but they are not considered trustworthy, large bodies of them frequently deserting or going over to the enemy.'[77]

Emir's statistics from September 1917 also confirm that every division on the Gaza line fielded operational infantry battalions at about 50 per cent of normal authorised strength. This was in spite of last-minute efforts in the summer of 1917 to divert additional replacements to the Palestine front by giving the Fourth

Table 4.1 Infantry strength in units on the Sinai front, 30 September 1917

Unit	*No. of battalions*	*No. of infantrymen*	*'Rifles at the front'*	*% ethnic group*		
				Turk	*Arab*	*Other*
16th Inf. Div.	9	5,043	3,789	88	7.5	4.5
26th Inf. Div.	9	4,115	2,951	85	7.5	7.5
54th Inf. Div.	9	3,541	2,738	92	4	4
3rd Inf. Div.	9	4,277	3,698	84	6.5	9.5
7th Inf. Div.	8	3,600	2,886	84	6.5	9.5
53rd Inf. Div.	9	4,018	3,100	66.5	28.5	5
27th Inf. Div.	7	3,091	2,408	21	76	3
24th Inf. Div.	9	3,596	3,200	Marching, cannot report		
12 Depot Regt		3,397	2,336	3	97	

Source: Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir (Erkilet), *Yıldırım* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basım Evi, 2002), reprint of the May 1921 edition, Ek 16 (Document 16), 346.

Note
This report included only infantry strength. The actual total personnel strength of each division was about 2,500 men more than these numbers and included cavalry, artillery, engineer, medical, signal, and support personnel.

Army priority of personnel fill over the Sixth Army in Mesopotamia.[78] Additionally, the Fourth Army's VIII and XII Corps in the quiet Syrian sector and along the coast were continuously ordered to send levies of trained men to the Gaza front.

One area in which the Ottoman Army in Palestine did not suffer was in its abundant supply of seasoned and capable commanders. Many of the commanders had served against the British in the Sinai or at Gallipoli. Additionally, all were veterans of the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. Of interest is the density of Ottoman General Staff officers among the Ottoman leadership in Palestine. All three corps commanders and three of five division commanders were Ottoman General Staff officers (graduates of the Ottoman War Academy). The Ottoman War Academy was modelled on the Prussian War Academy in its selection criteria, three-year curriculum, heavy work load, and high standards.[79] These men were hand picked and a separate staff directorate of the Ottoman General Staff controlled their assignments. They alternated between General Staff and command assignments; Table 4.2 shows this career progression. Throughout the war, most of the division and corps chiefs of staff, almost all of the corps and army commanders were Ottoman General Staff officers.

Like the German General Staff corps, the Ottoman General Staff corps was somewhat of an elite 'closed shop'. Its members knew each other well and routinely served together; Asım and Ali Fuat were members of the class of 1905 and overlapped with Fahrettin (1902), Ismet and Selahattin (1906).[80] Kazım and Refet were members of the class of 1912. Combined with Enver's 1913/14 drive towards standardisation of administration, training, and doctrine, this (as it was in the German Army) was a powerful combat multiplier and contributed to (in this author's opinion) a 'one army' mentality.

Continuity and change

The Ottoman Army in Palestine in 1917 demonstrated many of the same characteristics that this study previously noted during the first two years of war. Operationally and tactically, the army was aggressive and was able to execute both defensive and offensive operations. Training was continuous, realistic, and included up-to-date methods. Training was vigorously conducted at troop level and in a centralised setting as well. Divisions were task-organised to accomplish a variety of specific tactical missions. The chain of command included many experienced, highly trained, and capable men. This was an army that continued to function well in its third year of a multi-front total war.

However, major problems were beginning to appear in the Ottoman Army in 1917, the most serious of which was the issue of the eroding supply of manpower. The army's infantry battalions on the front were operating at about half strength and every effort to rectify this had failed. Moreover, because of war losses and manpower shortages, there was no relief in sight. This was compounded by terrible attrition from disease and desertion.

Morale also became a serious issue for the Ottoman chain of command as the deployment of increasing numbers of men in Palestine overwhelmed the limited logistical capacity of the theatre. Morale among Arab soldiers was a particular issue that concerned Ottoman commanders and which directly affected the reliability of tactical units. While the Ottoman commanders were doing many things right to compensate for the

deteriorating physical and logistical posture of their army in Palestine, the army continued to weaken.

Table 4.2 Ottoman commanders, Palestine front, September 1917

Name	*Assignment*	*Previous experience*	*Balkan War*
Col. Ali Fuat[a]	XX Corps	25th Inf. Div.	23rd Inf. Div.
(Cebesoy)	Commander	Commander	Chief of Staff
Col. Fahrettin[a]	26th Inf. Div.	Ottoman General Staff	Tribal Cavalry Brigade
(Altay)	Commander	Staff Officer	Commander
Col. Ismet[a]	III Corps	IV Corps (Caucasus)	Çatalca Army
(İnönü)	Commander	Commander	Chief of Staff
Col. Kazım[a]	7th Inf. Div.	43rd Inf. Div.	Ottoman General Staff
(Dirik)	Commander	Commander	Logistics Staff Officer
Col. Selahattin[a]	53rd Inf. Div.	II Corps	2nd Inf. Div.
(Kip)	Commander	Chief of Staff	Chief of Staff
Col. Refet[a]	XXII Corps	23rd and 3rd Inf. Div.	Ottoman General Staff
(Bele)	Commander	Commander	Staff Officer
Lt Col. Asım[a,b]	Eighth Army	III Corps	Ottoman General Staff
(Gündüz)	Chief of Staff	Chief of Staff	RR and Commo Staff Officer
Col. H. Nurettin	3rd Inf. Div.	2nd Inf. Div.	Hasköy Battalion
(Özsü)	Commander	Commander	Commander
Col. Rüştü	16th Inf. Div.	16th Inf. Div.	6th Inf. Regt
(Sakarya)	Commander	Commander	Commander

Sources: Ismet, Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu 1912–1913, Balkan-Birinci Dünya ve Istiklal Harbi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurum Basimevi, 1993) and TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Istiklal Harbi'ne Kalilan Tumen ve Daha Ust Kademelerdeki Komutanlarin Biyografileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989).

Notes
a Ottoman General Staff officer (War Academy graduate),
b This is Asım Gündüz, who wrote *Balkan Harbinde neden Mühenzim Olduk?* in 1913.

Allenby's army

Much has been written about the effect that Edmund Allenby had on his army—it was electric and immediate. He exuded confidence and a sense of knowing how to go about the business of war. This was mainly a result of relentless and closely personal contact with his front-line troops and from his reputation as a fighter on the western front. Unfortunately, Allenby, as an individual commander, is outside the scope of this study and this section will attempt to answer the question, 'To what extent was military effectiveness in Allenby's army different from Murray's army?'

First, Allenby had ten divisions and Murray had seven divisions. This was a result of the willingness of London politicians to support more fully an offensive in Palestine. The wheels for this were set in motion prior to Allenby's arrival. London cabled Murray on 10 May 1917 predicting that if Turkey suffered 'a severe defeat coupled with effective and secure occupation of Jaffa-Jerusalem during the next six months followed by suitable diplomatic measures…[it would] induce her to break with her allies'.[81] Moreover, there was speculation at the operational level that a British offensive was needed in Palestine-Syria to forestall Turkish operations in Mesopotamia.[82] Tactically, Lieutenant General Sir Philip Chetwode wrote that the Turkish left flank (Beersheba) was vulnerable to an attack and that inertia on the Russian front made action in Palestine necessary.[83] All of this happened prior to Allenby's arrival in Palestine.

After his arrival Allenby estimated that he would need a minimum of ten divisions to defeat the Turks. He studied the terrain, endorsed Chetwode's basic operational plan, and requested even more troops (thirteen additional divisions), highlighting his opinion that substantial forces would be needed to defeat the Turks.[84] He also asked for drafts of replacements to bring all of his formations up to strength.

Most of Allenby's infantry were Territorial divisions, which were mobilised at the outbreak of the war.[85] Three were first-line and had extensive combat experience against the Turks: the 52nd (Lowland) Division fought at Cape Helles, the 53rd (Welsh) Division fought at Suvla Bay, as did the 54th (East Anglian) Division. Prior to mobilisation, these divisions had professional regulars in command and staff positions at division and brigade level. All of the battalions had a sprinkling of regular officers and NCOs as well. The 60th (2nd/2nd London) Division was a second-line Territorial that had combat experience on the western front and at Salonika. Allenby also had two Territorial divisions that were formed in the Mediterranean theatre. The 74th (Yeomanry) Division was formed from eighteen under-strength Yeomanry regiments that had fought at Gallipoli and the 75th Division was formed from battalions of the Egypt garrison. Allenby's final infantry division was the 10th (Irish) Division, a New Army (K1) division that fought against the Turks at Suvla Bay and at Salonika. By most standards, Allenby's infantry may be judged as a seasoned force.[86]

Likewise, the cavalry available in the Desert Mounted Corps was very experienced. The three brigades of the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division had all fought at Gallipoli, as had two of three brigades in both the Australian Mounted Division and the Yeomanry Mounted Division. These three full-strength divisions became even more

capable when, in mid-September 1917, their artillery was re-equipped with the more mobile thirteen-pounder gun.[87]

Allenby got much of what he asked for. In addition to additional combat divisions, he received thousands of replacements to bring his reduced formations back up to authorised strength. But the most important addition to his combat strength was generated by Allenby's requests for artillery, which included 116 pieces of heavy artillery and full complements of division artillery. Matthew Hughes noted that he received eighty-two to ninety heavies and all divisional artillery minus two batteries.[88] The possession of heavy artillery was the most notable difference in combat power between Allenby's and Murray's armies, and arguably made the Egyptian Expeditionary Force more like its powerful counterparts in France.

Organisationally, Allenby tailored his army in the summer of 1917 to mirror the forces he commanded in France. He deconstructed Murray's ad hoc mixed forces of infantry and cavalry divisions and created conventional headquarters—two infantry corps (the XX and the XXI) and a cavalry corps (the Desert Mounted Corps). In doing this, Allenby enabled contemporary British combat doctrine as it had evolved in France to take root in the Middle East. By mid-1917, the British Army was rapidly increasing its combat effectiveness with improved combined arms infantry tactics (many of which were derived from German methods). In particular, the army was evolving fire and manoeuvre tactics based on the Lewis light machine gun as well as increasingly effective artillery.[89]

In parallel, and of particular importance, was the formation of corps artilleries for the XX and XXI Corps in the summer of 1917. The simple addition of more and heavier guns, in and of itself, as the British had already found out at Gallipoli, was not enough to win fire superiority in combat. Coming from the western front, Allenby certainly had been exposed to this idea. By 1917, the allies in France evolved a highly sophisticated artillery arm that employed increasingly complex fire support doctrines. In France, fire support evolved into two complementary systems, one directly supporting infantry that was composed of lighter divisional guns and howitzers, and a second concentrating on counter-battery work that was composed of heavier corps and army guns and howitzers.[90] These systems operated in harmony but fought separate battles, necessitating separate command functions and headquarters. This was the system that Allenby used in France and he brought the system with him to Palestine.[91] Because no such corps artillery headquarters existed in Egypt or Palestine, Allenby formed improvised Heavy Artillery Groups to perform this command function within his infantry corps.[92]

There is very little in print in English concerning training in the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in the summer and fall of 1917. However, Allenby was known as a serious trainer of soldiers. He drove training in his army by holding conferences with his subordinate commanders and had brought this method with him from the western front.[93] His physical proximity to the front enabled him to do this and enabled constructive dialogue between himself and his commanders. There is no doubt that Allenby paid attention to the condition of the combat divisions of his army. For example, a letter to the Director of Military Operations in July mentions that the 74th Infantry Division was not in very good shape and was pulled out of the line for a month of infantry training.[94] On the other hand, the state of training in the 52nd and 53rd Infantry Divisions was judged to be good.[95]

In all likelihood the creation of corps artillery headquarters (the heavy artillery group staffs) must have been accompanied by live fire and fire planning exercises. Also by late 1917, the British were belatedly beginning to task-organise and cross-attach their forces for combat. At Third Gaza, fought in late October 1917, the 54th Infantry Division assumed control of an additional infantry brigade, the complete artillery of the 52nd Infantry Division, a field company of engineers, an ambulance company, a machine-gun company, and an observation battery.[96] Again, it is self-evident that significant pre-battle training must have gone on for some months prior to the actual battle in order for these attachments to work together.

Allenby was fortunate to find many seasoned and capable officers in Palestine, notably Sir Philip Chetwode, Sir Henry Chauvel, and Guy Dawnay. He was unhappy, however, with his chief of the general staff, Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell, who was sent home. Allenby requested Sir Louis Bols, who had served with him in Third Army, to take this critical assignment.[97] Allenby also promoted Sir Edward Bulfin from command of the 60th Infantry Division to command a corps. The Egyptian Expeditionary Force now had a command team that was experienced and energetic. Allenby went one step further and gave the men in Palestine new jobs. For example, Chetwode, one of the most well known cavalrymen in the British Army, was given command of XXI Corps (an infantry command) and Chauvel, an Australian, was given the Desert Mounted Corps. Fresh from France, the professional and conventional Bols was given the brilliant and desert-wise Dawnay as an assistant.[98] It was a bold series of assignments and it made the army 'Allenby's army' in mind and spirit.

As to the question, 'To what extent was military effectiveness in Allenby's army different from Murray's army?' Allenby's army differed from its predecessor in its powerful strength and composition. Significantly, it was reorganised, re-equipped, and retrained to become like its counterparts in France, and its commander and chief of staff were fully knowledgeable of contemporary tactical doctrines then evolving on the western front. In a nutshell, Allenby matched the organisation well with its weapons, which was complemented by the skill set of the men making the decisions.[99] Finally, every source in English notes that Allenby significantly raised morale in his army by his personal presence, confidence, and dramatic personality. Still, it took Allenby six months to get his house in order and his army ready to fight.

Allenby's plans

Certainly the most complicated book written in English about the Gaza battles is Clive Garsia's *A Key to Victory*, which sought to vindicate the 'Gaza school'.[100] The 'Gaza school' postulated that a well organised direct infantry-artillery attack on Gaza in the fall of 1917 would have punctured the Turkish lines and, properly exploited by cavalry, would have resulted in a Megiddo-like victory. In retrospect, this may be true, but in view of what Allenby thought he knew about the Turks in the summer of 1917, any such attack (regardless of the planning system in use) was deemed inadvisable because of the strength of the Ottoman Army.

There is no question that Allenby thought that the Turks had significantly larger forces in Palestine than they actually did. In September, he cabled London that there were eight and a third Ottoman divisions facing him, with nine and two-thirds on the way, and

possibly an additional two coming from Mesopotamia.[101] In actuality, in raw terms, this was fairly accurate, and by early 1918 there were sixteen Ottoman divisions of different types in Palestine.[102] However, Allenby's intelligence appreciation did not take into account the depleted state of the Ottoman formations. Matthew Hughes vividly illustrated this and pointed out (in 1999) the true condition of the Ottoman divisions, which averaged fewer than 3,000 riflemen per division.[103]

Allenby's plan originated in the mind of Philip Chetwode and envisioned the seizure of Beersheba, followed by the envelopment of Gaza from the east. It was based on the seizure of geographic objectives rather than the destruction of the enemy's army. While not as dramatic as the subsequent Megiddo operation, Chetwode's plan was, by the standards of 1917, a bold and innovative operation. Importantly, Chetwode's plan matched the capabilities of the army that had to execute it. In this author's opinion, the 'Gaza school' was not viable simply because the British Army of 1917 was not the British Army of 1918 and to confer upon it operational capabilities evolved in the last year of the war is flawed thinking.

Happily, for the English-speaking historian, Allenby's army-level plan and all three corps-level plans for the battle of Beersheba-Gaza are reprinted as appendices to the official British history.[104] Taken together, this 'family of plans' reflects the success of Allenby's reorganisation of his army by showing remarkable clarity in the assignment of interlocking tasks and responsibilities at army and corps level. The army-level plan, Force Order No. 54 (22 October 1917), established an operational timeline and a framework of operational tasks for each subordinate army corps.[105] It is impossible to read this plan and not come away with a vivid mental picture of exactly what Allenby intended to accomplish—it is that well written. As has been illustrated by Cyril Falls and Anthony Bruce, the rapid capture of water supplies (for men and horses) dominated Allenby's thinking and the operational detail supporting this point is lucid.

The corps-level plans are similarly uniform in their clarity. Of note, the XX Corps plan (XX Corps Instruction, 22 October 1917) demonstrated just how far the British Army had advanced in its appreciation of combined arms warfare.[106] In particular, the artillery fire support plan was highly evolved and assigned multiple tasks to subordinate formations. For example, the timing of the infantry attack itself was dependent on the simultaneous success of the wire cutting by the artillery on two adjacent divisional fronts, after which artillery fires was shifted on to the trench lines and into the enemy rear areas. At the same time, the newly organised Heavy Artillery Groups were engaged in counter-battery work to neutralise the Turkish artillery. The British artillery waged a multi-dimensional phased attack on the Turkish wire, fortifications, infantry, and artillery—and it was timed and co-ordinated with British infantry.

The Ottoman Yildirim reorganisation

While Allenby was reorganising his army at the operational level the Turks were reorganising theirs at the strategic level. In June 1917, the irrepressible Enver Paşa ordered the activation of a joint Turco-German army group that he named the Yildirim Army Group.[107] The heart of this army group was composed of surplus Ottoman forces from Galicia, Romania, and Thrace transferred to the Near East for offensive operations.

The commander of the new army group was German General Erich von Falkenhayn, who was initially given the mission to retake Baghdad (which had fallen to General Stanley Maude on 11 March 1917). However, by midsummer the strategic situation in Palestine had grown so dangerous that the inbound Yildirim divisions were re-routed to the Sinai front.

In a complex political and military command environment, Cemal Paşa's Ottoman Fourth Army headquarters in Palestine was inactivated on 26 September 1917. This cleared the way for Enver to activate the new Ottoman Eighth Army on the Gaza front (commanded by Kress von Kressenstein) six days later.[108] A second Ottoman army, the Seventh, was activated and ordered to assemble near Aleppo under the command of Fevzi Paşa.[109]

On the ground from Gaza to Beersheba, there was little change in the tactical deployment of the Ottoman XXII, XX, and III Corps. Kress von Kressenstein recast his desert headquarters into the new Ottoman Eighth Army, which had responsibility over the entire Palestine front. Fevzi Paşa remained in Aleppo until 18 October, when he began to move his headquarters forward to Halilurrahman (arriving on 23 October).[110] On 28 October 1917, von Falkenhayn's headquarters issued orders that significantly altered the operational architecture of the Sinai front.[111] In these orders, Fevzi Paşa's Seventh Army assumed operational command of the eastern half of the Ottoman front (including Beersheba) and he was assigned the III Corps headquarters that commanded the 27th Infantry Division and the 3rd Cavalry Division. He was also assigned the 16th and 24th Infantry Divisions, and the incoming 19th Infantry Division. The Eighth Army remained in control of Gaza and the western half of the front.

The majority of the Yildirim Army Group staff was stationed in Jerusalem, working under Turkish assistant chief of staff Captain Hüseyin Hüsnü and German Staff Major von Papen. Its commander, von Falkenhayn, remained in Aleppo. This was a difficult decision for von Falkenhayn, who feared that while travelling south to Jerusalem, he might be caught without communications. He, therefore, decided that he would remain in Aleppo, where he had good telegraphic communications not only with his Seventh and Eighth Armies in Palestine, but also with his Sixth Army in Mesopotamia and with the Ottoman General Staff in Constantinople.

In summary, a bare three days before the Third Gaza battle, a major reorganisation of Ottoman command and control occurred. As will be seen, the Yildirim Army Group attempted to set this problem right shortly before the battle, but the seeds of confusion had been sown.

Ottoman plans and dispositions

The Yildirim Army Group expected the main British attack to be delivered against Gaza and a demonstration or feint against the Beersheba position. The Turks knew that Gaza offered proximity to logistical bases, support from the Royal Navy, and an adequate road and rail network for the attacking British, which made it easier for them to attack there. Their suspicions were apparently confirmed on 10 October 1917 when an intelligence bonanza dropped in their laps. This was the famous 'lost haversack' episode hatched by Major Richard Meinertzhagen.[112]

Meinertzhagen was an intelligence officer who set up a phoney front-line reconnaissance during which he appeared to drop a haversack while fleeing from Turkish cavalry. The bloodstained haversack contained personal possessions and letters, sandwiches, and false operational documents relating to an impending British attack. Meinertzhagen claimed to have barely escaped with his life, which added a convincing touch to the drama. The false documents were backed up by operational deception measures that made a British attack on Gaza appear imminent. It was brilliant work and Kress von Kressenstein was convinced of the documents' authenticity.[113]

The false operational documents set forth the ideas that the British would attack before the muddy winter season, that a small cavalry force would conduct a demonstration against Beersheba, that Anglo-French forces would conduct three amphibious landings north of Gaza, and that the main attack would hit Gaza using night assaults and tanks.[114] This played into the intelligence estimates of the Ottoman and German staff officers, who believed that the British possessed the logistical capability to move only two divisions (one infantry and one mounted) on the town of Beersheba.[115] Although this famous story is men-tioned in every English-language source, the changes in the Ottoman operational posture that Meinertzhagen's ruse caused to occur have never been explained in detail.

Believing that the British intended to attack Gaza (again), Kress von Kressenstein centred his attention on the Gaza defences over the course of the next two weeks. He was especially concerned about the vulnerable coastline north of the town. Consequently, as the incoming 53rd Infantry Division arrived in Palestine, Kress von Kressenstein rotated it into the front-line positions of the veteran 7th Infantry Division in the Gaza perimeter. He then pulled the 7th Infantry Division back into coastal defence positions north of the town to guard against the expected amphibious invasions.[116] Kress von Kressenstein also retained the newly arrived 24th Infantry Division in reserve near Gaza as a counter-attack force against a repeat of the First Gaza cavalry encirclement of the town. He also prioritised the strengthening of his defences in Gaza and sent replacements there as well.

While hardening his Gaza defences, Kress von Kressenstein remained somewhat concerned about Beersheba. He characterised the 27th Infantry Division, which manned the Beersheba lines, as 'badly trained, badly organised, and composed of Arabs who had to be watched'.[117] He was worried about this division and he recommended that it should be deactivated and its soldiers used as replacements. Furthermore, he recommended that the incoming 19th Infantry Division (Mustafa Kemal's famous Gallipoli division) be rotated into the Beersheba lines in place of the 27th Infantry Division.[118] Despite these misgivings, but based on the perceived threat to Gaza presented in the captured haversack, Kress von Kressenstein finally recommended instead that the arriving 19th Infantry Division be held in reserve near Cemame.[119] Von Falkenhayn approved this recommendation, which placed the 19th Infantry Division nearer Gaza than Beersheba.

The net result of all of this was that, between 10 and 28 October 1917, the Eighth Army shifted significant Ottoman forces (three experienced and hardened infantry divisions) to reserve positions that supported the retention of Gaza rather than Beersheba (see Map 4.3). In fact, Beersheba remained in the hands of the Ottoman III Corps, composed of the mostly Arab 27th Infantry Division, which received only the 2nd Infantry Regiment (minus its machine guns) as a reinforcement, and the two-regiment 3rd Cavalry Division. Had the original Ottoman plan gone forward, it is likely that the

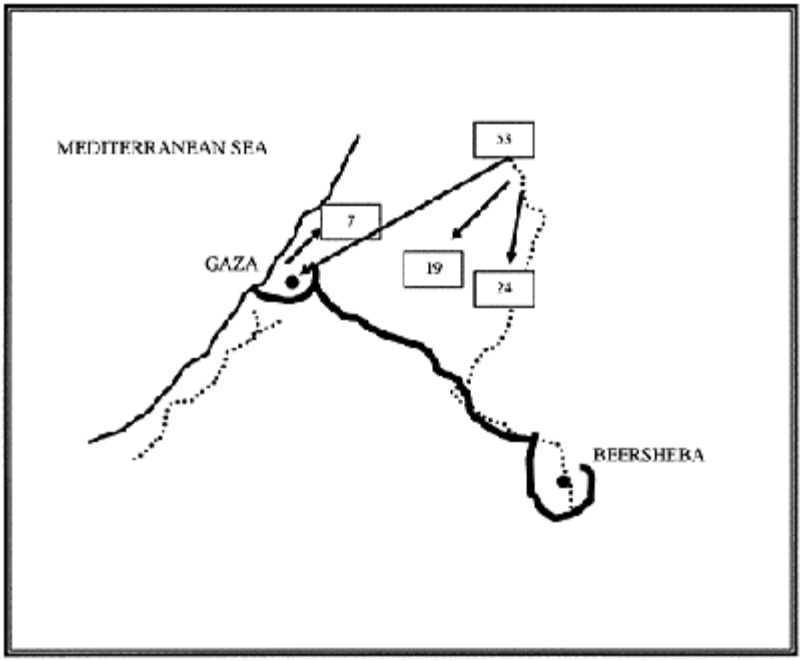
powerful 19th and 24th Infantry Divisions with a reinforced 3rd Cavalry Division positioned in reserve might have held Beersheba.[120]

The Turkish view of the battle of Beersheba

The battle of Beersheba lasted one day and was fought on 31 October 1917. The treatment of the events in the English language is accurate (from the Turkish perspective) and is adequately told in the existing literature.[121] Allenby achieved strategic surprise with overwhelming force—the four-division XX Corps and the two divisions of the Desert Mounted Corps against the equivalent of a single brigade (the Turks had 4,400 riflemen, sixty machine guns, and twenty-eight artillery pieces).[122] Moreover, the attack was delivered concentrically from three sides, denying the Turks the possibility of massing effectively their scant reserves. Given the deployment of the Ottoman Army in Palestine there was little that anyone could have done to save the town of Beersheba itself. According to Kress von Kressenstein the battle was lost for four reasons. First, the number of replacement soldiers required to bring the army's units to strength was inadequate. Second, the state of training and discipline in the 27th Infantry Division was so substandard that it should have been deactivated. Third, the III Corps commander committed his reserves too early in the battle. And fourth, the operations of the 3rd Cavalry Division were ineffective.[123] As a battle fought, Kress von Kressenstein shifted the primary blame for failure on to the shoulders of the Ottoman III Corps commander, Colonel Ismet (later Ismet İnönü).[124]

Naturally, this criticism stung Colonel Ismet, who promptly wrote a twenty-page rebuttal.[125] Ismet noted that his rapid commitment of reserves and his deployment of the 3rd Cavalry Division to the north prevented the encirclement of the Ottoman III Corps by the British Desert Mounted Corps. He also noted that his men were stretched too thin on a 26 km front, and in particular, opposing the British XX Corps he only had 1,400 men and sixteen machine guns manning a 7.5 km front. Ismet also mentioned that Kress von Kressenstein failed to send him reinforcements when he asked for help and noted that on 28 October he had expressed concern that the nearest reserves were 20km from Beersheba. Ismet acknowledged that the town fell more rapidly than expected but he did not highlight Arab soldiers as a contributing factor.[126]

Von Falkenhayn, for his part, also rendered comments on the loss of Beersheba in an after-action report.[127] He accepted the idea that all formations were under strength but noted that the reserves were improperly employed. In particular, von Falkenhayn identified the failure of the Eighth Army (von Kress) to properly issue instructions to reserves and to issue orders rapidly to the III Corps (Colonel Ismet) during the battle. Finally, von Falkenhayn noted that the Eighth Army had adequate reserves near Tel Sheria and should have planned to use them in the event that the attack on Beersheba was more than a simple diversion. Importantly, the Yildirim Commander did not highlight Arab ethnicity as a factor in the defeat. Altogether, von Falkenhayn's after-action report was a damning indictment of Kress von Kressenstein's management of the battle.



Map 4.3 Redeployment of Ottoman reinforcements, 10–28 October 1918.

Notes

a To guard the vulnerable coastline north of Gaza, von Kress pulled the veteran 7th Infantry Division out of the town and diverted the incoming 53rd Infantry Division into the Gaza defences.

b Von Kress held the incoming 24th Infantry Division near the centre of his army sector.

c Instead of sending the incoming 19th Infantry Division to Beersheba (as planned), von Kress diverted it to Cemame (near Gaza).

Concerning the issue of Arab reliability, the Turkish official histories do not specifically mention this as a factor in the loss of Beersheba, although the Arab soldiers in the 67th and 81st Infantry Regiments were thought to be notably weak in ‘fighting

spirit' prior to the battle.[128] However, it is significant that the 24,000 men of the British 60th and 74th Infantry Divisions took the entire day of 31 October to push the 1,400 men of these Arab regiments out of their trenches. Whether Anatolian or Turkish soldiers might have held back the British onslaught is problematic at best. The attack of XX Corps was not decisive but it did draw most of Ismet's reserves to the south-western perimeter of Beersheba, thus allowing the famous cavalry charge of the Australian 4th Light Horse Brigade to sweep, almost unopposed, into the town of Beersheba at about 1700.

Finally, Kress von Kressenstein and the Turks fully expected a British attack and they prepared to receive it. But when the attack came it was a strategic and operational surprise for the Ottoman Eighth Army. The Beersheba defences were manned sufficiently to repel an attack by two divisions largely because the Ottoman Army did not believe that the EEF had the logistical capability to move larger numbers of men around the desert flank. This estimation played into the hands of the haversack ruse.

Ottoman command and control

Much of the criticism levelled at Kress von Kressenstein dealt with his tardiness in shifting reserves toward Beersheba to support Ismet's III Corps. In truth, his positioning of the 7th, 19th and 24th Infantry Divisions in reserve positions nearer Gaza than Beersheba, based on the Meinertzhagen ruse, made this almost impossible in real time. Moreover, the ongoing reorganisation of Ottoman command architecture in Palestine certainly hindered his ability to control the battle as well. A retired Iraqi brigadier who had served in the Ottoman Army, writing in 1965, criticised the new Ottoman command architecture that went into effect prior to the battle.[129] Brigadier Şükrü Mahmut (later Nedim) maintained that the Seventh Army's assumption of tactical control of the Beersheba sector four days prior to a major engagement was a noteworthy error that negatively affected proper control of the battle. He concluded that the 'role of the commander' was undermined in the confusion of the battle.[130]

As has been described, von Falkenhayn gave Fevzi's Seventh Army control of Beersheba and the eastern half of the Palestine front on 28 October. However, on the same day, von Falkenhayn issued supplementary orders altering this arrangement.[131] In these orders he noted that, because of British movements over the last several days, the tactical situation was possibly dangerous. As such he noted that 'until the new command arrangements are functional, Kress Paşa would command all units on the Sinai front'.[132] Moreover, von Falkenhayn gave Kress von Kressenstein authority to employ the Army Group reserve (the 19th Infantry Division and the 74th Heavy Artillery Battalion). While this made sense operationally, it left Kress von Kressenstein in his headquarters at El Huleykat (north-east of Gaza) over 40 km away from Beersheba. It also left Fevzi and his Seventh Army staff in an uncertain operational position.

It is unclear today exactly which Ottoman headquarters had contact with one another during the day of 31 October 1917. It is clear, however, that, at some point in mid-afternoon, Kress von Kressenstein lost communication and thus operational control of the battle. This is evidenced by the fact that he sent out Colonel Hergote by automobile to find out the situation in Beersheba.[133] He gave Hergote instructions to establish a new defensive line from Tel Sheria-Ebuhof-Eddahariye if Beersheba had fallen.[134] Hergote

made his way to the headquarters of Esat's 3rd Cavalry Division, near the Jerusalem road, where he found that Esat's cavalrymen were already entrenching near Ebuhof, the defeated 27th Infantry Division regrouping to the west of Tel Sheria, and the 12th Depot Regiment blocking the Jerusalem road near Eddahariye.

Likewise, Fevzi was cut off from news from Beersheba about noon when the telegraph line was cut. Fevzi immediately sent his own Seventh Army chief of staff to Tel Sheria (headquarters of the 16th Infantry Division) to find out information.[135] In the meantime, Fevzi ordered the nearby 12th Depot Regiment to prepare for combat and he sent fifty armed soldiers from his headquarters to assist the conscripts. Having heard no news from the Eighth Army, at 1530 Fevzi ordered the 12th Depot Regiment to form four improvised combat groups to man positions astride the Beersheba road along the Ebuhof line. His chief of staff 'finally' returned at 1930.[136]

It appears that Fevzi at army level and Ismet at corps level, although disconnected in time and space from each other and from Kress von Kressenstein, arrived simultaneously at the same operational conclusion—if Beersheba could not be held, then a new defensive line must be created at Ebuhof. By early evening this was a reality and both the Seventh and Eighth Army colonels were returning to their respective headquarters to report the fact.

Later that night, Fevzi received orders from the Yildirim Army Group that clarified his mission. At 2330, Fevzi's Seventh Army reassumed control of his original operational area, including all combat units, support units and line of communications troops north of Beersheba.[137] The latter was quite important because the 12th Depot Regiment was now in the line, but remained technically out of Fevzi's control. Fevzi wasted no time in issuing his own orders early on 1 November 1917, which formally ordered his units to establish a defensive line.[138] He also moved his headquarters forward to El Halil.

