

ESTICA B-1165

1939

ESTONIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

1918-1920

II

TALLINN, 1939

ESTONIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

1918–1920

II

PUBLICATION OF THE HISTORICAL COMMITTEE
FOR THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE FOR THE WAR
OF INDEPENDENCE
TALLINN, 1939

Ext. B



Organisation of Defence after the Defeat of the Enemy on Estonian Territory.

(Maps 1—3.)

Consolidation of Law and Order.

(Pages 9—20.)

The Estonian Government quickly established law and order in the territories freed of the enemy. Proper Government and Municipal Institutions were established and courts of law and police commenced their duties. In respect of law and security the entire territory was made subject to the C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner. In the war zone and its close proximity the Commanders, Armed Forces were responsible for law and order while the Chief of Home Defence, Major-General E. Põdder, who had at his disposal 32,000 men of the Defence League, was responsible for the remainder of the country. On 31st March, the office of Chief of Home Defence was abolished and his duties were taken over by the Chief of the Defence League to which post Mr. E. Alver was appointed.

Bolshevik propaganda, which abated after the defeat of the Red Army, was resumed in the Summer. In this respect the objective of the campaign was the army, in particular the new recruits, and industrial workers and agricultural labourers were singled out for intensive propaganda, which, however, had no noticeable results.

Organisation of Government and Formation of an Assembly representative of the People.

(Pages 21—30.)

The Provisional Government, under the Prime Minister, Mr. K. Päts, strove for three main objects: 1. To free the Country of the enemy. 2. To organise the Government of the Country. 3. To convene the Constituent Assembly.

The first object had been brilliantly accomplished by the army. The organisation of the Government went on successfully. The Constituent Assembly, elected by the entire population and the army, met on 23rd April and began its work under the presidency of Mr. A. Rei. On May 18th, 1919, the first Government of the Republic was formed under O. Strandman as Prime Minister. On May 19th, 1919, the Constituent Assembly passed a special declaration of Estonian independence and sovereignty and proceeded to work out

a Constitution for the Country and the Land Reform Bill. The provisional Constitution was passed on 4th June, 1919.

Organisation of National Economy.

(Pages 31—42.)

The Government had difficulty in providing food for the people and the army. By rigid control it was possible to make our own grain supplies last until February 1919, when the first consignments came from England and the American Relief Committee, which covered two-thirds of the people's and one-third of the army's requirements in bread. The Ministry of Agriculture at once did everything to increase the agricultural output, taking large estates under control and making it compulsory for farmers to cultivate all arable land.

After the Country was freed of the enemy, it was possible to take up commercial relations with foreign countries to a greater extent than hitherto. Flax and timber were exported to England and spirit and cement were added later. Imports consisted of coal, kerosene, petrol and lubricating oils.

At the same time, steps were taken to revive industries which had suffered through the war.

The financial position of the Country, too, was difficult. Revenue was low and expenditure had to be met by the issue of treasury notes. The right of issue belonged to the Treasury only. On 7th March, 1919, the Bank of Estonia was established to regulate and manage and generally control the circulation of currency. For the most urgent needs foreign currency was obtained by export trade, but munitions from Great Britain and other goods, bought from the American Relief Committee, were obtained on credit.

Organisation of Armed Forces.

(Pages 43—60.)

The mobilisation of recruits and the organisation of armed forces were continued. On 23rd February, in order to facilitate the Higher Command, the Staff of the C.-in-C., was formed under Major-General J. Soots, whereas the Operative Staff was organised into the Administration of the General Staff. The 3rd Army Division was formed on the southern front to simplify command and Major-General E. Põdder was appointed its G. O. C. Armoured trains were organised into one division under Captain K. Parts. Some alterations were effected in the command of the naval forces under Captain J. Pitka.

New units of all arms were formed and the existing Formations were strengthened by artillery and armoured units. By the end of May 1919, there were altogether, 9 infantry regiments, 6 independent battalions, 2 cavalry regiments, 33 batteries of light and heavy artillery with 102 guns, 9 armoured trains and a detachment of 6 armoured cars. At the end of May 1919, the Estonian army numbered altogether 74,500 officers and men, of whom 1,500 were Latvians, 300 Ingermanlanders, 300 Finns, Swedes and Danes and 2,750 of the Northern Corps of White Russians.

A military school was opened for the training of officers on the 22nd April, and for replenishing N. C. O. cadres, training companies were established at the various units.

Army Supplies.

(Pages 61—74.)

Owing to the difficult economic position of the Country the provision of adequate supplies to the army was very difficult. Victualling was satisfactory, thanks to the great efforts of the appropriate authorities. As sufficient clothing was not available the percentage of sickness was very high and greatly reduced the fighting strength of the Army.

In regard to armaments the position was better. There were enough rifles for all men though they were of various makes; many of them, however, were badly worn. Most of the heavy machine guns had been captured from the enemy while light machine guns were bought from Great Britain. The guns were old and extremely varied in type. We had received 24 modern guns from abroad and captured 27 from the enemy. In the first half of 1919, there was no shortage of ammunition. There were still some old Russian stores on our territory, some ammunition was captured from the enemy and some bought from Great Britain and Finland.

The Red Cross service was organised by the Army Medical Administration under Dr. A. Lossmann. By the end of May 1919, there were 5,000 beds in the military hospitals. There was a great shortage of drugs, bandages and surgical appliances.

