

Le 1er février, 1918

Le Soldat Inconnu Vivant

France — Qui était Anthelme Mangin ?

Le **1er février 1918**, un soldat amnésique est interné à l'asile psychiatrique du Rhône. Il faisait partie d'un convoi de soixante-cinq déments, mais il n'avait pas de fiche pour l'identifier. On a alors cru reconnaître le nom d'**Anthelme Mangin** dans ses balbutiements et on l'a baptisé ainsi.

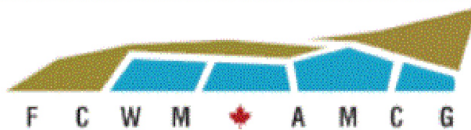
Tous les moyens sont employés pour retrouver sa famille. Son portrait s'étale à la une des journaux et est affiché sur les portes de toutes les mairies. Plusieurs centaines de familles reconnaissent en lui un père, un fils ou un frère disparu à la guerre. Comment départager ces familles qui n'arrivent pas à faire le deuil de leur proche disparu ? Une longue et douloureuse enquête débute. Elle durera tout l'entre-deux-guerres et s'achèvera sur un procès à rebondissements où s'opposent tous ceux et celles qui ont reconnu en l'amnésique un de leurs parents.

Les contemporains sont fascinés par cet homme sans passé : Jean Anouilh s'empare du fait divers pour écrire son *Voyageur sans bagage* et la presse baptise rapidement l'amnésique "le Soldat inconnu vivant".

Cette histoire singulière révèle en réalité une profonde souffrance née de la Grande Guerre, une douleur intime et collective : celle du deuil impossible à faire pour les familles des soldats disparus.

Sources : <http://www.blamont.info/textes268.html>

Pour en savoir plus : <http://laplumeetlerouleau.over-blog.com/article-4299126.html>



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February 2nd, 1918

Thinking Ahead

The Honourable
Sir James Alexander Lougheed
PC KCMG KC



Senator for Calgary, North-West Territories
(after 1905, Alberta)

Setting plans for demobilization

The Government of Sir Robert Borden has already been faced with the problem of returning soldiers incapacitated by wounds and forever disrupted in their normal life because of their experience in the war.

Although Canada has faced such problems in the Boer War, the circumstances and the numbers involved in the Great War are of a different order.

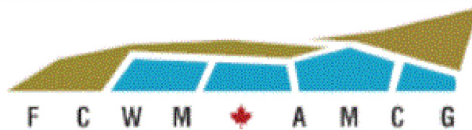
This is why the Union Government comes to the conclusion that a new department has to be created to look after the re-establishment of discharged servicemen in the civil life.

On 2 February 1918, Borden creates the department by an Order-in-Council and appoints **Sir James Alexander Lougheed**, a successful businessman and leading Conservative senator from Calgary, who has already been Chairman of the Military Hospitals Commission since 1915.

This department will oversee the rehabilitation programs created during and after the War, which are associated with convalescent and wounded soldiers.

It will become, in 1928, the Department of Pensions and National Health.

●Stacey, *Arms, Men and Government*, p. 63; ●Dictionary of Canadian Biography; ● Photo: LAC, Online MIKAN no. 3494267; ●Wikipedia.



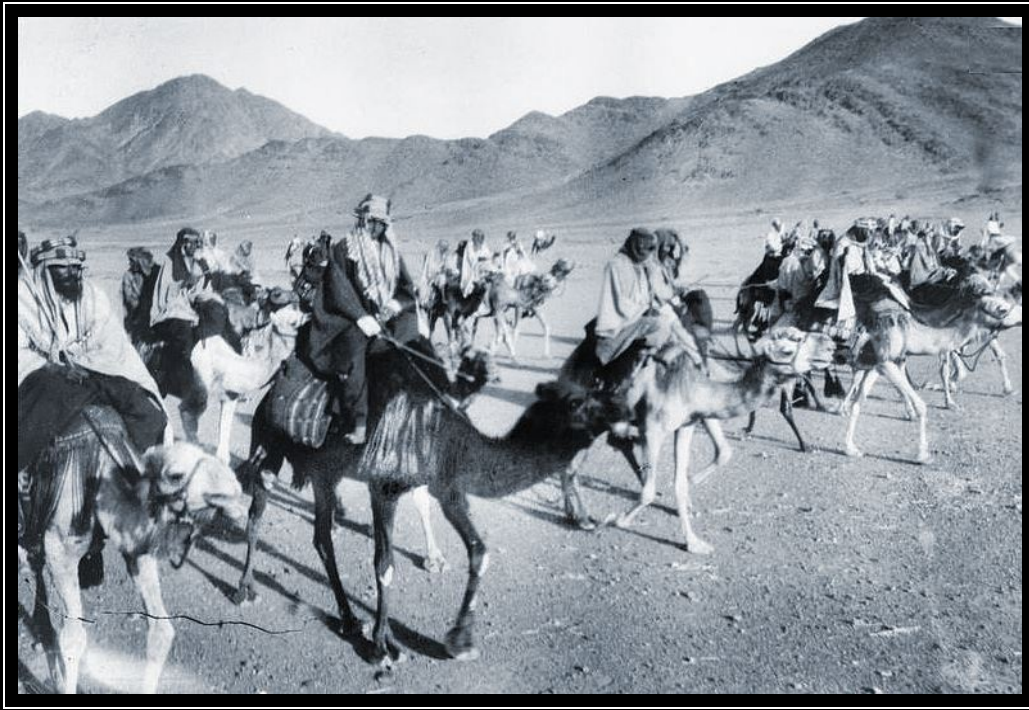
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February 3rd, 1918

A Proper Army with a Proper Job



The formation of the Northern Arab Army

The guerilla warfare that is being conducted by the Arabs in the Hejaz and into Palestine, at the right flank of Allenby's Army of Egypt, is growing in numbers.

New Arab tribes are joining the Revolt against the Ottoman as the camel cavalry progresses to the east of the Dead Sea.

In a meeting that he has in Guweira with a new Ops officer of the Cairo Intelligence Bureau, Lieutenant-Colonel

Alan Dawnay, Major

Lawrence decides to split his responsibilities because of the new diversity and size of the Arab Revolt. Lawrence agrees to the formation of a properly structured **Northern Arab Army** headquartered in Aqaba, under the command of an Arab leader, Djafer Pasha, assisted by a British adviser, Lieutenant-Colonel Pierce Charles Joyce.

The Northern Arab Army will be constituted and supported in war material on more conventional principles, so as to be useable in confrontations against well defended Ottoman positions.

Lawrence continues to forge ahead with his light troops, recruiting tribal chiefs as he progresses north, and preparing an assault in which the Northern Arab Army will join against the defended city of Maan.