For his part, Colonel Ismet, in command of the III Corps, probably performed as well as could be expected. From the narrative above it is clear that his reports and requests to both the Seventh and Eighth Armies never reached their intended destinations, leaving him isolated. Without waiting for direction or orders, early in the day, he ordered his major corps reserve, the 3rd Cavalry Division, northeast to block the Australians on the Jerusalem road. During the battle, Ismet was alerted to the fact that British cavalry had captured the key mound of Telüssebi (Tell es Sabe). Consequently, at 1600, in spite of his orders to defend the town, Ismet ordered the retreat of his surviving formations from Beersheba.[139]

These were important tactical decisions because they ensured the survival of the Ottoman III Corps. Kress von Kressenstein criticised Ismet for the decisions because they led to the capture of the town and its wells by the end of the day. In fact, with six full-strength British divisions compressing the Ottoman perimeter, the town probably would have fallen that night in any event. By his actions, Ismet's total losses, although severe, were limited to about 500 men killed, 2,000 men missing (1,947 were reported as captured by the British), and thirteen cannon.[140] Importantly, the 3rd Cavalry Division, the only Ottoman cavalry division in Palestine, survived the battle. The 27th Infantry Division, although badly battered as a fighting force, survived the debacle as well.[141]

Comparison and contrast

Beersheba was a battle lost from the onset. The operational deployment of Ottoman forces in response to the perceived threat to Gaza rendered a defence of Beersheba impossible. This author also believes that Kress von Kressenstein was not alone in his appreciation of the situation and that, even if an Ottoman officer had commanded the Palestine front in late October 1917, the operational deployment would have been similar. With this in mind, and in view of Beersheba as an almost unavoidable defeat, what then could be said about the performance of the Ottoman Army at this point in the war?

The Ottoman Army in Palestine, as an institution, remained wedded to notions of offensive warfare. The Turks created their own version of *Stosstruppen* and conducted formal and troop-level training in offensive tactics.[142] They also reduced the number of riflemen and introduced an organic light machinegun company in their infantry battalions. In the defence, they remained committed to the maintenance of reserves at every level that were capable of immediate counter-attacks. This was an army that still valued the power of the offensive.

The situational awareness of both Ottoman army commanders was almost non-existent on the day of battle. The crippling problems with communications on 31 October 1917 highlighted an overall weakness in the quantity and quality of technical equipment available in Palestine. But this was exaggerated markedly by the activation of the Seventh Army three days prior to the battle. The command and control arrangements were, at best, a lash-up designed for a temporary period, which forced Kress von Kressenstein to fight a battle that he did not believe was coming. When faced with uncertainty, both Kress von Kressenstein (Eighth Army) and Fevzi (Seventh Army) sent full colonels from their immediate staffs forward to unravel the situation. In both cases, the colonels found that Ismet's hard-pressed III Corps had re-established a new defensive line north of Beersheba.

Both Fevzi and Ismet were Ottoman General Staff officers—as was Kress von Kressenstein a German General Staff officer. Thus, all three of these men were products of a duplicate three-year operational curriculum. (The Ottoman War Academy patterned its curriculum directly on the German model and used German texts as well.) That they simultaneously arrived at a similar tactical solution, in the absence of information and contact, speaks to the existence of a 'one-army mentality' in operational thinking.

At the tactical level, the Ottoman soldiers, Arabs as well as Turks, fought as well as might be expected. They held off two full British corps for a day and then fought a fighting retreat northward. Alternatively, Beersheba might have been either an encirclement or a rout. That it was neither speaks to the discipline and training of the 27th Infantry and the 3rd Cavalry Divisions. Although out of touch with his higher headquarters, Colonel Ismet, the III Corps commander, made sound and timely decisions that saved his corps to fight another day.

By the standards of 1917, Allenby's army performed well. Its preparation, deception plan, and approach march were models for the time and placed overwhelming forces on the doorstep of the Ottoman III Corps almost overnight to achieve strategic, operational, and tactical surprise. The attack of XX Corps was well executed but did not result in a break through the Ottoman lines—even as night fell on the battlefield, XX Corps was

pushing against rearguards of Ottoman soldiers. In particular, the framework of infantry-artillery co-operation was greatly improved, as was tactical co-ordination. In fact, it was a very successful attack against a prepared position, at low human cost, and this was an important step forward for the British Army in Palestine. Against much lighter opposition, the Desert Mounted Corps was spectacularly successful and succeeded in effecting a breakthrough. It should be noted, however, that the point of attack of the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division did not come against a line of entrenched Ottoman infantry, but rather against a small mound manned by a tiny detachment of unsupported Ottoman cavalrymen (Tell es Sabe).

Very importantly, the situational awareness of the British Army was rapidly improving. Yigal Sheffy's work shows the development of a mature intelligence apparatus that was able to collect information, analyse it thoroughly, and provide useful and accurate products to the field commanders.[143] This was no small accomplishment and, when combined with innovative planning and skilful deception operations, would prove deadly to the Ottoman Army in Palestine.

Third Gaza

The battle of Third Gaza, fought by Bulfin's XXI Corps, was never intended to be anything more than a way to pin significant Ottoman forces in Gaza while the town was enveloped from the east. Neither Allenby's nor Bulfin's plan envisioned the seizure of anything more than the first line of Turkish trenches.[144] For this Bulfin's corps employed new infantry tactics, tanks, and the new western front-style artillery organisation. Moreover, Allenby authorised a lavish expenditure of hundreds of thousands of shells over a twelve-day period. The shelling began on 27 October and the ground attack on 2 November. But, after three days of fighting, XXI Corps was able to take portions of the first line of Turkish trenches, in two locations, but not much more. Nevertheless, on 7 November 1917 the British took the town, which had been abandoned by the Turks the previous night.

The British and Turkish official histories are in general agreement on the forces involved.[145] Falls noted that 10,000 British riflemen attacked 4,500 Turkish riflemen, which swelled to 8,000 as the enemy reserves were drawn in. Likewise, the Turks claim that British XXI Corps had 11,000 riflemen and 148 cannon, while the Ottoman XXII Corps had 8,000 riflemen and 116 cannon. The British also had substantial naval gunfire support available as well. It is clear that, while the British had a large superiority at Gaza, they did not enjoy the unique advantages that they had at Beersheba.

To explain in detail the Turkish defence of Gaza would repeat many of the findings previously discussed in this study. A well co-ordinated infantryartillery team defended the Turkish trenches. Reserves were positioned near by at every level of command for immediate counter-attacks. The ground had been surveyed and detailed plans, nine months in the making, were in the hands of every commander. The battle went pretty much as the Turks expected and, by 5 November 1917, they still maintained a solid defensive line (although they had lost some portions of their forward trench system). According to the defending Ottoman XXII Corps commander, Colonel Refet, the integrity of the Gaza fortress remained intact.[146]

In fact, the Yildirim Army Group Operations Directorate notified the Ottoman XXII Corps on 4 November 1917 that enemy forces (the British XX Corps and the Desert Mounted Corps) pushing west toward Gaza from Tel Sheria might make evacuation necessary. Colonel Refet notified his divisional commanders that day to prepare evacuation plans. To use a modern concept, the loss of Beersheba caused a 'cascade failure' of the Ottoman strategic posture in southern Palestine. Although Fevzi and Ismet continued to conduct a fighting withdrawal north from Beersheba, they could never concentrate enough combat power to stop Allenby's enveloping right wing. This forced Colonel Refet to order a night evacuation of Gaza on 6/7 November.[147]

The Turkish official history noted that Gaza never fell to a direct assault but was deliberately evacuated. The official history did not mention any real improvement in British infantry tactics, but it did highlight the effectiveness of the 'Counter-battery Group' (Allenby's Heavy Artillery Groups) and also noted that Turkish artillery batteries had about 300 shells on hand while the British artillery batteries had about 15,000 shells on hand.[148]

British opinion about the Turks

Prior to the battles of Gaza and Beersheba, Allenby's staff fully expected that his army would suffer accordingly. A staff appreciation from London in mid-October 1917 pointed out that 'the Turk is a stubborn fighter in trenches and we must expect that in any event he will stand long enough to cause us serious loss'.[149] This same appreciation predicted that it was likely that Allenby's army would be so weakened by the upcoming fight that 'we must be prepared to supply General Allenby with three more divisions to enable him to relieve exhausted divisions'.[150] These estimates demonstrate that, in late 1917, the British Army had finally developed a grudging respect for the fighting ability of the Ottoman Army. This attitude best explains the limited scope of Allenby's plans and operations in October 1917 (and contradicts the viability of Garsia's Gaza school).

Significantly, after the Gaza and Beersheba battles, British opinion regarding the Ottoman Army's capabilities remained constant. This was probably a result of winning the battles at low cost but without being able decisively to defeat the Turks. Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Wavell noted that although 'the Turks were taken completely by surprise [at Beersheba], Turkish guns shot well but infantry did not appear to have put up at stiff fight'.[151] However, writing of Gaza, Wavell noted that although 'Turkish losses were heavy, stubborn fighting continued' and he also noted that the British advance after the battle was hindered by 'strong rearguards that offered considerable opposition'. About the same time, Allenby sent London a cable noting that 'the Turks are known to be "shaken" because of constant hammering'.[152] But at the end of November 1917, Allenby modified his appreciation by noting that 'the strength of the Turkish positions has not allowed me to take Jerusalem'.[153]

Conclusions: combat effectiveness

The battle of Third Gaza demonstrated that the Ottoman Army, when fighting on fairly equal terms, could still hold its own against the British Army. The tactical skills

necessary for the conduct of a successful defence were still very much in evidence and the Ottoman Army showed a high level of operational and tactical mobility in extracting itself from Gaza. Although forced to abandon Gaza the Ottoman XXII Corps did not consider itself defeated.

This chapter has focused on leadership and operational and tactical doctrines. In these series of battles, the Ottoman Army failed in its objective of holding the Gaza-Beersheba line. This stemmed mainly from its failure to mass effectively adequate forces against the British assault on Beersheba, itself a result of a failure in command to anticipate Allenby correctly. Compounding this failure was an operational posture that could not accommodate or react to the loss of the Beersheba position. The focus of the Ottoman Eighth Army on Gaza itself was a significant operational mistake and reflected diminishing operational effectiveness. At the tactical level, it appears that the Ottoman Army retained much of its tactical effectiveness, at least when fighting against anything other than hopelessly superior odds.

In a sense, the British victory at Beersheba was a victory of manoeuvre rather than of combat operations. The movement of two complete army corps on the town of Beersheba completely surprised Kress von Kressenstein and the Turks, who had garrisoned the town to repel two enemy divisions. This movement was a triumph of logistics and administration rather than of tactical proficiency. However, despite a huge superiority, it took the British the better part of an entire day to take the town and its wells, and the Ottoman III Corps extracted itself and lived to fight another day.

Likewise at Gaza, the British were unable to take advantage of their strength to break through the Turkish lines. Gaza probably could have been held against Bulfin's attacks. It was the loss of Beersheba that forced Kress von Kressenstein to conduct a deliberate evacuation of the town of Gaza. Clearly Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force, in the fall of 1917, had not yet evolved the tactical and operational techniques necessary to defeat decisively the Turks in Palestine.

The deliberate attack on Gaza reflected the growing combat effectiveness of the British Army in Palestine more than the capture of Beersheba. Bulfin's XXI Corps was able to execute its very limited mission, but it was unable to make any dramatic or rapid progress, or achieve a breakthrough. Furthermore, it was unable to hold Refet's corps and allowed it to escape envelopment. Nevertheless, there was great improvement in infantry-artillery co-ordination, but like the divisions of the XX Corps at Beersheba, the divisions of XXI Corps experienced difficulty attacking prepared defensive positions (which were, of course, strongly held). Institutionally, even very experienced and well trained British Army divisions in Palestine remained unable to seize well prepared positions held by determined Ottoman soldiers. These problems were, however, institutional within the British Army in 1917 and affected Haig's army in France, which also could not penetrate hard defences.

Nonetheless, the combat effectiveness of the Ottoman Army in 1917 was slowly deteriorating relative to its enemy. The British Army in 1917 was beginning, at long last, to solve many of its problems in battlefield control and co-ordination. It was proving capable of absorbing the lessons of combat and of creating effective institutional tactical solutions. It was also developing, after three years of war, a hardened cadre of effective battlefield commanders to match the experienced Turks. The British Army would continue to improve as it approached the final year of war.

5
Megiddo, 1918

> The commander in chief intends to take the offensive. The Army, pivoting on its positions…will attack with the object of inflicting a decisive defeat on the enemy and driving him from the line.
>
> (General Sir Edmund Allenby, Force Order No. 68, 9 September 1918[1])

The Megiddo Campaign was conceived of, and fought, as a battle of annihilation and ranks as one of the most decisive victories of the twentieth century. The Ottoman armies in Palestine were destroyed as fighting organisations by Allenby's army and lost somewhere around 100,000 men killed, missing and captured. It was the worst defeat suffered by the Ottoman Army in World War I at the hands of the British Army.

The campaign evolved in four distinct phases. The first phase was the break through the Ottoman Eighth Army's western flank on 19/20 September 1918. The second phase was a giant cavalry exploitation, lasting six days, that swept northward to Haifa and the Sea of Galilee. The third phase took the imperial cavalry to Damascus on 1 October. The fourth phase lasted almost a month and took Allenby's army to Aleppo by 28 October 1918, where it halted because of the Ottoman government's request for an armistice.

The English-language historiography of the campaign is an extension of the work cited in the previous chapter and includes official histories, general histories, and personal memoirs.[2] The Turkish historiography includes no additional material covering Megiddo (or the battle of Nablus, as the Turks called it). The Megiddo Campaign is very well covered in the English-language literature, except for thorough treatments of Allenby's pre-battle preparation and the first day of battle (19 September 1918).

This chapter completes the four case studies of the Ottoman Army's experience against the British Army in World War I. The chapter explores precombat preparation, training, and planning as these affected the first day of battle and it focuses on the British breakthrough and the Ottoman collapse of 19/20 September 1918. Using fresh Turkish sources, it will also focus on developing an explanation as to why the Ottoman Army was unable to prevent a catastrophic rupture of its lines and why it was unable to halt the breakthrough with its reserves. The chapter will examine what capabilities the Ottoman Army in Palestine seemed to lose in 1918 and what capabilities were gained by the British Army in the same period.

The Jerusalem Campaign

In the wake of the loss of Beersheba and the abandonment of Gaza, the Ottoman armies in Palestine conducted a fighting withdrawal to a new line of resistance. To the discomfort of the Turks, Allenby maintained relentless pressure on the Ottoman Eighth Army by launching a pursuit operation that pushed its forces northward and away from the coast. The Yildirim Army Group planned to halt and defend a line from Jaffa on the coast to Jerusalem in the Judean hills. However, Allenby could not be stopped and the Turks retreated well beyond Jaffa. By 22 November 1917, Allenby's army had reached the Jerusalem defences. In early December there were Turkish counter-offensives, a renewed British offensive north along the coast, which failed, and a British offensive against Jerusalem, which succeeded. On 9 December 1917, the British captured Jerusalem, which the Turks had evacuated on the previous night.

The Jerusalem Campaign was a disaster in every sense for the Turks. The strategically viable and defensible Gaza and Jaffa lines were lost, as was the politically valuable town of Jerusalem. These losses were very serious, but not fatal, to the overall Ottoman strategic position in the Middle East.

It was at the operational level where the Ottoman Army was badly hurt—the Turks lost large numbers of men and much valuable equipment that was irreplaceable at this point in the war. In the British official history, Cyril Falls noted that the Ottoman Army lost about 25,000 officers and men during the period 31 October through 31 December 1917, while British losses were put at about 18,000.[3] Moreover, the history noted that over 12,000 prisoners were taken in this period. At least one historian has added these numbers together to arrive at a total Turkish loss of 40,000 soldiers.[4] In fact the actual reported Ottoman casualties included the prisoners, under two headings: prisoner *(tutsak)* and missing *(kayip),* leaving Falls's figures within 100 of the actual Turkish losses.[5] However, Falls noted that Allenby captured about 100 artillery pieces, while the official Turkish history noted far less; only twenty-nine artillery pieces lost as well as ninety-five light and heavy machine guns. The Turks also reported that 2,462 animals were killed (or destroyed) and 2,672 were missing, and that 7,000 rifles were lost.

The raw numbers of Ottoman losses are almost meaningless unless set in context. Kress von Kressenstein's Eighth Army returned strengths of 2,894 officers, 69,709 men, 29,116 rifles, 403 machine guns, 268 artillery pieces, and 27,575 animals on 1 October 1917.[6] These numbers represent a reasonable baseline, as few reinforcements reached the Eighth Army before the battle of Beersheba. Merging the Eighth Army numbers with the losses contained in the Turkish official history, the Ottoman Army's casualty rates in Palestine may be established from the fall of Beersheba through the end of 1917 (see Table 5.1).

Allenby's losses (18,000) amounted to about 11 per cent of his field army. Thus the true scale of his victory in relation to the Ottoman Army becomes apparent, as Ottoman losses approached 20 per cent. Moreover, it is likely that most of the Ottoman losses were combat infantrymen and machine gunners because of the kind of combat that the army engaged in (defensive operations, rearguards, and counter-attacks). The losses of infantry

weapons systems (about 24 per cent) seem to bear this out. It would also appear that the artillery (at least according to the Turkish sources) and transport suffered lower casualties (between 11 per cent and 19 per cent), attesting to the success of the Ottoman Army's deliberate withdrawal from the Gaza line.

Table 5.1 Ottoman Army casualty rates in Palestine, 31 October-31 December 1917

Category	*Total present*	*Total lost*	*% lost*
Officers, KIA or WIA	2,894	510	18
Officers, MIA or PoW		454	16
Soldiers, KIA or WIA	69,709	12,011	17
Soldiers, MIA or PoW		15,261	22
Animals	27,575	5,134	19
Rifles	29,116	7,000	24
Machine guns	403	95	24
Artillery[a]	268	29	11
Artillery[b]	268	100	37

Sources: Hüsnü, *Yıldırım*, 113, and Turkish General Staff, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne*, 757.

Notes
a Turkish figures.
b Allenby's figures.
c The 3,000 offficers and men reported as returned to duty have been included in these computations.
d *KIA* killed in action, *MIA* missing in action, *PoW* prisoner of war, *WIA* wounded in action.

The statistics concerning the number of men who were reported missing and prisoners also reveals a new and serious problem. In other battles against the British, at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia, and in Palestine, the percentages of Ottoman Army soldiers reported as prisoner and missing were quite low.[7] But by late 1917 desertion from the army was a significant problem and the higher rates of prisoners may reflect incidents of wilful surrender. Moreover, the relative percentage of Ottoman enlisted soldiers who were reported as missing or prisoner is higher than the percentage of Ottoman officers reported in these same categories.

Arab soldiers (as well as Greeks, Kurds, Jews, and Armenians) serving in the Ottoman Army do not appear to have surrendered in disproportionate numbers, as might have been expected. A British intelligence report tallying the 7,233 Ottoman prisoners and deserters captured between 31 October and 24 November 1917 reported the demographics of the men.[8] The British noted that 64 per cent of the prisoners were Turks, 27 per cent were Arabs, and 9 per cent were Greeks, Armenians, and Jews. Comparable statistics

contained in Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir's 9 September 1917 report on the ethnic composition of infantry divisions (see previous chapter) were 66 per cent Turkish, 26 per cent Arab, and 8 per cent of the other races.[9] It appears that the British captured enemy soldiers in numbers almost directly reflecting the ethnic composition of the Ottoman Army.

In any case, to an army that suffered from acute shortages of trained manpower, the loss of 25,000 combat arms soldiers was a significant blow that far exceeded the loss of territory and political prestige resulting from the fall of Gaza and Jerusalem. Making matters worse, replacements were not available within the immediate combat theatre and the movement of men from other parts of the empire was a process that took months.[10]

In any event, the front stabilised in mid-December 1917. This was due primarily to the British Army's lack of logistics as it pushed north into Palestine. Unlike its Ottoman adversary, the British Army was highly dependent on a rich logistical support base that had difficulty in maintaining the tempo of the advance. The absence of supplies degraded the effectiveness of the British Army, which allowed the Turks to solidify and construct defensive lines that stretched from the coast to the Jordan River and then south into the Judean hill country. Once the Turks had re-established their defensive lines, positional warfare reasserted itself in Palestine. And as at Gaza, the British were, as yet, unable to conduct breakthrough operations against the Ottoman Army.

The spring campaigns of 1918

The Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) entered 1918 with a sense of optimism born of victory. Guy Dawnay, BGGS, EEF (Brigadier General, General Staff, or the equivalent of the army chief of staff), was encouraged by the deteriorating condition of the Ottoman Army. Dawnay noted that 'the Turk will also be fully aware that his own force proved then, and will probably prove again, insufficient to met forces of the same strength'.[11] He also noted a general collapse of morale amongst the enemy and that 'they no longer think of themselves as impervious to our attacks as no doubt they were inclined before their present defeats'.[12]

Combat operations did not resume in earnest until 19 February 1918, when Allenby attacked the town of Jericho. In a two-day battle, the British pushed the Seventh Army behind the Jordan River. As a result of the seeming inability to stop Allenby, Enver Paşa lost confidence in the services of General von Falkenhayn, of whom much had been expected, and, consequently, Enver asked for his relief. On 1 March 1918, General Otto Liman von Sanders was appointed as the new commander of the Yildirim Army Group.

Shortly after Liman von Sanders' arrival, the British conducted a limited offensive, aimed at establishing a bridgehead on the east bank of the Jordan, which has been cloaked as the 'Trans-Jordan Raid'.[13] This offensive was co-ordinated with large Arab attacks on the Dera-Hejaz railway and was preceded by diversionary attacks across the entire front. The British launched their attack on 21 March with a reinforced infantry division and a mounted division, which broke through the Jordan River line. Allenby's intent was to seize Amman and cut the Dera-Hejaz railway (also outflanking the strong Turkish main defensive lines), and then 'probably withdraw'.[14] The British advanced against the Ottoman 48th Infantry Division. By 30 March, the British had pushed the 48th Division back to Amman but were unable to take the city. Allenby decided to withdraw

on 31 March. Certainly, the stated reason that the Turks had brought up substantial reserves, which offset the numerical advantage of the British, is not at all true. It was an important objective for the British, and the abandonment of their attack is not easily explained.[15] The Turks pursued the withdrawing British and continued to compress them into the Jordan River valley. After a bloody repulse on 11 April the Turks halted their counter-attacks and began to dig in. The Turks called this the First Battle of the Jordan.

The Second Battle of the Jordan began on 30 April 1918, with the British again launching an attack from their bridgehead across the Jordan towards Amman. In the intervening two weeks, the Turks had finally brought up strong forces (the 24th Infantry Division and the 3rd Cavalry Division), which were available to conduct a flank attack on the advancing British. Counter-attacks by these Turkish divisions were executed between 2 and 4 May and brought the British offensive to a quick termination. Simultaneous operations along the coast by Allenby's XXI Corps aimed at capturing a portion of the Turkish defences and capturing significant numbers of troops and guns were likewise unsuccessful.[16]

These successful operations by the Ottoman Army against heavy odds illustrated that it had retained much of its combat effectiveness and capability. The operations were carried out against trained and experienced British and Australian troops who enjoyed numerical and logistical superiority over the Turks. The bright predictions that Allenby would push the Turks out of Palestine by summer proved to be an illusion.

With the exception of some brief fighting in midsummer, the Palestine front was relatively quiet during the late spring and summer of 1918. The principal reason was that the gigantic Ludendorff offensives in France during the spring of 1918 forced the Imperial General Staff to tap Allenby's army for vitally needed reinforcements. Allenby was forced to send to France, beginning in March, two infantry divisions, nine yeomanry (cavalry) regiments, twenty-three British infantry battalions, five heavy artillery batteries and five machine-gun companies (in all, some 60,000 men).[17] Making matters worse, he had to disband ten infantry battalions to use as reinforcements for his depleted formations. In return, Allenby received several Indian Army infantry divisions from Mesopotamia, and a number of Indian cavalry regiments and infantry battalions. Effectively, Allenby lost a significant portion of his trained and experienced British Army combat power, and in return received less well trained Indian Army troops. This turn of events forced Allenby to spend the summer engaged in a complete reorganisation and retraining of his army.[18] The British were still left with seven infantry divisions in Palestine, but the national character of these formations had changed significantly. Only a single all-British infantry division remained, four others being three-quarters Indian (each brigade containing one British and three Indian battalions), and the final two were Indian Army infantry divisions (which were also three-quarters Indian and a quarter British). Only in mounted strength did Allenby's situation actually improve, gaining one division, for a total of four cavalry and mounted divisions (of which two were Indian Army as well). Nevertheless, Allenby still commanded a large and well equipped army with which to renew the offensive against the Yildirim Army Group. Turkish intelligence estimated Allenby's effective and mobile combat strength at 56,000 riflemen, 11,000 cavalry, and 552 artillery pieces.[19]

To oppose this collection of imperial strength, in August 1918, the Yildirim Army Group disposed of 40,598 front-line infantrymen, who were armed with 19,819 rifles,

273 light and 696 heavy machine guns.[20] The number of Turkish machine guns available to the Yildirim Army Group, in comparison with other campaigns, seems unusually high and reflected the Ottoman Army's new tables of organisation and the machine-gun components of the German Asia Korps. The Turks organised these soldiers into twelve under-strength divisions to defend a 90+ km front.

Over the summer, Liman von Sanders and his subordinate commanders worked feverishly to prepare the defence to receive what was expected to be a major British offensive. In early September 1918, the signs of an impending British offensive were undeniable, but Liman von Sanders and the Turks were unable to pinpoint the exact area where Allenby would strike. This was due to the superb tactical deception measures that Allenby used. Consequently, the Yildirim Army Group remained spread along the entire front in static defensive positions. The only formations available for reserve duty at the operational level were the 2nd Caucasian Cavalry Division in the Eighth Army area and the 3rd Cavalry Division in the Fourth Army area. In the event of a major British breakthrough, the Yildirim Army Group had few reserves and even fewer options. However, Liman von Sanders' faith in the fighting qualities of his well dug-in Turkish infantry remained high.[21]

The Ottoman Army in Palestine, 1918

The Ottoman Army in Palestine grew progressively weaker in terms of military manpower as 1918 progressed. For example, by summer, the nine infantry battalions of the 16th Infantry Division ranged in effective strength from 100 to 250 men (or the equivalent of a British infantry company).[22] Mustafa Kemal's famous 19th Infantry Division reported that infantry battalions, which had 500–600 men each at Beersheba, now had only 150–200 men assigned.[23] Many of the losses were from disease and desertion. The 7th Infantry Division was in a similar condition and its 21st Infantry Regiment reported that the 'weak replacement system failed to keep up with the losses and this resulted in weak companies at the front.' [24] To compensate for this, the regiment attempted to keep the first company in each of its three battalions up to strength, so that at least a portion of its combat strength was at authorised levels.[25] Of course, this dramatically weakened the other two companies in each battalion.

The memoirs of the participants, both Turkish and German, speak of the terrible problem of eroding manpower. They also speak of the deplorable conditions experienced by Ottoman soldiers in Palestine. Liman von Sanders noted that many soldiers and officers had no shoes and rags for clothing.[26] Food and fodder were, likewise in short supply. On 1 February 1918, the Ottoman Eighth Army had 155 tons of flour on hand. By 1 September, this had dropped to fourteen and a half tons of flour on hand (for an army whose ration strength was 39,783 men).[27] Ottoman soldiers in Palestine were given the barest rations, which frequently included the husks of oats and barley in lieu of the grain itself. The war diary of the 21st Infantry Regiment noted an 'excellent situation' in the late spring of 1918 because the regiment's soldiers received the following daily ration: 825g bread, 250g meat, 150g flour, 100g olives, 50g yoghurt, and 40g soap. Notably the animals received 1 kg of grain on the same day.[28] What makes the entry unusual is that this ration matched the pre-war daily ration of 3,149 calories authorised for Ottoman

soldiers. (The point here is that when regiments in Palestine received their actual authorised allowances of food it was a noteworthy event.)[29] The normal daily ration in Palestine was 'invariably 125 grammes of bread and boiled beans in the morning, at noon, and at night, without oil or any other condiment'.[30]

Despite the deplorable conditions that the Ottoman Army in Palestine endured in the last year of the war, it continued to train and to prepare its men for combat. The 48th Infantry Division, for example, while holding the line on the Jordan River, organised and conducted training courses on battle tactics and the employment of machine guns, hand grenades, and flame throwers.[31] At regimental level, the 20th Infantry Regiment underwent intensive training in early February in day and night fortification and battle drill.[32] At the individual level, soldiers from the newly arriving 37th Infantry Division (from the Caucasus) received a two-week course near Nablus in the use of stick grenades.[33]

Of note was the intense effort that the Ottoman Army put into organising and training its assault troops, which by 1918 had become an important part of the Ottoman Army's tactical capability in Palestine. The assault troops were organised into combined arms assault detachments *(hücüm müfrezesi)* of company strength. The assault detachment of the 23rd Infantry Division was composed of one infantry company (about 100 men), one engineer (pioneer) platoon (one officer, four NCOs and thirty men), and seven light machine-gun teams.[34] The officers assigned to the assault detachments were hand-picked from within the division by the division staff.[35] The assault detachment was given a four-week course in German-style stormtrooper tactics, to which the division sent an additional officer and five NCOs.[36] Eventually the assault detachment was expanded into an assault battalion *(23ncu Hücüm Tabur)*, giving the 23rd Infantry Division additional combat capability.

There appear to have been variances in the composition of the assault detachments and battalions. In the 16th Infantry Division, the 47th Infantry Regiment was tasked to form its first assault detachment of 140 men and two machine-gun teams.[37] The 19th Infantry Division, which had deployed to Palestine from Galicia, arrived with its assault battalion already formed and, in this division, each regiment also had its own organic assault platoon.[38]

The employment of Ottoman assault troops

In the absence of Ottoman divisional or corps-level offensive operations, the assault troops became somewhat of a 'fire brigade' for both corps and divisional operations. In mid-November 1917, the 48th Infantry Division organised a task force to block the road to Dera that included the divisional assault detachment, two infantry battalions, a cavalry, engineer, and a medical company, and an artillery battery.[39] In late February 1918, the assault detachment was expanded to become the 3rd Assault Company and was used as part of the Damascus garrison.[40]

In the First Battle of the River Jordan, Lieutenant Colonel Asım (later Gündüz) teamed the 3rd Assault Company with three infantry battalions, the German 703rd Infantry Battalion, and some machine-gun, cavalry and artillery units to create the counter-attack force that pushed the British back to their start lines.[41] At the same time, the 46th Assault Company (46th Infantry Division) was held in army reserve at the

Amman train station. However, by the seventh day of the battle, the 46th Assault Company was released to Lieutenant Colonel Asım, who attached it to his right wing for the final push.[42] The hard-marching assault troops led Asım's advance.

For the counter-attacks that followed on 4 April, Asım was also given the 24th Assault Company as well as the 3rd Battalion, 145th Infantry Regiment (both from the 24th Infantry Division). As the battle developed, Asım launched a pursuit of the British and teamed the 24th Assault Company with the 8th and 9th Cavalry Regiments (from the adjacent 3rd Cavalry Division).[43] After the battle, the 46th Assault Company was withdrawn from the 48th Infantry Division and held in corps reserve. Interestingly, at the same time, the Seventh Army formed a provisional cavalry regiment by combining the organic cavalry companies from the 11th, 24th, 48th, and 53rd Infantry Divisions.[44]

Some time in late April 1918, the 24th Infantry Division's assault company was expanded into an assault battalion. In the Second Battle of the River Jordan (30 April–4 May 1918), the Seventh Army formed a new provisional combat detachment with which to launch a counter-attack into the British flank. The composition of the detachment demonstrated the continuing ability of the Ottoman Army to task-organise combat groups quickly in combat conditions (see Table 5.2).

Since the Ottoman Army in Palestine was on the defensive, the employment of assault troops in other infantry divisions was similar. During the month of March 1918, the 19th Infantry Division employed its assault battalion as the division reserve.[45] In the sporadic and sparse fighting over the summer of 1918, the Ottoman assault battalions do not appear to have been heavily engaged.[46]

In summary, the Ottoman Army in Palestine began by hand-picking leaders and men for its assault troops to form assault platoons and detachments, which received

Table 5.2 Seventh Army left flank provisional detachment, 1 May 1918

Unit	*Parent organisation*
143rd Infantry Regiment	24th Infantry Division
24th Assault Battalion	24th Infantry Division
6th Cavalry Regiment	3rd Cavalry Division
3rd Horse Artillery Battery	3rd Cavalry Division
1st Battalion, 146th Infantry Regiment	German Asia Korps

Source: Neş'et, 'Büyük Harpte "Suriye" Cephesinde 48. Piyade Fırkası', 71.

Note
The 1st Battalion, 146th Infantry Regiment, was a German Army battalion.

intensive training in contemporary German *Stosstruppen* tactics and equipment. These companies were later expanded to become assault battalions. It would appear that the assault formations were rather well equipped and cared for in comparison with the remainder of the Ottoman Army in Palestine. While the Ottoman Army's assault battalions and companies were never used in doctrinal offensive operations, they were frequently used in deliberate and hasty counter-attacks, and as reserves at division and

corps level. Finally, it appears that assault battalions in Palestine normally operated with about 300 to 350 officers and men.[47] Since Ottoman personnel strength in Palestine was somewhat of a zero-sum game, this effectively concentrated nearly 20 per cent of the cream of divisional infantry strength into a single battalion at the expense of the regular infantry regiments.

The British Army in Palestine, 1918

The 'Indianisation' of Allenby's army[48]

Sir Edmund Allenby wanted to knock the Turks out of their lines in the late spring of 1918 but was thwarted in this ambition by the transfer of much of his trained infantry and artillery strength to France. The story of why Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force was gutted by the needs of the western front and was subsequently rebuilt with Indian Army battalions is covered in detail in the official history of the Palestine Campaign and by later historians.[49] However, Falls, and every author since, has omitted an explanation of exactly how Allenby trained his new soldiers to achieve a high standard of combat effectiveness.

The rotation of Indian Army soldiers into Palestine began in earnest in April 1918, when the Indian Army's 3rd and 7th Infantry Divisions began to arrive from Mesopotamia. Later battalions would arrive from France and from India itself. When complete in the summer, six of seven infantry divisions and two of four cavalry or mounted divisions in Allenby's army were essentially 'Indian Army' formations (although the infantry divisions retained their numbers and titles in the British Army's order of battle).