Generally, and in spite of all difficulties, the work of organisation developed satisfactorily. As a result Estonia's power of resistance was constantly growing, and by the Spring of 1919, the army not only repulsed all the attacks of Soviet Russia's forces but herself launched an attack as soon as an opportunity occurred.

Carrying the Offensive into Soviet Russian Territory.

(Maps 4—7.)

General Position.

(Pages 77—80.)

The Estonian C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, decided upon the plan of carrying the war into the enemy's territory as early as the end of January 1919. The object of this was to carry on a war of active defence to enable our neighbours, the Latvians, Ingermanlanders and Russians to become organised on their own soil for the fight with Soviet Russia, which would also assist the defence of our own frontiers. A favourable opportunity for an attack presented itself in May 1919.

The Red Armies, composed of Estonian and Latvian nationals and part of the 7th Russian Army, had suffered heavy losses in their attack against Estonia in the Winter and Spring of 1919. They were unable to make good these losses, for at the same time Russia was engaged in civil war. This did not permit the Soviet High Command to strengthen the Estonian front.

Offensive in the Direction of Narva—Petrograd (in Ingermanland) in the Spring of 1919.

(Pages 81—94.)

For political reasons the Estonian C.-in-C. decided to leave the initiative of the attack in the Spring of 1919 to the Russian (White) Northern Corps, which was under his command.

The Northern Corps, after its retreat from Pihkva (Pskov) in December 1918, continued its re-organisation on Estonian territory and at Estonian expense. The Command of the Northern Corps was composed of Russians and Baltic Germans, who did not accept the idea of an independent Estonia, for which reason the Estonian High Command had some difficulty in cooperating with the Corps.

During April 1919, General J. Laidoner transferred the Corps to the Viru front between Narva and Peipsi, from which position it was directed for an attack on Petrograd. The strength of the Corps at the time, was 3,000 officers and men ¹⁾ with 83 machine guns and 15 guns. The enemy on our Viru front consisted of the 6th Army Division which was double the strength of the Northern Corps, but owing to the disposition of its troops the Northern Corps had almost a threefold superiority in the direction of the main attack Krivassoo (Kriüsa) and Vasknarva (Syrenets).

The attack of the Northern Corps was launched on 13th May, supported by the 1st Estonian Army Division, under General A. Tõnisson. From the sea the attack was supported by a British Squadron, under Admiral Sir W. Cowan, and the Estonian Fleet, under Captain J. Pitka. In the south support was given by our fleet on Lake Peipsi and later by the 2nd Army Division. Attacked simultaneously on the south and north the enemy retreated in disorder, leaving behind trains and heavy artillery. On 20th May, an important junction, Volossovo, was occupied as well as the base of the Red Fleet on the eastern shore of Lake Peipsi at the Raskopel Bay.

The garrison of Krasnaja Gorka mutinied and on the 14th June surrendered to our Ingermanland Battalion. At this point the attack had reached its objective. As the Northern Corps was now on Russian territory, in accordance with an earlier signed agreement, the Estonian C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, relinquished his command on the 19th June. The Northern Corps was reorganised as the North Western Army with the object of fighting the Bolshevik rule in Russia.

On the 19th June, the Soviet Russian 7th Army, after having brought up their 6th and 2nd Divisions, with altogether 23,000 officers and men, against the Northern Corps of 16,500 officers and men, launched a counter-attack and forced the Corps to withdraw. The counter-attack was checked on the line Strugi-Belaja station — Luga River and Ingermanland lakes. The Estonian troops occupied the front from the Narva—Petrograd railway to the sea.

Capture of Pihkva.

(Pages 95—106.)

To support the attack of the White Russian Northern Corps, the C.-in-C. General J. Laidoner, on 16th May ordered the 2nd Division under Colonel V. Puskar, to launch an attack in the direction of Pihkva and Marienburg (Alūksne).

The attack was launched on the night of 23/24 May. In a pitched battle the enemy was put to flight on the whole front, and on the 26th May, Pihkva was occupied. Parts of the armoured train division organised the defence of the town after its occupation. A part of the 1st Brigade of the 2nd Army

¹⁾ Everywhere in this book, with the exception of pp. 6, 18 and 29, "infantry", "officers and men" and "men of all ranks" mean only those fighting in the front line with a bayonet or sword. Artillery and machinegunners are not included in these numbers. The number of men fighting with a rifle or sword amounted only to about 30% of the total forces.

Division was withdrawn to the present Estonian frontier where they began to fortify it on the line Laura—Irboska—Vidavīši. On the 29th May, Pihkva was handed over to a portion of the White Russian Northern Corps, leaving, as a precaution, some Estonian troops who were actually responsible for the defence of the town.

Liberation of Northern Latvia.

(Maps 8—16.)

Clearing Northern Latvia of Soviet Russian Troops.

(Pages 109—124.)

At the same time as the Estonian 2nd Division operated in the direction of Pihkva, the C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, ordered on 16th May the Commander of the 3rd Division, General E. Pödder, to launch an attack, supported by armoured trains on the front between Riga Bay and Valga. The object was to defend Estonia from the South outside the ethnographic border, to free Northern Latvia and support the attack of the Northern Corps of the White Russians.

The offensive was launched on 24th May. By determined attacks the enemy's resistance was soon broken and on the 26th May Volmari (Valmiera) was captured, on 27th May Lemsalu (Limbaži), on 29th May Smiltē, and on 30th May Vönneu (Cēsis). Owing to the simultaneous advance of the German Baltic *Landeswehr* from Riga in the direction of Valga, the 3rd Division stopped pursuing the defeated Soviet Russian troops.

