

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH STUDY

THE FIRST AUSTRIAN OFFENSIVE

THE JADAR CAMPAIGN

Covering the Operations from

August 12 to 25, 1914.

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INTRODUCTION.

After a series of events, too long to enumerate in this paper, (1) culminating in the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince at Sarajevo, on June 23, 1914, (2) Austria delivered an ultimatum to Serbia. This ultimatum was delivered on July 23rd, and granted Serbia only forty-eight hours for reply. The terms of this ultimatum required the virtual surrender of Serbian sovereignty. Serbia accepted the terms in the main, but requested that certain points be submitted to arbitration. (3)

This request was refused, and at 6:30 PM, July 25th, the Austrian Minister at Belgrade presented a note to the Serbian government informing it that the Serbian reply was unsatisfactory, and that Austria was severing diplomatic relations at once. (4)

Austria-Hungary mobilized her army immediately and declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. (5)

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- (1) MHW, Chap. I
 - (2) MHW, page 16
 - (3) MHW, page 17
 - (4) MHW, page 17
 - (5) MHW, page 17

MOBILIZATION AND CONCENTRATION

The mobilization of the opposing forces in the Balkan theater of operations proceeded in accordance with plans for offense and defense previously prepared by the Austria-Hungarian and Serbian staffs. (1) Austria-Hungary realized that the entrance of Russia into the conflict was almost a certainty, (2) and so the original plan for mobilization for a Balkan war was necessarily modified. (3)

Serbia, threatened by invasion from Austria, (4) and with the possibility of a Bulgarian invasion from the east (5) mobilized its entire army at once. (6) Montenegro, Serbia's tiny neighbor to the west, mobilized its entire force as well. The mobilization of these two started on July 20, 1914. (7)

A detailed statement of the initial mobilization, the plans of both sides made prior to the war, and a study of the military geography of this theater, have been omitted. These subjects will be found in detail in Individual Research Study No. 51, 1934, prepared by Captain R. G. Lehman, Infantry.

OPERATIONS

Lieutenant General Potiorek, commander-in-chief of the Austrian Balkan forces, (8) submitted his plan, including his scheme of maneuver, to the Chief of the Austrian General Staff, on August 4, 1914. (9) He intended to attack on the lower Drina, on 12 August, in the direction of Valjevo, (10) expecting to have his Fifth Army (Lieut. Gen von Frank) (11) reach the neighborhood of that town by 15 August. That day, or the day following, he expected to have the Sixth Army (Lieut. Gen. Potiorek) (12)

in position to make a concentric attack on Ushitsa, sending the

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| (1) AHLW, pages 64-49 | (7) AHLW, pages 73-74 |
| (2) AHLW, page 69 | (8) AHLW, page 26 |
| (3) AHLW, page 66 | (9) OD, page 13 |
| (4) AHLW, pages 64-69 | (10) AHLW, page 13 |
| (5) OD, page 13 | (11) AHLW, page 26 |
| (6) AHLW, page 70-73 | (12) AHLW, page 29 |

XVI Corps (Lieut. Gen. Wurm) (1), in two columns from Potchva on Plevlie, and the XV Corps (Lieut. Gen. von Appel) (2), in two columns from Visegrad. (3) He confirmed this plan by letter on 12 August. (4) (For distribution of forces and plan, see Map A.)

Realizing that the bulk of the Second Army (Lieut. Gen. Bohm-Ermolli) (5) would commence its entrainment for Galicia on 18 August, he intended to use this force to make a demonstration on the lower Save and the Danube, which he expected would hold the main Serbian forces away from the Drina until 20 August, at the very least. (6) By this time he expected to have reached the line: Ushitsa-Valjevo, following this up with an advance into the heart of Serbia. (7) By this he hoped to help bring Bulgaria into the conflict on the side of Austria. (8)

The offensive commenced on the night of 11-12 August, with demonstrations by the Second Army, which consisted of a crossing of its IV Corps at Chabats, and artillery bombardments along the rest of the front. (9) The 62d Brigade of the IV Corps entered ⁵Chabats² without resistance, the Serbs not reacting until the following day, when sharp fighting took place at the edge of the town. (10)