According to Cyril Falls this caused Allenby much anxiety.[50] Of the incoming fifty-four Indian Army infantry battalions, twenty-two had combat experience (but had given up one company of men), ten were composed of combat-experienced men who had not trained together as units, and twenty-two had seen no active service in the war. Many of the commanders were likewise inexperienced and almost a third of the men were new recruits, many of whom had not fired their rifles. An example of British opinion regarding these battalions concerns the 3rd Kashmir Rifles, which was 'utterly without experience'.[51]

Much thought and preparation went into ensuring a smooth transition of the new battalions into the theatre. In the 53rd Infantry Division, each British battalion (there were three) was formally linked with three incoming Indian battalions on 28 May and carefully selected British officers were 'earmarked' in advance to work with the Indians.[52] Three days later the earmarked officers received an allotment of the next scheduled Cycle of Courses so that when the Indian battalions arrived, their key personnel could immediately be programmed to attend training courses.[53] Later, on 8 June, the division began classes in Elementary Hindustani at the division's signals school and sent out allocations to each battalion.[54] The next day the division developed a system of training courses for signallers, who would be assigned to work with the Indian battalions. Also that day the XX Corps headquarters directed the Indian battalions to

submit copies of their weekly training programmes (to arrive on Mondays at the corps headquarters—the first of which arrived there on 16 June).[55]

The tempo of the training accelerated as more and more personnel began to be trained. On 27 June 1918, there were ninety vacancies at the XX Corps signals school, which were immediately allocated on the basis of ten to each battalion in the 53rd Infantry Division.[56] In the 75th Infantry Division, forty-eight British NCOs were selected to attend a brigade course on battle drill. All were 'volunteers, keen, and young' and twenty-four were designated in advance for transfer to Indian battalions.[57] This division, by 17 August 1918, had enough trained men from the corps signals school to put fourteen British soldiers in each Indian Army battalion.[58]

In the 60th Infantry Division, there was a structured programme to give firsthand experience in the trenches to the newly arrived personnel. On 1 July 1918, the 179th Infantry brigade ordered 'a party of 2 BOs (British officers), 4 IOs (Indian officers) and 8 Indian NCOs to proceed to the 20th Corps front "HO 2 sector" (Nablus Road) for four days instruction in the line'.[59] Then again, on 8 July, another party from three Indian battalions was ordered to proceed to the same sector for four days of instruction in the line.

The Indian battalions were likewise exposed to front-line conditions in very controlled circumstances that were often stage-managed. The 10th Infantry Division ordered the 29th Infantry Brigade to plan a brigade-scale night raid to 'test the newly-arrived Indian battalions'.[60] The 1st Leinsters were tasked to build a replica of the Ottoman lines in which to conduct TEWTs (tactical exercises without troops) and to work with the 1st/54th Sikhs (Indian Army) and the 1st/101st Grenadiers (Indian Army). 'Planning at division and brigade levels was meticulous and considerable special training was carried out.'[61] The brigade trained for almost a full month and, famously, felt pads were tacked to the men's boots to deaden the noise made by hobnails. The raid was executed on the night of 12/13 August 1918. Occasionally, some of the young Indian soldiers scattered under shellfire but were encouraged and led forward by the Irishmen, who had been distributed like corset stays for just this very contingency.[62] The raid was very successful and large numbers of Turks were captured along with fourteen machine guns.

These experiences were typical of the training provided to the incoming Indian battalions of the EEF.[63] It is evident that the staff of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, its corps, and its divisions placed a high premium on the development of both communications and tactical integration of Indian Army battalions.[64] The cross-levelling of trained British personnel into Indian battalions and the rigorous system of training courses described above were duplicated throughout Allenby's army. Nothing was left to chance, as evidenced by the interest of the staff of XX Corps in the weekly training of its Indian Army battalions.

Lessons from the western front

By the summer of 1918, the British Army had evolved into, perhaps, the most proficient and tactically capable army in the world. While Allenby had brought many modern battle tactics to Palestine in 1917, a continuous stream of current western front tactical information was sent thereafter to Palestine for implementation in the Egyptian

Expeditionary Force. Examples of this may be found in the war diaries of Allenby's army.

On 17 May 1918, the staff of the 53rd Infantry Division sent copies of Major Gammell's *Notes on Recent Operations—Artillery in Defence* and *The Importance of the Forward Slope* to each brigade.[65] Several days later, the division received a list of recent tactical lectures from the Staff Officer's Course (SOC) that were available for dissemination. On 5 June, the division commander attached his own short notes to a pamphlet entitled *Notes on Recent Fighting (France)* and sent it to his brigadiers and his machine-gun battalion commander. He also directed that his subordinate commanders and course officers 'should make the pamphlet the subject of conferences and lectures to officers'.[66] On 11 August, *Notes on Night Patrolling* were sent to all concerned, followed the next day by the CRA (Commander Royal Artillery) *Lecture on Artillery Co-operation.*[67]

Staff officers were active in transmitting the most recent 'lessons learned' from France. The Operations Officer (GSO 1) of the 53rd Infantry Division, Lieutenant Colonel Clive Garsia, personally went down to the 158th Infantry Brigade to deliver two lectures to 'all available officers' entitled the *Issue of Orders* and *Operations Orders*. Garsia remained overnight and gave three lectures the next day, entitled *The Attack, Use of Machine Guns,* and *Co-operation with Machine Guns.*[68] This was followed by a demonstration by 5/6 Royal Welsh Fusiliers of an attack by companies. Garsia returned again on 12 August to lecture on *Night Patrols,* also followed by a demonstration of patrol formations. The division CRA came to brigade the next day to lecture on *Artillery Barrages* and *Artillery Co-operation*.[69] It is logical to believe that both the division GSO 1 and the CRA went to the 159th and 160th Brigades to deliver the same lectures.

The 53rd Infantry Division printed tactical manuals to assist in the standardisation of fighting methods. On 11 July 1918, the division issued *53rd Division Instructions No. 1, Co-operation of Machine Guns,* which established the relationship between the division's machine-gun battalion and infantry company commanders.[70] Within the week, the division issued printed instructions on the *Demonstration on the Use of the Extra Lewis Gun in the Attack*. While these kinds of localised products may have lacked the formality of the BEF's 1918 tactical manuals, they did serve to bring what may be called 'user-friendly' tactical information on current fighting methods to an eager audience.

As Allenby himself held conferences to bring his commanders together to create common understandings, so did this method find its way down the chain of command. For example, in early July 1918 all battalion and regimental officers attended a conference at the 158th Infantry Brigade headquarters on artillery barrages.[71] The 60th Infantry Division held a division conference at 1000 on 9 July 1918, at the headquarters of the 179th Infantry Brigade, at which the division commander explained to the brigade commander, brigade major, and the brigade staff the corps policy to be adopted concerning Indian patrols.[72] The 179th Infantry Brigade itself then conducted a follow-on commander's conference of its own on 29 August to discuss training.[73] On 9 September 1918 (ten days prior to the battle of Megiddo), the commander of XX Corps held a corps and division commanders' conference at the headquarters of the 31st Infantry Brigade.[74] Clearly the patterns of command in Allenby's army now included a routine of conferences that expanded the dialogue on both training and operations.

Finally, a tactical development from the western front that was not implemented in Palestine was the reorganisation of British Army divisions in 1918. This change-over occurred from February to March 1918 and involved the reduction of infantry battalions in divisions from twelve to nine.[75] This change was implemented because the infantry shortage had caught up with Great Britain as it had already with France and Germany (whose armies implemented the nine-battalion division during 1917). The dominion armies were not affected and continued to maintain twelve-battalion divisions. Allenby's army, made up of predominantly Indian Army infantry battalions, maintained twelve-battalion divisions. Moreover, although Allenby's infantry battalions contained about half the rifle strength of 1916 British battalions, they gained thirty Lewis guns, eight light trench mortars, and sixteen rifle-grenadiers. Consequently, Allenby's divisions were 25 per cent more powerful than their western front counterparts and his British and Indian infantry battalions were considerably more combat capable than they had been in previous years.[76]

Training Allenby's army

The war diaries of the battalions, brigades, and divisions of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force show the consistent application of standardised training methods. Within companies and battalions there was a definite process that began with individual classes, demonstrations, full-scale rehearsals and finally by repeating the process at the next higher level. As an example, the 31st Infantry Brigade (10th Infantry Division) began individual and team Lewis gun classes on 21 August 1918 and on 2 September each battalion began companylevel Lewis gun training.[77] The next day the commanding general of the division personally inspected the training. On 5 September, battalion level Lewis gun training commenced with the 2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers conducting a demonstration attack, which was attended by all battalion and company commanders. Two days later the Fusiliers conducted a test march with combat equipment that would be carried on operations.[78] The results of the training were discussed at the corps commander's conference (previously mentioned) and the Lewis gun training programme finished up on 11 September 1918.

Training was conducted on realistic 'dummy positions' duplicating those employed by the Ottoman Army in Palestine. An after-action report from the 10th Infantry Division outlined the extensive training that was conducted by the 29th Infantry Brigade prior to a small-scale attack on the Ottoman lines. The brigade spent the day of 19 July 1918 practising their attack by columns on a dummy Ottoman position. The next day the brigade conducted the real attack, which was supported by artillery fire, and it went flawlessly.[79] Sketches and diagrams of the training areas and dummy positions were provided to brigade headquarters prior to the conduct of the training exercises.[80] After the war, the soldiers themselves remembered Allenby's arduous routines.[81] Realistic training with live machine-gun and artillery firing was also conducted to sharpen confidence in combined arms warfare and to harden the men.[82]

There was a broad range of training courses available to the formations of Allenby's army, although as a matter of record many of the instructional courses were established in 1916 under General Murray, including the Imperial School of Instruction at Zeitoun, the machine-gun school at Ismailia, as well as Stokes mortar, grenadier, and artillery

courses.[83] For officers there was an abbreviated senior officers' course in Heliopolis, Egypt, which stressed the lessons learned from the western front and the writing of operations orders.[84] Each army corps ran a platoon officers' course of four weeks' duration. In addition to the specialist courses previously mentioned, for soldiers, there were Lewis gun courses, machine-gun courses (heavy machine guns which were different in employment than the lighter Lewis gun), snipers' courses, gas courses, musketry and bayonet courses, and signals courses, as well as individual training for raw recruits from the United Kingdom.

As the training programmes matured in the late summer 1918, Allenby ensured that the organisational emphasis changed to reflect collective training. Training guidance included the following: 'individual training will be of secondary importance, coys [companies] will be given every opportunity for working as a coy with its own section commanders'.[85] At the same time, Allenby pressed for an institutional and tactical change as well. The staff of the 232nd Infantry Brigade noted that 'the training of officers and NCOs for open warfare is being carried out and considerable time devoted to this. Each unit is practising route marches and march discipline'.[86]

If there was an overriding theme in Allenby's recasting of his army in the summer of 1918, it would surely be in the area of co-ordination and co-operation. In his intense retraining programme Allenby created conditions that brought leaders together and also created vertical and horizontal dialogue about training and operations. Training was realistic and brought the lessons of the western front to Palestine, which were essentially built upon the co-operation of the combat arms to achieve combined arms capabilities.

The compartmentalisation that had characterised British Army operations for three years of global war was being beaten down in 1918. The officers and men of the EEF were brought together and the class barriers between the regular army, the Territorial Army, and the Indian Army were broken. The traditional institutional barriers between the infantry, artillery, cavalry and engineers were eradicated as combined arms training developed. Allenby would not be rushed; consequently, the instrument that he forged was fully capable of executing the tasks set before it.

Allenby's plans

Sir Edmund Allenby intended to inflict 'a decisive defeat on the enemy and driving him from the line Nablus-Samaria-Tul Karim-Caesarea'.[87] To accomplish this he concentrated five of his seven infantry divisions into a restructured XXI Corps to break through the Ottoman lines adjacent to the sea. Immediately after which, his Desert Mounted Corps (three cavalry or mounted divisions) would 'pass round the left of the XXI Corps…to cut the enemy's railway communications and to block his retreat in the northerly and north-easterly direction'.[88] In doctrinal terms, Allenby intended to execute a single envelopment of the Ottoman Seventh and Eighth Armies. Once again, his operational intent was clear and lucidly stated for his subordinate commanders.

Allenby was determined to ensure that his plan remained shrouded in secrecy and the EEF conducted elaborate deception measures to mislead Liman von Sanders. These are well documented in the extant English-language historiography and included active demonstration operations along the Jordan River (Chaytor's Force), air superiority

operations to deny enemy aerial observation, phantom wireless units, elaborate dummy positions and installations, and exceptional operations security measures within the EEF.

At corps level much thought was given to the execution of Allenby's intent. The orders of the XXI Corps emphasised the importance of rapid tactical movement, accurate and constant reports, and the proper marking of lanes for the oncoming cavalry.[89] Importantly, the XXI Corps plan included the use of an 'advanced XXI Corps H.Q.' that when opened would control combat operations. (All other functions, such as intelligence, logistics, personnel, etc., would remain in, or be routed to, the main XXI Corps headquarters.) This arrangement remains in use today and is called the corps forward command post.[90] In establishing this, Lieutenant General E.S.Bulfin, the corps commander, ensured that he could remain in close proximity to his advancing divisions and could maintain constant command and control. The corresponding Desert Mounted Corps operations order dovetailed neatly into Bulfin's operation and is especially noteworthy in its road and transport instructions that included priorities, as well as routes.[91] The principal technical difference between these orders published in September 1918 and the earlier counterpart orders (Beersheba and Gaza) published in October 1917 is in the selection of Allenby's objective—the decisive defeat of the Turks versus driving him out of his lines.

Many of the techniques, tactics, and doctrines associated with the BEF in France in the summer of 1918 manifested themselves in Palestine. In *Battle Tactics of the Western Front, The British Army's Art of Attack, 1916–18,* Paddy Griffith identified the characteristics of the BEF in the final eighteen months of the war that enabled it to conduct combined arms warfare.[92] Griffith noted the evolution of a mature artillery system, the production of tactical instructions and pamphlets to disseminate doctrine, the growth of a sophisticated system of tactical schools and courses, changes in tactics reflecting reliance on light machine guns, and changes in command and signals aimed at controlling the mobile battle as enabling factors. Clearly similar patterns are to be seen in Allenby's preparations for Megiddo. Moreover, the evidence that Allenby stressed preparation for open warfare and his vision of the decisive battle show that the lessons of August 1918 in France were not far from his mind as he planned Megiddo.

At the tactical level, with the exception of tanks, the divisional plans of Allenby's army bore much resemblance to those of the British Fourth Army at Amiens, fought on 8 August 1918.[93] At Amiens, the Fourth Army's infantry divisions attacked with two brigades abreast and a third in reserve. The attack began at 0420 with a carefully co-ordinated artillery barrage, during which the artillery 'lifted and shifted' to the enemy's rear to accommodate the forward movement of troops. Two-thirds of the available heavy artillery was allocated to the counter-battery fight and the air plan focused on the delivery of air superiority and ground support. The artillery barrage was short and was followed by immediate infantry assaults. Australian, British, and Canadian infantry effectively used Lewis guns, trench mortars, and rifle and hand grenades to bypass and isolate German strong points. Allenby's infantry divisions' plans mirrored these techniques, which had resulted in the victory that Ludendorff famously called 'the Black Day of the German Army'.[94]

Historical opinion on whether or not it was Allenby himself who was the brain behind the plan is changing. Cyril Falls, the author of the official British history of the campaign, in his *Armageddon 1918,* written in 1964, maintained that Allenby, returning from a

morning ride in late August 1918, changed what could be called 'the short envelopment' to 'the long envelopment' ('to the astonishment of his corps commanders', according to Falls).[95] Jonathan Newell, writing in 1991, took a more reasoned approach and stated:

> it is simplistic and misleading to state so categorically that the plan was solely Allenby's creation, on the contrary, there is strong evidence that it was not drawn up in some kind of vacuum but rather under the influence of earlier assessments of how most effectively British forces could advance to complete the conquest of Palestine and Syria.[96]

Certainly the activities of the EEF from May through August 1918 lend credence to Newell's thinking.

Ottoman plans

Liman von Sanders had twelve under-strength infantry divisions (and one cavalry division) with which to defend a 90km front. According to Ottoman Army doctrine in 1918, an infantry division would ordinarily be assigned a front of 5km—thus Liman von Sanders should have had eighteen divisions in the line.[97] Moreover, Ottoman Army doctrine maintained that each corps and army would have a regiment or a division in reserve (depending on terrain and roads), making a grand total of 'around twenty-five infantry divisions' as the minimal doctrinal requirement to hold the Ottoman line.[98] These doctrinal templates were based on divisions at full strength and Liman von Sanders' army fielded infantry divisions operating at less than 20 per cent of authorised strength. This meant, in real terms, that Liman von Sanders attempted to defend his lines with about 15 per cent of the doctrinal requirement necessary according to the Ottoman Army's tactics. Counting the required reserves (twenty-five divisions), the situation was even worse—Liman von Sanders had less than 10 per cent of the force required to defend a 90km front.

The defensive plan was simple and required the infantry to fight for their positions without giving up any ground.[99] Any ground lost would be retaken by immediate counter-attacks by reserves. The depleted infantry divisions manned their lines and retained, in most cases, a single battalion in reserve.[100] Even at corps and army level, the Turks mostly retained only a single battalion in reserve. The sole exception was Cevat's Eighth Army, which retained the entire 46th Infantry Division in reserve, the only army (of three) to do so. Cevat positioned the 46th Infantry Division in the centre of the Eighth Army sector (near Tul Karem).

The coastal sector where Allenby's main blow would fall was the responsibility of Cevat's Eighth Army and Cevat placed the XXII Corps on the coast and placed a provisional corps named the Von Oppen Group inland to link with the Seventh Army. The XXII Corps disposed the 7th Infantry Division and the 20th Infantry Divisions from west to east respectively. As mentioned earlier, Cevat retained the 46th Infantry Division in army reserve, 12km from the front in the centre of his sector.

The defensive frontages of the two front-line divisions in Cevat's XXII Corps were among the shortest in the entire Yildirim Army Group. The 7th Infantry Division held a front of 7km while the 20th Infantry Division held 5km of trenches. In the adjacent

Oppen Group and on the 20th Division's left flank was the famous 19th Infantry Division, which held a front of 10km. In fact, then, at the point where Allenby struck the Turks themselves achieved a fair degree of concentration of their scant resources, the 20th Infantry Division actually being within the doctrinal 5km template required by contemporary Ottoman tactics. (Of course, the crippling levels of reduced operating strength essentially negated any usefulness of templated planning by the Ottoman Army.)

At the operational level, there were no secondary lines of defence nor were there any fall-back positions in the event of a retreat. The Yildirim army intended to fight it out or die. At the tactical level, the Ottoman defences consisted of a primary line of trenches with a support trench. Although the Turks had been on this line for about eight months it was incomplete and weak in many locations. Fortification and building materials were in very short supply.[101] This was particularly true of barbed wire, concrete, and wooden beams (for overhead cover). Even sandbags, which the army had in some numbers, were routinely used to repair soldiers' uniforms and shoes instead of for their intended purpose. These shortages mostly affected the construction of strong points and bunkers.

There was an acute awareness of the weaknesses of the Ottoman position in Palestine at almost every level of command. Several days before Allenby's attack Cevat Paşa expressed grave concern about the lack of adequate reserves in a letter to Liman von Sanders.[102] As he was expecting an enemy attack, Cevat also requested permission to withdraw from his forward lines to avoid high losses. Seventh Army commander Mustafa Kemal was also a thorn in the side of both Liman von Sanders and the Ottoman General Staff and frequently dispatched letters recommending the abandonment of Palestine and the creation of large strategic reserves. The previous Seventh Army commander, Fevzi Paşa, had noted serious problems with the inefficient lines of communication and had also noted that the 'supply and recruiting Zone [was not] proportionate with the strength and situation of the army'.[103] He meant, of course, that there were not enough conscripts in the theatre provinces to sustain the strength of the army. Moreover, Fevzi mentioned that there were combat skills proficiency problems caused by the inability of his under-strength army to withdraw front-line units for training in the rear areas (with the exception of the assault battalions and machine-gun detachments).

Ottoman morale

By late 1918 confidence levels were exceptionally low, and this accelerated the problem of poor morale that afflicted the Ottoman Army in Palestine. This point is very well covered in the literature in English and many of the details need not be reiterated here.[104] Allenby's divisions captured hundreds of prisoners a month during the six months prior to Megiddo and came to rely on them as an important source of intelligence. Almost universally, Ottoman prisoners complained of low morale, bad logistics (especially food and clothing), and a general lack of support for the war itself. There were other factors at work as well.

One issue that worked its way around the Ottoman Army in Palestine was the withdrawal of some of the German units to the Caucasus. This concerned Liman von Sanders and it also bothered many Turkish soldiers. A British report summarised the issue: 'a serious blow has been dealt to the morale of the Turkish army in Palestine by the departure of a large proportion of the German combat units'.[105] This kind of thinking was

accompanied by contemporary newspaper reports of allied successes on the western front in the late summer of 1918. The cordial relations developed between Turks and Germans over three years were frayed badly by the last year of the war.[106]

Another problem involved replacements—not simply that there were not enough of them but rather the quality of men that the Yildirim Army Group was receiving by 1918. Since the number of draft-age young men was insufficient to maintain the strength of the army, the Ottoman Empire was compelled to draw on other sources of manpower that included deserters, convalescents, and men who had been previously rejected for active service. In Palestine, the Base Details Branch at Jerusalem (12th Depot Regiment) was responsible for collecting deserters, convalescents, men returning from leave, and men who had either avoided or been exempted from service.[107] The branch sent the deserters to the local prison for courts-martial and imprisonment, where upon release they were posted to active units.[108] For example, heavy casualties rendered the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 59th Infantry Regiment (19th Infantry Division) combatineffective and they were rebuilt in early 1918. The battalions received drafts of men from Kurdish labour battalions from the Tarsus District and replacements from the Jerusalem depot most of whom were former deserters.[109] British intelligence noted that the Ottoman Army's divisions in Palestine were becoming much weaker in the quality of manpower compared with combat divisions in Anatolia, the Caucasus and Europe.[110]

Finally, relations between officers and men, often tenuous in the Ottoman Army, were becoming increasingly strained. War weariness, at least in Palestine, had set in, making many of the soldiers 'broken in spirit and tired out'.[111] British intelligence noted that 'the morale of the Turkish prisoners is not nearly as good as in the Dardanelles Campaign' and that 'Arabs were especially unhappy'.[112]

Strategic surprise and Ottoman intelligence

It is commonly held that the Turks had been expecting a major British offensive for some time but were unable to pinpoint its location. Cyril Falls wrote in 1930 that 'the enemy was thoroughly deceived, wholly unaware of the devastating blow that was about to be dealt to him'.[113] Subsequent English-language historians have repeated this theme consistently and it has become part of the Allenby legend.[114] Allenby's plan involved an elaborate deception scheme designed to focus the Turks on the Jordan Valley and fool them into thinking that it was there that he intended to attack. Much of the strategic beauty of Allenby's attack involved the skilful concentration of troops hidden by an elaborate deception. The dramatic and surprisingly easy break through the Turkish lines on 19 September appeared to vindicate the totality of Allenby's planning effort. In fact, the success of Allenby's deception operation has never been seriously questioned and the assumption that it was a major contribution to his victory detracts from the tactical accomplishments of Allenby's XXI Corps.

The official Turkish history states that on 17 September 1918, Ottoman Army intelligence placed five infantry divisions and a French detachment in the west opposite the Eighth Army.[115] Moreover, Ottoman intelligence reckoned that two divisions faced the Seventh Army and two mounted divisions were on the Jordan River front. The Eighth Army commander (Cevat) was especially concerned about the threat to his front and requested permission on 17 September 1918 to rearrange his defensive arrangements with

a view to pulling back from his vulnerable front-line positions.[116] This point is mentioned by Falls in a footnote referring to an Indian Army deserter captured by the Turks on the same day (17 September) who revealed that a major British attack was scheduled for 19 September.[117] However, Falls concluded that Liman von Sanders thought the desertion was a ruse and denied Cevat's request. It should be noted that, in his memoirs, Liman von Sanders did not mention that he was, in any way, surprised by Allenby's attack, either in location, time, or intensity.[118]

The objective evidence supporting this claim is that there were no Ottoman troop movements in reply to Allenby's deception plan. In theory, Ottoman reserves should have been drawn to the Jordan River front; in fact, exactly the reverse happened. At the strategic level, Liman von Sanders' only incoming reinforcement, the 2nd Caucasian Cavalry Division, was routed to the Eighth Army sector and began to arrive at Tul Karem on 16 September.[119] At the operational level, the entire 46th Infantry Division, in reserve near the Eighth Army's headquarters at Tul Kerem, was moved 13km to the south-west on 17 September to a new reserve position at Tire—directly behind Cevat's threatened Ottoman XXII Corps on the coast.[120] At the tactical level, Turkish regiments on the front line were alerted that a major attack was imminent.[121]

In studies of the last two years of World War I, much can be understood about intentions and priorities by examining where the heavy artillery was positioned.[122] This was true for both offensive and defensive operations because counter-battery artillery operations (using heavy guns and howitzers) had become such an essential part of battle tactics. In Palestine in mid-September 1918, the 'majority of the (Yildirim) army's heavy artillery was deployed in the XXII Corps area'.[123] In fact, three of five Ottoman Army heavy artillery battalions (the 72nd, 73rd and 75th) available in Palestine were deployed in the Eighth Army sector.[124] The remaining two heavy artillery battalions were assigned to Mustafa Kemel's adjacent Seventh Army. Significantly, no Ottoman heavy artillery battalions were positioned on the Jordan River front, although an Austrian heavy artillery battery served there.

The infantry divisions on the threatened front were some of the most highly regarded fighting formations in the Ottoman Army—reflecting the strategic priority of the coastal plain. The 7th and 19th Infantry Divisions were part of Esat Paşa's III Corps at Gallipoli and had earned fine reputations there. The 20th Infantry Division was a pre-war active army division that was raised and stationed in Palestine and it could be called an 'Arab' division. But, as a matter of record, the division had fought well in the latter phases of Gallipoli and was so highly regarded that it was selected for deployment to Galicia (on the eastern front) for a year of combat against the Russians. When the 20th Infantry Division was sent to Palestine in 1918, it was regarded as one of the best divisions in the Ottoman Army.[125]

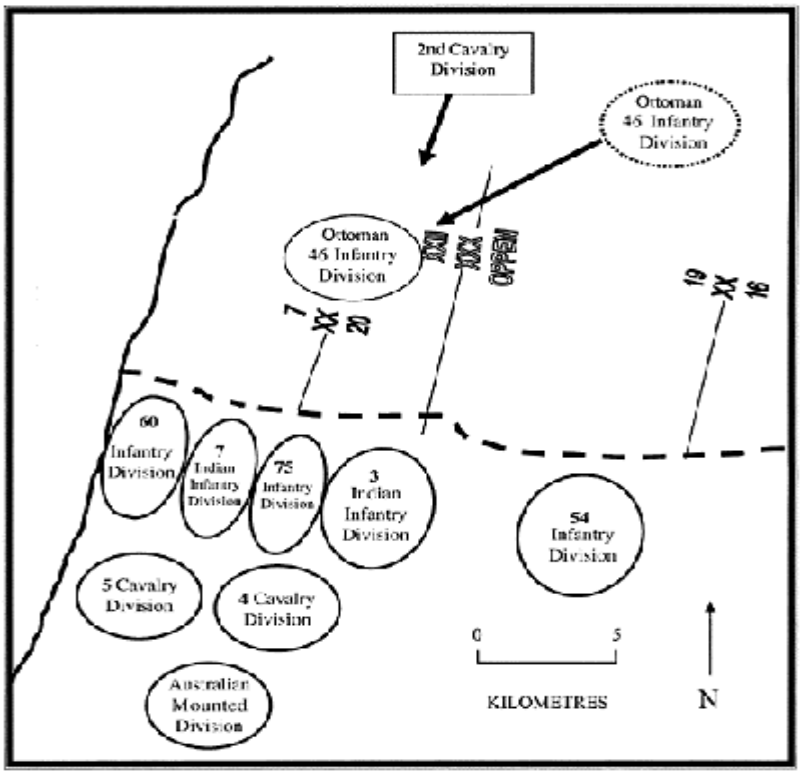
Altogether the evidence indicates that the Yildirim army was not surprised by Allenby's deception plan and Ottoman commanders were well aware of the strength and location of the impending attack. The few reserves and reinforcements that were available to Liman von Sanders were shifted to the west and not to the east as desired by Allenby. Moreover, the important coastal plain was heavily weighted by both experienced infantry divisions and by the army's heavy artillery, making that area the most strongly defended sector of the Ottoman front.

Megiddo: the Ottoman perspective

This section will focus on what happened to the four Ottoman Army infantry divisions facing Allenby's XXI Corps on 19 September 1918. This day was critical because, like the fall of Beersheba during the previous year, the destruction of these divisions caused a rupture of the Turkish lines resulting in complete failure of the Yildirim army's strategic position. The official Turkish history provides little insight into this catastrophe and yields only a scant seven pages on the topic. (Cyril Falls used twenty-three pages in his official British history.)

The main attack of four British infantry divisions (60th, 75th, 3rd Indian, and 7th Indian) fell on the two divisions of the Ottoman XXII Corps (see Map 5.1). These were the 7th Infantry Division commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Nasuhi and the 20th Infantry Division, commanded by German Lieutenant Colonel Veysel. Neither the British nor the Turkish campaign histories address the actual numerical superiority achieved by Allenby in this critical sector. The most commonly accepted figures are that Cevat's 8,000 infantry and 130 guns faced Allenby's 35,000 infantry, 9,000 cavalry, and 383 guns.[126] These figures do not separate clearly the Ottoman XXII Corps, the von Oppen Group, or the army reserves. Writing in 1967, retired General Fahri Belen (himself a participant in the Palestine campaigns) listed the strength of the Ottoman XXII Corps as 3,000 infantry, 134 machine guns and ninety-four guns.[127] Belen also listed the strength of the 46th Infantry Division as 500 infantrymen in two regiments, of which one regiment was 'Arab'. Assuming that each of the eight British brigades attacking the XXII Corps contained about 3,000 infantrymen, about 24,000 Indian and British infantry (supported by almost 400 guns) attacked 2,000 Turkish infantry (supported by 100 guns) near daybreak on 19 September 1918. These figures do not count the four British infantry brigades in reserve, the 53rd Infantry Division, or the three cavalry and mounted divisions.

The war diary of the Ottoman 7th Infantry Division recorded that enemy artillery shelling began at 0435 and that the enemy's attack was in full swing by 0730. The division reported that 'the front cracked' at 0830. [128] At regimental level, the 20th Infantry Regiment also reported heavy shelling at 0435, which was especially heavy in the adjacent sector (21st Infantry) and 'within minutes our communications were broken'.[129] Moreover, the accuracy of the shelling indicated that it was registered effectively and at 0510 the preponderance of shelling shifted on to the 20th Infantry itself. This was followed by an immediate infantry attack and at 0535 the headquarters command post of the 20th Infantry Regiment came under direct enemy rifle fire.[130] Shortly thereafter, 'English infantry and cavalry began to mop up'.[131]



Map 5.1 Megiddo, 19 September 1918.

Notes

a The Ottoman 46th Infantry Division was moved to El Tire on 17 September 1918 and the incoming 2nd Cavalry Division was rerouted into the Eighth Army sector as well.

b The eight forward brigades of the 60th, 75th, 3rd and 7th Indian Divisions contained 24,000 infantry men and were supported by over 400 guns. There were about 2,000 Turks in the 7th and 20th Divisions, supported by about 100 guns. Allenby achieved superiorities of twelve to one in infantry and four to one in artillery.

The 21st Infantry Regiment suffered a similar fate. Shelling began at 0430 and the enemy infantry attacked at 0450.[132] At 0615, the regiment reported that the enemy had penetrated completely through its lines and had broken into the second line of defences held by the 19th Infantry Regiment.[133] News from the other units was equally bleak, but despite the disaster, Ottoman commanders attempted to restore the tactical situation. About 0730, the adjacent 20th Infantry Regiment sent its reserve company to the aid of the collapsing 21st Infantry.[134] However, this was too small a force to stop the two British infantry divisions that were pouring into the sector. In the adjacent sector the regiments of the 20th Infantry Division received a similar pounding.[135]

Although wire communications were cut almost immediately, runners carried word of the debacle to the staff of the Ottoman XXII Corps in El Tire. At 0800, the corps' last reserve, the 17th Engineer Battalion, was sent forward.[136] At the same time, the XXII Corps received word that the Eighth Army had released the reserve 46th Infantry Division to the corps. In the next hour the corps staff sent reports to the army staff outlining the criticality of the situation and the fact that it was attempting to organise a withdrawal.[137] At 0850, Cevat's Eighth Army sent a dismal report to Liman von Sanders at the Yildirim Army Group outlining the situation:

> I am in great difficulty because of the terrible situation on the right wing. The 7th Division is out of the fight. The 22nd Corps is retreating from El Tire and most of its artillery is lost. The corps is working to preserve itself, but its commander is worried about encirclement. The enemy has broken through our lines in spite of our counter-attacks. The 19th Division is retreating toward Kefri Kasim. Without assistance operations are impossible.[138]

Whether this report ever reached its destination is unknown.

In his memoirs Liman von Sanders claimed that communications with the Eighth Army ceased about 0700 on 19 September 1918.[139] He also claimed not to have known about the breakthrough in the western coast sector until later except through the reports of Colonel von Oppen. In any case, the Turkish official history and Liman von Sanders' memoirs coincide in their description of his attempts to repair the tactical situation by noting that he ordered the Seventh Army to organise a relief force of one battalion from the 110th Infantry Regiment and one battalion from the Depot Regiment for operations near El Tire.[140] He also ordered that the force be composed of fresh troops and should include as many cavalry detachments as possible.