The occupation of Pihkva and Volmari by Estonian troops created a favourable situation for the advance of the right wing of the 2nd Division in the direction of Võru—Marienburg. The attack was launched on the 27th May and on the 5th June, the first Cavalry Regiment reached Väina (Daugava) river, occupying Kreuzburg (Krustpils) and Jakobstadt (Jēkabpils), south of which the left flank of the Polish Anti-Bolshevik forces was operating.

Thus the Estonian troops by a brilliant manoeuvre had freed Northern Latvia from the Bolsheviks, entirely destroying the Red Latvian army.

War against the Landeswehr.

(Pages 125—192.)

A new dangerous enemy to Estonian independence was growing in Southern Latvia, the Baltic-German *Landeswehr* formed in Riga in December 1918, and the "Iron Division" of Reich German troops, led by General R. v. der Goltz. His object was to conquer all Baltic territory, after which it was intended to colonize the land by Germans. These aggressive aims were explained to the Allies as defence of the German Eastern frontier against the Bolsheviks.

The Germans hindered the organisation of Latvian troops in Courland so that by April 1919, Latvia only managed to form a single unit of 600 men. On 16th April, the *Landeswehr* deposed the national Latvian Government under K. Ulmanis, which was friendly to the Allies, and formed a pro-German Government under the Premiership of A. Needra. On the 22nd May the *Landeswehr*, together with the "Iron Division" and the Latvian unit, occupied Riga, from where the Baltic-German *Landeswehr* advanced in a north and

north-east direction, to the rear of the Estonian 2nd Division and its communications in the Ramotskoje (Ieriķi) — Võnnu district.

The *Landeswehr* did not comply with the demand of the Estonian C.-in-C. that they should withdraw south of the Ramotskoje—Alt-Schwaneburg railway line as north of this line there were no Bolshevik troops, but instead launched an attack on the 5th June and occupied Võnnu on the 6th. On the 8th and 9th June fighting for Võnnu continued with alternating success. At the same time the *Landeswehr* tried to organise cooperation with the Northern Corps of the Russian Whites, but their delegates in three aeroplanes were caught and taken prisoner by the Estonian troops.

On 10th June, by intervention of the military representatives of the Allied Countries, an armistice was signed between the Estonian and *Landeswehr* Commands, and negotiations were started for the settlement of matters by peaceful means. The negotiations, however, led to no agreement as the *Landeswehr* made an unacceptable demand, namely that the Estonian troops be withdrawn to their ethnographic frontier, which meant handing over the communications of our 2nd Division to the *Landeswehr*, without the latter taking upon itself the obligation of defending the Anti-Bolshevik front.

The time afforded by the armistice was used by the *Landeswehr* for assembling forces in the region of Võnnu and Hinzenberg (Inčukalns). The Estonian 3rd Division, under Major General E. Põdder, occupied defensive lines of 100 km., having in the front line 5,000 officers and men (of whom 1,400 were Latvians), 189 machine guns, 28 guns and 2 armoured trains. The enemy had 5,300 officers and men, 310 machine guns, 50 guns, 12 trench mortars, 1 armoured train and a number of aeroplanes, thus exceeding the Estonian forces in material, and in the direction of attack, also in man-power. The main strength of the 3rd Division was disposed in defence of Lemsalu, Stolben (Stalbe), Võnnu and Ronneburg (Rauna) district.

The enemy attack began on the 19th June, 1919, by the operations of the flank defence battalion of the German "Iron Division" in the direction of Lemsalu. On 20th June, the enemy battalion was decisively beaten near Lemsalu by the 2nd battalion of the 9th Regiment. On the same day the main forces of the "Iron Division" proceeded to attack and occupied the village of Roopa (Straupe).

Early in the morning of 21st June the *Landeswehr* again attacked. Near Võnnu it broke through the front line of the Latvian 2nd Võnnu Regiment, holding the centre of the Estonian 3rd Division line, and continued its advance in the direction of Loode railway station and Volmari. By night-fall the advance troops of the enemy came to within 8 km. of Volmari. The right wing of the 3rd Division at Lemsalu, and the left wing at Ronneburg on the 21st June successfully repulsed all enemy attacks. Neither had the enemy any success at Stolben in spite of fierce attacks by the "Iron Division".

To liquidate the break-through at Võnnu, the C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, ordered a counter-attack on the 21st June, placing the Kalevlaste Maleva (a volunteer battalion), and the 2nd battalion of the 1st Infantry Regiment together with a battery of light artillery at the disposal of the Commander of the 3rd Division. These forces together with the Kuperjanov Partisan Battalion and armoured trains put to flight the *Landeswehr* troops which had broken through. At the same time the 3rd and 6th Regiments, which were fighting on the flanks of the 3rd Division, repulsed all enemy attacks. The 9th Regiment, operating on the extreme right flank of the 3rd Division had

very successfully advanced in the Lemsalu—Hinzenberg direction and threatened the main forces of the "Iron Division" from the rear, forcing the whole "Iron Division" to withdraw, in the night, from the Stolben district.