Two days later, the 62d Brigade was relieved by the 29th Division (Maj. Gen. Count Zedtwets) (11), of the IX Corps (Lieut. Gen. von Horstein) (12), which was ordered to cover the building of a bridge. This division was attacked violently by the Serbs, and thrown back in some confusion. The corps commander, General von Horstein, completely lost his head, and fled back across the river. (13) The Austrians retained Chabats only on account of the timely arrival of reinforcements. (14)

(1) AHLW, page 29
(2) AHLW, page 29
(3) CD, page 13
(4) CD, page 13
(5) AHLW, page 31

(6) CD, page 13
(7) CD, page 14
(8) CD, page 15
(9) CD, page 14

(10) CD, page 15
(11) AHLW, page 32
(12) AHLW, page 32
(13) CD, page 14
(14) CD, page 14

On the morning of the 12th, three columns of the Fifth Army began crossing the Drina River. The XIII Corps (Lieut. Gen. von Rnemen)(1), crossing in two columns, the 42nd Division (Maj. Gen. von Sarkotic)(2), at Zvornik, the 36th Division (Maj. Gen. Osibulka)(3), at Batar. The VIII Corps (Lieut. Gen. Baron von Geislingen)(4), crossed its 9th Division (Maj. Gen. von Scheuchonstuel)(5), at Almajije, just to the north of Lesnitsa. The three advance guards were to gain a foot-hold on the east bank of the river, and by night-fall they were solidly established. (6)

The fighting on 13 August was much harder, and the XIII Corps spent the day in completing its crossing and preparing to attack the heights to the east on the following day. (7) In the VIII Corps, the 9th Division organized itself in front of the Tser ridge, while the 21st Division (Maj. Gen. Przyborski)(8), had advanced about four kilometers from the river, in the Watchva valley, north of the Tser, by nightfall. (9)

During this time, on the Serbian side, the covering forces of the Third Army (Gen. Jurisic-Sturm)(10), and the frontier guard battalions had been the only ones engaged. But by the afternoon of 12 August, there was no longer any doubt that the enemy was present in considerable strength and so General Jurisic took steps to reinforce his advanced elements. He sent his divisional cavalry to Chabats, together with the 17th Infantry, of the 1st Drina Division; the remainder of that division being sent to the Lesnitsa-Losnitsa front. (11)

The Chief of Staff, Marshal Putnik, also arranged to cover his left (12). The Second Army (Gen. Stepanovic)(13), was concentrated around Oub, where it was to be held in readiness until the direction of advance of the enemy's main effort could be determined.

From Oub and Kotselievo, he sent the 1st Choumadia Div-

(1) AHLW, page 28	(5) AHLW, page 26	(10) AHLW, Annex 7
(2) AHLW, page 28	(6) OD, page 14	(11) OD, page 16
(3) AHLW, page 28	(7) CD, page 14	(12) AHLW, Annex 7
(4) AHLW, page 26	(8) AHLW, page 28	(13) AHLW, Annex 7
	(9) CD, page 16	

ision towards Chabats. The squadrons of independent cavalry were relieved from their mission of guarding the lower Morava River and its tributaries, and were placed at the disposition of the Second Army at Oub. The remainder of the covering forces were to continue their surveillance on the Save and at Obrenovatz. Behind the Second Army, the First Army (Gen. Bojovic) (1), was to establish itself on the line: Arandjelova-Lazarevatz, which had previously been occupied by the Second, abandoning the Morava River so as to get closer to the Kolu-bara. (2)

Marshal Putnik did not limit himself to defensive measures only. The reports from Ushitsa, showed him that the Austrians were not exerting much pressure against the Ushitsa detachment (Gen. Bozanovic) (3). Consequently he ordered that force to take the offensive in the direction of Visegrad. (4)

All of those movements were ordered during the afternoon of 12 August, and took all of the 13th, and part of the 14th to be completed. The reinforcements for the Third Army were being assembled, and had some sixty or more kilometers to march from Valjevo to the Drina, but they were en route. (5)