•Wilson, Lawrence, 477.



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February 4, 1918

Not For Now



The Tiger looks ahead

At the conference in Versailles (**31 Jan-4 Feb 1918**), the Prime Minister of Great Britain, David Lloyd George, and the *Chef du Conseil* of the French Government, Georges Clemenceau, both come with a view to organizing an allied front that will resist the predictable German onslaught in the spring, an inevitable concern in view of the enemy reinforcements coming from the Russian front.

But David Lloyd George wants a unique command to direct operations from Versailles, and Clemenceau wants anything that will work.

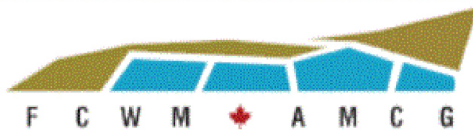
After having visited Haig at his headquarters, Clemenceau agrees to

Haig's adamant position that he will not provide British divisions to a common strategic Reserve. In fact Haig has threatened his resignation if he is compelled to do so. Neither Lloyd George nor Clemenceau will go that far.

But Clemenceau foresees that Haig will eventually have to come around. The Tiger is cautiously working his way to set Foch in a stronger position at Versailles, where Pétain will no more give than Haig.

— The Tiger will have to lay in wait for that one. Roaring will not do.

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- Basil Liddell Hart, Foch: The Man of Orleans (Two volumes; London: Penguin, (1931), 1937), I: 271.
 - <http://tigerscorner.free.fr/>



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Le 5 février, 1918

Un Balai pour Londres

Sir Edward Kemp, ministre des forces canadiennes outremer

Albert Edward Kemp est né près de Clarenceville, au Québec, mais a très tôt dans la vie pris le chemin de Montréal et Toronto pour devenir un des hommes d'affaires les plus proéminents de son temps. Au cours des années 1890, après avoir fait fortune très rapidement, il a pris intérêt à la politique et est devenu un des riches contributeurs du parti Conservateur dans ses heures sombres du régime Laurier. Après avoir été réélu comme membre du parlement, il s'est mérité la confiance de Robert Borden.

Kemp a été l'homme de confiance que Borden a choisi pour remplacer Sam Hughes lorsque celui-ci a été renvoyé de son poste de ministre de la Milice canadienne, en novembre 1916. Kemp s'est avéré d'un caractère très différent de Hughes, très bon organisateur et capable de fonctionner comme membre d'un Cabinet en harmonie avec ses collègues. Il s'est attaqué aux problèmes d'organisation causés par son prédécesseur trop fougueux et indépendant.

Borden l'a encore choisi lorsqu'il a fallu aller réorganiser la situation devenue trop compliquée en Angleterre, dans la direction des forces canadiennes outremer. Le Haut Commissaire canadien à Londres, Sir George H. Perley, qui a cumulé cette direction avec ses devoirs diplomatiques, retourne à ses fonctions primaires et Kemp agit comme ministre de Borden à Londres dès **janvier 1918**.

— Kemp est un ministre efficace et clair dans ses pensées et ses actions. Exactement ce qu'il fallait.

•Dictionnaire biographique du Canada, «Kemp, Sir Albert Edward»; •Desmond Morton, A Peculiar Kind of Politics, Chap. 8.



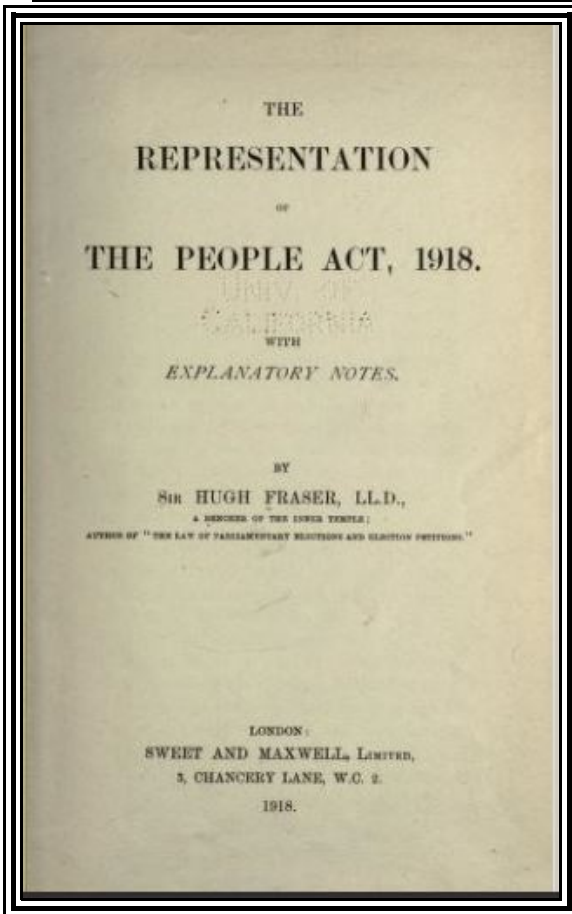
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February 6, 1918

A Good Crack in the Door



***Representation of the People Act* becomes law in Great Britain**

On 6 February, 1918 the ***Representation of the People Act*** (aka the Fourth Reform Act) received Royal Assent, beginning the march towards female suffrage in Great Britain.

The Act reduced the previous seven alternative qualifications for the parliamentary franchise to three with regard to men, and combatant duties secured the vote for male 19-20 year olds on active service, as well as all men 21 and over, but not for servicewomen under 30.

The franchise was extended to qualified women 30 and above, but excluded women who worked in factories, the Land Army, government offices and nursing services.

A number of parliamentary seats were redistributed as a result of the expanded size of the electorate, and the House of Commons gained 37 seats overall.

Some glaring anomalies remained as late as 1950, in particular the right to exercise two votes where an individual possessed a residential, a business, or a university qualification.

●Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of War*, p. 660-2; ●A.J.P. Taylor, *English History 1914-1945*, p. 133-4, 159-60; ●Hugh Fraser, *Representation of the*

People Act (1918), see <https://archive.org/stream/representationof00frasrich#page/n3/mode/2up>



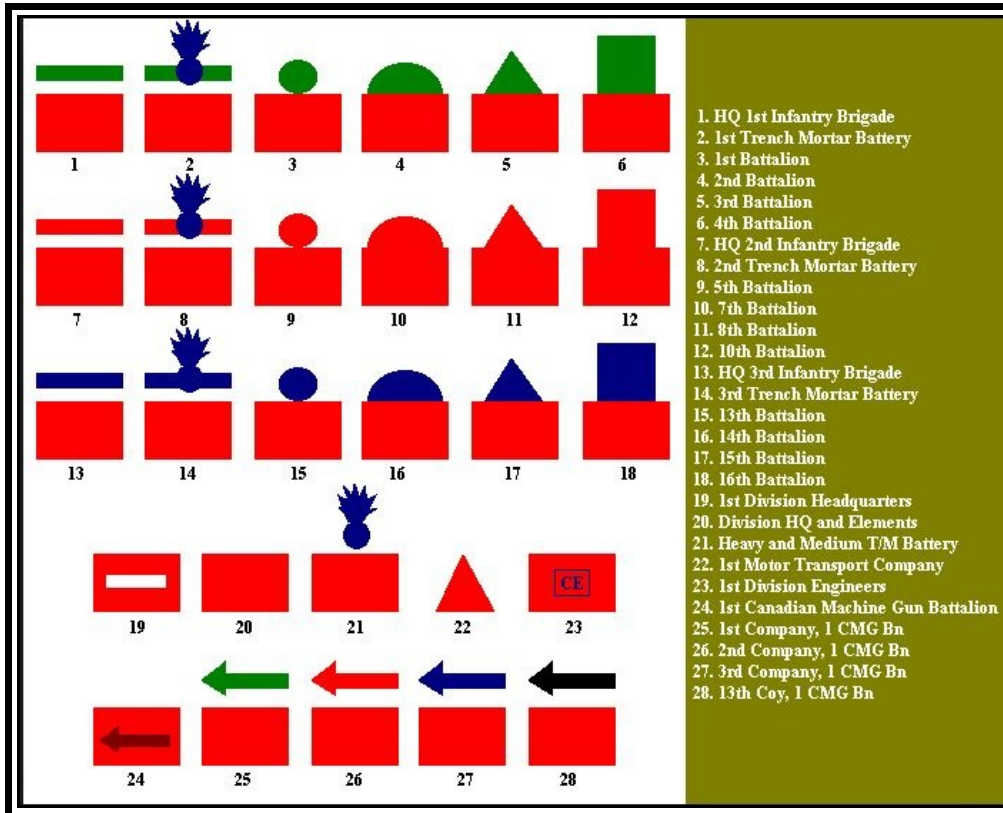
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February 7, 1918

A Army Corps on Steroids



Currie Improves Combat Effectiveness

“Currie’s refusal to weaken his Canadian Corps [by reducing infantry battalions to 9 per division] and to ensure the combat efficiency of his fighting force, may have been the single most difficult and important decision of his career.”¹

In London, backed by Minister Kemp, Currie makes his case to break up the 5th Division to reinforce the Corps in France. Each of his infantry battalions will gain 100 men.

He had already ‘poached’ the 5th Div’s artillery and mortars to improve artillery and signals

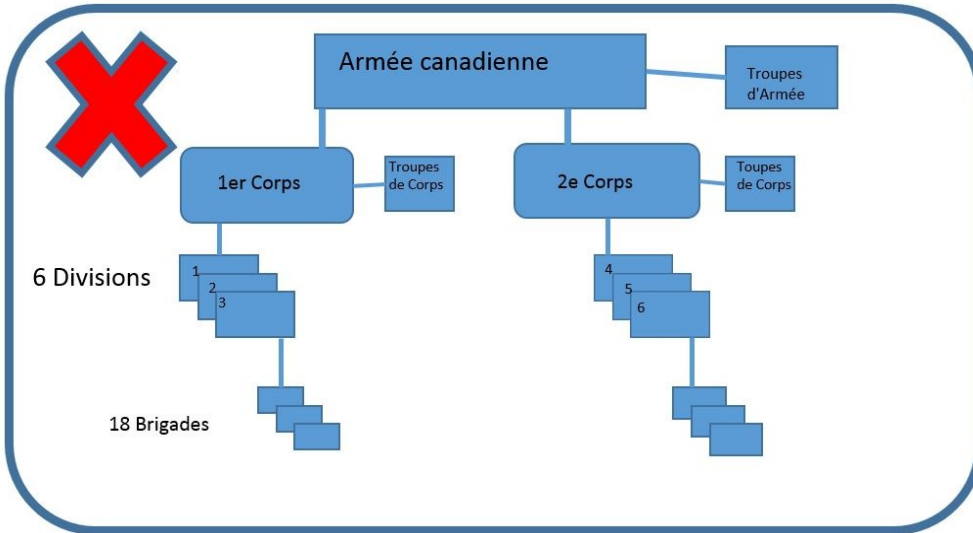
capabilities. His organizational plan now amalgamates the heavy machine gun companies into larger more powerful machine gun battalions of 64 guns, one battalion per division; he also equips all infantry platoons with two Lewis-gun teams; restructures infantry platoons to 40 men; increases the size of his engineering battalions (to include pioneer and tunnelling companies) to a 3,000-strong brigade per division; and adds two mechanical transport companies.

— Currie is determined that his combat troops will lack nothing in the way of support during battle.

¹●Tim Cook: *Shock Troops*, p. 372-381, quote p. 374; ●A.M.J. Hyatt: *General Sir Arthur Currie*, p. 98-102; ●Image from Service Publications, [canadiansoldiers.com](http://www.canadiansoldiers.com); <http://www.canadiansoldiers.com/insignia/formations/cefform.htm>

Le 8 février, 1918

La Réponse Est Non!



Il n'y en aura pas d'Armée canadienne!

Les discussions qui se sont produites dans les derniers jours entre le général Currie et le Ministre Kemp, à Londres, ont résolu que malgré les incitations du War Office, le Canada n'accepterait pas de former un deuxième Corps canadien et de le joindre au premier dans une Armée canadienne.

Les plans proposés il y a deux ans par le ministre Sam

Hugues, qu'une cinquième et sixième divisions seraient envoyées en première ligne, paraissent maintenant complètement inappropriés au général Currie. Il désire que les renforts soient tous dirigés vers les unités de combat d'un seul Corps canadien, qui pourra ainsi être renforcé en infanterie et doté d'armes d'appui tactique solides, bien équipées et bien entraînées.

Le plan de Currie évite la formation de deux QG divisionnaires, un QG de Corps avec ses troupes de Corps considérables, et un QG d'Armée avec des troupes d'Armée gigantesques.

– Cette décision fera du Corps canadien une formation de choc, hautement respectée.

•Nicholson, Le Corps expéditionnaire canadien, p. 249-52.



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February 9, 1918

Winning the War in the East, One State at a Time



Ukraine Signs a Treaty at Brest Litovsk

Representatives of Bolshevik Russia, of the Central Germanic Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) and of all the former border provinces of Russia that are now asserting their independence from Russia (Finland, Estonia, Livonia, Courland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Crimea, Kuban, Georgia and Azerbaijan), have been negotiating at Brest Litovsk since early

December 1917.