A general successful counter-attack of the Estonian forces was launched by the C. O. of the 3rd Division on 23rd June. In the early morning of that day the town of Võnnu was captured, which had been evacuated by the main enemy forces through the night. The enemy was doggedly pursued on the whole front. Its attempts at resistance were broken by spirited attacks. On 28th June, the Estonian troops reached the outskirts of Riga where the enemy stopped on the positions Jägeli (Jugla) River and Riga lakes. Continuing their attacks, the Estonian forces captured, on 2nd July, Alt-Mühlgraben (Milgrāvis) and Magnusholm (Mangalsala). At the mouth of Vāina River 4 enemy ships were captured. The Estonian troops were making preparations for the capture of Riga when, at the demand of the military representatives of the Allied Countries, an armistice was concluded at Strasdenhof (Strazdu-muiža) on 3rd July. The Germans were forced to leave Riga on the 5th July and to proceed to the Miitavi (Jelgava) district of Courland. The Estonian troops, thanks to their high fighting qualities, had won a brilliant victory, defeating the enemy decisively and putting an end to the attempt to establish German rule over the Baltic region.

Defensive Fighting on the Soviet Russian Territory in Summer.

(Maps 17—21.)

Fighting in Ingermanland and in Pihkva region.

(Pages 195—236.)

After the retreat of the North West Army from Petrograd district in the Summer, the 1st Division, with the 4th and 1st Regiments, occupied from the 12th July, front line positions from the Narva—Petrograd railway to the sea and proceeded at once with their fortification. The fighting strength of our 1st Division comprised, at the time, 4,800 officers and men, 146 machine guns and 39 guns. The strength of the Russian 6th Division opposing our 1st Division was at least 3 times greater.

In spite of our small numbers, all enemy attacks on our positions, in the second half of July and first half of August, were repulsed with considerable loss to the enemy. To strengthen the front, the 9th Regiment was brought up in July from the Southern front. At the same time the Ingermanland battalion was formed into a regiment.

The 30 km. long front of the 4th Regiment was defended by 1,650 men with 40 machine guns and 16 guns. The enemy attacked this sector of the front in August in detachments of 9 regiments (7,000 officers and men). A temporary enemy success was made good on the 11th August by inflicting very heavy losses on the Russians.

On the southern front the enemy launched a general offensive for the recapture of Pihkva, on July 8th, with a force of nearly 10,000 officers and men, 38 guns and supported by 3 armoured trains. At the time, Pihkva was defended by detachments of the 2nd Division and White Russians, a force nearly 7 times smaller than that of the enemy. Between 10th—18th July, ar-

moured trains, their infantry units and the 6th Regiment, were transferred to Pihkva from the Riga front. Heavy fighting continued until the 18th July when, by a counter-attack, the initiative was wrested from the enemy.

On the 18th July, the Estonian forces launched a counter-attack from the Pihkva region in the direction of Ostrov, Porhov and Luuga. In spite of the nearly two fold superiority of the enemy the advance of the Estonian troops proceeded satisfactorily. On the 28th July, our troops halted 6 km. from Ostrov and 12 km. from Porhov, having captured Strugi-Belaja station in the direction of Luuga.

In the middle of August, the enemy launched a counter-attack with superior forces and pressed the Estonian forces back on to the fortified line at Irboska and the general line of the Rivers Tšerehha and Kebi, in front of Pihkva. As the relations between the Estonian troops and the North West Army of White Russians were not too cordial the defence of Pihkva was handed over to the units of the North West Army and the Estonians left the town during the night of 25th/26th August. On the same night the White Russians gave up the town to the enemy and withdrew in the direction of Oudova on the River Želtša.

The Estonian forces withdrew to the present frontier-line of the Country and took up the defence of the fortified positions.

General Position by the Autumn of 1919.

(Map 23.)

Position on the Various Soviet Russian Fronts.

(Pages 239—244.)

The Military position of the Red Army had considerably improved by the Autumn of 1919. Intervention on the Northern front was being liquidated. On the Eastern front the Russian White Armies had been defeated. On the Southern and Western fronts the attacks of Russian White troops had been repulsed. Only Estonians and Poles had consistently beaten the Bolsheviks. As Estonians and Poles limited their operations to the active defence of their frontiers, the lack of success here was not particularly dangerous to the Red Army.

Estonian Foreign Political Position.

(Pages 245—258.)

An Estonian delegation, headed by her Foreign Minister, J. Poska carried on in Western Europe, and particularly at the Paris Peace Conference, an intensive campaign for the recognition of Estonia *de jure* and for procuring material assistance. Material assistance was given to us but the recognition of our independence *de jure* was made dependent on the solution of the Greater Russian problem. General Sir H. Gough, the head of the military commission of the Allies in the Baltic, warmly supported the claim for Estonian independence.

On 31st August, 1919, Soviet Russia made an offer to the Estonian Government to start peace negotiations. As Estonia did not want a separate peace, the Baltic States conferred in Tallinn on the 14th September, when

it was decided to carry on peace negotiations together, keeping the Western European Allied States informed. Peace negotiations in Pihkva on 16th—18th September gave no results and were, therefore, broken off.

The Home-political and Economic Position of Estonia.

(Pages 259—268.)

On the 18th November, a new Government was formed under the Premiership of J. Tõnisson. Bolshevik propaganda, which had been dropped in the Spring, was intensified in the Summer. In the towns strikes were organised, and in the army it was attempted to undermine the fighting spirit of the men. The will for freedom and the determination to gain independence among the Estonians, however, proved so strong that they remained firm to the end. With unflinching tenacity the Estonian officers and men continued to fight side by side against a dangerous enemy, together enduring all hardships and difficulties. The enemy propaganda, therefore, did not yield any positive results.