In the adjacent sector of the von Oppen Group, the 19th Infantry Division was attacked by the all-British 54th Infantry Division. The mission of the 54th was to push forward and act as the pivot for Allenby's encircling left wing. Although this attack was not as strong as those on the divisions of the XXII Corps, the 19th Division was shelled heavily and subjected to similar infantry assaults. Falls claimed that the 54th broke through the Turkish lines, but the number of captured men and quantity of equipment (700 soldiers, nine guns, and twenty machine guns) attest to the fact that most of the division managed to withdraw successfully.[141] In fact, both of von Oppen's divisions, the 19th and 16th Infantry Divisions, were intact and retreating under his orders.[142]

The 16th Infantry Division was the least engaged of the four front-line divisions of the Eighth Army and was attacked by part of the 54th Infantry Division and the French DFPS (a brigade-sized force of colonial and Armenian troops). The division reported that it was expecting the attack and held itself in readiness during the night of 18/19 September.[143] Its 47th and 48th Infantry Regiments held the line and the division had the strongest local reserve of any division on the Palestine front (the 1st Battalion, 125 Infantry, part of the 48th Regiment's machine-gun company, and the divisional assault, engineer, and cavalry companies). The division was attacked at 0450 and situation reports flowed freely up over telephone lines, which remained intact.[144] The soldiers of the forward regiments could clearly see the British assault and the difficulties of the adjacent 19th Infantry Division. At 1000, the 1st Battalion 125th Infantry and the cavalry troop were committed and the division commander learned that the XXII Corps was in retreat. 'Heavy enemy rifle and artillery fire made the tactical situation difficult but manageable.'[145] By 1700, the division had committed all of its reserves but was still holding its positions. About an hour later the division began to retreat under pressure only because of the disastrous situation on its right flank.

By noon, Cevat was aware that enemy cavalry had taken Afule and was advancing on his headquarters at Tul Karem.[146] Concerned about the prospect of capture, he considered moving his headquarters into the hills to his north. By 1630 he knew that El Tire had fallen, but he determined to stay in place for as long as possible in order to maintain effective command. As darkness fell on 19 September, Cevat was finally and completely cut off from news and reports from his XXII Corps and he began to move his headquarters north.[147]

Megiddo: the British perspective

It is apparent that Allenby's army used the same techniques and tactics that were used so effectively by the British Fourth Army at Amiens.[148] All five of the attacking British and Indian infantry divisions employed two brigades in the assault, with one in reserve. The artillery plan was complex and was based on shifting fire forward as the infantry advanced. The experiences of the British and Indian Army's divisions are outlined to illustrate many of the examples of the British Army's 'Art of the Attack' as it existed in late 1918.

The 60th Infantry Division was ordered to seize a bridgehead across the Nahr el Faliq (a river wadi running parallel and behind the Turkish trenches). The artillery began firing at 0430 and the infantry began moving ten minutes later at a rate of advance of seventy-five yards a minute behind the creeping barrage.[149] By 0550, most of the Turkish redoubts and their first line of trenches had been taken. In the 180th Brigade sector, the Turks managed to get their artillery into action, causing fifty-four casualties in the Guides battalion before it reached the enemy wire. The division continued to advance, mopping up isolated groups of Ottoman soldiers, and by 1700 occupied Tul Karem station (an advance of about 18km). Ottoman resistance was moderate at one redoubt but was considered light overall.

The 7th Indian Division was tasked to break through the enemy lines. The rate of advance of the creeping barrage for this division was set at one hundred yards a

minute.[150] After the infantry broke through the lines, the divisional artillery was ordered to displace forward to support future operations and, while it was moving, the heavy artillery was ordered to shift to an infantry support role (the Ottoman artillery having been suppressed). Resistance in this sector was minimal.

The 75th Infantry Division was ordered to break the enemy's lines and take the village of El Tire. Ottoman resistance in the forward trenches was light. A staff officer in the 232nd Brigade noted that 'speed was essential—the shelling was intense—after which officers were able to cross no man's land on horseback'.[151] He also noted that 'once alive to the situation, the Turks fought hard'. As the division approached El Tire, the Turks' resistance stiffened and caused numerous casualties.[152]

The 3rd Indian Division attacked using platoon columns and the same intense, but brief, creeping bombardment. As the platoon columns closed on the enemy's trenches they broke into squad columns to exploit the gaps.[153] Resistance in this division's sector ranged from minimal to stout. The opposing Turkish artillery was alert and fired in support of its infantry; however, much of its fire was ineffective due to the sandy soil negating the effects of high explosive shells.

By nightfall, the infantry divisions had broken through the Ottoman lines and had passed the waiting 4th and 5th Cavalry and the Australian Mounted Divisions into the fields beyond to begin the last great cavalry operation of history. The infantry divisions themselves continued to fight and march rapidly in a ceaseless pursuit that ultimately destroyed eight Ottoman infantry divisions and two Ottoman cavalry divisions.[154]

End game

According to Liman von Sanders, the 7th and 20th Infantry Divisions 'completely disappeared' on 19 September. However, he claimed not to know it at the time and he assumed that they 'were falling back to the prepared positions in the rear'.[155] In fact, small groups of survivors managed to fall back and continue fighting. The cadre of the 7th Infantry Division, for example, fell back to Mesudiye, where it established the division headquarters.[156] The British attacked this group the next day and by 1400, the survivors were completely scattered and had 'melted away'. The 20th and 21st Infantry Regiments, likewise, existed until the afternoon of 21 September.[157]

The fortunate 16th Infantry Division had much better luck than the other Ottoman infantry divisions on the line that day. This division conducted a fighting retreat on 20 and 21 September, during which it lost most of its artillery.[158] However, by 22 September it too was reduced to less than 480 officers and men.[159] By 24 September, the battered division reported that there were 'enemy horse units everywhere and that it was relying on machine guns to keep them at bay'.[160] Later that day, the division headquarters, co-located with the surviving headquarters elements of the 19th Infantry Division, came under heavy rifle fire from Indian cavalry at ranges of less than 150m. Both headquarters were overrun and captured.[161] The 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 125th Infantry Regiment and the combined assault/engineers company survived the debacle and fought a delaying action to Damascus, where they finally were captured on 1 October 1918, ending the story of this division.

At 1500 on 21 September, Cevat Paşa, the Eighth Army commander, who had asked to withdraw in the anticipation of a heavy attack, got in his automobile and departed

Nablus.[162] He made his way to the sanctuary of Mustafa Kemal's Seventh Army headquarters. Only his chief of staff and several staff officers accompanied Cevat. It was the end of the Ottoman Eighth Army.

Comparison and analysis

At Amiens the British Fourth Army had captured over 15,000 prisoners and 374 guns, and had killed or wounded another 9,000 Germans.[163] This was accomplished at the relatively cheap cost of about 9,000 men in a single day. Moreover, by nightfall, the Fourth Army advanced about six miles and had broken through three enemy trench lines. At Amiens, the Germans were able to bring substantial reinforcements into the fight, which brought the British offensive to a halt.

In comparison, on 19 September 1918, Allenby's XXI Corps reported capturing about 7,000 prisoners and about 100 guns.[164] Allenby's men had advanced a startling seventeen miles at a cost of some 1,500 casualties. They probably killed and wounded another 3,000 Turks.[165] The difference was that, at Megiddo, the Turks were unable to bring enough reinforcements into the fight, resulting in a complete collapse of the operational situation of the Eighth Army and the strategic posture of the Yildirim Army Group.

In the same way that British fighting methods prevailed over the Germans in late 1918, so too did they prevail over the Turks. The performance of the Ottoman Army on 19 September 1918 was similar to the performance of the German Army on 8 August 1918. The same could be said for the performance of Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force and the performance of the British Fourth Army.

Up to a point, in its pre-battle training, the Ottoman Army in Palestine continued to attempt to adhere to effective training programmes and routines. It activated, trained, and employed German-style assault troops and machinegun companies. Moreover, it incorporated lessons learned from the western front into its training and operations. In its planning and deployment, the Turks weighted the vulnerable coastal sector in September 1918. Ottoman commanders, at all levels, noted serious deficiencies in the tactical and operations posture of the Eighth Army, and attempted to recommend solutions.

The Ottoman manpower situation in Palestine bordered on the absurd and there was no solution on hand. This was compounded by serious problems in morale that caused desertions and intentional surrenders. In effect, the Ottoman Army's infantry divisions were reduced to the size of weak regiments, mirroring a problem that affected the front-line German divisions at Amiens. This negated tactics and defensive templates that were designed to be executed by units at nearly full strength.

Liman von Sanders could be criticised for not withdrawing the Eighth Army to a more defensible position, as suggested by Cevat. This would, at the very least, have preserved the army to fight another day. However, transport and animal services were in as bad a condition as the human element of the army. Liman von Sanders made the point that in mid-1918, 'there was a gradual failing of the draft and pack animals'.[166] This was the result of inadequate grain supplies, poor pasture, and lack of good water. While the Ottoman infantry might have been able to conduct some kind of deliberate withdrawal or fighting retreat, the artillery, ammunition trains, service support units, and hospitals were almost static by September 1918. This point is confirmed by the Turkish official

history.[167] The resulting lack of tactical mobility mandated that the Yildirim Army Group remain in its lines and attempt to fight the British using the bravery and determination that had made the Ottoman Army such a deadly adversary in the past.

Conclusions: combat effectiveness

This chapter has focused on the Ottoman Army's operational doctrines and organisational architecture in Palestine in late 1918. The Ottoman Army appeared operationally ineffective in the Megiddo Campaign in that it failed to integrate the forces necessary to hold the line against Allenby's army. This was mainly a function of its inability to marshal adequate forces at the decisive point on a 90km front. The overwhelming superiority of Allenby's army, in qualitative and quantitative terms, negated any possible Ottoman operational solution.

It should be noted, however, that Ottoman intelligence provided the Turks with advance warning of Allenby's attack. In response to this, all available mobile reserves were positioned closer to the threatened sector. Moreover, the critical right wing of the Eighth Army was weighted with most of the available heavy artillery and timely warnings went out to troops concerning the imminent attack. In terms of performance, given its crushing inferiority, the Ottoman Army in Palestine did as well as could be expected under the circumstances.

At the operational level, the most serious failure of the Ottoman Army at Megiddo was in its inability to mount effective counter-attacks. By late 1918, it was a foregone conclusion that the British could take multiple lines of trenches at will. Therefore, an effective Ottoman defence rested on determined corps or army-level counter-attacks (which had saved the Germans at Amiens). This precept was deeply embedded in Ottoman and German operational doctrines as well.

The most visible failure of the day was the virtual disappearance and destruction of Cevat's reserve 46th Infantry Division. This division was specifically moved into the Ottoman XXII Corps area as a reserve for counter-attacks and Cevat released it at 0800 on 19 September. Unfortunately, Colonel Refet immediately split the two-regiment division by sending one regiment to the beleaguered 20th Infantry Division's failing position at Kabak Tepe.[168] He despatched the remaining regiment to fortify Sehpali Tepe near the corps headquarters. These deployments were an exercise in futility and according to Liman von Sanders 'the weak 46th Division under Major Tiller made an effective resistance and checked the hostile advance for a time. The greater part of the division was soon destroyed.'[169]

The tactical effectiveness of the Ottoman Army in this case study is much harder to assess because of the brevity of the battle and the absence of detailed Ottoman records. Resistance to Allenby's attack was uneven along the front and this alone may have doomed a coherent Turkish defence. However, the regimental and divisional reserves were committed in a timely fashion and reflected this traditional strength of the Ottoman Army. The most glaring deficiency was the loss of situational awareness caused by the breakdown in communications. This was the most telling problem for the Turks and it stands in stark contrast to their performance in previous battles.

It also appears that the Turks weakened their conventional infantry forces by changing the organisational architecture of their infantry divisions to include assault troop battalions. When combined with an eroding pool of high-quality manpower, this must have had a negative effect on the ability of regular Ottoman infantry to hold the line. No amount of additional training regimes could correct this problem. The final result was that the Turks could no longer hold back conventional British infantry attacks that were executed using the latest British fighting methods.

6
Conclusion

The strength of an army

> The defensive lines prepared north of Aleppo were expected to hold back Allenby's army for 4–5 months.
>
> (Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, 1991[1])

This chapter concludes the study and offers an analysis of what the strengths of the Ottoman Army were during the course of World War I. It also examines the Caucasian and Persian theatres of operations in 1918 and the performance of the Ottoman forces engaged there. These campaigns are important because Megiddo was such a shattering defeat that it must be placed in an understandable strategic and operational context. Perhaps the central question for an analysis of Ottoman combat effectiveness in 1918 asks whether Megiddo was a generalised or localised reflection of the Ottoman Army's combat performance in the last year of the war.

The Ottoman Army's performance in 1918 is overshadowed by the disasters in Palestine and Syria. Moreover, the general collapse of the Central Powers in September and October of 1918 reinforces the idea that the Ottoman Army also suffered a collapse of will and fighting spirit, as did the armies of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Germany. However, it is often forgotten that the Turks fought successful campaigns in Azerbaijan and in Persia until after the armistice.

Ottoman combat effectiveness will be analysed by year from 1914 to 1918. The Ottoman Army's demobilisation is explained also for the first time in English. Moreover, because major parts of this study dealt with the British Army, comments on its performance are included as well. In conclusion, a broad summary is offered that establishes the demonstrated strengths of the Ottoman Army.

Competing strategic priorities

In the late spring of 1918, the Ottoman General Staff was caught between the competing strategic priorities that emerged as result of operational success in Trans-Caucasia. Instead of prioritising a single strategic theatre, the Turks tried to maintain a balance between Palestine and Trans-Caucasia in the allocation of their scarce resources.

Liman von Sanders was especially critical of the fact that the TransCaucasian campaigns took men and material away from his theatre.[2] He particularly commented that the Trans-Caucasian campaigns used large amounts of coal, which was very scarce, for the railroads and shipping necessary to support the offensives. Later historians maintained this position.[3] In fact, no units of the Ottoman Army were sent from Palestine

to support the Trans-Caucasian campaigns. In 1918 only a single Ottoman infantry division and a single infantry regiment were sent to eastern Anatolia from anywhere in the empire.[4] These forces were moved there by sea from Constantinople (not from Palestine). Moreover, in 1918, the Ottoman General Staff actually deployed significant forces from Caucasia to Palestine. These units were the 2nd Caucasian Cavalry Division and the 37th Infantry Division.

As for material, during the conduct of the campaigns in eastern Anatolia and Armenia, the Turks captured huge stores of weapons and equipment.[5] In a sense, the equipment requirements of these campaigns, after June 1918, became literally self-supporting. An example may be found in the 9th Infantry Regiment, which had two battalions re-equipped with 2,000 Russian rifles, ten machine guns, and two artillery pieces.[6] Other items incorporated into the Ottoman Army included trucks, engineer equipment, aircraft, communications gear, and horses.[7]

A case can be made, however, that the Trans-Caucasian campaigns drained scarce manpower from the Ottoman force pool, which at this point in the war was almost empty. A representative infantry division from the Ottoman forces in Trans-Caucasia, the 5th Caucasian Infantry Division, had 330 officers and 7,403 men assigned to its rolls on 5 August 1918.[8] This stands in stark contrast to the Ottoman divisions in Palestine, which at the same time, seldom had more than 2,000 officers and men in the ranks.

This relative wealth of manpower was a function of the Ottoman replacement system, which at least in this area, was still functional. A regiment of the 15th Infantry Division may be used as an example of this continuing function. The 38th Infantry Regiment arrived in Ankara on 14 June 1918, where it began training.[9] On 21 June, the 7th Depot Regiment sent 840 replacements to the regiment, which were divided among the three battalions. In early July another 620 men were assigned to the regiment, bringing it to nearly full strength (see Table 6.1) and it continued training. The 38th Infantry Regiment was sent east and found itself in combat by mid-August 1918. The other regiments of the 15th Infantry Division received similar support before being sent to the combat zone.[10] The 15th Infantry Division took the Russian city of Petrovsk eight days after the armistice was signed at Mudros. (This will be discussed later in this chapter.)

As to the question of whether this manpower could have been used to better effect in Palestine, the issue of intra-theatre communications must be addressed. The decision to use a portion of the available Ottoman manpower in the Trans-Caucasian campaigns was made in spring 1918. At that time, Allenby was rebuilding his army and Palestine was operationally quiet. Additionally, the dire consequences of the failed Ludendorff offensives were not at all clear. It was not until later in 1918 that an accurate understanding of the actual strategic situation clarified for the Ottoman General Staff—by which time it was too late to shift manpower priorities. Even if the Turks had wanted to move more men into Palestine in the summer of 1918, under the best of circumstances, it would have taken several months to move units or replacements between theatres. Finally, it must be noted that having more men in Palestine meant that more supplies would have had to be moved there as well. Unlike the campaigns in Trans-Caucasia, which were nearly self-supporting, the lines of communications that serviced Palestine remained poor until the very end of the war and the Yildirim Army Group was always short of food, munitions, and material.[11]

Table 6.1 Strength returns, 38th Infantry Regiment, 8 July 1918

Unit	*Officers*	*Men*	*Rifles*	*Animals*	*Machine guns*
Regt HQ	4	46	6	29	
1st Battalion	19	741	707	171	4
2nd Battalion	18	750	679	179	4
3rd Battalion	n.a.	844	n.a.	179	4
MG Company 4	126	63	55	4	
Artillery Bn.	n.a.	450			
Total	45	2,957			

Source: ATASE, 38nci Piyade Alayı Tarihçesi, 1970, 61, unpublished staff study (Muhittin Turagay), ATASE Library Record 26–360.

Combat effectiveness, 1914

The first eight months of 1914 were a time of reconstitution and training for the battered Ottoman Army, after which it was put on a war footing. In the wake of the Balkan Wars, the Turks underwent a period of rigorous self-criticism and self-examination. From this emerged a determination on the part of Ahmet Izzet Paşa and Enver Paşa to engage in a corrective series of initiatives and reforms designed to recast the army as an effective force. These initiatives are summarised in Table 6.2.

Upon mobilisation, the cadre divisions of the Ottoman Army were brought up to war establishment with reservists, many of whom were experienced combat veterans from the Balkan Wars. After mobilisation and concentration, commanders cross-attached artillery, cavalry, engineers, and Jandarma units to infantry regiments. These combined arms units conducted multi-echelon training that included division and corps-level manoeuvres and exercises. Moreover, training was hard, continuous, and conformed to the precepts laid down by Enver Paşa in the spring of 1914. Finally, the new divisions that were activated for war were created by an expansion system that built upon experienced active units led by combat-tested commanders.

This is contrasted by the British Army, which in 1914 was tightly compartmentalised, intellectually and physically. The British clung to outdated tactics that stressed the individuality of the combat arms and also to ineffective command methods. Multi-echelon combined arms training was unknown and there were no doctrinal procedures to improve the situation. Finally, there were four distinct armies that separated regulars, territorials (reservists), volunteers, and colonials, and which in turn were led by a wide spectrum of leadership abilities.

Table 6.2 Ottoman Army initiatives, 1913–1914

Date	*Initiative*
Autumn 1913	Publication of *Why were we Defeated in the Balkan Wars?* and *Officer and Commander: A Friend's Private View*
11 December 1913	Reorganisation of the Ottoman Army: • Eliminated reserve divisions • Realigned army areas • Created cadre divisions
3 January 1914	Involuntary retirement of 1,300 elderly or incompetent officers; accelerated promotion of young combat officers
14 March 1914	General Orders No. 1: detailed standardised training guidance that stressed leadership, fire power, and combined arms
7 April 1914	100% revision of war plans (based on the new reorganisation)
14 April 1914	Establishment of centralised training sites and schools
21 April 1914	General Orders No. 7: Ottoman War Academy reopened
24 May 1914	General Orders No. 9: standardisation of reports and war diaries
June 1914	Establishment of pure triangular divisions: elimination of rifle battalions

Sources: See Chapter 1 for source citations by date of initiative.

The early encounters between Briton and Turk in 1914 (and to some extent Russian and Turk) disguised the true levels of Ottoman military effectiveness. Misconceptions, inaccurate intelligence, and a low opinion of the Turks and their army exaggerated this situation. As a result of this thinking, strategic decisions were made in early 1915 that sent British expeditions to the Gallipoli Peninsula and up country in Mesopotamia.

Combat effectiveness, 1915

The Ottoman Army was operationally effective in the III Corps sector at Gallipoli because its commanders selected realistic objectives and effectively integrated the forces necessary to secure those objectives. This stemmed primarily from its experienced leadership and its advanced and flexible organisational architecture.

In terms of leadership the Turkish officers in the Ottoman III Corps proved to be highly effective. The British encountered officers at company, battalion, regiment, division, and corps level who were aggressive and skilled in the conduct of war. Ottoman officers could pass reliable reports up and down the chain to provide a clear picture of unfolding events. They could plan, co-ordinate, and execute artillery fire support. They could act without direction, but within the commander's overall intent. They led from the front and personally made on-the-spot decisions. They could cross-attach companies, battalions, and regiments with ease. They could concentrate and move.

The organisational architecture of the Ottoman Army lent itself to the effective ability to cross-attach regiments and battalions. The original triangular architecture of Ottoman

infantry divisions, dating from 1910 and refined in the Balkan Wars, proved highly flexible and allowed the Turks to concentrate forces effectively. It was possible for the Turks to take a regiment or battalion from one division and attach it to another division with no real loss of capability. Artillery, Jandarma, engineers, and cavalry enjoyed a similar capability. This capability enabled the Turks to tailor their forces by assigning 'troops to task' or 'troops to terrain', unlike the British, who had to work mainly with infantry brigades and infantry battalions within a divisional context.

Similarily, the Ottoman Army in the III Corps sector at Gallipoli was tactically effective in its effective use of specific techniques to secure objectives. This capability stemmed mainly from the army's firepower-focused doctrines and from its multi-dimensional combined arms training programmes.

In terms of training, the Ottoman Army laid down detailed training guidance in the spring of 1913 based on its experiences in the Balkan Wars. This guidance was relevant to modern war. During the mobilisation and in the months prior to the battle, the army continued to adhere to this guidance. The men were hardened by long marches. Artillery, engineers, machine-gunners, and cavalry worked with their infantry counterparts to iron out how to achieve mutual support. Commanders held terrain walks and fire planning exercises. Detailed rehearsals were conducted. All of this was based on the experience of the Balkan Wars. Combined arms training was encouraged and was executed at all levels. Relatively small groups of Turks were able to seize fire superiority and devastate their enemies with effective machine-gun and artillery fire.

By way of contrast, the British Army was trapped inside antiquated doctrines that stressed the individuality of the separate combat arms. Moreover, the training cycles of the ANZAC and the 29th Infantry Division did not include any combined arms training or exercises. The strength of that army was its magnificant infantry, especially the regulars.

As the campaign progressed, the Turks proved resilient and formidable opponents. The Ottoman Army was well trained, adhered to standardised and well understood doctrines, and possessed an appreciation of the reality of modern war. Its commanders were, likewise, experienced and well trained, and they led from the front. In combination, these factors provided the Ottoman Army with high levels of military effectiveness.

Combat effectiveness, 1916

In Mesopotamia in the fall of 1915 and early 1916, the Ottoman Army proved demonstrably combat-effective by inflicting humiliating defeats on an Anglo-Indian army. The Ottoman Army in Mesopotamia was operationally effective in its selection of a campaign of encirclement that forced the British to fight unsuccessful offensive battles. The Turks planned and conducted an offensive campaign at the operational level that put their army on the tactical defensive (doctrines). Consequently, the fighting tended to play to the strengths of the Ottoman Army. This result was primarily a function of effective command (leadership) and the institutional creation of effective fighting forces that could execute the tasks asked of them (organisational architecture).

The commander throughout most of the campaign was Nurettin Paşa. Nurettin's leadership shows the consistent application of the tenets of modern war prescribed by

Enver in the spring of 1914 and the operational art prescribed by contemporary German doctrines. Nurettin had a clear appreciation of defensive warfare, as evidenced by the construction of the position at Ctesiphon and in the execution of decisive counter-attacks with well positioned reserves. He was able to shift rapidly to the offensive and conduct a vigorous pursuit operation with the portion of his army that was experienced in such operations (Halil's XVIII Corps from Caucasia). Nurettin was able to encircle and isolate his enemy in the river town of Kut Al Amara. Although denied the final victory, it was Nurettin's operational vision of how the campaign would be fought that was completed successfully by Halil in the late spring of 1916.

Nurettin's opponent, Major General Charles V.F.Townshend, was very experienced and had studied war, but unlike Nurettin he had no practical and recent experience of modern war. Townshend underestimated his Ottoman opponents and was unable to deal with the operational consequences of his failed offensive at Ctesiphon. He repeated his underestimation of Nurettin by retreating into Kut Al Amara to await relief.

The Ottoman Army demonstrated significant institutional strengths in Mesopotamia, the underpinning of which was its organisational architecture that enabled the effective activation of new combat units. The wartime expansion process of the Ottoman Army was unique among the major combatants and this process was of major importance to the army's efficiency and ability to field combat-ready forces.

The Ottoman expansion system ensured that there was 'one army' rather than a mixed army of distinct active and reserve army corps and divisions. Practically speaking, the Ottoman Army's twenty-six wartime infantry divisions were uniformly constructed by mixing well trained, experienced regiments with newly raised regiments. Likewise, the professional leadership of the Ottoman Army was distributed evenly throughout the newly raised forces as experienced young professionals were given command of the new fighting formations. The expansion mechanism of the Ottoman Army ensured that inexperienced and unready forces were rarely committed to combat during World War I.

The British sent the Indian Army to Mesopotamia. The Indian Army divisions sent to Mesopotamia were pre-war regular formations. Their principal weakness was unevenness of training and preparation, and lack of combined arms training. As the campaigns developed, these divisions suffered from a lack of readily available replacements, especially officers and NCOs. In combination, a case can be made that the Indian Army formations in Mesopotamia were less tactically effective than their Ottoman counterparts. The lopsided casualty rates sustained by the Imperial forces during these campaigns lend credence to such an assertion, although the author feels that the casualties were more a result of operational processes than of tactical processes.

In terms of operational doctrines, the shifting tactical situation after Ctesiphon provided the Ottoman Army in Mesopotamia with opportunities to demonstrate its flexibility to shift rapidly from defensive to offensive operational postures. The vigorous pursuit and successful encirclement demonstrated a firm grasp of conventional German ideas about encirclement battles of annihilation. Nurettin's choice of the destruction of Townshend's army as his objective in December 1915, rather than a terrain-oriented or geographically based objective, further demonstrates German-style thinking.

Combat effectiveness, 1917

The Battle of Third Gaza demonstrated that the Ottoman Army could still hold its own against the British Army. Its tactical skills were still very much in evidence and the Ottoman Army showed a high level of operational and tactical mobility in extracting itself from Gaza. In these battles, the Ottoman Army failed in its objective of holding the Gaza-Beersheba line. This stemmed mainly from its failure to effectively mass adequate forces against the British assault on Beersheba, itself a result of a failure in command to correctly anticipate Allenby. Compounding this failure was an operational posture that could not accommodate or react to the loss of the Beersheba position. The focus of the Ottoman Eighth Army on Gaza itself was a significant operational mistake and reflected diminishing operational effectiveness. At the tactical level, it appears that the Ottoman Army retained much of its tactical effectiveness, at least when fighting against anything other than hopelessly superior odds.

The movement of two complete army corps (six divisions) on the town of Beersheba completely surprised von Kress and the Turks, who had garrisoned the town to repel two enemy divisions. This movement was a triumph of logistics and administration rather than of tactical proficiency. However, despite huge superiority, it took the British the better part of an entire day to take the town and its wells. Moreover, the Ottoman III Corps extracted itself and lived to fight another day.

Likewise at Gaza, the British were unable to take advantage of their strength to break through the Turkish lines. Gaza probably could have been held against Bulfin's attacks. It was the loss of Beersheba that forced von Kress to conduct a deliberate evacuation of the town Gaza. Clearly Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force, in the fall of 1917, had not yet evolved the tactical and operational techniques necessary to defeat the Turks in Palestine.

The deliberate attack on Gaza did reflect the growing combat effectiveness of the British Army in Palestine more than the capture of Beersheba. There was great improvement in infantry-artillery co-ordination, but like the divisions of the XX Corps at Beersheba, the divisions of XXI Corps experienced difficulty attacking prepared defensive positions (which were, of course, strongly held). The creation of corps artillery headquarters dedicated to counter-battery work was a major development in the modernisation of the British Army in Palestine. However, even very experienced and well trained British Army divisions in Palestine remained unable successfully to attack well prepared positions held by determined Ottoman soldiers. These problems were, however, institutional within the British Army in 1917, and affected Haig's army in France, which also could not penetrate hardened defences.

None the less, the combat effectiveness of the Ottoman Army in 1917 was slowly deteriorating relative to its enemy. The British Army in 1917 was beginning, at long last, to solve many of its problems in battlefield control and co-ordination. It was proving capable of absorbing the lessons of combat and of creating effective institutional tactical solutions. It was also developing, after three years of war, a hardened cadre of effective battlefield commanders to match the experienced Turks.

Combat effectiveness, 1918, Palestine

The Ottoman Army appeared operationally ineffective in the Megiddo Campaign in September 1918 because it failed to integrate the forces necessary to hold the line against Allenby's army. This was mainly a function of its inability to marshal adequate forces at the decisive point on a 90 km front. However, the overwhelming superiority of Allenby's army, in qualitative and quantitative terms, negated any possible Ottoman operational solution.

It should be noted, however, that Ottoman intelligence provided the Turks with advance warning of Allenby's attack. In response, all available mobile reserves were positioned closer to the threatened sector. Moreover, the critical right wing of the Eighth Army was weighted with most of the available heavy artillery and timely warnings went out to troops concerning the imminent attack. In terms of performance, the Ottoman Army in Palestine probably did as well as could be expected under the circumstances.

At the operational level, the most serious failure of the Ottoman Army at Megiddo was in its inability to mount effective counter-attacks. The failure of the reserve 46th Infantry Division decisively to affect the outcome of the battle was an indicator of the decreasing operational effectiveness of the Ottoman Army.

The tactical effectiveness of the Ottoman Army at Megiddo is much harder to assess. Resistance to Allenby's attack was uneven along the front and this alone may have doomed a coherent Turkish defence. However, the regimental and divisional reserves were committed in a timely fashion and reflected this traditional strength of the Ottoman Army. The most glaring deficiency was the loss of situational awareness caused by the breakdown in communications. This was the most telling problem for the Turks and it stands in stark contrast to their performance in previous battles.

It also appears that the Turks weakened their conventional infantry forces by changing the organisational architecture of their infantry divisions to include assault troop battalions. When combined with an eroding pool of high-quality manpower, this must have had a negative effect on the ability of regular Ottoman infantry to hold the line. No amount of additional training regimes could correct the problem.

In contrast, Allenby used his time effectively to conduct a massive retraining programme that embedded the most current tactics, doctrines, weapons, and methods of command into his army. Cyril Falls noted that 'The student of infantry tactics will find marked differences between those of this theatre and the western front.'[12] While this may be true of the Megiddo Campaign as a whole, clearly on 19 September Allenby's plan of attack used the most current British methods of attack and mirrored the techniques and tactics seen at Amiens on 8 August 1918 (minus, of course, tanks). Importantly, his army was not a 'British Army': rather it was an Indian Army—making the point that method, not men, was the key to Allenby's success. The final result was that the Turks could no longer hold back conventional British infantry attacks that were executed using the latest British fighting methods.

Combat effectiveness, 1918, other theatres

As a counterpoint, the Ottoman Army in Azerbaijan and that in Persia appear to have retained both their operational and tactical effectiveness. (Appendix B contains brief summaries of these campaigns.) In this period the Turks conducted pursuit and encirclement operations, hasty and deliberate attacks, and defensive operations. They captured Kars in Anatolia, Baku in Azerbaijan, and Tabriz in Persia. The army retained the capacity to task-organise its forces at the tactical, operational, and strategic level.

In Syria, the Turks conducted skilful fighting retreats and Mustafa Kemal's successful withdrawal of his Seventh Army, and its maintenance as a force in being, were arguably his greatest operational achievement. On the day of the armistice, the Yildirim Army Group remained a potent fighting force that expected to hold up Allenby north of Aleppo for four to five months.

Demobilisation

In November 1918, the Ottoman Army did not simply put down its weapons and go home. It did not, as Lenin remarked about the Russian Army as it quit the war in 1917, 'vote with its feet'. Instead the Ottoman Army remained a disciplined force under competent command authority. Unlike Germany, the Ottoman Empire signed an armistice that did not require the immediate demobilisation of its army and the surrender of its weapons.[13] Rather this would be co-ordinated with the British authorities and would be contingent upon internal and external security requirements.[14]

In fact, the Ottoman General Staff, under the newly appointed Minister of War, Ahmet Izzet Paşa sent out telegraphic instructions concerning the implementation of the armistice on 31 October to all armies and garrisons.[15] Further instructions followed in November 1918 that outlined the timelines and geographical parameters of the turn over of strategic points to the allies. By late November, the Ottoman General Staff had completed the reorganisation process and issued orders to all corps and divisions assigning them to peacetime garrisons within the Anatolian heartland.[16] In December, several armies, corps, and seven infantry divisions were deactivated.