On 9 February 1918, Ukraine agrees to sign a treaty with the Germanic Alliance that will recognize its independence and sovereignty as a state, but make it an 'exclusive protectorate' of Germany. This means that Germany reserves the right, through this treaty, to unilateral demands on its resources. It thus gains control over the Ukrainian government commercial policy, as well as over its railways.

The treaty makes a sham of 'independence' and 'sovereignty'. It is an instrument of the German *Ostraum* («Room in the East») policy to diminish and isolate Russia and establish a ring of resources-rich German-controlled states around a weakened «Rump Russia» from the Baltic to the Caspian Seas.

– Negotiations continue at Brest-Litovsk where the Germans are winning the war one state at a time.

•Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, Chap 20.



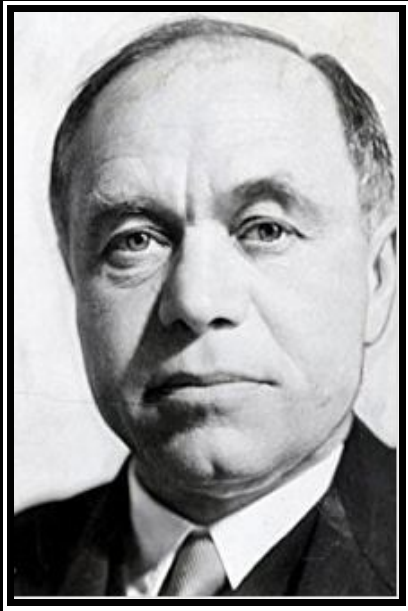
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February 10, 1918

Minister of the Crown



Lord Beaverbrook becomes British Minister of Information

Max Aitken, a superbly successful Canadian business leader, moved to Britain in 1910 where he was elected to the House of Commons in December 1910 and played a small part in the removal of Henry Asquith as Prime Minister and his replacement by David Lloyd George.

During the Great War, Aitken, using his own funds, established the Canadian War Records Office in London. He appointed the first war artists, war photographers and makers of war films to record life on the Western Front, thereby ensuring that Canada's contribution to the war was publicised with particular success in Canadian and British newspapers.

In January 1918 he was given a peerage as the **1st Baron Beaverbrook** and on **10 February 1918**, was appointed Minister of Information, responsible for propaganda in allied and neutral countries. In this capacity he successfully extended the work he had been doing for Canada. His staff included the prolific writer John Buchan, later named Governor General of Canada.

Lloyd George now intends to use Beaverbrook's press connections in his conflict with Sir William Robertson, which is reaching a climax.

●A.J.P. Taylor, Beaverbrook: a Biography, p. 137-156; ●Tim Cook, Shock Troops, p. 380; ●CWM: The Lord Beaverbrook Collection of Art. <http://www.historymuseum.ca/blog/art-of-the-first-world-war/>



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February 11, 1918

Churchill Up Front With the Canadians



Winston visits Canadian Lines

Winston Churchill is Minister of Munitions in the British Cabinet. He is, however, not a member of the small War Cabinet that prime minister Lloyd George uses for rapid decision-making. As always, he is very keen to see everything.

Churchill is now in France, where he was invited by Field Marshal Haig to tour the front lines to get an idea of the great changes that took place since he was a Commanding Officer of an infantry unit, in 1915.

On 11 February 1918, Churchill is received by the Commander of the 3rd Canadian Division, **Major-General Louis James Lipsett**. Lipsett is a Welsh career officer of the British Army who was sent to Canada in 1911 and stayed with the CEF. Churchill was shown the new defensive tactics, with slanted barbed wire, advanced machinegun points and artillery well forward.

«I must frankly admit that all that I saw, both in the line and of the minutely perfected organization far to the rear, inspired me with confidence in the strength of the defensive system which had gradually developed as the war proceeded. Holding the convictions which this volume describes of the relative power of offence and defence under modern conditions, I looked forward, at least so far as this sector was concerned, to the day when the Germans would taste a measure of that bitter draught our armies had been made to drink so long. Alas the conditions here were by no means representative of the general state of the line.»¹

¹•Winston Churchill, World Crisis, Vol. III (Part 2), p. 390-1.



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February 12, 1918

The Frocks and the Brasshats Have It out



A bitter feud becomes constitutional

The relationship between the prime minister of Great Britain, David Lloyd George, and the Chief of the Imperial

General Staff (CIGS), **General William Robertson**, has never been cordial. «Wully» Robertson is a soldier who joined the ranks as a private and worked his way up by showing loyalty to the service as his primary quality. As CIGS, he was an unrepentant «Westerner», supporter of Haig against all comers, including the PM.

But the feud has just progressed to a lethal level. Robertson's comments against the prime minister's war plans, to allow a inter-allied strategic reserve to be put together by the Supreme War Council in Versailles, have been published by the renowned journalist Charles Repington of the *Morning Post*.

On 12 February 1918, the prime minister has to go to the Parliament and answer questions about the nature of the SWC and its authority over British forces in France. Former prime minister Henry Asquith, a fellow Liberal to Lloyd George, takes part in accusations that come from all quarters that this handover of control is unwarranted, and that political interference in military plans is dangerous.

Lloyd George is a superb debater and skilful politician. He wins the debate in the House of Commons and clears himself of underhanded scheming against Haig. He defends his constitutional political authority and lets it be known that a leak of War Plans by the staff in the newspapers is reprehensible.

— This spells the end of Robertson as CIGS. He will shortly get an offer that he can refuse...

●Lloyd George, Memoirs, V: 2804-11.



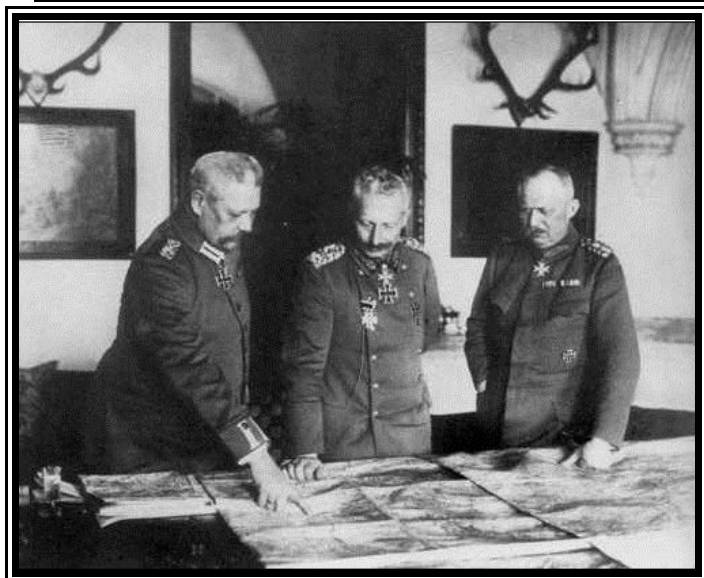
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February 13, 1918

Tôt, Vite et Fort!