On 10th October, the Constituent Assembly passed the Land Reform Bill, which was of great economic and social importance. According to the provisions of this Bill all feudal estates were to be nationalized if they did not belong to municipalities, charitable or scientific institutions, and adequate compensation was to be made. Of the total arable land in Estonia 58% belonged to large estates, owned mainly by a few hundred noble families of foreign nationality, sprung from the old feudal system. At the same time two thirds of the people in Estonia, deriving their living from agriculture, had no land of their own. In addition to the existing 74,000 small holdings 56,000 more were created by the Land Reform Bill. With the passing of this Bill the soldiers received a guarantee that the land, which they had freed and were defending, in the future belonged to the nation, which was one of the factors contributing to victory in the War of Independence.

The economic position was particularly difficult during the second half of 1919, but these difficulties were overcome quite successfully. Providing food for the towns during the summer months was a problem for the solution of which it was necessary to import in 5 months 50,000 tons of food stuffs.

Continued Organisation of Estonian Armed Forces in the Second Half of 1919.

(Pages 269—284.)

The general organisation of the Army and the Defence League had already taken shape in the first half of 1919; in the second half only smaller additions were made. To every division there was added a frontier guard battalion. The total number of effectives in the regular army on the 15th October, amounted to 78,420. The Defence League numbered 119,000 men, of whom 46,000 had received partial military training, and were fit for service in front line units.

Army supplies had improved considerably, especially in regard to clothing, as in the Summer large quantities arrived from abroad, which nearly covered the requirements of the whole army. Only winter equipment was insufficient.

The supply of arms also improved. Artillery units received some modern guns from Great Britain. Thanks to this in the Autumn there were 142 field guns, of which 56 were of heavy artillery. The number of machine guns also

increased. There was sufficient small arms ammunition, but a shortage of artillery ammunition. By the Autumn it was possible to augment engineering and transport supplies as well as communications, only the shortage of field cable remained acute.

Generally the economic position of the Country had improved but it was still serious enough.

Military Operations on the Soviet Russian and Latvian Territories in the Autumn of 1919.

(Maps 24—28.)

The Attack of the White Russian North West Army on Petrograd.

(Pages 287—293.)

In the Autumn the North West Army, under the command of General N. Youdenitch, intended to launch a new and vigorous attack via Jamburg and Gatšina, with the capture of Petrograd as the main objective. The army had been thoroughly reorganised. It had also received great quantities of war material from the Allied Governments. The effective strength of the North West Army, at that time, amounted to 18,500 officers and men, with 56 guns and armoured trains. The effective strength of the 7th Red Army was 26,500 officers and men with 148 guns but its fighting quality was not high.

On 26th August, a conference took place in Riga, under the guidance of the Allies' military representatives, between the representatives of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Armies, the North West Army and Colonel Bermond-Avalov. The Allies demanded that the forces of the participants at the conference should support the main offensive of the North West Army on Petrograd by an attack on their respective fronts.

The general offensive of the North West Army was launched on the 10th October and developed with great success: by October 13th, Luuga was taken and by October 20th, Tsarskoje Selo and Pavlovsk. In 10 days the army had advanced from Jamburg to the gates of Petrograd. But in the meantime, the Soviet Russian 7th Army had been considerably reinforced. It had received an additional 28—29,000 officers and men from Petrograd. On the 21st October, the 7th Army launched a counter-attack and recaptured Pavlovsk and Tsarskoje Selo. The strong attack of the Soviet Russian 15th Army, which began on 26th October in the direction of Luuga—Volossovo, penetrated far into the rear of the North West Army and forced it to withdraw quickly from Gatšina.

The Krasnaja Gorka Operations.

(Pages 293—301.)

In accordance with the Riga agreement, Estonian forces were obliged to support the North West White Russian Army. The Estonian C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner intended by a swift coup to capture Krasnaja Gorka. The British Fleet was, at the same time, operating at sea. To carry out the planned attack the C.-in-C. detailed naval forces, infantry and artillery detachments under the command of Rear-Admiral J. Pitka. By 13th October, the majority of the landing parties, altogether 1,600 men with 4 guns, arrived at

Kaporje Bay and landed on the 13th and 14th October in Peipija district, whence they immediately pushed on in the direction of Krasnaja Gorka. Our landing party had to operate against the enemy's forces of 3,000 men and 12 guns. On the 16th October our troops reached the strongly fortified positions, which they did not succeed in breaking through even though, on 26th October, our landing party was reinforced by the 4th Regiment and the British Fleet supported it effectively by their fire. At the end of October, the failure of the North West Army's attack became apparent and at the beginning of November the Estonian troops withdrew from the Krasnaja Gorka positions.

Pihkva Operations.

(Pages 301—308.)

To support the offensive of the North West Army and to keep the enemy forces engaged in the Pihkva region, the armoured trains and 2nd Division, supported by our Peipsi fleet, made, by order of the C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, 3 attacks in the direction of Pihkva, in the middle of October and the beginning of November. The attacks were successful: in parts Velikaja river was reached, prisoners and war material were captured and many bridges across the river destroyed, after which the forces returned to their old positions.

Military Operations in Northern Latvia and Riga.

(Pages 309—328.)