British Admiral John de Robeck dictated the demobilisation schedule on 26 November 1918.[17] According to the British schedule, all men in year groups 1866–84 were to be demobilised beginning on 6 November (and this was apparently already in progress), all men in year groups 1885–93 were to be demobilised beginning on 28 November, and the 1897–99 years groups would begin to demobilise on 6 January 1919. About 10,000 officers and 264,339 men were discharged under this schedule by 22 January 1919, which still left about 60,000 more men in the army than the British thought appropriate at that point to Ottoman military requirements.[18] Reducing the number further was left on the table, but the Turks were willing to repatriate 10,000 Arab and 4,300 Greek soldiers to areas that were left outside the rump Ottoman state. Demobilisation resumed in February on a massive scale as forces returned home from the Caucasus. By the end of

March 1919, the Ottoman Army had discharged another 337,615 soldiers, leaving 61,223 men on active duty.[19]

The Ottoman General Staff finalised its plans for the new peacetime active army on 21 January 1919.[20] The army was authorised twenty infantry divisions organised into nine army corps. The General Staff returned to a scaled-down version of the cadre organisation that the active army used prior to the war and each division was authorised a bare 1,540 riflemen, thirty-six machine guns, and eight artillery pieces.[21] Additional artillery was held at corps level, as were more machine guns. Altogether, there were roughly 41,000 men and 256 artillery pieces in the active Ottoman field army in the late spring of 1919. The total strength of the army, including staffs, schools, and garrisons, was approximately 61,000 officers and men. These active strengths were governed by the strict economies of the bankrupt Ottoman Empire but the army held substantial reserves of 791,000 rifles, 2,000 machine guns (light and heavy), and 945 artillery pieces.[22]

The triangular structure of infantry divisions was retained, as was an assault battalion in some of the divisions. When called to full mobilisation under this plan, the Turks would have an active army of twenty combat divisions fielding about 250,000 men. Using the reserve equipment stockpiled in Anatolia, they retained the capacity to activate another ten infantry divisions. Additionally, the Ottoman General Staff itself continued in existence and continued to function as a directing staff. The professional corps of trained General Staff officers was, likewise, retained and as would be expected continued to hold the important command and staff posts within the army.[23]

The British Army as a learning organisation

Many contemporary military historians consider that the British Army was the most tactically and technically advanced army in the world in 1918. Indeed, there is an entire genre of recent military history devoted to the study of the how the British Army's art of the attack changed over four years.[24] Yet, in 1914, the British Army was a generation behind the Germans and the Turks. It appeared devoted to individuality—in its organisational architecture, its tactics, and its command ethos and climate. It was not an army that possessed depth—in commanders, in equipment, or intellectual doctrines. When committed to combat, its fragility was demonstrated time and again and it was the courage of its soldiers that enabled it to endure.

Beginning in 1916, and with increasing velocity through 1918, the British Army began to change. Often, the changes that it undertook mirrored the tactically successful armies of its enemies. The British adopted leadership models, tactics, and a mass army model based largely on the German Army and, by association, the Ottoman Army. In many ways, then, the British Army became more like its Ottoman adversary. Leaders were more involved, training was based on realistic battlefield paradigms, firepower was integrated, combined arms thinking and doctrines were advanced, and organisational architectures reducing the number of infantrymen in divisions were adopted.

But by 1918, the British Army came into its own by taking the German models and moving beyond them. While this was partially a product of industrial capacity and manpower availability, it was primarily due to a command climate that fostered innovation and change. To use a modern phrase, the British Army became a 'learning

organisation'. The learning organisation is defined as 'an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future'.[25] In such organisations, there are two components at work, 'adaptive learning' (sometimes called 'survival learning' or learning as a reactive mechanism) and 'generative learning' (creating entirely new concepts). Copying the Germans was essentially adaptive behaviour. However, British innovations in 1918 in tactical air support and interdiction, artillery planning and delivery of fire, tank employment and integration, mechanisation, and logistical planning were clearly generative in nature. These changes place the British Army in a unique niche in the history of the Great War as the army that was best able to adapt to the increased lethality of the modern battlefield.

The strength of an army

The Ottoman Army proved unexpectedly resilient to the enormous pressures of a sustained multi-front war. It continued to astonish its enemies into the final year of the Great War, despite early predictions that it was not an especially capable or modern army. The total number of men that the British Empire sent against the Turks remains an elusive figure—the author of this study estimates that it must have numbered about 1.5 million. (The rough figures are: Gallipoli 400,000, Sinai-Palestine 450,000, Mesopotamia 350,000, and Salonika, Persia, Libya and Aden perhaps 100,000). Field Marshal Lord Carver put the total imperial casualties suffered at the hands of the Ottoman Army as '264,000 battle casualties'.[26]

As to the question 'How good were the Turks and what was the strength of their army?' the Ottoman Army was good enough to absorb the collective military efforts of 1.5 million imperial troops, perhaps a million Russians and several hundred thousand French and Armenians. At the armistice, the Turks still had over 900,000 men in the field organised into twenty-six combat infantry divisions.[27]

Any conclusions concerning the strength of the Ottoman Army must consider the demographic base of the army and the industrial base and infrastructure of the empire. The Ottoman Army was composed mainly of illiterate peasants with low mechanical and technical skills. There were linguistic problems with many of the empire's ethnic minorities (particularly the Arabs), who did not speak Turkish. The Ottoman Empire could not produce its own heavy weapons and, moreover, it was hamstrung by a decaying railroad system that made the strategic concentration and resupply of the army very difficult. Therefore, the strength of the army was not a unified and mechanically capable society, nor was it an industrial society, nor did it occupy a militarily useful geographic central position. Whatever military system the Ottoman Army used had to operate within the context and parameters of these weaknesses.

It is perhaps leadership that stands out as the dominant strength of the Ottoman Army in World War I. In early 1914, Enver Paşa removed a large number of ineffective senior officers from the army. This enabled young men of ability, who had recent combat experience in a modern operational context, to assume command of the army's regiments, divisions, and corps. The experience and energy of these men paid high dividends time and again against the British Army. The 'lead from the front' model of command gave the Ottoman Army a significant advantage during the first three years of war. Beyond its

commanders, at the highest levels, the primary staff officers of divisions, corps, and armies, the assignment of highly trained Ottoman General Staff officers ensured that the army was employed to maximise its capability.

The Turks' training philosophy and training methods stand out as a strength of the army. It was 'hands-on' and rigorous and it was supervised by officers. Moreover, it was based on recent combat experience and stressed firepower and combined arms. It was geared to practical battlefield skills that focused on survival and the co-ordination of arms. Additionally, the Turks employed a training system that bears a close similarity to the modern US Army training system. It also appears that the training system was able to absorb a peasant population and mould it into an effective army.

In terms of tactical and operational doctrines, the Ottoman Army was especially effective in fighting on the defence. It was also very effective in the conduct of pursuit, exploitation, and hasty attacks. This speaks to its tactical and operational flexibility and to the army's ability to move quickly. Consistent understanding of doctrines also contributed to a 'one army' philosophy within which tactics and operations were uniformly executed in all theatres of war. It must be remembered that in many ways the Ottoman Army was a reflection of the German Army in its theoretical and practical approach to war. It is apparent, throughout the Great War, that German tactics and ideas continued to flow and to be implemented in the Ottoman Army.

The triangular organisational architecture of divisions proved very valuable to the Ottoman Army and allowed the army to cross-attach rapidly battalions and regiments within divisions to maximise combat power. This could not have been accommodated without a high degree of standardisation in tactical processes, such as reports, orders, and tactics. It was especially valuable in the construction of combined arms teams at regimental level and below. This capability existed before the war and the attachment of artillery batteries directly to infantry regiments proved to be powerful combat multiplier. At divisional level, the triangular system made it possible to activate new infantry divisions by taking experienced regiments and melding them with newly raised formations. The rapidity with which the Turks could activate and deploy an effective infantry division was remarkable. The German, French, and British armies all adopted the Ottoman triangular division in 1917, validating it as an effective organisational concept.

Commonly held notions about the Turks do not appear to have influenced the battles in this study. German commanders were not influential in the early Gallipoli campaign or the Kut Al Amara campaigns, although it may be said that Kress von Kressenstein perhaps adversely affected the Gaza-Beersheba campaign. The issues of 'Arab' units possessing a proclivity for ineffectiveness or desertion do not appear justified. The Turks appear to have won campaigns, not because of dogged determination or bravery, but rather through the consistent application of sound military practices.

In summary, the strength of the Ottoman Army was due to its inherent institutional tactical and operational effectiveness. In particular, its excellent and hardened cadre of combat leaders, its ability to train and organise its forces, its use of the 'German way of war', and its flexible and advanced organisational architecture ensured that the army was effectively employed. It took the British, with lavish superiority in men, equipment, and logistics, over three years to create the military capability to defeat the Turks. Even in the last months of the war, the Ottoman Army when competing on anything near level terms, was a serious opponent. Without question, the Ottoman Army, although often inefficient, ragged, and ill equipped, was an effective army.

Appendix A
Ottoman Army Orders No. 1, dated 14 March 1914

From: Enver Paşa, Chief of the Ottoman General Staff

Battle instructions

a A commander must lead at the front and must be able to conduct a counterattack on an attacking force. He must be able to decide whether to launch an encirclement of the enemy force.

b He must be careful to avoid the confusion that results from an encirclement that has over-extended itself. This is because it is very difficult to make a main effort with units that have been scattered. It is necessary to take time for the defence, contrary to an attack by extended encirclement operations, which must be done rapidly.

c When an enemy position is seized, all serviceable units must be positioned facing the enemy. After the seizure of the position, the priority of work is to: observe the enemy and prepare to repel him, pursuit, and reconnaissance.

d Although the battlefield may appear empty, pursuit is not permitted if the attack becomes disorganised.

e Reconnaissance. Cavalry reconnaissance columns will move forward and conduct this mission during periods of fog. In other situations, infantry may move forward and conduct reconnaissance. All reconnaissance detachments will be assigned one officer who is responsible for sketching boundaries and sectors.

f Marching

The distance and tempo of infantry marches will be determined by the amount of excessively heavy gear (loads). On good roads infantry can march 5km in one hour. Efforts must be made to prevent straggling. An officer must march at the head of each infantry column.

Great care must be exercised when moving forward against enemy fire. The commander must always locate himself within the march column, and not in the rear on a hilltop, in order to immediately advance or avoid losses.

The commander must be able to use reconnaissance effectively to find enemy units and to locate the gaps between them.

The advance guard must be deployed ahead of, and move out prior to, the main body. In order not to deploy too slowly, the advance guard must organise a skirmish line from a standard operating procedure. This must be practised from battalion to small detachment level.

g Attacks

As far as possible, infantry will deploy away from obstacles (in the open). The deployment of skirmishers will not halt the deployment of the line of battle. In this way the advance will not be slowed.

Every unit (detachment) will have the capability to concentrate together and well forward in battle. The priority of planning an advance will go the units that can concentrate quickly in the vicinity (of the battle area).

Reserve companies will not be sent into battle in penny packets. Reserves will be kept in covered positions, well in hand, as close to the battle area as possible, and will be released forward under tight control.

At the time of the assault every soldier will fix bayonets. But, if this cannot be done everywhere at the same time, don't do it. Henceforth, plan to lift supporting protective fire everywhere when the troops begin the assault.

Every time artillery wants to move from its initial position, it must quickly reoccupy firing positions.

h Defence

The commander's mission must include enough time for proper reconnaissance and for selecting positions by degrees (carefully). The commander, so that the defence won't become too thin, must divide and arrange sectors for his unit. For this reason, it is necessary for commanders to go forward. Defensive sectors, accordingly, must be stocked with provisions, ammunition, and have the men near by. It is better for the defensive line to be well forward in order to establish killing fire (zones) and to bombard the area with punishing fire.

In defensive battles the supporting reserves must be dug in and near by the battle area.

At the last moment, large numbers of reserves should be shifted (repositioned) forward together to new locations closer to the front. This is because they will interfere with each other when moving into battle.

The commander's permission to fire is not required at night.

If it is necessary to move through and area dominated by enemy fire, behave as if an attack operation is about to be launched.

General instructions

1 *Officers*

Command in battle and on marches must be exercised in person. Sufficient numbers of officers and horsemen [messengers] must accompany the commander's party [command group]. He must show himself in this way in reconnaissance and in delaying operations. Officers must not rest [or sleep] during combat operations and must act aggressively like hunters. Officers must actively walk around and it is necessary to find out personally, on foot, the situation of the his soldiers, or he will find it out in battle later on.

The most important thought must be for the health and comfort [welfare] of the animals, men, and officers. For example: when going into reserve, choose a protected position in which the men can halt, stack arms, and unload their packs.

2 *Junior officers and privates*

Platoon leaders [junior officers] and officer cadets must use their weapons like soldiers. It is necessary for every junior officer to learn thoroughly by degrees that our answer to the question of the enemy must be to conduct the defence by attacking the enemy wherever he is located.

No soldier will be honoured in a passing-out ceremony [graduation from training] if he has not demonstrated proficiency in marching and combat techniques. Soldiers will continue training in the bivouac area or in another location. They will not be allowed to relax until they have in hand the ability to march like the companies of the active army. For this reason, they will not be given any orders that allow them to relax.

3 Units will depart for large-scale training exercises as if equipped for an actual campaign. Likewise, officers will take maps, field glasses, and all equipment as if on campaign. For battle manoeuvres during exercises, soldiers will be given blank ammunition from the squad so that they have sufficient quantities on hand for training.

Live ammunition for training will be issued to all participating troops. Soldiers will take both rifles and training ammunition. From this they will draw increased energy [confidence] and will develop proficiency in skirmishing. Platoon leaders must industriously inspect their platoons. Tents that have been used for long periods must be waterproofed. Because to do otherwise is negligence.

From the beginning of the training exercise the leaders of the red side [friendly] must wear red clothes to identify themselves. Everywhere on manoeuvres the artillery must remove the barrel and breech block covers and will practise firing. For training in cold weather for long periods, soldiers must wear cloaks [overcoats] in the forward trenches.

4 *Rations.* During large-scale exercises soldiers will be given hot food on a daily basis or in its place bread, cheese, olives, and *helva* [confectionery].

5 The condition of mounts and pack animals must constantly be attended to. For example, when units are staying in the same place for a long time, the men must ensure that girths are loosened. Mounts and pack animals must be provided with water. The health of the draught and pack animals must be looked after. Classes on the care for of horses must be conducted frequently and officers must attend, and the soldiers must ensure the proper execution of these duties during marches and at rest halts.

When cavalry companies deploy or move out, orders must be given for the care and servicing of the animals. This is because misfortune in battle and in reconnaissance will befall companies that neglect to care for their animals.

6 *Planning for the employment of machine guns*

Firing for an extended time is not permitted. This is because the ammunition expenditures will exhaust supplies.

Positions must be established in defence, as well as in the attack, from which firing can immediately be made.

Suitable positions must be found so the enemy skirmish lines can be taken in the flank at the beginning of the battle.

Machine guns are especially suitable for flanking fire.

7 *Use of digging implements* [entrenching tools]. Generally entrenching implements should be used everywhere. Trenches must be dug to avoid the effects of enemy fire. A main trench must be constructed by the men, after which secondary trenches must be dug. After an advance forward on a wide front the soldiers must dig trenches before they are allowed to sleep. Earthworks [hasty positions?] must be constructed during a forward advance. During lulls in enemy firing, every soldier must dig positions, and nobody should be left unoccupied on guard duty.

8 *Measuring distances and estimating distances* [range]

In machine-gun companies, ranges which cannot be measured will be estimated. The company commander will maintain [surveying] instruments close by. Machine guns will be placed close to infantry and the commander [of machine guns] will make his ranges known. He will not make incorrect ranges. Because of the importance of range estimation, in every training exercise this skill will be attended to.

9 *Signal pennants* [guidons]. Every order and every message will clearly specify in writing how to identify enemy positions and times using pennants.

10 *Signal bugles.* So that bugle calls won't have to be repeated, all units will listen to all bugle calls.

11 *Conduct of fire*

All plans must include provision to protect our own troops from our own fire. All officers must use their field glasses frequently.

Every unit will have two pennants, white and red, to show their position in battle so that commanders can infer the tactical situation, i.e. if commanders can understand and recognise the pennants of other units they can understand the relationship of opposing units as well.

The I Corps will plan arrangements below division level for the wellbeing of our troops from artillery fire.

When deploying on exercises with artillery, every infantry company will be obliged to carry two small bundles [sets] of pennants: a coarse earthencoloured flag and two others, a white and a red pennant. For infantry companies entering the battle area, the earth-coloured pennant will be the signal for opening fire on the enemy. Red and white pennants will be implanted immediately behind and immediately in front of our lines to show the artillery our locations. Our artillery will be required to observe the pennants with field glasses. Pennants will not be found forward of the skirmish line.

The I Corps will organise a test of the pennant system within its divisions to determine its reliability and will prepare a report.

The commander will submit the report through the First Army Inspectorate to arrive at the Ministry of Defence not later than 8 October 1914.

12 *To abandon exterior battles* [break contact with the enemy] In campaign training exercises, breaking contact with the enemy will be planned, organised, and executed. It is necessary to conform to the same doctrine.

a In the attack, officers must identify the critical battle area and must position soldiers in the proper locations. All attempts will be made to disrupt the enemy detachment left in contact. In exercises, umpires will judge the effectiveness of this technique.

b In the defence, officers must not withdraw from their trenches until the detachment left in contact is properly positioned. After the withdrawal the officer will remain with the detachment.

13 *Medical support*

a In battle, medical support will be found near the front line. Henceforward, instructions will also be provided to the troops on the locations of medical aid stations.

b It is necessary to bring medical personnel forward on all foot marches.

Source: T.C.Genelkurmay Harp Başkanlığı. *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6nci Kisim (1908–1920), 1nci Kitap*. Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1971, 405–411. Translated by Lt Col. Edward J.Erickson, US Army (retired).

Appendix B
Other theatres of war in 1918

Azerbaijan

Throughout the spring of 1918, the Ottoman Third Army and Ninth Army vigorously attacked eastward against the Armenian National Army to recover territory lost to the Russians in 1916. The Turks recovered the great fortress of Erzurum and then took Kars as well, which had been lost in 1878. In the summer the victorious Turks formed a new army, styled the Army of Islam, to advance on Baku on the Caspian Sea. On 31 July 1918 the Turks attacked Hill 905, to the north-west of Baku. The attack continued until 2 August, when the Turks called it to halt. Turkish reinforcements, in the form of the 10th Caucasian Infantry Division, joined the 5th Infantry Division, as well as several batteries of artillery and a cavalry regiment. The army commander, Halil Paşa a (the victor of Kut), prepared a second assault and on 5 August this attack was launched, again aimed at Hill 905. The attack also failed, with the Turks losing a total of 547 officers and men killed and wounded. The commander of the Army of Islam attributed his failure to a well organised defence and to the fact that his soldiers were tired.[1] The 10th Caucasian Infantry Division was pulled off the line and the 15th Infantry Division, which had seen little fighting since its deployment to the Caucasus, arrived to take its place.

Compounding the problem for the Turks were the first reports that 300 British soldiers had arrived in Baku on 5 August and that a further 5,000 were awaiting transport in Enzeli. To compensate for this, the Ninth Army was directed to threaten Enzeli and Hamadan with the hopes that the British troops would be retained in Persia. The worried staff of the Army of Islam now considered that they would need an additional 5,000 fresh troops and several batteries of heavy artillery to take Baku. By 17 August the British 'Dunsterforce' had three battalions of British infantry, some field artillery, and three armoured cars in Baku. However, its commander, Major-General L.C.Dunsterville, was becoming more discouraged every day as the Azeri and Armenian defence force began to fall apart from the lack of dynamic leadership. The Turks began to plan for the final assault on Baku, with the 15th Infantry Division coming in from the north and the 5th Caucasian Infantry Division attacking from the west. The main attack would be made on the north-west corner of the Baku defences. The Army of Islam began its attacks on 14 September 1918, and the Turks made rapid progress against crumbling defences. Dunsterforce, in planning a withdrawal reminiscent of the Gallipoli evacuation, had its transport ready. Dunsterville realised that the defence was failing and decided about 1100 that he must withdraw his forces. While his rearguard protected the evacuation, Dunsterforce loaded its personnel and equipment, and by 2200 that night they set sail for Enzeli.

With the withdrawal of the British, chaos broke out amongst the Azeris, the Cossacks, and the refugee Armenians. Throughout the night, as the Turks drove in the remaining

defences, fires, pillaging and massacre broke out in Baku. The Turks continued their artillery bombardment of the town throughout the night. By the next day perhaps as many as 6,000 Armenians were dead, many of them refugee civilians, slaughtered by the Azeris.[2] The Turks took the town on 15 September 1918. In the final assault on Baku the Turks lost about 1,000 casualties.

After a period of reorganisation, the Army of Islam pushed the 15th Infantry Division northwards along the Caspian Sea to the town of Derbent, where on 7 October the advance was halted by determined resistance. Under heavy naval gunfire by Russian fleet units, the Turks continued their attacks on 20 October, the running battle lasting until 26 October, when the Turks shattered all remaining resistance. The 15th Infantry Division then continued to drive northwards along the Caspian coast, arriving at Petrovsk on 28 October. The division launched several attacks in early November, finally taking the city on 8 November 1918. The 15th Infantry Division had the distinction of conducting the last Turkish offensive operation in World War I. This operation was successful and it also marked the northernmost point of the Turkish advance into the Caucasus mountains.

Persia

Yakub Şevki Paşa's Ninth Army initially had six infantry divisions assigned to its rolls when it received the mission to invade Persia and to take Tabriz. By the end of June 1918 two divisions had been taken away for other theatre requirements. Nevertheless, Şevki Paşa attacked with his remaining forces. His 12th Infantry Division attacked south, taking Dilman on 18 June. By 27 July the division had beaten its way down to Rumiye, and a month later it had taken the southern shore of the Rumiye lake. To the north, Şevki Paşa began a two-division attack, which bypassed Erivan and went straight toward Nahcivan. That city fell on 19 July 1918. Continuing down the railway toward Tabriz, the 11th Infantry Division took Tabriz on 23 August.[3] Confronting an increasing British presence in Persia, the Ninth Army's offensive now ground to a halt. In September the Turks had consolidated their hold on northern Persia and held a line reaching from Astara on the Caspian Sea to Miane in Persia (about 60km southeast of Tabriz) and on into the Ottoman Empire near Süleymaniye. The Turks held this territory until the Armistice.

Syria

Liman von Sanders and his subordinate Turkish officers fought stubbornly to keep the armies intact as Allenby maintained relentless pressure and ordered his fast-moving, powerful cavalry to seize Damascus. While conducting a fighting retreat, Liman von Sanders shifted some of his few remaining combat formations northwards to deal with this threat and assembled the 24th, 26th, and 53rd Infantry Divisions and the 3rd Cavalry Division under the command of III Corps for the defence of the city. However, these units were badly worn down by combat and by retreat and could not hold Damascus, which fell on 1 October 1918. The 3rd Cavalry Division fought a desperate rearguard action, which allowed the remainder of the Turkish forces to escape northward. Liman's headquarters retired to Baalbek.

The strategic situation confronting the Turks in Syria on 6 October 1918 was grim to say the least. The Eighth Army had been destroyed and its headquarters dissolved. The III Corps, with the 1st and the 11th Infantry Divisions, was still intact and conducting a fighting retreat, as was the XX Corps, and the 48th Infantry Division. In addition to the lost divisions of infantry, the Yildirim Army Group had lost most of its artillery. In early October the 43rd Infantry Division arrived and was immediately committed to the defence of Beirut, but the situation appeared hopeless.

Allenby's pressure never stopped; the British took Beirut on 12 October and kept driving northward. On 16 October the Fourth Army headquarters were encircled and destroyed in the city of Humus. The 48th Infantry Division attempted to set up blocking positions at Kama, south of Aleppo, but was thrown out of them on 19 October. On 25 October Allenby's army entered Aleppo. The campaign for Syria was over.

On 26 October 1918 the headquarters of the Yildirim Army Group had fallen back to the Anatolian city of Adana, where it was co-located with the Second Army, the XII Corps headquarters, and the headquarters of the 23rd Infantry Division, which had its main body at Tarsus. The XV Corps was in Osmaniye (41st and 44th Infantry Divisions). The Seventh Army was located in Raco and maintained the III Corps at Alexandretta (11th and 24th Infantry Divisions), and the XX Corps near Katma (1st and 43rd Infantry Divisions). While these divisions were badly worn down by constant fighting, they were still able to offer substantial resistance.

On 30 October 1918 the Ottoman government signed an armistice on the deck of HMS *Agamemnon* in Mudros harbour. On the same day, the newly installed Turkish minister of war, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, recalled Liman von Sanders to Constantinople. Mustafa Kemal Paşa was appointed to command the Yildirim Army Group in his place and reported to the headquarters at Adana the next day. The tireless Kemal went immediately to work planning for the defence of the Anatolian homeland. It must be pointed out that the Turkish Army was still in the field and actively preparing its defence of the Anatolian heartland when the Armistice was signed (and according to one Turkish historian expected to hold the Amanus mountains into the winter).[4]

Conclusion: other theatres, 1918

In summary, even at the very end of the war, the Ottoman Army retained much of its military capability, albeit against third-rate opponents. Demonstrably, it even retained a limited offensive capability in Trans-Caucasia. Moreover, its ability to task-organise forces for offensive and defensive operations remained largely unimpaired—even in Syria against Allenby's pursuit. Its replacement and training systems continued to operate effectively (within the limitations of the general staff's strategic priorities and within the limitations of theatre specific shortages). As the Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian, and German armies self-demobilised or lost combat capability in the fall of 1918, the Turks continued to fight and maintained their armies in the field.

Appendix C
The Ottoman infantry division

The army reorganisation of 1910[1]

By late 1910 all organisational planning was complete and the Ottoman Army was poised on the threshold of a major reorganisation designed to streamline its command and control architecture. This reorganisation fundamentally altered the command structure of the army by introducing the army corps headquarters as an echelon of command. Equally important was the breakthrough reorganisation of the Ottoman infantry division based on the tactical ideas of Colmar Frieheer von der Goltz. The new organisational architecture brought the Ottoman Army in line with contemporary continental European armies in its doctrinal approach to the operational level of war and organisationally put it ahead of the Europeans at the tactical level of war. These changes were put into effect in late September 1910 (immediately after the annual fall manoeuvres) and reflected significant changes in the army's thinking.

The most exciting organisational development in the reorganisation of the Ottoman Army's architecture came at division level. The genesis of the idea seems to have originated in the mind of von der Goltz, who is known to have championed the concept of the offensive supported by direct support artillery at the tactical level. After he had departed the Ottoman Empire in 1896, von der Goltz had gone on to extremely important assignments in the German Army. He had established an excellent reputation with the Turks and was known for the soundness of his training programmes and manoeuvres. By the end of 1900 von der Goltz had been promoted to the rank of general of infantry, and in January 1902 he was the commander of the I Army Corps in Königsberg, East Prussia. While commanding at that level, von der Goltz participated in numerous army manoeuvres and continued to refine his thinking about tactical doctrines. There is substantial evidence that von der Goltz keenly followed the events of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Throughout the war he maintained a running correspondence with the Ottoman military observer Colonel Pertev Bey (later Pertev Paşa).[2] Pertev accompanied General Nogi's Japanese Third Army at the siege of Port Arthur and witnessed the Japanese-style infantry asaults. Later Pertev Bey, who was both a former aide-de-camp of von der Goltz's and a protégé, presented von der Goltz with his tactical study of Japanese operations at Port Arthur.

Another view of the origin of the Ottoman Army's reorganisation is found in the recollections of Ahmet Izzet Paşa, who in 1927 claimed reponsibility for the restructuring of the army into corps and reconfigured infantry divisions.[3] Ahmet Izzet Paşa claimed that he came up with the basic reorganisational scheme in the winter of 1908 and that the Ministry of Defence decided to test his ideas in August 1909. However, most of Ahmet Izzet Paşa's comments deal with corpslevel arrangements and army corps end strength figures.[4] There is very little discussion in his book about the changes at division level

involving the implementaion of the three-regiment infantry division (which would lead to the conclusion that Ahmet Izzet Paşa was uninvolved or uninterested in these matters). In any case, Ferik Ahmet Izzet Paşa served as the chief of the Ottoman General Staff (Erkani Harbiye Umumiye Reisleri) from 15 August 1908 until 1 January 1914 and therefore was responsible for the planning and implementation of all organisational matters.

Von der Goltz continued to maintain an interest in the Ottoman Empire and in the operations of the Ottoman Army. On 12 July 1909, von der Goltz returned to Constantinople on an inspection tour. He was accompanied by Major von Berge-Herrnsdorff of the general staff of the German VI Army Corps. While on the tour he was very interested in the ongoing reorganisational planning efforts of the Ottoman General Staff and he advanced several ideas that he had developed, which were based on his studies of the Russo-Japanese War. Among these ideas were his thoughts on tactical operations at division level and divisional organisational structures. In early August 1909 von der Goltz observed the annual army manoeuvres near Adrianople and he had many opportunities to speak with Turkish officers. Apparently von der Goltz's ideas fell on fertile ground. By late October 1909 the Turks were engaged in full-scale division-level manoeuvres designed to test various combinations of army division configurations. Von der Goltz was put in charge of the first set of test manoeuvres *(Manöverleiter)* and developed a tactical scenario pitting the 'West' (Bulgarians) against the 'East' (Turks). Heavily observed by military attaches from Constantinople, the first three-day test exercise began on October 31, 1909. The centrepiece of the manoeuvre was a new experimental divisional structure that von der Goltz called the 'combined division', which contained one infantry brigade, one cavalry brigade, and one artillery regiment. At the end of the manoeuvres von der Goltz put together a work group of officers to critique troop performance during the exercise and to study the results of the tests.[5] Subsequently in November he went on to observe other corps-level manoeuvres in Macedonia and by December von der Goltz was back in Constantinople. In January 1910, despite the cold and frost, von der Goltz put the troops back out in the field north of Constantinople for more manoeuvres in a corps-on-corps exercise using two of his combined divisions. Although von der Goltz returned to Germany in the spring of 1910, Ottoman Army manoeuvres continued throughout the spring and summer in the Balkans, Thrace, and in Caucasia, testing new division-level configurations. After a careful analysis of the unprecedented test manoeuvres (and probably following the inclinations of von der Goltz) the Ottoman General Staff made its decision regarding the reorganisation of the Ottoman Army.

On 10 July 1910 the army published its instructions for reorganisation[6] (Devlet-I Aliye-I Osmaniye Ordusunun Teşkilat-ı Esasiye Nizamnamesi). In this instruction, the Turks decided to adopt the European army corps organisation, but with significant and far-reaching alterations. Instead of the standard European army corps of two assigned infantry divisions, the Ottoman General Staff chose a revamped army corps model of three infantry divisions. A full-strength regular Ottoman Army corps of three infantry divisions would contain 41,000 men and 6,700 animals. The implementation date of this change was set at 8 January 1911. The reason for the delayed date of implementation was simply that the Turks had no surplus of officers, men, animals, and equipment with which to create new headquarters. In order to produce these assets, especially the number of

trained General Staff officers necessary to fill the corps staff positions, the Ottoman General Staff had to consider further structural changes in the architecture of its army.

The most radical Ottoman organisational reform came at division level. Because of the tactical ideas pioneered by von der Goltz, the Ottoman General Staff decided to eliminate both infantry brigade headquarters from its infantry divisions. The Turks decided to reduce their standard square infantry division comprised of two brigades of two infantry regiments each down to a triangular

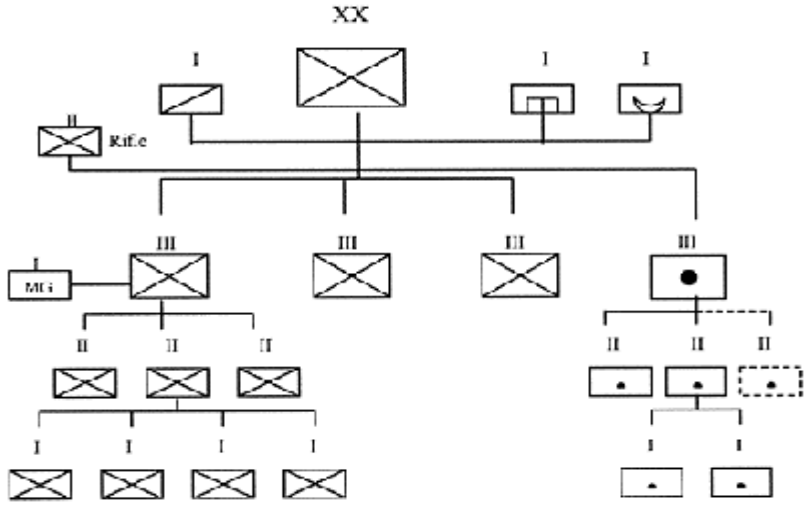


Figure 1 The 1910 infantry division. Divisional strength: total infantry battalions, nine; total rifle battalions, one; total artillery battalions, three; total personnel, 13,293; total heavy machine guns, twelve; total artillery pieces, sixteen (twenty-four).

division of three infantry regiments. Additionally Ottoman Army infantry divisions received an artillery regiment of three battalions. This triangular structure mirrored their new corps structure and was a dramatic breakthrough in tactical organisation. Under this arrangement the number of infantry battalions in an infantry division was reduced from sixteen to nine. Additionally, the division had a rifle battalion and a musical band assigned as well. This was a remarkably prescient decision. Later in the static trench warfare environment of World War I the large four-regiment infantry division proved to be extremely unwieldy and organisationally unsuited to tactical requirements. In particular, the larger divisional structure was ill adapted organisationally to maintaining a portion of its strength in contact (i.e. in the trenches) while at the same time maintaining a portion in immediate reserve. The German Army would be the first European army to begin converting its four-regiment divisions to the Turkish model in 1915. The Turkish

model enabled an infantry division to maintain two regiments ‘up front’ and one regiment ‘back’ (in reserve), which proved to be the ideal organisational solution to the tactical requirements of trench warfare. Every major combatant European army would change its organisational structure to this model by 1918 and the basic triangular structure of infantry divisions pioneered by the Turks continues in the world’s armies to the present day.

Organisational changes in 1914–1918

One final adjustment to the tables of organisation for both Ottoman army corps and infantry divisions was eliminating the respective independent Nişanci or rifle regiments and battalions. It is unclear exactly why Enver inactivated these formations and eliminated them from the Ottoman force structure. During the Balkan Wars these rifle formations often were misused when they were employed mostly as reserves rather than in their doctrinal role of reconnaissance and screening. It is possible that the Turks recognised that the actual battlefield utility of these highly specialised formations did not justify the assignment of large numbers of select officers and men. In any case, by the summer of 1914 the Nişanci units were inactivated and the Ottoman corps and infantry divisions were established as pure triangular formations (in terms of assigned infantry assets). Changes to this organisational architecture are discussed throughout the text.