***Kaiserschlacht* – Faites vos Jeux! – Dernière Chance!**

La planification continue pour la grande offensive allemande du printemps. C'est l'ultime opportunité de frapper avant l'arrivée en force des Américains.

C'est contre l'armée britannique que cette offensive doit être menée ; les stratèges allemands estiment qu'elle est sortie épuisée des quatre offensives meurtrières et infructueuses qu'elle a menées au cours de l'année 1917 : Arras, Messines, Passchendaele et Cambrai.

À la **mi-février 1918**, l'essentiel du transfert des divisions allemandes du front est vers la France est achevé.

Sur les 110 divisions placées en première ligne, 50 le sont face au front britannique, pourtant très étroit par rapport au secteur français.

L'offensive allemande a été baptisée avec emphase, la ***Kaiserschlacht***, la « Bataille de l'Empereur ».

Elle est composée de deux phases principales :

— la première doit frapper la Somme ; la seconde doit parachever la rupture en Flandre française.

Sources : ● <http://www.cheminsdememoire-nordpasdecals.fr/lhistoire/batailles/loffensive-allemande-du-printemps-1918-la-kaiserschlacht.html>

Pour en savoir plus : ● https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Offensive_du_Printemps



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February 14, 1918

Calling S.O.S. to All Boys of the Land



Calling on Boys to work the farms

With Conscription, the shortage of labour in the farms becomes more acute. There is a shortcoming of 64,000 workers across the country, at a time when exportation of food to Europe is of highest priority.

On 15 February 1918, the Federal Government holds a Federal-Provincial Conference on Agriculture to try to address labour shortages in the farms.

The conference results in a new program being implemented by the Department of Agriculture and its Canada Food Board, in cooperation with provinces. The program is **Soldiers of the Soil**. It is inspired by the United States program called Boys' Working Reserve.

Soldiers of the Soil seeks to transport boys from 15 to 19 years of age to areas where labour is more required, including across provincial boundaries.

Schools will release participating boys early in the spring.

●Djebabla-Brun, *Combattre avec les vivres*, Chap 2 - «Fight or Farm», p. 138-301, See p. 229-31.



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February 15, 1918

A Sideshow Worth the Ticket

General Smuts reports from Palestine

General Jan Smuts is the famous Boer leader who gave a hard time to the British forces in South Africa during the Boer War. He has become, since then, a British Imperialist and has fought at the head of the Imperial and African forces to defend the colonies of Africa until early 1916. A very clever tactician, he can ply his skill to political battles as well.

Smuts has recently been used in London as a member of the Cabinet to sort out the mess with Air Services. His recommendations have led to the creation of the Air Ministry and the upcoming amalgamation of the RFC and RNAS into the RAF.

On 15 February 1918, Smuts now reports from Palestine where he has been sent by Lloyd George to give a first-hand account of what the situation is and what the prospects are for 1918. Lloyd George is convinced that the Turks are the Achilles' heel of the German Alliance and that pushing against them in Palestine and beyond Aleppo in Syria will unsettle the Ottoman government in Constantinople and prompt it to accept a separate

peace. The negotiations in Brest Litovsk must be neutralised by a penetration of the Caucasus and early seizure of Muslim Russian provinces.

Despite the prospect of the German offensive in the spring in France, Lloyd George does not want to let go of the grip that he has on the Turkish throat.

●Lloyd George, Memoirs, VI: 3218.



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February 16, 1918

Haig looking at his Back rather than at his Front



British Conference at Doullens

Field Marshal Haig has called a conference for all his army commanders at the Hôtel de Ville of Doullens. He wants to coordinate the preparations for defence in the spring.

Despite the analysis provided by his new Chief of Intelligence Section at GHQ, Brigadier General Cox, saying that 50 of the 68 German divisions being seen to take positions in reserve for an attack are in front of the British sector, Haig believes that the German will attack on the French side. He foresees no particularly severe threat for the most southerly Fifth Army, which is at the point of junction with the French armies.

Haig maintains his own reserves more to the north, near Flanders, so as to be able to react if the Germans decide to attempt a push there.

Haig is coming back from London where he had discussions with the Secretary of War, Derby, and the Prime Minister. He was just offered the position of «Generalissimo» of all the British forces on all theatres.

Haig remembered that General Joffre had been «kicked upstairs» to such a post, where he was taken away from the day-to-day command of the French Front. Haig refused, objecting that he had to concentrate on the most important task at hand, with all his experience of this front.

—With his ally in London, Robertson, in deep trouble; the Versailles attempts to command him; and the German spring offensive obviously in preparatory progress, Haig is too busy looking at his back!

●Liddell Hart, History of the First World War, Chap 8; ●Lloyd George, Memoirs, Chap 77●Sheffield and Bourne, Haig, 381-2.



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Le 17 février, 1918

L'Art du Canon



Un chef d'orchestre expert des percussions

En février 1918 l'état-major général allemand s'évertue à préparer le plan de bataille le mieux conçu à date pour la grande «Offensive du Kaiser» du mois prochain. Toutes les leçons apprises de tous les fronts qui aient quelque portée que ce soit sur les opérations envisagées en France sont étudiées avec une méthode rigoureuse.

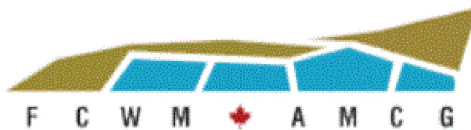
C'est ainsi que l'emploi des *Stosstruppen*, les troupes de choc, triées sur le volet et entraînées pour des opérations à haute mobilité, est favorisé par le développement de techniques d'appui pour les accompagner.

Ludendorff est allé chercher un chef d'orchestre hors pair dans l'alliance germanique, le **général d'artillerie Georg Bruchmüller**, pour coordonner la tempête qu'il entend déclencher autour de ses troupes d'assaut.

Bruchmüller, bien connu comme professeur dans le monde des artilleurs, a été particulièrement remarqué pour l'attaque qu'il a orchestrée à Riga, sur le front Est, et qui a largement été reconnue pour la démoralisation russe qui a précédé la révolution de mars 1917. Bruchmüller a grandement augmenté la sophistication des plans de feu par des minutages et des dispersions géographiques des canons très étudiées qui ont confondu l'ennemi.

— Il n'hésite pas à trouver réponses dans les calculs scientifiques de son collègue, le capitaine Erich Pulkowski, un mathématicien génial qui étudie la science du canon.