After the defeat of the *Landeswehr* the Estonian 3rd Division took up positions, at the beginning of August, from Lake Luban to the Estonian frontier in defence of the frontier of Northern Latvia, as Latvia herself lacked the necessary armed forces.

In accordance with the stipulations of the Versailles Peace Treaty the German forces had to leave the Baltic Countries. To evade the stipulations of the Peace Treaty, many German armed units entered the Service of the White Russians under the Russian Commander, Colonel P. Bermond-Avalov, forming with the Russian war prisoners in Germany, the Russian Voluntary Western Army. This army actually became a tool in the hands of the German Command whose real aim was, not so much fighting Bolshevism for the building up of a German-friendly Russia, as the conquest of the Baltic for Germany.

On the 8th October, 1919, the Russian Voluntary Western Army, under Bermond, launched an offensive against Riga, and on the 9th October, the western part of Riga, down to the River Vaina, fell into the hands of Bermond. The enemy did not succeed in capturing the eastern part of the town as two Estonian armoured trains reached Riga at 3 a. m. on the 10th October, sent at the request of the Latvian Prime Minister and C.-in-C. On the arrival of Estonian assistance, the spirits of the Latvian forces rose and the advance of Bermond was checked. At the same time, the Estonian C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, ordered the C. O. of the 3rd Division to be ready with the whole division to proceed against Bermond's forces. The Estonian armoured trains left Riga on the 23rd October, as the position there had become secure, and the Latvian forces, supported by the allied fleet and Estonian armoured trains, successfully counter-attacked. The Estonian 3rd

Division, at the same time, defended the Eastern frontier of Northern Latvia from Lake Luban to the Estonian frontier, where they remained until December 14th, 1919.

Concluding Battles of the War on the Viru Front.

(Maps 29—36.)

The Situation Developing into the Defence of Narva.

(Pages 331—344.)

In the first half of November, the demoralized North Western Army of the White Russians continued to retreat quickly from the Petrograd region, abandoning the town of Jamburg on November 14th to the Red Army. It was pursued by the 7th and 15th Soviet Russian Armies, of altogether 6 divisions with 32,000 men and 190 guns. The disintegrated North Western Army, comprising some 40—50,000 men and a great number of refugees, intended to retire behind the Estonian lines and reorganise again. As the North Western Army was hostile to Estonian independence its large, demoralized, armed forces, in the rear of our lines, proved extremely dangerous to the organisation of the defence of our Viru front. In view of this, the Estonian Government decided, on 11th November, to disarm all units of the North Western Army on their crossing on to the left shore of the Narva River which was carried out during the month of November. Only about 2,500 men of the North West Army remained at the front.

In the Autumn of 1919, three positions, north of Narva—Jamburg railway, had been prepared by the Estonian troops for the defence of Narva. South of the railway only part of the western shore of Narva River was fortified, with bridge-heads on the eastern shore at Vasknarva, Krivasoo and Vääska. All forces on the Viru front, including naval forces, were placed under the command of the G. O. C. of the 1st Division, Major-General A. Tõnisson. To strengthen the Division the C-in-C. transferred from the Southern front 3 armoured trains, 2 infantry regiments and some artillery units.

On the Defensive from 16th—30th November 1919.

(Pages 345—358.)

After the capture of Jamburg and Oudova, the Command of the Soviet Russian Western front continued its pressure on the whole front from Lake Peipsi to the Gulf of Finland. The enemy launched its offensive on 16th November. On the front, from Lake Peipsi to Narva—Petrograd railway the enemy's 15th Army drove the units of the North Western Army over Narva River from Peipsi to the village Krivasoo. The Estonian forces were in position on the western shore. On the front between Narva—Petrograd railway and the sea, the Soviet Russian 7th Army, with 19,000 men and 100 guns, attacked the units of the Estonian 1st Division whose strength at the time was only 4,700 men and 34 guns. By the 25th November, the enemy succeeded in pushing back the Estonian line in the centre and on the left flank. The loss of these positions was not dangerous, as the Narva front, extending in a semi-circle to the East, was thus shortened by 20 km. and the morale of the men was good.

Defensive Battles from 7th—20th December.

(Pages 359—378.)

The frontal attacks of the Soviet Russian troops had had no effect. For this reason their Command brought up 3 divisions, comprising 12,000 men and 80 guns, to the villages of Krivasoo and Vääska, south west of Narva. On this section Estonian forces numbered, at that time, only 1,100 men and 22 guns, and some remnants of the North Western Army. The enemy intended to break through to the Tallinn—Narva railway line and cut off the defenders of Narva. The attack was launched on the 7th December. With this attack the Russians endeavoured to influence the peace talks, which had commenced at Tartu, between Estonia and Russia, on December 5th. On the 8th, the Russian peace delegation presented their proposal for the Estonian-Russian frontier, according to which the eastern half of our Viru district and the whole Petseri district would have gone to Russia.

To stem the offensive the C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner, brought the 3rd Division from the Southern front to the Viru front to strengthen the 1st Division, and ordered the entire army to be ready for a supreme effort.

The pressure of the numerically superior forces of Soviet Russia became particularly strong from the 14th December. The enemy took the Krivasoo bridge-head on the eastern shore of Narva River and, crossing over the ice of the frozen river on the 16th December at Vääska village, advanced to Samokrassi village within 3 km. of the Tallinn—Narva railway. By a counter-attack on the 17th December, this very dangerous break-through was made good. A break-through on the night of 17th/18th at Mustjõe village was also liquidated.