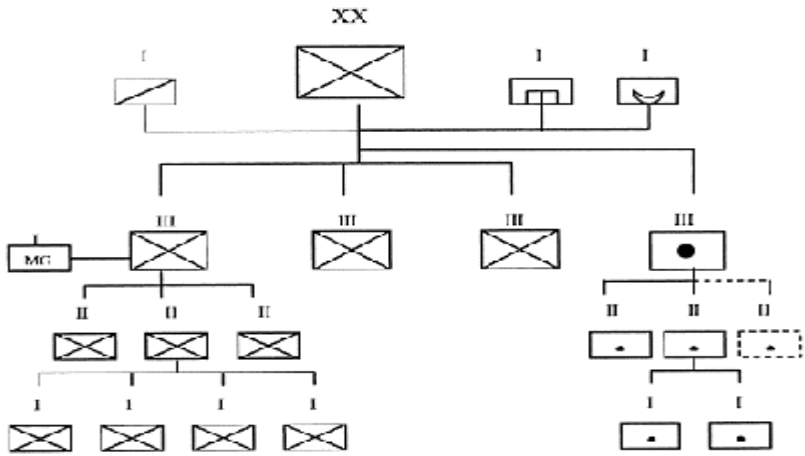


Figure 2 The 1914 infantry division. Divisional strength: total infantry battalions, nine; total artillery battalions, three; total personnel, 12,239; total heavy machine guns, twelve; total artillery pieces, sixteen (twenty-four).

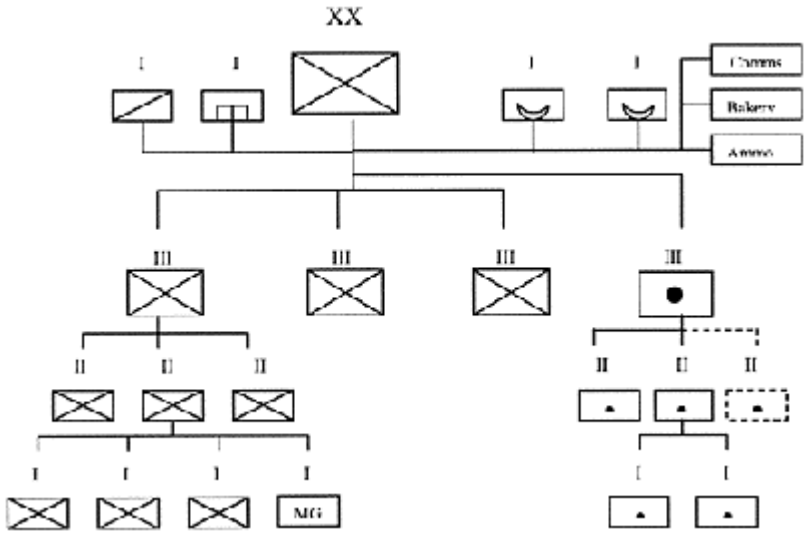


Figure 3 The 1917 infantry division. Divisional strength: total infantry battalions, nine; total artillery battalions, three; total personnel, 10,824; total heavy machine guns, thirty-six; total artillery pieces, sixteen (twenty-four).

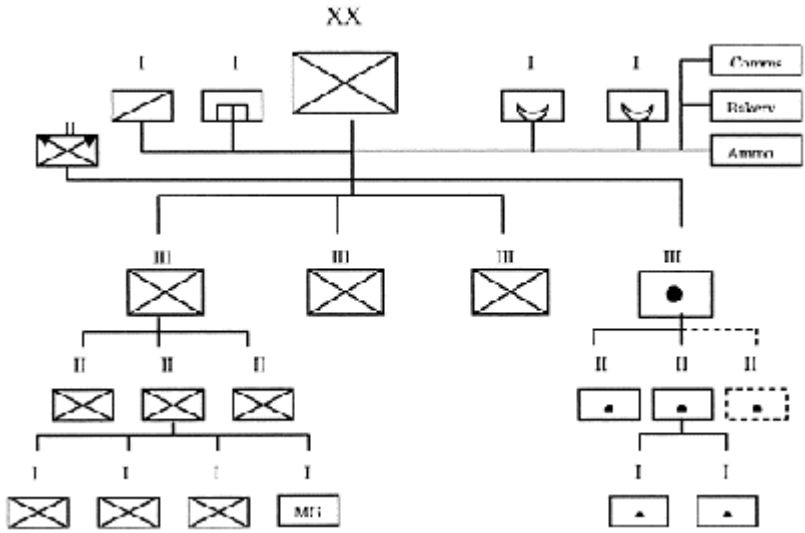


Figure 4 The 1918 infantry division. Divisional strength: total infantry battalions, nine; total assault battalions, one; total artillery battalions, three; total personnel, 11,424; total heavy machine guns, thirty-six; total artillery pieces, sixteen (twenty-four).

Notes

Introduction

1 Robert Rhodes James, *Gallipoli, The History of a Noble Blunder* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 93.

2 The author recognises that the Ottomans also waged war against the Russian Army on a massive scale. However, combat against the Russians largely ended in the fall of 1916, making a unitary study of the four-year war impossible.

3 The primary works of the 'Western historiography in English' concerning the Turks at war are the official British and Australian histories (Aspinall-Oglander, Bean, Corbett, Falls, and Moberly), the memoirs of the participants—allied (for example, Churchill, Birdwood, Godley, and Masefield) and German (for example, Liman von Sanders, Kannengiesser, Mûhlmann, and Prigge), and the secondary works of mostly Australian and British historians (for example, Wavell, Hickey, James, Millar, Moorehead, and Steele). To this must be added Maurice Larcher's classic 1926 history of the Turkish War. The unifying factor for this body of work is that it largely relies on Western sources rather than on Turkish sources. Even Larcher cited only 12 per cent of his sources as Turkish, while 25 per cent were German and the remaining 63 per cent were allied or European. (For full details of these books, see Bibliography.)

4 *Mesopotamia Commission Report of the Commission Appointed by Act of Parliament to Enquire into the Operations of War in Mesopotamia* (London: HMSO, 1917), 111–119.

5 A review of the evidentiary statements contained in CAB 19 also reveals that direct testimony heard by the commission did not attribute the causes of defeat to the operations of the Ottoman Army. See TNA, Cabinet Papers, CAB 19/8.

6 *The Final Report of the Dardanelles Commission* (London: HMSO, 1919), 21.

7 Ibid., 84.

8 Ibid., 87.

9 Ibid., 88.

10 See Allan R.Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H.Watman, 'The Effectiveness of Military Organizations' in Allan R.Millett and Williamson Murray, *Military Effectiveness*, Volume I: *The First World War* (Boston MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989, 321.

11 Colonel T.N.Dupuy, *Numbers, Predictions, and War, Using History to Evaluate Combat Factors and Predict the Outcome of Battles* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1979), 39.

12 Even in the largest battles in the Near East, the opposing armies numbered their cannon in the hundreds, rather than in the thousands. Likewise, shells were counted in the tens of thousands rather than in the millions. In a general sense, the Turks were logistical paupers and the British were often hamstrung by the logistical priority given to the western front. Consequently, neither side was particularly well off in logistical matters.

13 Casualty rates against the Turks were generally lower than in France. For example, Martin Middlebrook noted that, of thirty British New Army divisions, the four with the lowest casualties per month of active service were the 10th, 13th, 22nd, and 26th which fought on Turkish fronts. See Martin Middlebrook, *Your Country Needs You, From Six to Sixty-five Divisions* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 2000), 94.

14 The extant historiography of the specific campaigns will be examined at the beginning of each chapter.

15 A comprehensive listing and description of the twenty-seven modern Turkish official histories concerning World War I can be found in Edward J.Erickson, 'The Turkish Official Military Histories of the First World War, A Bibliographic Essay', *Middle Eastern Studies,* 39(3) (July 2003), 190–198. Additionally, the bibliography of this study contains full information on these volumes.
16 Ibid., 192.
17 The official Turkish military histories are not intended for general public consumption and are sold exclusively at the ATASE military compound in Ankara. Rather they are intended for use in the Turkish military's war and staff colleges and military academies.
18 Ibid., 195.
19 Besides the author only two Western historians have enjoyed access to the Turkish military archives (Dr. Tim Travers, University of Calgary and Dr. Michael Reynolds, Princeton University).
20 The bibliography of this study lists eighteen Ottoman memoirs reprinted since 2000.

1
From the ashes of disaster

1 TNA, Report re Turkish Military Preparations, 10 November 1914, WO 157/689.
2 Yigal Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 59–62. See also Hew Strachan, *The First World War,* Volume I: *To Arms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 680–693.
3 Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign,* 58–62.
4 TNA, H.D.Beaumont, *Turkey, Annual Report, 1913,* 4 December 1914, 31, Foreign Office Papers, FO 371/2137.
5 John Gooch, *The Plans of War, The General Staff and British Military Strategy c. 1900–1916* (New York: John Wiley, 1974), 271.
6 TNA, Cunliffe-Owen to Sir L.Mallet, Constantinople, 26 December 1913, FO 424/251.
7 TNA, Sir L.Mallet to Sir Edward Grey, Constantinople, 21 April 1914, FO 424/252. Herr von Mutius speaking to Cunliffe-Owen reported that the 'army was in deplorable condition and would be quite unfit…for some years to come'. See also Carl Mühlmann, *Das Deutsch-Türkische Waffenbundnis im Weltkriege* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1940), Jehuda L.Wallach, *Anatomie einer Militarhilfe* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1976), and *Liman von Sanders, Five Years in Turkey* (Nashville TN: The Battery Press, 2000), *passim,* for negative commentary about the Ottoman Army.
8 G.P.Gooch and Harold Temperley, eds, *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914,* Volume 11 (London: HMSO), 1926.
9 NARA, Major John R.M.Taylor, Constantinople Embassy, Attaché Dispatches 274–433, War College Division, M 1271, 274–433.
10 Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918,* 88–92. Dr. Sheffy highlights the repeated use of the phrase 'the Russian General Staff informed me that…' by British intelligence officers.
11 See Edward J.Erickson, *Defeat in Detail, The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912–1913* (New York: Praeger, 2003) for a complete presentation of the Ottoman Army's performance in the Balkan Wars.
12 Major Asım, *Balkan Harbinde neden Mühenzim Olduk?* (Istanbul, 1913). I am indebted to Dr. Feroz Yasamee of the University of Manchester for providing me with a summarised translation of Major Asım's book.
13 Ibid., Part 1:46–84, Part 2:3–73.

14 NARA, Major John R.M.Taylor, Constantinople Embassy to War College Division, Dispatch 368, 4 February 1914, M 1271, 368. Major Taylor included a copy of Major Asım's book in this report to the US War Department.
15 M.Kemal (later Mustafa Kemal Atatürk), *Zabit ve Kumandan ile Hasbihal* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1956). *Hasbihal* literally translated is a private and friendly chat between friends.
16 Ahmet Izzet (later Furgaç), 1864–1937. Graduated from the Ottoman War Academy in 1887. Served in Germany and as an aide-de-camp to Colmar von der Goltz. He was a staunch advocate of modernisation and was responsible for the massive organisational changes instituted in the Ottoman Army in 1910.
17 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncü Cilt, 6ncı Kısım (1908–1920)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1971), 209–220.
18 TNA, Lt Col. Cunliffe-Owen to Sir L.Mallet, Constantinople, 26 December 1913, FO 424/251. Cunliffe-Owen noted that the wartime 'dislocation of troops did not correspond to the fixed garrisons of the 1912 organisation…and it was not possible to give the proper training to even the smaller units of battalions'.
19 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 220.
20 Ibid., 220.
21 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dunya Harbinde Türk Harbi Vncu Cilt, Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati Inci Kitap (Haziran 1914–Nisan 1915)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1993), 54.
22 Strachan, *The First World War,* 206.
23 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi Kafkas Cephesi 3ncu Ordu Harekati, Cilt I* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1993), 52, and, in English, Erickson, *Defeat in Detail,* 336–340.
24 General Orders *(Ordu Emirnamesi),* No. 1, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 405–411. A summarised translation of this important order is included in this study as appendix A.
25 Ibid., 405, and, in English, Erickson, *Defeat in Detail,* 336.
26 Brian Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854–1914* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), 291.
27 Brian Holden Reid, *J.F.C.Fuller, Military Thinker* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987, 26–29). Fuller's ideas themselves were not especially radical but illustrate how conservative the army was toward the concept of fire power-based doctrines.
28 Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College,* 291.
29 Bronsart von Schellendorf was the author of *The Duties of the General Staff,* which became the principal publication on the subject until 1914. In both theoretical and practical terms, he was the ideal choice for the job.
30 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 336–340.
31 Ibid., 401.
32 General Orders No. 7, 21 April 1914, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 401.
33 General Orders No. 9, 24 May 1914, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 327–328.
34 The modern Turkish General Staff archives in Ankara contain thousands of sequential war diaries from regiment through army group level, attesting to the thoroughness and integrity of the Ottoman Army's war diary system.
35 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 329–330.
36 Ibid., and, in English, Erickson, *Defeat in Detail,* 396–398.
37 C.E.W.Bean, *The Story of ANZAC* (University of Queensland Press, reprint of 1921 edition), 142, and C.F.Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations, Gallipoli* (2 vols, London: William Heinemann, 1929), 18.

38 Strachan, *The First World War,* 685–686. See also Edward J.Erickson, *Ordered to Die, A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 28–29, 82.
39 Wallach, *Anatomie einer Militarhilfe,* 133.
40 Ulrich Trumpener, 'Suez, Baku, Gallipoli: The Military Dimensions of the German-Ottoman Coalition, 1914–1918', in Bela K.Kiraly and Nandor F. Dreisziger, eds, *East Central European Society in World War I* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 381–400, 384.
41 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey,* 25. In the summer of 1914 Liman von Sanders noted, 'I was unable to exercise the least influence on these decisions.'
42 Kazım Karabekir, *Birinci Cihan Harbinde Nasıl Girdik?* Cilt 2 (Istanbul: Emre Yayınları, 1995), 356–378. Karabekir noted that 'Bronsart was a German. Naturally he took directives from the [German] state,' 378.
43 Cemal Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, 1nci Cilt, Osmanli Imparator-luğunun Siyasi ve Askeri Hazırlıkları ve Harbe Girişi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1970), 274. See also Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* 11–12, for an explanation of the manning of the German Mission.
44 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 197.
45 By 2 August 1914, the German Military Mission had seventy-one officers on its rolls. See Hans Kennengiesser, *The Campaign in Gallipoli* (London: Hutchinson, undated), appendix I.
46 See, for example, A.J.Barker, *The Neglected War, Mesopotamia, 1914–1918* (London: Faber, 1967), 23.
47 See Scott W.Lackey, *The Rebirth of the Habsburg Army, Friedrich Beck and the Rise of the General Staff* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1995) for a thorough examination of the development of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff.
48 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 296–300. See Erickson, *Defeat in Detail,* 55–59 for a detailed discussion in English of Ottoman staff procedures and the use of German publications and doctrines by the Turks.
49 John Robertson, *Anzac and Empire, The Tragedy and Glory of Gallipoli* (London: Leo Cooper, 1990), 271. Robertson's appendix, entitled 'Gallipoli: Continuing Historical Controversy' (current through 1986) is the most complete exposition of the Western historiography of the Gallipoli Campaign. In his appendix, Robertson suggests that personal involvement distorted the views of the German participants and that they exaggerated their own roles.
50 For explanations of this exaggerated sense of racial superiority, see Eliot A.Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes, The Anatomy of Failure in War* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 134; Tim Travers, 'Command and Leadership Styles in the British Army: The 1915 Gallipoli Model', *Journal of Contemporary History,* 29 (1994): 403–442.
51 For examples see C.F.Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations, Gallipoli,* 18, W.E.D.Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields, A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border, 1828–1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 232, 237, and Michael Hickey, *The First World War, The Mediterranean Front, 1914–1923* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002), 29.
52 Akbay, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, 1nci Cilt, Osmanli Imparatorluğunun Siyasi ve Askeri Hazırlıkları ve Harbe Girişi,* 222.
53 Ibid., 222.
54 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 197, and, in English, Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* 39–45.
55 The Hejaz railway was a notable exception (running to Mecca and Medina for pilgrimage traffic).
56 TNA, Lt Col. Fredrick Cunliffe-Owen, Report No. 30, Enclosure to Sir L.Mallet's No. 639 of 12 October 1914, FO 371/2141.

57 TNA, Lt Col. Fredrick Cunliffe-Owen, Report No. 31, Enclosure to Sir L.Mallet's No. 652 of 16 October 1914, FO 371/2141.
58 TNA, Report, re Turkish Military Preparations and Political Intrigues having an attack on Egypt as their object, 10 November 1914, 1–3, WO 157/689
59 Ibid., 5–6.
60 TNA, Captain G.Effington Smyth, Remarks on Mr P.Graves' Report on Turkish Military Preparations, 27 November 1914, FO 371/1971.
61 See Falls, *Military Operations, Egypt and Palestine,* Moberly, *Military Operations, Mesopotamia Campaign,* and Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields,* or Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* chapter 2, for detailed expositions of these campaigns.
62 TNA, Notes on the Turkish Army, March 1915, WO 106/1472.

2
Gallipoli, 1915

1 NARA, General Information on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Capt. Williams, 6 November 1915, M 1271, File 8544–1, Dispatch 446.
2 Historian George H.Cassar claims that 'there are more books written about Gallipoli in the English-speaking world than on any other campaign in World War I'. George H.Cassar, *Kitchener's War, British Strategy from 1914 to 1918* (Washington DC: Brassey's, 2004), 325. The current author cannot verify this assertion.
3 C.F.Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations Gallipoli,* C.E.W.Bean, *The Story of ANZAC,* Phillip J.Haythornthwaite, *Gallipoli 1915, Frontal Assault on Turkey* (London: Osprey Press, n.d.), Michael Hickey, *Gallipoli* (London: John Murray, 1995), Robert Rhodes James, *Gallipoli, The History of a Noble Blunder* (New York: Macmillian, 1965), Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli* (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), Nigel Steel and Peter Hart, *Defeat at Gallipoli* (London: Macmillan, 1994), Tim Travers, *Gallipoli 1915* (Charleston SC: Tempus Publications, 2001).
4 Tim Travers, 'The Other Side of the Hill', *Military History Quarterly,* 12(3) (2000): 2–20, 2.
5 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915,* 222–228.
6 Steel and Hart, *Defeat at Gallipoli,* 420.
7 Field Marshal Lord Carver, *The Turkish Front, 1914–1918, The Campaigns at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia and in Palestine* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 2003), 246.
8 Winston Churchill appears to have established Mustafa Kemal as an almost mythic figure, who was personally responsible for the failed landings on 25 April 1915 (and referred to as the 'Man of Destiny'). See Winston S.Churchill, *The World Crisis* (New York: Macmillan, abridgement, 1992), 441–442. In fact, Churchill's account of the ANZAC landing is the most inaccurate of any of the Western histories.
9 Beginning in the late 1990s, Tim Travers (Canada) and Ed Erickson (United States) have enjoyed access to the Turkish General Staff Archives and have published several books and articles about the Turks in World War I and the Gallipoli Campaign. They are the first Western historians to make use of the archives.
10 Although there were approximately 500 Germans, including Vice-Admiral Guido Usedom, assigned to the coastal defence fortresses guarding the straits themselves.
11 The material for this paragraph comes from Edward J.Erickson, 'Strength against Weakness, Gallipoli 1915', *Journal of Military History,* 65 (October 2001), 981–1012.
12 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dunya Harbinde Türk Harbi Vncu Cilt, Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati Inci Kitap (Haziran 1914–Nisan 1915)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 80–91.

13 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 2nci Kisim, 1nci Kitap, Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarkoy Çikmarmasi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 66–67. Hereafter *Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Cikarmasi.* See also Erickson, 'Strength against Weakness', 981–1012 for a description and comparative maps of the 1912, February 1915, and April 1915 defences.
14 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Cikarmasi*, 66–67.
15 Ibid., Kroki (Map) 79.
16 Modern-day Gallipoli enthusiast Jul Snelders (from Belgium) uncovered these pits in 1998.
17 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Cikarmasi*, Kroki (Map) 19.
18 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Şark Ordusu, Ikinci Çatalca Muharebesi ve Şarköy Cikarmasi*, 251, 262. It is sometimes forgotten that Kemal served in a combat role during the Balkan Wars and generally unknown that he served as a corps-level operations officer on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1913.
19 The material for this paragraph comes from Erickson, 'Strength against Weakness', 981–1012.
20 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Hareket Inci Kitap*, 51–52.
21 Ibid., 49–51.
22 Ibid., 79.
23 Ibid., 52.
24 Ibid., 61–62.
25 Ibid., 54.
26 ATASE, 19ncu Tümen Tarihçesi, 1970, 9, unpublished staff study (Mekki Erertem), Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etut, ATASE Library, Record 26–834.
27 Ibid., 104–107.
28 Ibid., 38–40.
29 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Hareket Inci Kitap*, 97–99, 106–07, 217.
30 Otto Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey* (Nashville TN: The Battery Press, 2000), 61. Liman von Sanders asserted that 'The positions of five existing divisions up to March 26 had to be altered completely. They were posted on different principles and distributed along the entire coast…there were no reserves to check a strong and energetic advance.' This myth was perpetuated by all subsequent Western writers, for example Churchill, *The World Crisis*, 412, Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, 104, and James, *Gallipoli*, 71. For a more recent example see Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 38–39. Travers stated that the Ottoman defensive structure scattered the troops too widely for an effective defence.
31 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Hareket Inci Kitap*, Kroki (Overlay) 14.
32 Ibid., Kroki (Overlay) 15.
33 This perception also began with German memoirs and was perpetuated by later Western authors.
34 ATASE, 26nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 7, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 29, Shelf 2, File 169.
35 ATASE, 9th Infantry Division Orders, 19 August 1914, Ek (Document) 1, ATASE Archive 5025, Record 27, File 1/86–88.
36 ATASE, 26nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 8, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 29, Shelf 2, File 169.
37 ATASE, 27ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 7, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 29, Shelf 2, File 170.
38 Ibid., 8.
39 27th Infantry Regiment Order No. 5, 10 September 1914, Binbaşı Halis Bey (Ataksor), *Çanakkale Raporu* (Istanbul: Arma Yayınları, n.d.) (reprint of 1975 edition), 42–43.
40 ATASE, 27ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 7, Archive 91/2.
41 Detachment Orders Nos 8, 10, and 18, 1914, Halis Bey (Ataksor), *Çanakkale Raporu*, 46–58.

42 ATASE, 27ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 7, Archive 91/2.
43 ATASE, 25nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 1977, 7, unpublished staff study (Lütfi Doğanci), ATASE Library, Record 26–485.
44 ATASE, 9ncu Topçu Alay Tarihçesi, 1970, unpublished staff study (Mete Şefik), ATASE Library, Record 26–346.
45 ATASE, 19ncu Tümen Tarihçesi, 9, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–834.
46 See Aspinall-Oglander, Bean, Hickey, James, Moorehead, and Travers for statements to this effect.
47 ATASE, 57nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 19, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–466.
48 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 4, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 29, Shelf 1, File 159.
49 *Mümtaz subaylar* were officers who had graduated from the staff college but had not scored well enough on the examinations to qualify for the General Staff corps. If they performed well in units or scored well on subsequent examinations, they were admitted as staff officers *(Erkan-ı Harp).* The assignment of Distinguished Captains Zeki, Hayri and Ata gave the new regiment an unusual number of highly trained officers. Fahrettin Altay, *Çanakkale Hatırlanı* (Istanbul: Arma Yayınları, 2002), 12.
50 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 19, Archive 91/1.
51 ATASE, 77nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 2, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–336.
52 Ibid., 3.
53 Ibid., 3.
54 ATASE, 19th Division Daily Orders, Maidos, 25/26 February 1915, ATASE Archive 497, Record 36, File 23.
55 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 4, Archive 91/1.
56 ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 4, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–326 and ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 20, unpublished staff study (Mekki Erertem), ATASE Library, Record 26–327.
57 ATASE, 15nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 5, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 1, Shelf 27, File 1549.
58 ATASE, 46ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 6, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 34, Shelf 3, File 202.
59 ATASE, 47nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 11, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 29, Shelf 1, File 159.
60 Ibid., 12.
61 Ibid., 13.
62 Ibid., 14.
63 LC, Interview with General Askir Arkayan, Liddle Collection (LC), undated, Box Gall 216/1.
64 LC, Interview with Lt Col. Abil Savasman, July 1972, Box TU 01, item 4, tape 49.
65 ATASE, 11nci Piyade Tumen Tarihçesi, 13, Archive, Cabinet 6, Record 34, Shelf 9, File 1–14.
66 Ibid., 14.
67 Esat (Bülkat), 1862–1938. A fuller biography of Esat is presented later in this chapter.
68 David Jones, 'Imperial Russia's Forces at War', in Allan R.Millett and Williamson Murray, eds, *Military Effectiveness,* Volume I: *The First World War* (Boston MA: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 281.
69 David G.Herrmann, *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 203.
70 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* Ek-4 (Document 4). See Table of Peacetime Organisational Cadres. Interestingly, thirteen NCOs were assigned to the infantry battalion headquarters.

71 Yücel Yanıkdağ, ‘Educating the Peasants: The Ottoman Army and Enlisted Men in Uniform’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 40(6) (November 2004):94. Yanıkdağ noted that the literacy rate of the Ottoman Empire in 1914 was about 5–7 per cent.
72 Ibid., 99–101.
73 The term ‘British Army’ is used inclusively in this study to include the regular army, its territorial reserves, the armies of its colonial and dominion partners, and the Kitchener armies.
74 Among the best are Brian Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854–1914* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), Nikolas Gardner, *Trial by Fire, Command and the British Expeditionary Force in 1914* (Westport CT: Praeger, 2003), Paddy Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the Western Front, The British Army’s Art of Attack, 1916–1918* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1994), Martin Samuels, *Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), and Tim Travers, *The Killing Ground, The British Army, the Western Front and the Emergence of Modern Warfare, 1900–1918* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987).
75 See Travers, *The Killing Ground, passim,* Gardner, *Trial By Fire, passim,* and Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the Western Front, passim.*
76 See Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College, passim.*
77 See Gardner, *Trial By Fire, passim.*
78 See Samuels, *Command or Control?, passim.*
79 Ibid. See also Gardner, *Trial By Fire, passim.*
80 As late as 1920, the British Army was characterised as ‘there is probably no more complex and complicated organisation in the world than the British Army’. John Gooch, ‘“A Particularly Anglo-Saxon Institution”: The British General Staff in the Era of Two World Wars’, in David French and Brian Holden Reid, eds, *The British General Staff, Reform and Innovation c. 1890–1939* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 192.
81 Bean, *The Story of ANZAC* and Steel and Hart, *Defeat at Gallipoli.*
82 Rhodes James, *Gallipoli,* and Hickey, *Gallipoli.* James, for example, erroneously maintained that the southern sector was divided between Kemal and Sami until about 0730, when Liman von Sanders ordered Esat to take command, p. 112. Alan Moorehead’s *Gallipoli* created the lasting impression that a single regiment (the 57th Infantry) stopped the Australians, pp. 138–140.
83 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915,* passim.
84 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915,* 82. However, Travers does credit the Turks with very effective shrapnel fire and sniper fire.
85 Halis Bey (Ataksor), *Çanakkale Raporu,* 15. Major Halis published the *Canakkale Report* in 1933 as a serial in the Turkish magazine *Küçük Mecmua.* Halis’s report contains several hundred regimental and battalion orders from the period May 1914 through August 1915 that he had retained as personal copies.
86 Ibid., 105. See copy of 27th Infantry Regiment Order No. 25, 22 April 1914, paragraph 8.
87 ATASE, 27ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 10, Archive 91/2.
88 Australian historian Frank Cain has noted that the landing on the narrow Anzac beach ‘could not have been as unintentional as first thought.’ Cain quoted Captain C. G.Dix of the Beach Party, who thought that the intended beach was so heavily mined, wired, and covered by guns that landing there ‘must have been nearly impossible’. Frank Cain, ‘A Colonial Army in Ottoman Fields: Australia’s Involvement in the Gallipoli Debacle’, in Yigal Sheffy and Saul Shai, eds, *The First World War: Middle Eastern Perspectives* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2000), 180.
89 ATASE, III Corps to Fifth Army, ATASE Archive 180, Record 777, File 4–19.
90 Ibid.
91 NDU, Log Entry, HMS *Bacchante,* 0420, 25 April 1915, National Defence University (NDU) Special Collections, Gallipoli Box.

92 Ibid., 0443 Log Entry.
93 ATASE, 9th Infantry Division Orders, 0555, 25 April 1915, ATASE Archive 4836, Record H-10, File 1–73.
94 Ibid. See distribution of orders.
95 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dunya Harbinde Türk Harbi Vnci Cilt, Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1979), 107–109.
96 ATASE, 9th Infantry Division Orders, ATASE Archive 4836, Record H-11, File 1–19.
97 ATASE, 27ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, Archive 91/2.
98 ATASE, Combat Report, 27th Infantry Regiment, ATASE Archive 5026, Record 28, File 1–12.
99 ATASE, Regimental Attack Order, 1200 hours, 25 April 1915, appendixed in 27ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 14, Archive 91/2.
100 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 72–77.
101 Christopher Pugsley, 'Stories of Anzac', Jenny Macleod, *Gallipoli, Making History* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 49–54.
102 Ibid.
103 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dunya Harbinde Türk Harbi Vncu, Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati, 1nci, 2nci, 3ncu Kitaplarin Özetlenmiş Tarihi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 2002), 69.
104 Bean, *The Story of ANZAC*, 450–445 and Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 81–82. In particular, both authors erroneously state that the 77th Infantry was fed into the fight between the 27th and 57th Regiments. However, the Turkish Official History clearly states that it was ordered to the left flank of the 27th Infantry and went into action there.
105 John Lee, *A Soldier's Life, General Sir Ian Hamilton, 1853–1946* (London: MacMillan, 2000), 161–162.
106 Bean, *The Story of ANZAC*, 454–457.
107 Ibid., 460–461.
108 Ibid., 60.
109 Ross Mallett, *The Interplay between Technology, Tactics, and Organisation in the First AIF* (MA Honours Thesis), Australian Defence Force Academy (Canberra), 1999, 14.
110 Ibid., 36–37.
111 See Samuels, *Command or Control?* and Travers, *The Killing Ground* for a fuller explanation of British doctrine during this period.
112 Similarly, Nikolas Gardner noted that, in 1914, BEF divisions had 'no set procedures for the distribution of artillery…and, as a result infantry and artillery brigades within the same division often operated independently of one another, with unfortunate consequences'. Gardner, *Trial by Fire*, 82–83.
113 NARA, General Information on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Capt. Williams to Chief of Staff, War College Division, 6 November 1915, M 1271, File 8544–1, Dispatch 446. Williams personally observed 'rather feeble artillery fire' from the Anzac beachhead that 'frequently burst high'. He was told by Turkish officers that 'English artillery fire had been poor throughout, it being necessary for them to fire many shots before they obtain the correct range.'
114 See Nigel Hamilton, *Master of the Battlefield, Monty's War Years, 1942–1944* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1983), 124–125, for a complete explanation of Montgomery's concept of 'grip'. The author recognises the controversy surrounding Montgomery's operations, but as a trained staff officer he believes in the fundamental concept of 'grip'.
115 İhsan Ilgar and Nurer Uğurlu, eds, *Esat Paşa'nın Çanakkale Savaşı Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Örgün Yayinevi, 2003 reprint of 1975 edition), 509, Ek VI, Fahrettin's *Çanakkale Şavası*.
116 Ibid., 48–50.
117 Ibid., 426, Ek IV, Mustafa Kemal's *Arıburnu Muharebeleri Raporu.*
118 Ibid., 48, 508. These are tribes found in northern Syria and Mesopotamia.

119 Interview with Dr. Mesut Uyar, Captain, Turkish Army, Turkish Army Military Academy Archives Division, 12 April 2004. Uyar stated that the recruitment area of the 77th Infantry Regiment was the city of Aleppo, which had ‘a Turkish dominated population’. He is currently researching the Arab composition of the Ottoman Army’s officer corps in World War I and finds the characterisation of the 77th Infantry Regiment as ‘Arab’ to be a misrepresentation.
120 ATASE, Fifth Army Message to Ministry of War, 0150 hours, 26 April 1915, ATASE Archive 180, Record 776, File 4/4–1.
121 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 127.
122 The 1911 Ottoman Army tables of organisation for infantry divisions provided twenty-two officers (including the commander [a general officer] and chief of staff) and three NCOs as the entire division headquarters element. See TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, IIIncu Cilt 6ncu Kisim (1908–1920)*, Ek 4. By way of comparison, British infantry divisions in 1914 had seventy-one personnel assigned to the divisional headquarters, including five general officers and fourteen qualified staff officers. For discussion see Middlebrook, *Your Country Needs You, From Six to Sixty-five Divisions*, 2, 10–12.
123 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 132–133.
124 Ibid., 137.
125 ATASE, Ministry of War to III Corps Commander, morning of 28 April 1915, ATASE Archive 2453, Record H-61, File 1–27.
126 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 155.
127 Ibid., 157. The Ottoman attack was planned at divisional level using 1/25,000 scale maps that were known to be based on old and incomplete data. Therefore, commanders were directed to make checks physically and corrections as necessary.
128 Ibid., 157. This page contains a quote from an order in the Atatürk Archives, Archive 6–35, Record 10, File 1–7.
129 Ibid., 158.
130 Ibid., 160.
131 Ibid., 162.
132 ATASE, 15nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 5, Archive 91/1.
133 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 6, Archive 91/1.
134 The historiography of the Cape Helles landings is largely the same as that of the ANZAC landings since the authors chose a wide-angle view of the entire pattern of landings.
135 ATASE, 26nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 8–9, Archive 91/2.
136 Ibid., 12.
137 Ibid., 12.
138 ATASE, Combat Orders, 26th Infantry Regiment, ATASE Archive 5337, Record H-5, File 1–23.
139 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, Kroki (Map Overlays) 28 and 29.
140 Ibid., 226.
141 Registration and shooting ‘off the map’ were gunnery concepts that would not be used in the Ottoman Army until 1917.
142 Ibid., 227.
143 ATASE, Combat Orders, 26th Infantry Regiment, ATASE Archive 5337, Record H-1, File 1–1.
144 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 232.
145 The Beaten Zone is a technical term in machine gun employment that denotes the area into which most of the bullets fall. It is elliptically shaped along the gun target line.
146 ATASE, 26nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 12, Archive 91/2.
147 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 235.
148 Ibid., 237–238.