On the heights overlooking the Drina from the east, the covering detachments were forced to retire. Resisting stubbornly their retirement was very slow. (6) Near Zvornik, a half battalion, having all of one division before it, was in a very precarious position. (7). On the extreme right, the 1st Choumadia Division, by a forced march, reached Kotsselevo by noon of 13 August, with the intention of continuing on to Chabats. It had the 17th Regiment ahead of it. (8)

On 14 August there was considerable movement of forces. At Chabats, the fighting became very lively. The Austrians advanced from the outskirts of the town, early in the morning, but the 17th Regiment (Serb) arriving there, attacked, and drove them back to their lines of departure. (9)

(1) A.H.L.W., Annex 7

(4) C.D., page 16

(7) C.D., page 16

(2) C.D., page 16

(5) C.D., page 16

(8) C.D., page 16

(3) A.H.L.W., Annex 7

(6) C.D., page 16

(9) C.D., page 17

On the Drina, the defenders of the river retired gradually, and with discretion, their reinforcements not having arrived. The retirement was forced in the right sector; on the north of the Tser, and along the north bank near Lesnitsa. The Austrians advanced in strength, and by 9 o'clock had taken Vedoicovitsa, and intrenched themselves. That point established, an Austrian column was sent up the Jadar valley, and by evening had entered Losnitsa. (1)

The advance of the Austrians was very slow and deliberate. While the terrain was rough, and difficult to capture, the Austrians had a great preponderance of strength in their favor in this sector. (2) They had a river-crossing to negotiate as well, but it seems that they should have made it with greater facility. (3) It also appears that the Austrians had some difficulty with their supply after crossing the river. (4) Considerable difficulty was also experienced in maintaining contact between the two corps of the Fifth Army, and also between the columns near Lesnitsa and in the Jadar valley. (5)

The VIII Corps had arranged to attack, but the XIII Corps waited in vain until 10 o'clock. Finally, at 11 o'clock, taking into consideration the apparent weakness of the Serbian forces, and knowing of no reinforcements coming to their aid, General von Rhemen gave the order for the XIII Corps to attack. (6)

It took until 6 o'clock that evening before his troops penetrated to Losnitsa, and there installed themselves for the night. Under cover of darkness, the Serbians made a counter-attack, but were driven off. Falling back before the superior enemy, they commenced their retirement up the Jadar valley. (7)

The Austrian column from Zvornik, the 42nd Division, advanced more rapidly. It came upon a half battalion of the enemy which tried to block its path, and destroyed it. After this the way was entirely clear, and it started towards Krupanj.

There it menaced the Serbian army of General Jurisic, whose

(1) CD, page 17
(2) CD, page 17
(3) TT, page 29
(4) TT, page 39

(5) CD, page 17
(6) CD, page 17
(7) CD, page 17

forces were either engaged or about to be. (1) This division was directly on his flank, in position to threaten his communications from Zlavaka and the valley of the Jadar. (2)

At this time, on the northern front, except in the region of Chabats, there was nothing going on that was particularly upsetting to the Serbs. Marshal Putnik determined to over-run it with a strong attack. However, on the 14th, a new long column was discovered advancing towards the left flank. (3) This was the Austrian 29th Division, (4) moving from north to south across the plain. Serbian G.H.Q. sent an order to the 1st Ohounadia Division to take up the defensive, in this sector, for the time being. (5) The Second Army did not stop at Oub, but continued toward the west, to connect up with the Third. Its mission, among other things, was to stop the advance of the enemy coming from the Save at Chabats. (6)

One division of the First Army was charged with protecting the communications to Oub. The other two divisions were sent to Valjevo, where they completed their defensive dispositions, and where they formed themselves in echelon behind the left of the Third Army. Entrenched upon the heights west of the town, these divisions formed a pivot on which the Third and Second Armies could support themselves against the enemy forces on the Drina and on the Save. (7)

The Austrians spent the day of the 15th in preparation for a continuation of the advance; the Serbian covering forces, which before had retired on the Tser and on the Yverak, renewed their resistance, and a general engagement was imminent. (8) An advance was to be made by the Austrians along the entire front, beginning the next morning. All columns were to advance in accordance with the previously ordered plans, and it was expected that the line: Chabats- Tokeris- Ushitsa, would be reached, in preparation for the continuation of the invasion into the heart of the country. (9)