Simultaneously with the attacks from the south, the Command of the Soviet Russian forces directed an offensive against Narva from the east and north. All these attacks, however, were repulsed with great losses to the enemy.

The Final Attempts of Soviet Russia to Break the Resistance of Estonia.

(Pages 379—386.)

Peace negotiations at Tartu had progressed successfully. The question of the Estonian Russian frontier had been settled. But on the 24th December, the Soviet Russian delegation suddenly and unexpectedly advanced the demand that, within 10 km. on both sides of the River Narva, Estonia should have no right to maintain any armed forces nor build fortifications. At the same time they gave us to understand that in case of need this demand would be enforced by military action. It was clear that the enemy was planning a new offensive to break Estonian resistance.

In reply to this demand our C.-in-C., General J. Laidoner arranged a transfer of fresh troops from the quieter Southern front to the Viru front. At the same time he reorganised the Commands, appointing Major-General A. Tõnisson in command of the Viru front. The forces at the disposal of the Viru front Command were the 1st Division, under Colonel O. Heinze, and the 3rd Division under Major-General E. Pödder together with artillery units. The C.-in-C. explained the significance of the moment to the Army which was prepared to repulse all enemy attacks.

The offensive of the Soviet Russian 7th and 15th Armies began on the 28th December, 1919. 19 enemy regiments attacked our Narva positions from

the North East and another group of 6 regiments from the East. Repeated attacks were repulsed. On the 30th December the C. O. of the 7th Soviet Russian army had to report to his chief that only remnants, not even fit for defence, were left of his army. After that the enemy attacks ceased. At the same time the Soviet Russian peace delegation abandoned its demand of creating a neutral zone on the shores of Narva River.

End of the War.

(Maps 37—38.)

(Pages 389—418.)

The Estonian Forces at Narva, fighting incessantly for a month and a half without a break and without relief in difficult winter weather, had crushed all enemy attacks and led the Command of the Soviet Russian army to the conviction that it was unable to break the resistance of Estonians. On 31st December, 1919, an armistice was signed in Tartu, which came into force on 3rd January, 1920, at 10.30 a. m.

As a result of the peace negotiations which followed the armistice, a Treaty was signed on 2nd February in Tartu between Estonia and Soviet Russia. By the provisions of the Peace Treaty all former Russian Government property on Estonian territory was handed over to the ownership of the Estonian Government. Of the Russian gold reserve Soviet Russia paid out the Estonian share of 15 million roubles in gold.

After the signing of the Peace Treaty, the Estonian Army was demobilised and reorganised in accordance with peace time requirements.

General Summary.

(Pages 421—464.)

The Estonian War of Independence began and was carried through under very difficult conditions for Estonia. At the beginning of the war, at the end of November 1918, the Estonian Government machinery and army were only in the first stages of organisation. At the beginning of the war Estonia had only managed to assemble 2,200 men against the invading force of 9,000. For this reason the small Estonian force was obliged to retreat gradually into the interior of the Country, ceding to the enemy within 6 weeks nearly half of the territory.

During that period a strong Government was built up, order in the Country was established and an army was organised. Even in the first week of January, 1919 it was possible to check the advance of the enemy. This was followed by a general victorious counter-offensive of the Estonian forces, as a result of which the territory was freed from the enemy in 3 weeks. In this, we were effectively assisted by Finnish volunteers and a British squadron. Intensive organisation proceeded throughout 1919. At the end of the war Estonia had under arms: in the army 75,000 men and in the Defence League 119,000 men. For the support of the infantry there were 39 batteries, 10 armoured trains, 8 armoured cars, 28 aeroplanes and 10 warships. Towards the end of the war, Soviet Russia was forced to bring to the Estonian front, two armies with a total of 160,000 men.

Strategically the War of Independence was a defensive war, carried out by Estonian forces actively and with great tenacity and courage. The best

examples of the active nature of the defence were the brilliant offensive of Estonian troops from Võru to Jakobstadt, the capture of Pihkva and Krasnaja Gorka and the victory over the well-armed *Landeswehr*. In the concluding battles of the war, the Estonian Army defended its positions with the utmost tenacity and perseverance and undertook daring counter-attacks.

In the conduct of the War of Independence, when the Country and Army were entirely unprepared for war, the direction of the Government and Army were of paramount importance.

As the result of a sound foreign policy we received *de facto* recognition of our independence and effective foreign assistance, and concluded a satisfactory Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia. By a skilful home policy the whole nation was welded into one strong unit for the fight against a numerically superior enemy. The strategic and tactical leading of troops was successful in securing victory for us over the enemy.

To political and military difficulties were added economic ones, since the entire national economy was disorganised and its capacity small. Great quantities of foodstuffs and war material, altogether costing Kr. 137.4 million, had to be imported to feed the people and provide supplies for the army. As exports amounted to only Kr. 20 million, the deficiency of Kr. 117.4 million, had to be covered by external loans. To cover the war expenditure the following foreign indebtedness was incurred: to Finland Fmk. 21.5 million in cash and in war material from Great Britain £3 million, U. S. A. \$12.1 million, and France Fcs. 13.7 million. The Finnish and French loans were repaid soon after the war.

Captured war material played a large part in the supply of the army. The total captured war material and supplies was: 73 guns, 500 machine guns, 4,200 rifles, 13 ships, 18 locomotives, 503 railway carriages and flax, hemp and timber to the value of Kr. 2.8 million. Over and above that, great quantities of ammunition and other war material were captured and put to immediate use.