149 Ibid., 242–243.
150 ATASE, Combat Orders, 26th Infantry Regiment, ATASE Archive 5337, Record H-5, File 1–26.
151 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 243–244.
152 ATASE, Situation Report, 26th Infantry Regiment, ATASE Archive 5337, Record H-5, File 1–27.
153 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 265.
154 Ibid.
155 In fairness to Halil Sami, as the 9th Infantry Division commander, he remained technically responsible for all of the beaches until relieved of this responsibility in the ANZAC sector in the late afternoon by Esat.
156 Selahattın Adıl Paşa, *Çanakkale Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Arma Yayınları, 2001), 144. Reprint of the memoirs of a participant.
157 ATASE, Report to Fifth Army from III Corps, 1520 hours, 25 April 1915, ATASE Archive 180, Record 777, File 4–19.
158 Ibid.
159 *Gecen Komutanlari*, 437. Halil Sami's performance would continue to erode. Finally, on 7 July 1915, he was relieved of command for being 'tired and weary' and sent to Constantinople.
160 See Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 83–4, for the story in English of Sergeant Yahya and his determined defence of this position.
161 ATASE, 25nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 12, unpublished staff study (Doğanci), ATASE Library, Record 26–485.
162 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 270–271.
163 ATASE, Combat Orders, 3rd Battalion 26th Infantry, 0100 hours, 26 April 1915, ATASE Archive 5337, Record H-1, File 1–3.
164 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 270–271.
164 ATASE, Combat Orders, 3rd Battalion, 26th Infantry, 0100 hours, 26 April 1915, ATASE Archive 5337, Record H-1, File 1–3.
164 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 278–279.
165 The British Army mobilised twelve infantry divisions of regulars, plus the elite Guards Infantry Division, during World War I. See Middlebrook, *Your Country Needs You*, 21–35.
166 Captain Stair Gillon, *The Story of the 29th Division, A Record of Gallant Deeds* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1925), 7–15.
167 Hunter-Weston would later, on the western front, mature into an effective corpslevel commander.
168 Major General J.C.Latter, *The History of the Lancashire Fusiliers, 1914–1918* (Aldershot: Gale & Polden, 1949), 46–51. The material for the following paragraph is drawn from this work.
169 Geoffrey Moorhouse, *Hell's Foundations, A Town, its Myths, and Gallipoli* (Sevenoaks: Hodder & Stoughton, 1992), 57–59.
170 Latter, *The History of the Lancashire Fusiliers, 1914–1918,49.*
171 Ibid., 50–51. In the famous Lancashire Landing at W Beach, the Fusiliers won 'six VCs before breakfast'.
172 T.H.E.Travers, 'Command and Leadership Styles in the British Army: The 1915 Gallipoli Model', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 29 (1994):403–442, 412–413.
173 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 61.
174 Field Marshal Lord Carver, *The Turkish Front, 1914–1918* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 2003), 34. Hunter-Weston eventually came ashore on 27 April 1915.
175 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 288.
176 Ibid., 292.

177 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 92. Travers used British war diaries and a German letter, rather than Turkish sources, to support this idea.
178 ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 1977, 23, unpublished staff study (Lütfi Doğanci), ATASE Library, Record 26–326.
179 ATASE, 9ncu Piyade Tumen Tarihçesi, 9, ATASE Archive 3459, Record 7, File 1–112.
180 ATASE, Combat Orders, 9th Infantry Division, 27 April 1915, ATASE Archive 4836, Record H-10, File 1–83.
181 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 299.
182 Ibid., 299.
183 The Turkish official history is especially critical of Halil Sami's failure to delay the attack until all preparations had been completed.
184 ATASE, Combat Orders, 9th Infantry Division, 28 April 1915, ATASE Archive 4836, Record H-l 1, File 1–27.
185 Ibid.
186 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 304.
187 Ibid., 304–305.
188 Ibid., 305. Travers noted contemporary criticism by Captain Mühlmann that the Turkish fortress artillery did not support the fight at Cape Helles (Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 97). This would seem to be incorrect based on Turkish histories.
189 Ibid., 307.
190 ATASE, Combat Report, 9th Infantry Division, 28 April 1915, ATASE Archive 4836, Record H-1 1, File 1–27.
191 Carver, *The Turkish Front 1914–1918*, 36. Orders did not leave the 29th Division headquarters until 2300 hours for an attack scheduled for 0800 on the following morning.
192 Ibid.
193 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 309.
194 ATASE, Combat Report, 9th Infantry Division, 28 April 1915, ATASE Archive 4836, Record H-10, File 1–85.
195 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekati)*, 311.
196 LC, Interview with General Askir Arkayan, Observation Officer in 3rd Battery, 150mm Howitzer Demonstration Battalion, July 1972, GALL 216/1, item 1.
197 Travers, *Gallipoli 1915*, 93.
198 Travers and Erickson have examined certain aspects of Ottoman corps-level performance. However, their work is localised in time and space and a complete analysis of Ottoman corps-level operations remains incomplete.
199 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 140–141. See Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 24–33 for detailed discussions of Ottoman Army reorganisation efforts.
200 See Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 77–162 for an examination of the fighting record of Mahmut Muhtar's III Corps in the Balkan Wars.
201 Change of Command Directives, 6 January 1914, Archive No. 6, Prime Minister Archives, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Turk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 195–196.
202 The material for the following biographical information on Esat was assembled from İsmet Görgülü, *Türk Harp Tarıhı Derslerinde Adı Geçen Komutanlar* (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri Yayını, 1983), 298–300.
203 For a detailed discussion of Esat's defence of Yanya, see Turkish General Staff, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), IIIncü Cilt, 2nci Kisim, Garp Ordusu Vardar Ordusu, Yunan Cephesi Harekati* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 518–672 and Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 293–316.
204 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 78–79.
205 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 61–62.

206 Akbay, *Osmanli Imparatorlugu 'nun Siyasi ve Askeri Hazirliklari ve Harbe Girisi*, 175–176.
207 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1914-Nisan 1915)*, 96–101.
208 ATASE, III Corps Orders, 8 November 1914, ATASE Archive 3964, Record H-5, File 1–10/11.
209 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1914-Nisan 1915)*, 228.
210 ATASE, paragraphs 1–9, III Corps Orders, 7 April 1915, ATASE Archive 3475, Record H-4, File 2–20.
211 ATASE, paragraph 10, III Corps Orders, 7 April 1915, ATASE Archive 3475, Record H-4, File 2–20.
212 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Balkan Harbi (1912–1913), II Cilt, 1nci Kitap, Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 62–63 and Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 127.
213 NARA, Report—Evacuation of Gallipoli, 3 May 1915, American Embassy, Constantinople, RG 353, Roll 41.
214 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 30.
215 Ibid., 32.
216 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 64.
217 III Corps Orders, 1010, 25 April 1915, full text copy reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Amfibi Harekat)*, 32.
218 Ibid., 32–33.
219 Akbay, *Osmanli Imparatorlugu'nun Siyasi ve Askeri Hazirliklari ve Harbe Girisi*, 172–174.
220 ATASE, 48nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 8, Archive, Cabinet 91, Record 34, Shelf 3, File 202.There were five officers killed and nine officers wounded in this attack as well.
221 Ibid., 8.
222 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahi Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanli Devri Birinci Dunya Harbinde Türk Harbi Vnci Cilt 3ncu Kitap, Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1915–Ocak 1916)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1980), 538–540, the information on the Ottoman replacement system is drawn from these pages.
223 NARA, General information of military troops and events in Constantinople, Captain R.H.Taylor, Constantinople Embassy, 14 February 1916, M 1145, Dispatch 503.
224 Ibid.
225 NARA, General military conditions in Constantinople, Captain R.H.Taylor, Constantinople Embassy, 21 March 1916, M 1147, Dispatch 518.
226 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 391–394. Ottoman soldiers fired only about twenty to thirty rifle bullets in training, 393.
227 LC, Interview with Lt Gen. Fahrettin Altay, July 1972, Box TU 01, tape 69.
228 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1915–Ocak 1916)*, Kroki (Map) 8, 9.
229 Ibid., 5th Infantry Division Strength Returns, 5 July 1915, ATASE Archive 3849, Record H-22, File 1–37 reprinted on p. 206.
230 Ibid., 205–206.
231 Ibid., 207. These additional casualties came from the following infantry divisions: 1st (2,853), 4th (963), 6th (2,932), 7th (265), 11th (3,311), 12th (534).
232 Ibid., 545–552.
233 Ibid., 547–548.
234 LC, Interview with Lt Col. Abil Savasman, July 1972, Box TU 01, item 4, tape 49.
235 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Çanakkale Cephesi Harekati (Haziran 1915–Ocak 1916)*, 538.
236 LC, Interview with General Fahri Belen, July 1972, Box TU 01, tape 67.

237 Ibid. See also LC, Interview with Captain A.Ozgan, 27th Infantry Regiment, July 1972, Box TU 01, tape 69 and LC, Interview with S.Artum, aide-de-camp, July 1972, Box TU 01, tape 46.
238 LC, Letter to father, 7 May 1915 and letter to wife, 16 June 1915, Fahrettin Altay, July 1972, Box TU 01. Altay requested that his father send him pastries, fruit, cologne, acid drops, and new shirts.
239 LC, Interview with Lieutenant General Fahrettin Altay, July 1972, Box TU 01, tape 69.
240 Ibid.
241 Colonel Henry Wilson, British Army DMO (October 1913). See Chapter 1, note 4 for the origins of this quote.
242 NARA, General information on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Capt. Williams to Chief of Staff, War College Division, 6 November 1915, M 1271, File 8544–1, Dispatch 446. Williams had numerous detailed discussions with Turkish officers on the peninsula throughout the campaign.
243 Ibid.

3
Kut Al Amara, 1916

1 LC, Copy of 'Communiqué to Troops' in G.H.Allen papers, LC, MES 001.
2 The Victorian military tradition included the successful sieges at Lucknow, Rorke's Drift, Chitral Fort, Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Peking. It also included the last stand at Isandhlwana and Gordon's last stand at Khartoum. In Victorian times, British soldiers died or they persevered, but they did not surrender. This theme was popularised by the British public and press before 1914. See Cecil D.Eby, *The Road to Armageddon, The Martial Spirit in English Popular Literature, 1870–1914* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1988), 4–8.
3 See, for example, Nikolas Gardner, 'Sepoys and the Siege of Kut-al-Amara, December 1915–April 1915', *War in History*, 11(3) (2004):307–326.
4 The best known popular work on the campaign remains Ronald Millar's *Death of an Army, The Siege of Kut, 1915–1916* (Boston MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), which focused on the siege itself. Other works include A.J.Barker, *The Neglected War, Mesopotamia, 1914–18* (1967) and Brig. Gen. F.J.Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia*, 1914–1918 (Volumes 1–4) (London: HMSO, 1923–27). The most recent work on the Mesopotamian Campaign is Erickson's *Ordered to Die, A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (2000) and Field Marshal Lord Carver, *The National Army Museum Book of the Turkish Front, 1914–1918* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 2003).
5 The author believes that his article, 'From Kirkilisse to the Great Offensive, Turkish Operational Encirclement Planning 1912–22', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 40(1) (January 2004):45–64, is the first non-Turkish discussion of the Kut Al Amara Campaign as an encirclement operation.
6 Brig. Gen. F.J.Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia*, 1914–1918 (Volume 1) (London: HMSO, 1923), 99.
7 Ibid., 69–70. The General Staff at the War Office remained responsible for Mesopotamia and most of Arabia.
8 Cemal Akbay, *Osmanli Imparatorluğunun Siyasi ve Askeri Hazırlıkları ve Harbe Giriši*, 212–220. The Ottoman Concentration Plan sent six out of thirteen army corps to Thrace, four to the Caucasus, two to Palestine, and one to Arabia. Mesopotamia, the peacetime home to two army corps (four infantry divisions), was converted to an Area Command (one infantry division).

9 TNA, Sir J.E.Nixon to Chief of GS, Army HQ, India, Report of Battle of Kut-al-Amarah *(sic)*, 28 September 1915, WO 32/5207. Nixon commented that the Turkish 'entrenchments were well traversed and concealed…they were the most up to date types. In front—barbed wire, military pits and land mines. Behind commo trenches.'
10 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, III ncü Cilt, Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918, 1nci Kısım* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1979), Kroki (Overlay) 32.
11 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 223.
12 Ibid., Kuruluş, (Organisation Chart) 15. The 36th and 38th Infantry Divisions had one artillery battalion and the 35th and 37th Infantry Divisions had two artillery battalions.
13 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanlı Devri Birinci Dünya Harbi Idari Faaliyetler ve Lojistik, Xncu Cilt* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1985), Ek (Document) 7.
14 Fahri Belen, *Birinci Cihan Harbinde Türk Harbi, 1914 Yılı Hareketleri* (Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1964), 54.
15 ATASE, Ciphered Report to the Ministry of War from XII Corps Commander Fahrettin, 28 September 1914, Archive 3641, Record 176, File 1.
16 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 290. At the end of September 1914, in all of Mesopotamia, the Turks had a total of thirty-six field guns and three machine guns.
17 ATASE, Orders to the 38th Infantry Division from the Iraq Area Command, Baghdad, 7 September 1914, Archive 3644, Record H-3, File 1–6.
18 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 159.
19 Fahri Belen, *Birinci Cihan Harbinde Türk Harbi, 1918 Yılı Hareketleri, Vnci Cilt* (Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1967), Ek 1, Divisional Organisation Chart.
20 ATASE, Ciphered telegram No. 45837, Enver Paşa to the Iraq Command, 9 September 1915, Archive 3606, Record 25, File 1.
21 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 349.
22 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 375–378.
23 ATASE, Mission Directive, 12 December 1914, from Enver Paşa to Kazym Bey, Archive 5240, Record H-3, File 1.
24 For a detailed discussion in English of the formation of the expeditionary forces, including the composition and strength of the support units, see Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 62–67.
25 TNA, Minutes No. 49832, December 1914, FO 371/1971. Graves's report (although full of errors) was well very received by Mr Cheeham, Lord Kitchener, and the King. For Graves's assessments on Ottoman mobilisation, see p. 26.
26 British General Staff, Intelligence Section, Cairo, *Handbook of the Turkish Army, Eighth Provisional Edition 1916* (London, Imperial War Museum reprint, 1996), back leaf of title page.
27 Intelligence Section, Cairo, *Handbook of the Turkish Army, Eighth Provisional Edition 1916*, 36–39. The discussion of 'Reserve and bis units' in the handbook con-tains a rather confusing explanation of the situation, but the Order of Battle properly identifies the former expeditionary forces.
28 Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign*, 105. Sheffy attributes this situation, in part also, to over-reliance on Russian intelligence, which relied on faulty information and an incomplete understanding of Ottoman mobilisation.
29 However, by the eighth edition of the handbook in 1916 the British had sorted out the truth.
30 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, Kafkas Cephesi, 3ncü Ordu Harekatı, Cilt I* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1993), 570–577.
31 İsmet Görgülü, *On Yillik Harbin Kadrosu 1912–1922, Balkan Birinci Dünya ve İstiklal Harbi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurum Basimevi, 1993), 21, 31. Halil was also an uncle of Enver Paşa.

32 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Kafkas Cephesi*, 575–580.
33 Ibid., 597.
34 Third Army Strength Report, 4 June 1915, Archive 2950, Record H-14, File 1–49, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Kafkas Cephesi*, 698. The First Expeditionary Force had 7,500 effectives and the Fifth Expeditionary Force had 4,725 effectives.
35 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Kafkas Cephesi*, 699.
36 Ibid., Kuruluş, (Organisation Chart) 16.
37 Ibid., 741.
38 Ibid., Kroki (Overlay) 59.
39 Ibid., 755. The 36th Infantry Division was assigned a holding action on the corps' southern flank.
40 Ibid., 757–775 and Kroki (Overlay) 60.
41 Ibid., 775. The Right Wing Group headquarters ordered its subordinate corps to 'continue to attack and pursue the enemy' in a telegraph message on 27 July 1915.
42 Ibid., 777–791 and Kroki (Overlay) 61.
43 Ibid., Kroki (Overlays) 65 and 66.
44 Ibid., Kroki (Overlay) 67.
45 Ibid., Kroki (Overlays) 68 and 69.
46 Ibid., 830.
47 Ibid., 830.
48 Ibid., 855.
49 Ibid., 857.
50 Ibid., 857.
51 Ibid., 857.
52 Ibid., 859.
53 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Idari Faaliyetler ve Lojistik*, 280.
54 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Kafkas Cephesi*, 859.
55 ATASE, Ciphered telegram No. 51387, Enver Paşa to the Iraq Command, 5/6 October 1915, Archive 3614, Record 58, File 4. On this day, Enver sent word to Iraq that regular infantry divisions were being sent from the Third Army and would arrive in a month and a half.
56 These host divisions were the 3rd, 13th, 14th, and 15th Infantry Divisions.
57 General M.Cowper's testimony to the Mesopotamia Commission indicated that he was impressed by the general opinion that Townshend would beat the Turks handily at Ctesiphon. Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia*, vol. II, 50.
58 Ibid., 52.
59 Ibid., 56–57. This misnomer crept into the British intelligence's Ottoman order of battle because two of the regiments in the First Expeditionary Force were originally from the Ottoman 3rd Infantry Division. Hence, the 51st Infantry Division was known as the '3rd Composite Division' or sometimes the '3rd bis Infantry Division'.
60 TNA, Special Order, 6th Infantry Division, 13 November 1915, WO 32/5204.
61 Colonel W.H.Beach, *Note on Military Intelligence in the Mesopotamia Campaign*, in Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia*, vol. II, appendix XXX.
62 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 376–377.
63 ATASE, Ciphered telegram, Enver Paşa to von der Goltz, 22 October 1915, Archive 3644, Record H-1, File 1–11, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 377.
64 It is untrue that either von der Goltz or Halil planned the encirclement of Kut. This myth was perpetuated in Paul K.Davis, *Ends and Means, The British Mesopotamian Campaign and Commission* (London: Associated University Presses, 1994), 137. Davis claimed that 'these two directed the pursuit and eventual siege of the 6th Division'.

65 The following biographical material for Nurettin (later Sakallı) is drawn from TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk İstiklal Harbi'ne Katılan Tümen ve Daha Üst Kademelerdaki Komutanlaryn Biyografileri (Ikinci Baskı)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basimevi, 1989), 29–31.
66 Although replaced by Enver's uncle (Halil) in Mesopotamia, Nurettin went on to command the IX Corps and serve as the Third Army chief of staff in January 1916. By 1918, he had served as the Antalya Area commander, XXI Corps commander, and XI Corps commander. In the War of Independence, Nurettin served in Atatürk's Republican Army as the First Army commander and played an instrumental role in the encirclements and expulsion of the Greeks from Anatolia in 1922/23. He retired in 1925 as a lieutenant general.
67 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 363–364. The Turks had 11,400 rifles and forty-six artillery pieces. The British had 11,103 rifles, fortyeight artillery pieces, and three gunboats.
68 Ibid., 366.
69 Ibid., 201. For an account in English of Süleyman Askeri's suicide see Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 110–111.
70 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 384. Additionally, Nurettin could deploy eighteen machine guns and forty-four artillery pieces to Townshend's forty-six machine guns and thirty artillery pieces (plus the guns of the Tigris flotilla).
71 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia*, vol. II, 64–73.
72 Ibid., Combatant Strength Chart, 71, and TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 388.
73 Millar, *Death of an Army*, 43. Oddly splitting hairs, Townshend actually claimed to have won a victory at Ctesiphon because the 'enemy left me in possession of the battlefield'. See Charles V.F.Townshend, *My Campaign in Mesopotamia* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1920), 178.
74 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia*, vol. II, 108.
75 Ibid., 64–73.
76 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, 406.
77 ATASE, Ciphered telegram Iraq Area Command to Enver Paşa, 28/29 October 1915, Archive 3644, Record H-25, File 1–15.
78 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918*, Kroki (Overlay) 32.
79 ATASE, Army Orders No. 28, Iraq Area Command, 1545 hours, 24 November 1915, Archive 3609, Record 26, File 39–4.
80 NARA, Interview with General Townshend, Captain R.H.Williams, United States Military Attaché, Constantinople, 28 August 1916, Dispatch No. 567, M 1271, File 8759–139.
81 Ibid. Townshend also expressed his belief to Captain Williams that General Nixon (the theatre commander) had ordered him to advance with too small a force against his better judgement.
82 The material and opinions in the following paragraph are drawn from Millar, *Death of an Army*, 20–22 and Byron Farwell, *Queen Victoria's Little Wars* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 301–305. Townshend was also an adept mimic and an amateur thespian.
83 Millar, *Death of an Army*, 21.
84 Townshend's organisation of his army into columns reflected his own colonial experience and his use of terminology such as 'Principal Mass' and French phrases his bent for French methods.
85 Townshend was a serious student of military history and his memoirs constantly referred to Napoleonic and classical military themes as reference points for his tactical plans. (See Townshend, *My Campaign in Mesopotamia, passim.)* It is unclear whether this was retrospective (justifying his battles) or whether he actually used historical examples in the operational and tactical sense.
86 Ian Sumner, *The Indian Army, 1914–1947* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2001), 3–4.

87 Roger Beaumont, *The Sword of the Raj, The British Army in India, 1747–1947* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1977), 160–163.
88 Ibid.
89 Sumner, *The Indian Army 1914–1947,* 5.
90 Philip Mason, *A Matter of Honour, An Account of the Indian Army, its Officers and Men* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974), 410–411.
91 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 63.
92 ATASE, Daily Order, Iraq Area Command, 26 November 1915, Archive 3609, Record 26, File 41–1.
93 ATASE, Ciphered telegram from the Iraq Area Command to Mazhar Paşa near Diyala, 1000 hours, 26 November 1915, Archive 3609, Record 27, File 11–24.
94 ATASE, Telegram (marked Urgent) from Nurettin to Fazil Paşa, 1145 hours, 26 November 1915, Archive 3609, Record 27, File 11–16.
95 Nurettin's resolute and decisive actions may be favourably compared to those of Mustafa Kemal at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. In each case, the commander sought to seize the initiative by rapid action. Oddly, Ronald Millar characterised Nurettin as 'overcautious' (Millar, *Death of an Army,* 118).
96 Telegram, Townshend to Nixon, 1600 hours, 28 November 1915, quoted in Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 112.
97 ATASE, Army Orders (Summary) 1600 hours, 28 November 1915, Archive 3644, Record H-31, File 1, reprinted in Turkish General Staff, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 408–409.
98 Telegram, Townshend to Nixon, 1730 hours, 29 November 1915, quoted in Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 114–115.
99 ATASE, Army Orders No. 35, Iraq Area Command, 1030 hours, 30 November 1915, Archive 3610, Record 33, File 3–1.
100 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 120–121 and Turkish General Staff, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 416.
101 TNA, Report on Operations 11 November-3 December 1915 from Maj. Gen. Townshend to Lt Gen. Sir P.H.N.Lake, WO 32/5195.
102 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 126–130.
103 Ibid., 131–137.
104 TNA, Report on Operations 11 November-3 December 1915 from Maj. Gen. Townshend to Lt Gen. Sir P.H.N.Lake, WO 32/5195. Townshend noted that he did not lose a gun or a PoW in the retreat (except some sick who were unable to be moved).
105 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 420–421.
106 Ibid., 422.
107 Ibid., 422.
108 Ibid., Kroki (Overlay) 38.
109 ATASE, Daily Orders, Iraq Area Command, 1000 hours, 6 December 1915, Archive 3644, Record H-31, File 1–29, reprinted in Turkish General Staff, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 430.
110 ATASE, Nurettin to Sixth Army, 7 December 1915, Archive 4274, Record H-1, File 1024, reprinted in Turkish General Staff, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 431–432.
111 Lines of contravallation face inward and the associated line of circumvallation face outward. They were used most famously by Julius Caesar to besiege Vercingetorix at Alesia in 52 BC.
112 TNA, Strategic Situation Memorandum from W.E.Vian to C-in-C, 16 December 1915, WO 106/903.
113 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 448.
114 ATASE, Army Orders No. 44, Iraq Area Command, 1705 hours, 9 December 1915, Archive 3644, Record H-32, File 1–4, reprinted in Turkish General Staff, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 450–451.

115 ATASE, Telegram, Nurettin to Enver Paşa, 9 December 1915, Archive 3644, Record H-32, File 1–4, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918, 451–452.*
116 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 454–455.
117 Ibid., 455.
118 Ibid., 457.
119 Ibid., 546.
120 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* Ek 4–5.
121 Middlebrook, *Your Country Needs You,* 10.
122 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 165.
123 This is an anecdotal position taken by the author, who is a staff college graduate.
124 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, appendix XI (OB) and TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 463.
125 Bruce I.Gudmundsson, *On Artillery* (Westport CT: Praeger, 1993), 29–39. Chapter 3 contains a detailed discussion of the superiority of howitzers in trench warfare compared with field guns.
126 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 461–462.
127 Ibid. Nurettin sent three infantry battalions (two from the 45th Infantry Division and one from the 51st Infantry Division), a machine gun detachment, two artillery batteries, and a cavalry detachment under Major Şevket. This was the equivalent of a reinforced regiment.
128 Ibid., 462.
129 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 173.
130 Ibid., p. 176 n.
131 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 461–462.
132 ATASE, Circular (Tamim), Iraq Area Commander to Baghdad Governor; Baghdad, Mosul Corps Command; Aleppo Line of Communications Command; and local area commands, 15 December 1915, Archive 3611, Record 34, File 14.
133 ATASE, Army Order No. 49, Iraq Area Command, 1530 hours, 17 December 1915, Archive, 3611, Record 34, File 23.
134 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 465–467.
135 Ibid., 469.
136 Ibid., 472.
137 Ibid., 47–474.
138 Ibid., 478–479.
139 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 177–183.
140 LC, Communiqué to the Troops (from Charles Townshend, Major-General), 16 January 1916, MES 001, G.H.Allen papers.
141 Millar, *Death of an Army,* 118.
142 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 476–478.
143 TNA, Report on the Siege of Kut-El-Amara 5 December 1915–29 April 1916 by Lt H.S.D.McNeal, RFA, WO 32/5204. The author is a commissioned field artillery officer and attributes this problem to bad fuses rather than to bad shells.
144 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 475.
145 Ibid., 483–484.
146 Ibid., 492.
147 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Lojistik,* 215.
148 Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* appendix F.4, Ottoman Casualties, 241. This work is the only attempt in any language to compile accurately Ottoman casualties in World War I.
149 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Lojistik,* 215.
150 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Irak-Iran Cephesi 1914–1918,* 481.
151 ATASE, Infantry Weapon and Ammunition Situation (1 August 1914), Archive 58, Record 286, Files 21–21/2 reprinted as Ek 6 and ATASE, Artillery Weapon and Ammunition

Situation (1 August 1914), Archive 58, Record 287, File 1–1–12 reprinted as Ek 7 in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahli Kuvvetleri Tarihi, Lojistik.*

152 Ibid., 280. These totals do not include the 2,800 artillery shells and the 5,600 artillery shells brought from Caucasia by the 51st and 52nd Infantry Divisions respectively. The importance of these additional 8,400 shells is immediately apparent.

153 Ibid., 481. This division, as well as others, was found excess to operational needs following the evacuation of the ANZAC beachhead on 19/20 December 1915.

154 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 204.

155 Ibid., 205.

156 Mason, *A Matter of Honour,* 412–413.

157 Ibid., 414–419.

158 Gardner, *Trial by Fire,* 198.

159 Mason, *A Matter of Honour,* 414–421.

160 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, 204–205.

161 Ray Westlake, *British Territorial Units, 1914–18* (London: Osprey, 1991), 6.

162 *Mesopotamia Commission Report,* 112–113.

163 Moberly, *The Campaign in Mesopotamia,* vol. II, chapters *XXI–XXVI, passim.*

4
Third Gaza-Beersheba, 1917

1 TNA, Operations Report, GHQ Egypt to CIGS, WO, 5 October 1917. WO 106/718, 79.

2 The British fielded 65,000 rifleman, 160 machine guns, 170 artillery pieces, and eight tanks to the Ottoman Army's 16,366 riflemen, sixty-five machine guns, and seventy-four artillery pieces. TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, IVncü Cilt 1nci Kısım, Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıncından Sonuna Kadar* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1979), 600–601.

3 Cyril Falls with George McMunn, *Official History, Military Operations, Egypt and Palestine* (London: HMSO, 1928 and 1930) and Lowell Thomas, *With Lawrence in Arabia* (London: Hutchinson, 1925).

4 Archibald Wavell, *Allenby, A Study in Greatness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941) and Clive Garsia, *A Key to Victory, A Study of War Planning* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1940).

5 Matthew Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East, 1917–1919* (London: Frank Cass, 1999) and Yigal Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

6 Anthony Bruce, *The Last Crusade, The Palestine Campaign in the First World War* (London: John Murray, 2002).

7 Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East,* 18.

8 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 516. The Gaza Group was commanded by German Major Tiller and was composed of three infantry regiments.

9 Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign,* 210–214.

10 Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East,* 18–20.

11 Archibald Murray, *Sir Archibald Murray's Dispatches (June 1916-June 1917)* (London: J.M.Dent, 1920), 153. Murray's Fourth Dispatch, 28 June 1917, covered the First and Second Gaza battles. Moreover, Murray disguised his defeat by noting that 'my primary and secondary objects were completely attained, but that the failure to attain the third object—the capture of Gaza…prevented a most successful operation from being a complete disaster to the enemy'.

12 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 555.
13 Bruce, *The Last Crusade,* 100–101. This was the first time the British used tanks and poison gas on the Turkish fronts.
14 Ibid., 104.
15 Murray, *Sir Archibald Murray's Dispatches,* 160–163. Murray was kind to Dobell in the Fourth Dispatch by presenting the idea that Dobell, 'who had suffered some weeks previously from a severe touch of the sun, was no longer in a fit state of health to bear the strain of further operations in the coming heat of summer… I felt it my duty to relieve him of his command.'
16 Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East,* 21.
17 Bruce, *The Last Crusade,* 104.
18 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 512.
19 Ibid., 506.
20 Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign,* 209–211.
21 ATASE, Proposed Operations, Fourth Army to Ministry of War, 22 March 1917, Archive 3221, Record H-48, File 1–6, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıncından Sonuna Kadar,* 506.
22 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 516–517.
23 Ibid., Kroki (Overlay) 40.
24 Ibid.
25 Rafael DeNogales, a Venezuelan soldier of fortune serving with the Turkish cavalry, thought it was the appearance of the Ottoman 3rd Cavalry Division so far to the south and west of Beersheba that convinced the British to call off the offensive. Rafael DeNogales, *Four Years beneath the Crescent* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1926), 331.
26 ATASE, Fourth Army to XXII Corps, 14/15 April 1917, Archive 3221, Record H-51, File 1–41, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıncından Sonuna Kadar,* 585.
27 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 585.
28 Ibid., 600–601.
29 Ibid., 612.
30 Ibid., 612–613 and 630–631. The Turkish official history makes the point (several times) of the steadiness of the Turkish soldiers in the face of these weapons, which were new to the Turkish theatre of war.
31 ATASE, 53rd Infantry Division to XXII Corps, 1610 hours, 19 April 1917, Archive 4524, Record H-2, File 1–20, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıncından Sonuna Kadar,* 621.
32 ATASE, 48th Infantry Regiment to 53rd Infantry Division, 2300 hours, 19 April 1917, Archive 4524, Record H-2, File 1–16, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 623.
33 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından Sonuna Kadar,* 631.
34 Ibid., 637.
35 NARA, Comment on the Military Operations at Gaza, 2 May 1917, Special American Agent 'UY2', M 1271, 8544–30.
36 See Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* 166–172 for a comprehensive treatment of the strategy and formation of the Yildirim Army Group.
37 ATASE, 7ncü Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 20, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–518. The 7th Infantry Division lost its 19th Infantry Regiment and received the

54th Infantry Regiment. It also received men, animals, and weapons from the 54th Infantry Division to bring it up to strength.

38 ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 53–57, unpublished staff study (Lüfti Doğancı), ATASE Library, Record 26–326.

39 Ibid., 21.

40 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 28, unpublished staff study (Meki Ererthem), ATASE Library, Record 26–361.

41 Ibid., 21. The tactical reorganisation of the Ottoman Army in 1917 mirrored the ongoing tactical reorganisation of the German Army.

42 Ibid., 21.

43 German, French, and British divisions underwent similar reorganisations in 1917.

44 Friedrich Kress von Kressenstein, *Zwischen Kaukasus und Sinai* (Berlin, 1921), 268.

45 Ibid.

46 Ahmed Sedad, *Hücum Kıtaatının Talim ve Terbiyesi* (Istanbul: Erkaa-y Harbiye Matbaası, 1336 [1920]). The author is indebted to Mesut Uyar for bringing this manual to his attention.

47 Cyril Falls noted briefly that Ottoman storm battalions participated in counterattacks in the Jordan Valley in early May 1918, but did not discuss their origins or employment. See Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, notes on 375 and 393.

48 David Nicolle, *The Ottoman Army, 1914–1918* (London: Osprey Press, 1994), 23. The same photo may be seen in Perrett, *Megiddo 1918*, 30. Nicolle credited the photo to the Imperial War Museum (Q80044).