●Pitt, 1918, p. 64-5; ●Wikipedia, «Georg Bruchmüller».



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Le 18 février, 1918

Un Coup de poing sur la Table de Négotiation



Brest-Litovsk — L'opération « Coup de poing »¹

Depuis l'armistice de décembre, Trotsky négocie à Brest Litovsk, essayant de ménager la chèvre et le chou. Mais le **18 février 1918**, l'Allemagne, impatiente donne un coup de poing sur la table: elle rompt l'armistice et lance une offensive avec 53 divisions sur trois axes : au nord vers Pskov et Narva, au centre vers Minsk, au sud vers Kiev.

Les forces allemandes avanceront par chemin de fer, parcourant jusqu'à 500 km en deux semaines en rencontrant très peu de résistance. La seule contre-attaque notable sera menée le 23 février par le général Evgueni Iskritski : elle sera considérée comme la première opération de l'Armée Rouge et sera à l'origine de la fête soviétique du Jour du défenseur de la patrie.

Ce «Coup de poing», mené par les Empires centraux (Allemagne et Autriche-Hongrie) contre la République socialiste

fédérative soviétique de Russie, en rupture de l'armistice, aboutit à l'occupation des pays baltes, de la Biélorussie et de l'Ukraine, pertes qui seront reconnues par le régime soviétique lors du traité de Brest-Litovsk (le 3 mars 1918).

— Les subterfuges allemands pour 'libérer' ces états frontaliers ont un but commun: Réduire.

¹**Faustschlag**, parfois appelée « Guerre des Onze Jours » (février-mars 1918).

Sources : ●Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, p. 501-5;

●https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opération_Faustschlag



February 19, 1918

Civil Government to Prevail



Lloyd George's axe falls on Robertson

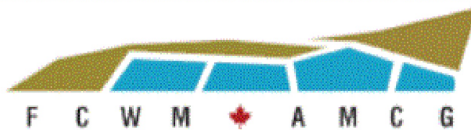
From the time that he became CIGS in December 1915, **General William R. Robertson** was at odds with David Lloyd George over the primacy of the Western Front and the War Office's unconditional support of Haig.

Robertson consistently opposed Lloyd George's 'sideshows' in Italy and the Balkans, and was angered by the Prime Minister's blatant attempts to undermine his position as CIGS, in particular with the move to place the British Expeditionary Force under French command.

Disagreement between the two men came to a head over the issues of the creation of the War Policy Committee (convened "to intimidate Robertson and Haig into changing their plans"¹) and the setting up of the Supreme War Council ("an ingenious device for depriving Robertson of his power."²) As CIGS, Robertson dug in his heels over the question of his authority vis-à-vis the SWC and was manoeuvred out by Lloyd George, (who claimed it caused him "the deepest regret"¹), learning of his 'resignation' in the press.

— He was replaced by Sir Henry Wilson and demoted to Home Command.

¹•Trevor Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of War*, p. 442-4, 532-547; ²•Gary Sheffield, *The Chief*, p. 262-4; ³•Lloyd George: *Memoirs*, V, p. 2823; •Liddell Hart, *History of the First World War*, p. 365.



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February 20, 1918

Money Trouble

Lawrence's Crisis of Confidence

In early 1918, **Major T.E. Lawrence** was attached to the Arab Northern Army, commanded by Prince Zeid bin Hussein. Lawrence supplied Zeid with a large amount of British money (£30,000) to win over local tribesmen as the campaign moved towards Jericho.

Zeid squandered the money on unreliable people and when Lawrence found out, the accumulated stresses of leading the Arab Revolt led him to a breakdown.

Lawrence appealed to General Allenby for a subordinate role; he was exhausted by what he called the fraudulence of "the pretence to lead the national uprising of another race....My will had gone and I feared to be alone...."

Allenby calmed Lawrence and involved him again in a new push in Palestine.

Lawrence later wrote:

– "There was no escape for me. I must take up again my mantle of fraud."

●T.E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, Chap 90; ●J. Wilson, Lawrence, 482-3.



T. E. Lawrence



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Le 21 février, 1918

L'Écrasement de Trotsky

Les débats atroces de Brest Litovsk

Trotsky a été impliqué dans les négociations pour un traité de paix entre les Puissances du Centre et la Russie depuis la mi-décembre 1917. Son espoir est que la révolution du prolétariat se répande aux pays de l'Europe, les empêchant de continuer le conflit. Le rêve des partis socialistes de tous les pays d'Europe, avant la guerre, était d'ailleurs que les travailleurs s'opposent, par une révolution massive, internationale, aux politiques nationales des régimes d'autorité. Mais la révolution socialiste n'a pas eu lieu et les travailleurs ont revêtu l'uniforme. Trotsky espère que l'exemple russe va entraîner ces socialistes à jeter leur uniforme.

Mais la facilité déconcertante avec laquelle l'Allemagne a repris les combats, il y a quelques jours, pour forcer sa main dans les négociations, démontre à tous les Bolshéviques qu'ils sont dans l'erreur de penser que la révolution prolétaire aura lieu et que l'Allemagne s'arrêtera dans sa conquête de l'Est. Puisque l'Armée russe a été démentelée et que les soldats sont retournés chez eux, rien ne peut arrêter les Allemands dans leur pénétration de la Russie.

À partir du **21 février 1918**, c'est donc à l'intérieur de la délégation russe que s'effectue le débat. Avec chaque heure qui passe, des villes et villages russes tombent aux mains des envahisseurs, sans résistance. De plus en plus de Bolshéviques veulent signer maintenant pour limiter les pertes.

La diplomatie est toujours une relations de pouvoir. Trotsky est un négociateur qui se voit maintenant écrasé par l'assymétrie de puissance.

●Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, p. 505.



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February 22nd, 1918

A Good Peace rather than a Quick Peace



A Good Peace for Germany

On 22 February 1918, Emperor Charles II of Austria visits Emperor Wilhelm II at Homburg, in the Saar, for a discussion of the Polish question.

Austria-Hungary had great ambitions to keep large parts of the old Polish Kingdom in its realm after the war, but Germany has maneuvered so as to ensure that Poland will fall under German domination.

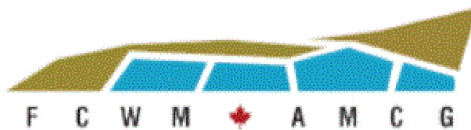
Austria-Hungary is now in such a state of weakness that Prince Charles is looking for just one thing: making sure that his Habsburg family survives as a Crown dynasty after the war. He recently came to the conclusion, following rejections of special terms by the Allies, that only a German victory will ensure Austrian continuity, although Wilhelm's Hohenzollern dynasty will dominate the resulting political landscape of Europe.