As a result of 13 months of heavy fighting the brave Estonian Army secured a brilliant victory, forcing Soviet Russia to recognise Estonian Independence. But the victory of the Estonian Army also influenced history beyond the Estonian national borders, helping to put the Latvian Republic on her feet, and by crushing the *Landeswehr*, checked German expansion to the North East. Estonia was the first to stop the advance of Bolshevik Soviet Russian forces westwards, which, at the time, was a great danger to Western European peace. Estonia was also the first capitalist country to conclude peace with Soviet Russia, thus displaying the strength of the new State and its inner stability. The Estonian example was soon followed by other capitalist countries. As the price of victory in the War of Independence Estonia lost 3,588 dead and 13,775 wounded. The reason for the victory lay, however, first and foremost, in the unwavering will of the whole Estonian people to secure and defend their independence, and in the great and successful organisation of the Government and Army Command. At the time when Estonia's own armed forces were being organised, timely foreign assistance, especially from the British Fleet and Finnish Volunteers, played a great part in assuring final victory. The Estonian people fully realise the value of this assistance and will thankfully remember those powers which helped her in her hour of need.

Exhib. univ. Tart.

Maps of Operations in the Unabridged Edition.

No. 1.	Organisation of the High Command as from 23rd February, 1919.	49
No. 2.	Disposition of Army Supply Services by 25th May, 1919.	68
No. 3.	Disposition of Army Medical and Evacuation Services by May, 1919.	73
No. 4.	General Position on Soviet Russian Fronts, middle of May, 1919.	79
No. 5.	The Offensive of the Northern Corps of White Russians on Petrograd and our Support in May and June, 1919.	94—95
No. 6.	The Counter-Offensive of Soviet Russian Forces and the Fall of Jamburg in August, 1919.	94—95
No. 7.	Capture of Pihkva in May, 1919.	105
No. 8.	Capture of Volmari and Võnnu in May, 1919.	113
No. 9.	Our Offensive from Võru to Jakobstadt in May and June, 1919. . .	123
No. 10.	Military Position in Courland at the end of February, 1919. Capture of Riga by the <i>Landeswehr</i> in May, 1919.	133
No. 11.	Assembly of our Troops against the <i>Landeswehr</i> . Fall of Võnnu to the <i>Landeswehr</i> on June 6th, 1919.	137
No. 12.	The Attack of our Troops at Võnnu on June 8th, and <i>Landeswehr's</i> Counter-Attack on June 9th, 1919.	141
No. 13.	The Attack of the Iron Division at Lemsalu and Roopa on 19th and 20th June, 1919. Our Counterstrokes.	155
No. 14.	The Attack of the Iron Division and <i>Landeswehr</i> at Stolben, Looe, Võnnu and Ronneburg on June 21st, 1919.	163
No. 15.	The Counter-Attack of our Troops against the <i>Landeswehr</i> and Iron Division on June 22nd and 23rd, 1919.	176—177
No. 16.	The Offensive of our Troops against Riga, June 24th to July 2nd, 1919.	192—193
No. 17.	Organisation of Defence by our 1st Division, July—August, 1919.	199
No. 18.	The Counter-Attack of our 4th Regiment at Luuga in August, 1919.	203
No. 19.	The Defence of Pihkva in the Summer of 1919.	215
No. 20.	The Withdrawal of our Troops from Pihkva and Ostrov from 16th to 25th August, 1919.	219
No. 21.	Our Fortified Positions on the South-East Front at the end of 1919.	223
No. 22.	Our Artillery on the Irboska Fortified Positions in August, 1919.	225
No. 23.	Position on the Soviet Russian Fronts, middle of October, 1919.	243
No. 24.	Offensive of the North Western Army against Petrograd in October, 1919. The Krasnaja Gorka Operation.	300—301
No. 25.	The First and Second Offensives of our Troops in Pihkva Direction on October 11th—13th and 17th—19th, 1919.	303
No. 26.	The Third Offensive of our Troops in Pihkva Direction on November 5th—7th, 1919.	307
No. 27.	Offensive of our Troops in Põtalovo and Ostrov Directions from October 29th to November 4th, 1919.	312—313
No. 28.	The Offensive of Bermond-Avalov on Riga and Assistance of the Estonian Troops to Latvia	327
No. 29.	Our Fortified Positions on Viru Front at the end of 1919.	335
No. 30.	Soviet Russian Counter-Offensive in October and November, 1919.	344—345
No. 31.	Disposition of our Artillery in front of Narva in November, 1919.	355
No. 32.	Defensive Fighting on Viru Front, November 16th—30th, 1919. . .	358—359
No. 33.	The Vääska Break-through. Position on the Viru Front in the evening of 16th December, 1919.	367
No. 34.	Liquidation of the Vääska Break-through on December 17th and 18th, 1919.	369
No. 35.	Disposition of the Opposing Forces on Viru Front on December 7th, and Activities up to December 16th, 1919.	378—379
No. 36.	Viru Front from December 17th, 1919 to January 3rd, 1920. . . .	384—385
No. 37.	Defining the Frontiers at Tartu Peace Negotiations, December, 1919.	405
No. 38.	Organisation of the High Command of the Armed Forces on Transition to Peace Time in February, 1920.	415
	Theatre of the Estonian War of Independence 1918—1920.	

Est.

B-1165

11

5603