49 NARA, Near Eastern Intelligence Report, 27 February 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.

50 Ibid.

51 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 209 and, in English, Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 342–344. From 1910 to 1914, each Ottoman army corps was authorised three infantry divisions and one rifle regiment. Each Ottoman infantry division was authorised three infantry regiments (of three infantry battalions) and one rifle battalion.

52 In Turkish the word for marksman is *nişanci*. In my previous work I have translated this term to mean ‘rifleman’, hence a *nişanci tabur* is a rifle battalion. In Turkish an infantry battalion is *piyade tabur*. In a military context, *nişanci* is equivalent to the German *Jäger* or ‘hunter’.

53 Ibid. In fact, the Ottoman Army’s rifle battalions were not inactivated, they were simply ‘reflagged’ as conventional infantry battalions to reconstitute many of the infantry formations lost during the First Balkan War.

54 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 28, Record 26–361.

55 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 40–45, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–441.

56 Hüseyin Hüsnü Emir (Erkilet), *Yildirim* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basım Evi, 2002), reprint of the May 1921 edition, Ek (Document) 21, ‘8th Army Infantry Strength, 15.10.1917’.

57 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 49, Record 26–411. The inactivation of the 4th Company of Ottoman Army infantry battalions in the summer of 1917 cut 250 men from an authorisation of 1,012 men.

58 ATASE, 3ncü Süvari Tümeni Tarihçesi, 13, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–421.

59 Ibid., 14.

60 Ibid., 15.

61 XX Corps Orders, 1940 hours, 2 November 1917, reprinted in ATASE, 3ncü Süvari Tümeni Tarihçesi, 19, Record 26–421. In these orders, for example, the division was assigned the 125th and the 177th Infantry Regiments and the 16th Artillery Regiment to screen the retreat from Beersheba.

62 ATASE, 3ncü Süvari Tümeni Tarihçesi, 17, Record 26–421. This Esat Paşa (3rd Cavalry Division commander) was a different individual from the III Corps commander at Gallipoli and was a well known governor and police official from Constantinople. DeNogales described Esat has having 'an abundance of energy and initiative'. DeNogales, *Four Years Beneath the Crescent*, 311.
63 ATASE, 3ncü Topçu Alayı Tarihçesi, 14, unpublished staff study (Meki Ererthem), ATASE Library, Record 26–413.
64 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, IVncü Cilt 2nci Kısım, Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne Kadar Yapıylan Harekat* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basymevi, 1986), 23.
65 Ibid., 23–24.
66 Ibid., 23. The material for the following paragraph comes from this source. The Ottoman Army noted that many of the divisional officers in Palestine were extremely young and were also deficient in the Ottoman language.
67 Fahri Belen, *Birinci Cihan Harbinde, Türk Harbi, 1918 Yılı Hareketleri Vnci Cilt* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1967), Ek 1, 'Activation of Turkish Divisions'. The Turks would mobilise one final infantry division in July 1918.
68 Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, Table F.4 'Consolidated Ottoman Losses by Year of the War', 241.
69 Erik J.Zurcher, 'Between Death and Desertion', *Turcica*, 28 (1996), pp. 235–258, 241.
70 ATASE, Report, Midyear 1917, Soldiers taken from Year Group 1315 (1900), Archive 2024, Record 549A, File 1–157 reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanlı Devri Birinci Dünya Harbi, Idari Faaliyetler ve Lojistik, Xncu Cilt* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basymevi, 1985), 413.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East*, 47.
75 Ali Fuat Erden, *Birinci Dunya Harbi'nde Suriye Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Kültür Yayınları, 2003), 315–318, 341–342.
76 Fahri Belen, *Birinci Cihan Harbinde, Türk Harbi, 1917 Yılı Hareketleri IVncü Cilt* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1966), 100. General Belen was a junior officer at Gallipoli who survived and went on to a career in the post-war Republican Army.
77 NARA, Report on the Turkish Army in Syria, 2 May 1917, Special American Agent 'UY2', M 1271, 8544–29.
78 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne*, 49.
79 See Erickson, *Defeat in Detail*, 56–57 for a summary of the Ottoman War Academy's selection criteria and curriculum.
80 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Istiklal Harbi'ne Kalilan Tumen ve Daha Ust Kademelerdeki Komutanlarin Biyografileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 67, 98, 113, 127, 165, 216.
81 TNA, Chief, London to Chief, EgyptFor, Cipher 42626 General Conditions of Turkey, 10 May 1917, WO 158/611.
82 TNA, Sir R.Wingate to Balfour, Dispatch No. 127, 11 June 1917, CAB 21/60.
83 TNA, Notes on Palestine Operations, Lt Gen. Philip W.Chetwode, 21 June 1917, WO 158/611.
84 TNA, EA 391 Cipher, 9 October 1917, WO 158/611.
85 The material for the following paragraph is found in Middlebrook, *Your Country Needs You, From Six to Sixty-five Divisions*, 50, 111–113, 124–125 and 139–142.
86 Although it must be noted that malaria was a problem for many of the formations brought from Salonika.

87 Ross Mallet, 'The Interplay between Technology, Tactics and Organisation in the First AIF', unpublished MA (Hons) Thesis, Australian Defence Force Academy, 1999, 151.
88 Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East,* 44–46.
89 Paddy Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the Western Front, The British Army's Art of Attack, 1916–1918* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1994, 78. See also Martin Samuels, *Command or Control? Command, Training and Tactics in the British and German Armies, 1888–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1995) for discussions of the increased effectiveness of the British Army in this period.
90 Gudmundsson, *On Artillery*, 89.
91 British artillery tactics in France were rapidly changing in 1917 as a result of the work of Brigadier General J.F.N.Birch, who was instrumental in introducing an artillery command system and groupings of heavy guns for counter-battery work. Fire planning under Birch also became very sophisticated and complex. See E.K.G. Sixsmith, *British Generalship in the Twentieth Century* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1970), 89–92.
92 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 660–666.
93 Mallet, 'The Interplay between Technology, Tactics and Organisation in the First AIF', Mallet cites GOC Desert Mounted Corps to CGS EEF, 27 August 1917, AWM 45 7/23.
94 TNA, Ahyude Bell to Maj. Gen. F.B.Maurice, Director of Military Operations, WO, 18 July 1917, War Office Papers, WO 106/718.
95 Ibid.
96 XXI Corps Order No. 11, 24 October 1917, reprinted as appendix 11, Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 689–690.
97 Wavell, *Allenby, A Study in Greatness,* 200–201.
98 For a revealing glimpse into the personal dynamics of Allenby's senior leadership team see T.E.Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (reprint, Stockholm: Continental Book Company, 1946), 392–393.
99 Hughes calls this 'organisational mobility' (a style of warfare that matched operations with proper preparations to achieve operational success). Matthew Hughes, *Allenby in Palestine, The Middle East Correspondence of Field Marshal Viscount Allenby, June 1917-October 1919* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004), 16.
100 See Clive Garsia, *A Key to Victory, A Study of War Planning* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1940) and Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East,* 56. Hughes noted that Garsia's system of planning, which composes over half of the book, is 'almost unintelligible'.
101 TNA, EA 391 Cipher, 9 October 1917, WO 158/611.
102 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* Kuruluş, (chart) 4.
103 Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East,* 46–48.
104 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, appendix 7–11, 676–690.
105 Ibid., 676–680.
106 Ibid., 680–685.
107 For a thorough treatment of the origins of the Yildirim Army Group see Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* 3–7 and Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* 166–172.
108 ATASE, Ottoman General Staff Orders, 2 October 1917, Archive 1137, Record 66, File 85, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi 'ne,* 115–116.
109 The Seventh Army was briefly under the command of Mustafa Kemal, who resigned in protest over Enver's strategic direction in early October 1917. Mustafa Fevzi (later Çakmak) was a brilliant officer (who spoke eight languages). He was an Ottoman War Academy

graduate (1898) and would retire as a field marshal. He served as a division commander in the Balkan Wars, and as V Corps Commander and Chief of Staff of Esat Paşa's Anafarta Group at Gallipoli. TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Komutanlarin Biyografileri,* 55–58.

110 Ibid., 119.

111 ATASE, Summary Yildirim Army Group Orders, Jerusalem, 28 October 1917, Archive 3704, Record H-1, File 1–1, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi 'ne,* 119–120.

112 See Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign 1914–1918,* 272–274, for a vivid explanation of this episode.

113 Hüsnü, *Yildirim,* 102–103. This is also confirmed in the Turkish official history and in Kress von Kressenstein's memoirs.

114 'Summary of Contents of the Haversack', reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 120. The Turkish official history contains the only full description in print of the false operational documents themselves, which were in Meinertzhagen's haversack. A general list of the haversack's contents may be found in Meinertzhagen's memoirs. See R.Meinertzhagen, *Army Diary, 1899–1926* (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1960), appendix A, 283–287.

115 Hüsnü, *Yildirim,* 124–125.

116 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 125–127.

117 Eighth Army Report to Yildirim Army Group Headquarters, 17 October 1917, reprinted in Hüsnü, *Yildirim,* 121–122.

118 Ibid.

119 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 129.

120 ATASE, 19ncü Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 27, Record 26–349. The Ottoman General Staff then regarded the 19th Infantry Division as the most powerful infantry division in the Ottoman Army's order of battle. This stemmed from its service in Galicia and from its unusually powerful artillery component.

121 See, for example, Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 25–105 and Bruce, *The Last Crusade,* 111–153.

122 Hüsnü, *Yildirim,* 113.

123 ATASE, Report on the Loss of Beersheba, To Yildirim Army Group Commander from Von Kress, 17 November 1917, Archive 3712, Record 15, File 1–44, reprinted as Ek 2, TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 783–784.

124 Ismet İnönü had a distinguished career in the War of Independence and later became President of the Turkish Republic. He was an artillery officer and graduated from the Ottoman War Academy in 1906. Prior to Beersheba, he had commanded IV and XX Corps, served as Chief of Staff of the Ottoman Second Army in Caucasia, and served as the Chief of Operations of the Ottoman General Staff. TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Komutanlarin Biyografileri,* 216–218.

125 ATASE, Report on the Loss of Beersheba from the III Corps Commander, undated, Archive 3712, Record 15, File 1–17, reprinted as Ek 3, TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi 'ne,* 785–816.

126 Hüseyin Hüsnü noted that the Ottoman III Corps staff felt that the town of Beersheba could be held for thirty-six hours against two British divisions. Hüsnü, *Yildirim,* 124–125.

127 ATASE, After Action Report on the Loss of Beersheba, To Enver Paşa from the Yildirim Army Group Commander, 24 November 1917, Archive 3712, Record 15, File 1, reprinted as Ek 4, TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 817–818.

128 Belen, 1917 *Yılı Hareketleri,* 130.

129 Şükrü Mahmut Nedim, *Filistin Savasi (1914–1918)* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1995), *passim.*
130 Ibid., 75–76.
131 ATASE, Yildirim Army Group Orders, 28 October 1917, Archive 3704, Record H-1, File 1, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 129.
132 Ibid.
133 Ali Fuat Cebeoy, *Birussebi-Gazze Maydan Muharebei ve Yirmici Kolordu* (Istanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1938), 69.
134 Belen, *1917 Yılı Hareketleri,* 132–133.
135 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 148.
136 Ibid., 148.
137 Ibid., extract of Yildirim Army Orders, 2300 hours, 31 October 1917, quoted on 149.
138 ATASE, Seventh Army Orders, 0300 hours, 1 November 1917, Archive 3704, Record H-1, File 1–14 and 1–15, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 149.
139 Belen, *1917 Yılı Hareketleri,* 132.
140 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 140 and Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 51, 59.
141 Fahri Belen noted that on 2 November 1917 the 27th Infantry Division (near Ebuhof) returned strength reports of 124 officers, 2,176 men, 1,361 rifles, ten machine guns, and seven cannon. Belen, *1917 Yılı Hareketleri,* 134.
142 A full discussion of the origins and employment of the Ottoman Army's assault troops is presented in Chapter 5.
143 See Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918,* chapters 7 and 8.
144 See Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, appendices 8 and 11 (operations plans).
145 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part I, 76 and TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi 'ne,* 162.
146 ATASE, After Action Report, Evacuation of Gaza, XXII Corps to Yildirim Army Group, 18 January 1918, Archive 3712, Record 15, File 3–2, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 177. Colonel Ibrahim Refet (later Bele) was a War Academy graduate (1909) and served at Gallipoli in command of the 3rd and 23rd Infantry Divisions. Prior to commanding the XXII Corps (17 August 1917), he com-manded the 53rd Infantry Division in Palestine. TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Komutanlarin Biyografileri,* 98–100.
147 ATASE, Combat Orders, XXII Corps, 1700 hours, 6 November 1917, Archive 3712, Record 15, File 1–6, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 175.
148 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 163.
149 TNA, Appreciation: An Advance to Jerusalem, CIGS, 17 October 1917, WO 106/726.
150 Ibid.
151 TNA, Notes on Operations on the Palestine Front, Lt Col. A.P.Wavell, Liaison Officer, 17 November 1917, WO 106/718.
152 TNA, GOCinC Egypt to CIGS (Cipher 45777), 16 November 1917, WO 106/718.
153 TNA, Chief Egyptforce to Chief, London, 28 November 1917, WO 158/611.

5
Megiddo, 1918

1 Reprinted as appendix 23 in Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 713–715.

2 For example, Bruce, *The Last Crusade*, Falls, *Military Operations, Egypt and Palestine*, Garsia, *A Key to Victory, A Study of War Planning*, Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East 1917–1919*, Hughes, *Allenby in Palestine*, Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign 1914–1918*, Thomas, *With Lawrence in Arabia* and Wavell, *Allenby, A Study in Greatness.* To which may be added works such as Cyril Falls, *Armageddon, 1918* (Philadelphia: J.B.Lippincott, 1964) and Bryan Perrett, *Megiddo 1918, The Last Great Cavalry Victory* (Oxford: Osprey, 1999).

3 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part I, 262. The British official history referenced a Turkish General Staff historical report that gave a total of 28,443 officers and men killed, wounded, and missing.

4 Bruce, *The Last Crusade*, 165.

5 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne*, 757. The Turks claimed that 28,337 officers and men were killed, wounded, missing, and prisoner, of whom about 3,000 returned to duty.

6 Eighth Army General Strength Report, 1 October 1917, reprinted as Ek (Document) 20 in Hüsnü, *Yildirim*, 350.

7 In the other campaigns against the British, the percentage of Ottoman soldiers taken prisoner or reported as missing in action averaged less than 1 per cent of the total force. See Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, appendix F, table F.1 (Ottoman Battle Casualties), 237–239.

8 NARA, Near Eastern Intelligence Report, 21 January 1918, AEF G-2, American Expeditionary Force Papers, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.

9 Hüsnü, *Yildirim*, 346.

10 The issue of replacement availability will be explored later in this chapter.

11 TNA, CGS Appreciation by BGGS G.Dawnay, 13 December 1917, WO 158/611.

12 Ibid.

13 The word 'raid' does not appear in any orders associated with these events. It is only well after the war that Cyril Falls bestowed the term 'raid' on Allenby's operations in March 1918. Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part I, 328–349.

14 60th Division Operations Order, 16 March 1918, reprinted as appendix 20 in Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 705–707.

15 The author believes that Allenby hoped to catch the Turks napping and break open the front. In late February, Allenby hoped 'to cross the river, and get to the Hedjaz railway; joining hands with the Arabs, and really breaking the line'. Allenby to Robertson, 23 February 1918, LHCMA, Robertson Papers 7/5/86, reprinted in Hughes, *Allenby in Palestine*, 133.

16 XXI Corps Operations Order, 1 April 1918, reprinted as appendix 21 in Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 707–709.

17 Ibid., 421.

18 This subject will be covered in detail later in this chapter.

19 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'n*, 615. However, many of these troops were deployed along the coast or along the lines of communications and unavailable on the front.

20 Ibid., 617.

21 Falls makes the point that the 'policy of Falkenhayn was defence by manoeuvre; that of the Liman *(sic)* defence by resistance in trenches'. Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part I, 311.

22 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 53, Record 26–441.

23 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 33, Record 26–349.
24 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 28, Record 26–327.
25 Ibid., 28.
26 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 259–260.
27 ATASE, Ration Stockages, Eighth Army, 1918, Archive 1247, Record 472, File 4–2, reprinted in Turkish General Staff, *Idari Faaliyetler ve Lojistik*, 557.
28 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 31, Record 26–327. See War Diary entry for 18 March 1918.
29 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 358. Ottoman soldiers were authorised 3,149 calories per day. The recommended daily ration consisted of 900g bread, 250g meat, 150g bulgar, 20g olive oil, 20g salt, and 9g soap.
30 NARA, Turkish Military Information, 18 February 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.
31 M.Neş'et, 'Büyük Harpte "Suriye" Cephesinde 48. Piyade Fırkası', in *Askeri Mecmua*, No. 18, 1 July 1930 (Istanbul: Askeri Matbaa), 89.
32 ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 1977, 55, Record 26–326.
33 LC, Interview with S.Dilman, undated, Box TU 01 tape 46.
34 ATASE, 23ncu Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 28, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–412.
35 Ibid., 29. The 23rd Infantry Division staff selected Captain Zeki (3rd Battalion, 68th Infantry Regiment), Lieutenants Ahmet Hikmet (69th Infantry Regiment) and Adayı Asım (2nd Battalion, 68th Infantry Regiment) and a senior NCO from the 69th Infantry Regiment as the leadership for the division assault detachment.
36 Ibid., 28.
37 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 48, Record 26–441.
38 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 27, Record 26–349. These were the very first assault troops introduced into the Ottoman Army. The men were hand picked and had been sent to courses in hand grenades, the assault crossing of barriers, and assault tactics and firing.
39 Neş'et, 'Büyük Harpte "Suriye" Cephesinde 48. Piyade Fırkası', 16.
40 Ibid., 22.
41 Ibid., 40–44. The total strength of the 48th Infantry Division on 28 March 1918 was 130 officers, 2,307 men, 1,841 rifles, thirty-four machine guns, and eight artillery pieces (or about the strength of a British brigade).
42 Ibid., 50.
43 Ibid., 60.
44 Ibid., 68.
45 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 28, Record 26–349.
46 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne*, 585–614.
47 NARA, Near Eastern Intelligence Report, 30 November 1917, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.
48 Tom Johnstone, *Orange, Green and Khaki, The Story of the Irish Regiments in the Great War, 1914–18* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1992), 401. Johnstone used the term 'Indianisation' to describe what happened to the 10th (Irish) Infantry Division in Palestine in 1918.
49 See Bruce, *The Last Crusade*, 197–198; Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine*, 411–421; and Falls, *Armageddon*, 15–16.
50 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 418.
51 LC, Lt A.T.P.Robertson, Experiences of a British Intelligence Officer, Palestine 1917–18, Part II, 25, unpublished memoir, EP 066.

52 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 28 May 1918, War Office Papers, WO 95/4615.
53 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 31 May 1918, WO 95/4615.
54 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 8 June 1918, WO 95/4615.
55 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 9 June 1918, WO 95/4615.
56 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 27 June 1918, WO 95/4615.
57 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 232 Infantry Brigade, 12 August 1918, WO 95/4688.
58 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 232 Infantry Brigade, 17 August 1918, WO 95/4688.
59 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 179 Infantry Brigade, 1 July 1918, WO 95/4667.
60 Johnstone, *Orange, Green and Khaki*, 402.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid., 403. Johnstone noted that, consequently, the Leinsters suffered the heaviest casualties as a result of their work that night.
63 See Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 425–429 for similar experiences of the 21st and 28th Indian Brigade (7th Infantry Division) and the 179th and 181st Brigades (60th Infantry Division).
64 The contrast with the army's dismal showing of the tactical and organisational integration of British and Indian soldiers in Mesopotamia in 1915/16 is startling. See Gardner, WH, 2004 11(3), 307–326.
65 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 17 May 1918, WO 95/4615.
66 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 5 June 1918, WO 95/4615.
67 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 11 and 12 August 1918, WO 95/4615.
68 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 158 Infantry Brigade, 5 and 6 August 1918, WO 95/4625. This was the same Clive Garsia who later advanced the 'Gaza school' of thought in 1940.
69 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 158 Infantry Brigade, 12 and 13 August 1918, WO 95/4625.
70 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 11 and 21 July 1918, WO 95/4615.
71 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 158 Infantry Brigade, 6 July 1918, WO 95/4625.
72 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 179 Infantry Brigade, 1 July 1918, WO 95/4667.
73 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 179 Infantry Brigade, 29 August 1918, WO 95/4667.
74 TNA, War Diary, 31 Infantry Brigade, 9 September 1918, WO 95/4585.
75 Middlebrook, *Your Country Needs You*, 147–149.
76 Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, *Command on the western front, The Military Career of Sir Henry Rawlinson, 1914–18* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 311.
77 TNA, War Diary, 31 Infantry Brigade, 21 August-11 September 1918, WO 95/4585.
78 TNA, War Diary, 2nd Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers, 7 September 1918, WO 95/4585.
79 TNA, Report on operations carried out by 10 Div on 12/13 August 1918, HQS General Staff, 10th Division, WO 95/4568.
80 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 7 June 1918, WO 95/4615.
81 LC, Photo with caption, Capt. T.M.MacQuaker, 53rd Infantry Division, undated, EP 047. Captain MacQuaker noted on the back of a photo that 'we were kept fit by very strenuous training. If an attack was to be made, whenever possible, it was carefully rehearsed before hand over "dummy" trenches behind our lines prepared to scale from aeroplane photos of the enemy trenches that were to be attacked.'
82 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 179 Infantry Brigade, 6 September 1918, WO 95/4667. For example, on this day the brigade conducted a live fire demonstration of 'the support of infantry by overhead machine gun fire'—a technique which in the author's direct experience can be both frightening and dangerous.
83 Murray, *Sir Archibald Murray's Dispatches*, 7–8. Murray's First Dispatch, 1 June 1916, details his establishment of a large instructional programme in Egypt.
84 TNA, War Diary, HQS, EEF, 53 Infantry Division, 2 and 3 June 1918, WO 95/4615.
85 TNA, War Diary, HQS, 232 Infantry Brigade, 24 August 1918, WO 95/4688.

86 Ibid. The use of the phrase ‘open warfare training’ is significant since it represents a clear break from the trench warfare training that the army had been conducting and probably reflects lessons learned from France.
87 Force Order No. 68, 9 September 1918, reprinted as appendix 23 in Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 713–715.
88 Ibid.
89 XXI Corps Order No. 42, 17 September 1918, reprinted as appendix 24 in Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 715–718.
90 Ibid., 718.
91 Desert Mounted Corps Operation Order No. 21, 12 September 1918, reprinted as appendix 26 in Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 720–723.
92 Paddy Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the western front, The British Army’s Art of Attack, 1916–18* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1994), Parts 2, 3 and 4, 84–186.
93 J.P.Harris, *Amiens to the Armistice, The BEF in the Hundred Day Campaign, 8 August–11 November 1918* (London: Brassey’s, 1998), 77–107. The material for this paragraph comes from this source.
94 Sidney F.Wise, ‘Amiens, August 1918: A Glimpse of the Future’, in Briton C. Busch, ed., *Canada and the Great War* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 172.
95 Falls, *Armageddon 1918*, 36.
96 Jonathan Newell, ‘Allenby and the Palestine Campaign’, in Brian Bond, ed., *The First World War and British Military History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 199–200.
97 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi’ne*, 618. Pre-war Ottoman doctrinal templates assigned an infantry division a defensive front of 3.5km, but by 1918 (with additional machine guns and artillery), this had increased to 5 km. See TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920)*, 312 for pre-1914 defensive frontages.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid., 616–618 and Fahri Helen, *Birinci Cihan Harbinde, Türk Harbi, 1918 Yılı Hareketleri, Vnci Cilt* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1967), Kroki (Overlay) 15.
100 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 32, Record 26–327.
101 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi’ne*, See ‘Lojistik ve Idarı Faaliyetler’, 745–772.
102 ATASE, Letter to Yildirim Army Group from Eighth Army, 17 September 1918, Archive 3787, Record H-37, File 11, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi’ne*, 621.
103 NARA, Letter, Fevzi to von Falkenhayn, 15 February 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5836.
104 See, for example, Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign, 1914–1918*, 300–307.
105 NARA, Military Situation in Turkey, 30 August 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5836, Case 43–3.
106 This problem was exaggerated by the worsening relationship between Germany and the Ottoman Empire caused by Enver’s aggressive expansion into Georgia in May 1918 (in violation of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk). See Erickson, *Ordered to* Die, 186–187.
107 NARA, Near Eastern Intelligence Report, 18 February 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.
108 Ibid.
109 NARA, Near Eastern Intelligence Report, 27 February 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.
110 NARA, Turkish Military Notes, 21 January 1918, AEF G-2, RG 120, NH 91, Entry 187, Box 5828.

111 Ibid.
112 Ibid.
113 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 467. Falls based this statement on an Ottoman intelligence map dated 17 September 1918, which was captured at Nazareth.
114 See Bruce, *The Last Crusade* (2002), 220, Carver, *The Turkish Front 1914–1918* (2003), 231–233, Falls, *Armageddon 1918* (1964), 46, Michael Hickey, *The First World War, The Mediterranean Front, 1914–1923,* 60, and Perrett, *Megiddo 1918* (1999), 36.
115 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 620.
116 ATASE, Letter to Yildirim Army Group from Eighth Army, 17 September 1918, Archive 3787, Record H-37, File 11, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 621.
117 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 468.
118 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey,* 272–280.
119 Belen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri,* Kroki (Overlay) 15.
120 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 625 and Belen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri,* Kroki (Overlay) 15.
121 For example, see ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 72, Record 26–327 and ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 32, Record 26–327.
122 In the German Army, for example, Georg Bruchmüller's famous 'flying circus' of artillery moved from battle to battle to support the army's main efforts. Gudmundsson, *On Artillery,* 87–91.
123 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 625.
124 Belen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri,* Kuruluş (Organisation Chart) 5.
125 See Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* 137–142 for an examination of the Ottoman Army's campaigns in Galicia, which also included the 19th Infantry Division.
126 See, for example, Perrett, *Megiddo 1918,* 36 and Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War,* Part II, 452–453. Falls noted that British intelligence listed the total rifle strength of the 7th and 20th Divisions as 1,970 men.
127 Belen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri,* 73.
128 ATASE, 7nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 29, unpublished staff study, ATASE Library, Record 26–518.
129 ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 72, Record 26–327.
130 Ibid., 64.
131 Ibid.
132 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 32, Record 26–327.
133 Ibid.
134 ATASE, 20nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 73, Record 26–327
135 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 32, Record 26–327.
136 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 626.
137 Ibid.
138 ATASE, Report to Yildirim Army Group from Eighth Army, 0850 hours, 19 September 1918, Archive 3787, Record H-37, File 1–14, reprinted in TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne,* 626–627.
139 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey,* 275.
140 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne, 621.*

141 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 476.
142 ATASE, 19ncu Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 33, Record 26–349.
143 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 58, Record 26–441. This division survived for a longer period in September 1918 and its war diaries are more complete than those of the 7th and 20th Infantry Divisions, which were destroyed by 21 September.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.
146 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne, 621*.
147 Ibid.
148 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 468–495, Carver, *The Turkish Front*, 225–235, and Bruce, *The Last Crusade*, 224–232.
149 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 485.
150 Ibid., 481.
151 LC, Lt A.T.P.Robertson, Experiences of a British Intelligence Officer, Palestine 1917–18, Part II, 30, unpublished memoir, EP 066.
152 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 479–480.
153 Ibid., 476–478.
154 Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, tables 7.4 and 7.5.
155 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 277.
156 ATASE, 7nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 30, Record 26–518.
157 ATASE, 21nci Piyade Alay Tarihçesi, 32, Record 26–327.
158 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 61, Record 26–441.
159 ATASE, Strength Report, 16th Infantry Division, 22 September 1918, Archive 3730, Record, H-4, File G-12. On this date, the division consisted of 200 men in the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 125th Infantry Regiment, 100 men in the 47th Infantry Regiment, and eighty men in the combined assault/engineer company.
160 ATASE, 16nci Piyade Tümeni Tarihçesi, 61, Record 26–441.
161 Ibid., 62.
162 Helen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri*, 81.
163 Harris, *Amiens to the Armistice*, 103–104.
164 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 488.
165 Author's estimate. The Turks reported 19,157 soldiers in the Eighth Army, of whom 10,393 were infantrymen. See TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne*, 617.
166 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 269.
167 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Ikinci Gazze Müharebesi Sonundan Mondros Mütarekesi'ne*, 752–753. See *Sağlık, Veteriner Hizmetleri* (Health, Veterinarian Services) and *Hayvan Sağlıgı* (Animal Health).
168 Helen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri*, 72.
169 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 276.

6
Conclusion: the strength of an army

1 Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk lnkılabı Tarihi, Cilt III/4* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi 1991), 763 and TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Istiklal Harbi I, Mondros Mütarekesi ve Tatbikatı* (Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1962), 64–67, 77. Professor Bayur, a noted Turkish historian, highlights the fact that Mustafa Kemal was preparing a determined defence of the Anatolian heartland at the time of the armistice.
2 Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey*, 256–257.
3 See for example, Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 495 or A.L.Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1923* (London: Longman, 1998), 157. Macfie wrote, 'Meanwhile in Syria, an attack launched by the British on the Ottoman forces, now weakened by the withdrawal of units dispatched by Enver to strengthen the Ottoman position in Trans Caucasia, led to a complete collapse.'
4 Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 182. These units were the 15th Infantry Division and the 123rd Infantry Regiment.
5 For example, in the capture of the ex-Russian fortress of Kars, the Turks took 220 artillery pieces and 106 machine guns. TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *3ncu Ordu Harekati*, Kroki 79.
6 Belen, *1918 Yılı Hareketleri*, 174.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 177.
9 ATASE, 38nci Piyade Alayı Tarihçesi, 1970, 58, unpublished staff study (Muhittin Turagay), ATASE Library 26–360.
10 Ibid., 61.
11 In particular, the choke points through the Toros Mountains and the Amanus Mountains remained uncompleted until September 1918. These uncompleted portions of the Berlin to Baghdad railroad were 53 km and 35km long respectively and required the transloading of all cargo.
12 Falls, *Military Operations Egypt and Palestine, From June 1917 to the End of the War*, Part II, 642. Falls specifically noted that numerous British assaults did not use the 'creeping' artillery barrage used in France.
13 The armistice, signed at Mudros Harbour on 30 October 1918, called for the surrender of strategic points such as the Dardanelles and the Toros and Amanus tunnel com-plexes, but it left the Ottoman Army intact. See David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace, The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt, 1989), 373.
14 This may be contrasted with the terms of the armistice with Germany under which the German Army had to surrender over 5,000 artillery pieces and 25,000 machine guns. See Cyril Falls, *The Great War* (New York: G.P.Putnam's, 1959), 416.
15 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Mondros Mütarekesi ve Tatbikatı*, 46–47.
16 Ibid., 68–69.
17 Ibid., 184–185.
18 Ibid., 185.
19 Ibid., 185
20 Ibid., 177–178.
21 Ibid., 180.
22 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Birinci Dünya Harbi Idarı Faalıyetler ve Lojistik*, 583.
23 Ismet Görgülü, *On Yıllık Harbin Kadrosu 1912–1922* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurum Basımevi, 1993), 197–213.

24 See note 82 in Chapter 4 and notes 83 and 100 in Chapter 5 (for example, Bond, Griffith, Samuels, and Travers).
25 Gordon R.Sullivan, *Hope is not a Method, What Business Leaders can learn from America's Army* (New York: Random House, 1996), 189–192.
26 Carver, *The Turkish Front 1914–1918,* 245. Lord Carver was particularly critical of the war on the Turkish fronts as a waste of resources that failed to bring satisfactory returns on investment in the strategic sense.
27 See Erickson, *Ordered to Die,* table 7.5, 202. The Turkish government never published a consolidated statistical summary detailing casualties, losses, or surviving unit strength. *Ordered to Die* is the only work to attempt such a reconciliation and annex F (Ottoman Casualties), pp. 237–243, is based on statistics culled from the twentyseven Turkish official histories of World War I.

Appendix B: other theatres of war in 1918

1 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *3ncu Ordu Harekati,* 580–581.
2 Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields,* 495.
3 Ibid., 544.
4 Bayur, *Türk Inkılabı Tarihi,* 763. See note 1 above.

Appendix C: the Ottoman infantry division

1 The material for this portion is drawn from Erickson, *Defeat in Detail,* 24–28.
2 Pertev Demirhan, *Generalfeldmarschall Colmar Freiheer von der Goltz. Das Lebensbild eines grossen Soldaten* (Göttingen, Germany: Göttinger Verlagsanstalt, 1960), 74–91.
3 Ahmed Izzet Pascha, *Denkwürdigkeiten des Marschalls Izzet Pascha* (Leipzig, Germany: K.F.Koehler, 1927), 165–172.
4 Ibid., 295–302.
5 Ibid., 130–142.
6 TC Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi (1908–1920),* 140–141.

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ATASE 4275—31st Infantry Regiment
ATASE 4618, 4836—9th Infantry Division
ATASE 4775—7th Infantry Division
ATASE 4898—War Diary, 9th Infantry Division
ATASE 5018—19th Infantry Regiment
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ATASE 26–344—41st Infantry Division
ATASE 26–346—9th Artillery Regiment
ATASE 26–349—19th Infantry Division

ATASE 26–351—8th Infantry Division
ATASE 26–359—36th Infantry Regiment
ATASE 26–360—38th Infantry Regiment
ATASE 26–361—21st Infantry Regiment
ATASE 26–412—23rd Infantry Division
ATASE 26–413—3rd Artillery Regiment
ATASE 26–415—6th Artillery Regiment
ATASE 26–421—3rd Cavalry Division
ATASE 26–441—16th Infantry Division
ATASE 26–466—57th Infantry Regiment
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ATASE 26–485—25th Infantry Regiment
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