Wilhelm is receiving reports from Brest Litovsk and he is jubilating that the Russian delegation is now cornered by the recent advance of German troops into Russia proper. Frontier states are falling one after the other to become German protectorates, where resources will be plentiful to nourish war industries and force a victory in the west.

Wilhelm makes it clear that he does not want a quick peace, as Charles is hoping for, but a Good Peace, where Germany will be in position to dominate Mitteleuropa and establish a new World order.

He does not mind if it takes another two or three years of war.

•Fischer, Germany's Aim, p. 525.



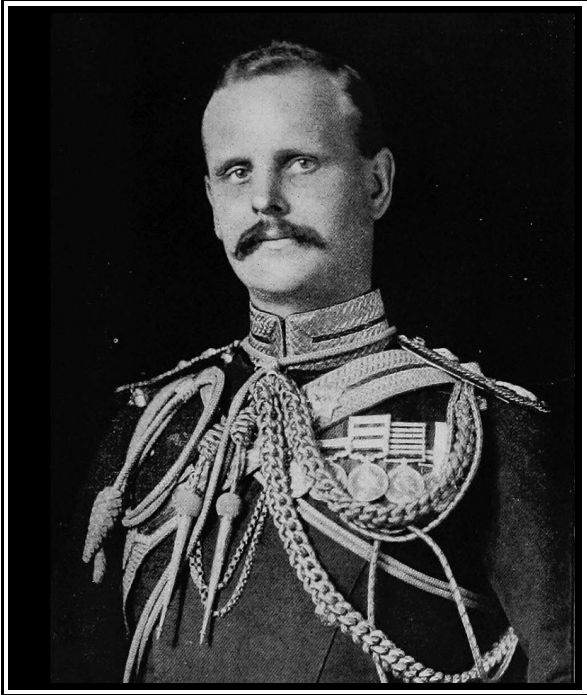
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Le 23 février, 1918

Les pièces britanniques sur l'échiquier de France



Birdwood à la Quatrième Armée

Les plans du premier ministre Lloyd George tombent en place malgré les efforts des autorités militaires britanniques en France.

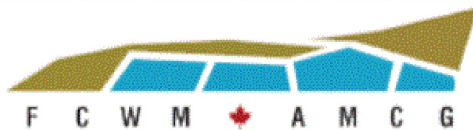
Le général Robertson a maintenant été remplacé comme chef de l'état-major impérial par le général Henry Wilson, qui a lui-même été suivi dans le poste de représentant militaire britannique au Conseil supérieur de Guerre de Versailles par le commandant de la Quatrième Armée, le général Henry Rawlinson. Pour le moment, c'est **le général William Birdwood** qui remplace temporairement Rawlinson à son armée.

Tous ces préparatifs visent à assurer que, malgré les décisions opérationnelles du général Haig, –que Lloyd George ne peut renverser, les défences en France soient supervisées de Versailles, de sorte que le gouvernement soit informé par une autre source que les rapports de Haig au War Office, auxquels le premier ministre fait peu confiance.

Depuis le traité de paix avec l'Ukraine, les Allemands effectuent des transferts de divisions vers la France par des trains incessants de personnel et matériel. Les plans de Ludendorff sont qu'il y aura 190 divisions sur le front Ouest vers la fin-mars, soit trois million et demie d'hommes. Soixante-neuf divisions feront face aux 35 divisions britanniques, dont certaines sont mal placées.

— Lloyd George a bien raison d'être inquiet de la cécité de Haig malgré le renseignement dont il dispose.

•Pitt, 1918, 63.



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Le 24 février, 1918

Déclaration d'Indépendance de l'Estonie



Estonie: Bolshéviques chassés

La révolution de février 1917 a permis un redécoupage administratif; l'Estonie a ainsi reçu ses frontières actuelles, ainsi que l'estonisation de l'enseignement et de l'administration.

Mais, le 21 février 1918, alors qu'il y a un armistice sur le front de l'est en prévision du Traité de Brest-Litovsk, les troupes allemandes reprennent l'offensive.

La délégation bolshévique, espérant une révolution en Allemagne, refusait en effet les conditions allemandes du traité, les trouvant trop humiliantes. Elle faisait traîner les pourparlers.

Durant la brève vacance du pouvoir en Estonie qui sépare le départ des Bolshéviques de l'arrivée des Allemands, le Comité de Salut Public, désigné le 19 février par le Comité des Anciens, proclame symboliquement, **le 24 février 1918**, l'indépendance de l'Estonie dans ses frontières historiques et ethnographiques.

L'Estonie devient elle aussi, au prix de ses ressources, un protectorat allemand soutiré aux Russes.

•Baumont, *La Faillite de la Paix* (1951), I: 94. Autres sources : <http://www.est-emb.fr/estonie/histoire/independance>
Pour en savoir plus : <http://www.cosmovisions.com/ChronoEstonie.htm>

February 25, 1918

From Fourteen Points to Four Principles



German Chancellor
Count Georg von Hertling

Germany Responds to Wilson's Four Principles

On January 8th, President Wilson addressed Congress to present his famous «Fourteen Points» for peace resolution.

On February 2nd, he further elaborated with his resounding «Four Principles»:

- 1 – Each part of the settlement must be based on the "essential justice" of the case.
- 2 – Peoples must not be bartered among states "as mere chattels."
- 3 – Territorial settlements must be in the interests of the concerned populations.
- 4 – All 'well-defined national aspirations' should be satisfied provided they will not stimulate discord.

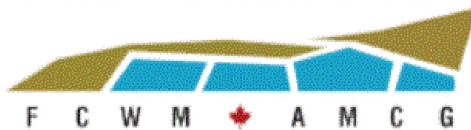
On **25 February 1918**, Chancellor Count von Hertling responds in the Reichstag.

Germany accepts the essence of these principles but so must all belligerents; the President should not just aim them at Germany.

Chancellor Von Hertling specifically mentions that Lloyd George's speeches are "thoroughly imperialistic" and that England seeks a peace "according to England's good pleasure."

— What about India, Egypt and Ireland?, asked the German Chancellor.

•Charles Horne (ed.), Source Records of the Great War, Vol 6. •Fischer, Germany's Aims in the First World War, 615-7.



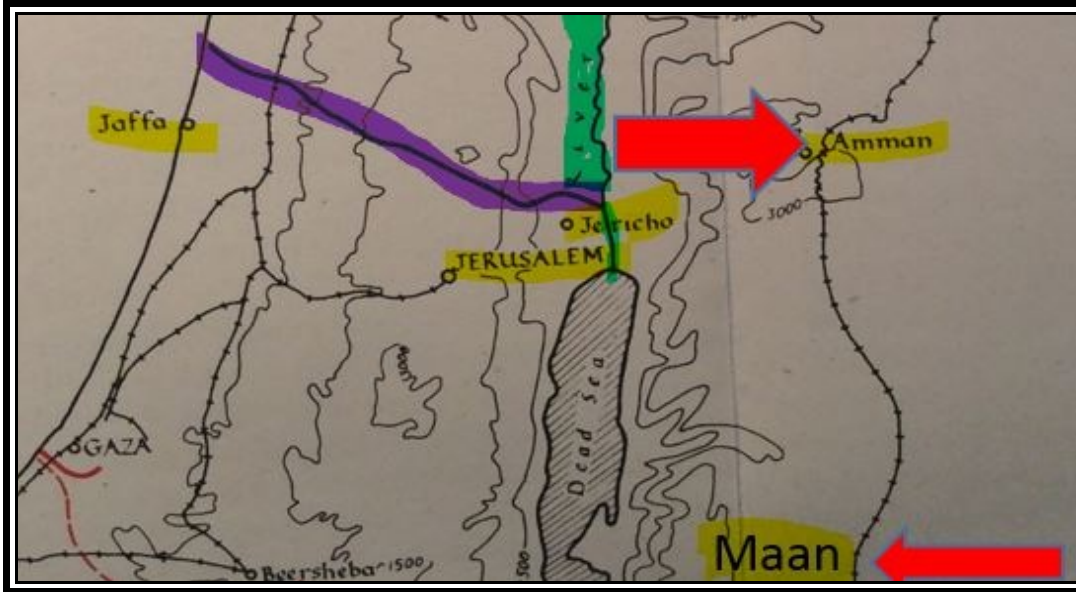
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February 26, 1918

A Jump from Jericho to Amman



Allenby Solidifies His Right Flank

In early February, Lloyd George instructed General Allenby to renew hostilities with the goal of delivering a decisive blow to the Ottoman Empire in Syria, and forcing it out of the war.

Allenby steadily extended the coastal logistical railway from Egypt and his troops are in good shape.

After the taking of Jericho, just north of Jerusalem, Allenby could dominate a solid line from Jaffa to the Jordan River.

He decides to attack in the east, up the Jordan Valley to take Amman, in order to neutralize the twenty thousand Turkish troops situated south of Amman and also to cut the Hejaz Railway to Maan and Medina, in the south, before opening his main campaign against Damascus.

On 26 February 1918, Lawrence is at Allenby's HQ for liaison with the Arab Army on the plan to attack Maan, and pin down that garrison while Allenby moves on Amman.

— Distances and weather make coordination difficult.

Further information: ●Rogan, The Fall of the Ottomans; ●Edmonds, A Short History of World War I (1951), 370ff, map p. 376.



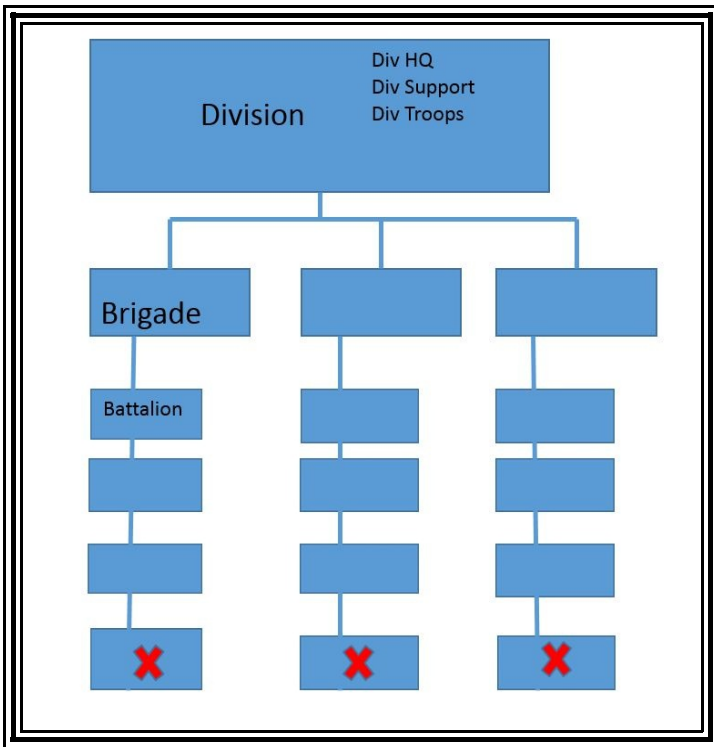
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February 27, 1918

Thinning the Red Line Some More



British army divisional reorganization completed

On **February 27th 1918** the reduction of infantry battalions in each division from 12 to 9 is completed as ordered, with the disbanding or redistribution of 145 battalions in all, despite protests from the Army Council.

It will drastically affect the fortunes of the Armies in France. Haig does not get his desperately needed reinforcements at the time that the British are taking over from the French an additional 50 miles of front.

Reorganization is not simply a matter of melding 3 infantry battalions into the other 9 battalions in each division; the number of effective or weak units varies from division to division. Nearly a quarter of battalions have to leave the division in which they have served for years and find a new accommodation with unfamiliar commanders, supporting artillery batteries and

engineer companies, and become accustomed to the operational and administrative procedures in their new division.

It is particularly fateful that a high proportion of disbanded and displaced infantry battalions belong to General Sir Hubert Gough's hapless Fifth Army.

●John Keegan: [The First World War](#), 395-6; ●Jeffery Williams: [Byng of Vimy](#), 213-4; ●[The Long, Long Trail](#)
<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/>



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Le 28 février, 1918 Thieffry, As Belge



Edmond Thieffry, considéré comme le premier grand as belge en 1917, fut le premier à atteindre 5 puis 10 victoires homologuées (dont trois lors d'une confrontation seul contre 9 avions ennemis).

Il est abattu en **février 1918** au-dessus des lignes ennemies.

Blessé lors du crash, il est capturé par les Allemands. Détenu en Allemagne il tentera à 6 reprises de s'évader (la dernière fois, il sera repris à quelques kilomètres de la frontière suisse), mais terminera la guerre en captivité.

Il est aussi connu pour avoir été l'auteur de l'un des premiers survols de Bruxelles occupée, le 24 janvier 1917, à bord d'un Nieuport 17, y jetant 4 drapeaux, un au-dessus de la cathédrale Saints-Michel-et-Gudule (centre-ville), un sur le Collège Saint-Michel et les derniers au-dessus de la maison de ses parents et celle de sa fiancée à Etterbeek.

Sources : <http://www.vieillestiges.be/fr/rememberbook/contents/50>



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