(1) OD, page 17
(2) OD, page 17
(3) OD, page 17
(4) TT, page 24
(5) TT, page 24

(6) OD, page 17
(7) OD, page 17
(8) OD, page 17
(9) OD, page 14

That day, on the Serbian side, one finds the following situation: At Chabats, stationary; with the 1st Choumadia Division within about ten kilometers of that town, in a defensive position behind the Dobrava, and somewhat to the east. (1) Its patrols had discovered enemy elements advancing in the Matchva plain, and below the Tser. (2) This division was afraid that if it continued on Chabats, it would expose its left. Behind the Dobrava, it could wait for reinforcements expected from the Second Army. The 17th Regiment of Infantry was on its right, on the lower part of the river, almost to the Save. (3)

On the banks of the Drina, a junction was made during the night of 14-15 August, between the covering forces and the main body of the 1st Drina Division, which had come down the valleys of the Jadar and on Lesnitsa. (4) The early morning of the 15th was spent by these troops in organizing their position. The hill with the church in Yarebitsa constituted a central supporting point, and the front extended from there to Tekeria, on the right, and to the southeast to Lavlaka, on the left. (5)

This division was extended over a front of from 20 to 25 kilometers, which was out of all proportion for the reduced effectives of the Third Army, part of which was at Chabats. The front was "in the air", the right exposed to the advancing enemy on the Tser, and the left to those advancing from Krupanj. (6)

Late in the afternoon of the 15th, the two wings were forced back by this double pressure, the left particularly. A spirited attack was made against them at about 4 PM, and they were compelled to fall back to the ridge above the Jadar. (7) The engagement was not so lively along the rest of the front, but it was certain to Serbian G. H. Q., which had moved to Oub, that the enemy had grouped his forces from the Tser Ridge to Krupanj, and that a decisive action was imminent. (8)

(1) CD, page 17
(2) CD, page 17
(3) OD, page 17
(4) OD, page 17

(5) CD, page 17
(6) CD, page 17
(7) CD, page 17
(8) OD, page 19

Proceeding under the old plan, filling it out and modifying it on certain points, Marshal Putnik issued the following instructions: (1)

The Third Army would continue its obstinate resistance, the Second Army passing to the offensive on the right. (2)

The independent cavalry was to advance to the line: Kotse-lievo- Draguigna, passing to the left of the 1st Choumadia Division, and go to clear up the situation on the Matchva. It was to attack on the flank of the enemy seen along the Tser, and if possible, in their rear, and seize the railway from Chabats to Loanitsa. (3)

Close to the Third Army, and joining it on the right, the Second Army would send two divisions, by a forced march. They were to attack toward the Tser and the Yverak, during which the Third Army would maintain itself on the Jadar. (4)

The principal changes from the previous instructions concerned the First Army, and through it, the Third, which was to take over the former's mission. G. H. Q. did not disregard the banks of the Save, where, if an offensive came from Obrenovats, and reached the Kolubara, all of his (Putnik's) plans would undergo the risk of falling through. (5) The division from the First Army that he had sent to Cub, was to stay there, the other two to assemble at Lazaravats, leaving the Third Army to cover Valjevo. (6) The general plan remained the same but the offensive was to be made by the Second Army, the Third taking over the mission of the First, holding the pivot of the attack. (7)

Upon completion of the preparatory movement the distribution of the Serbian Divisions was as follows:

On the extreme right, behind the Dobrava, the 1st Choumadia Division, with the 17th Infantry on its flank. This force would hold by fortifying itself strongly, and cover the Second Army from surprise from the direction of Chabats. (8) Ahead of the infantry on the right, was the independent cavalry, exploring in the Matchva. (9)

(1) CD, page 19
(2) CD, page 19
(3) CD, page 18
(4) CD, page 18

(5) CD, page 16
(6) CD, page 19
(7) CD, page 19
(8) CD, page 19
(9) CD, page 19

Near Zekeria, was the combined division, which was to attack on the Tser ridge, and the left of the 1st Korava Division, directed to attack toward Yverak. On the Judar, somewhat up the river from Yarebitsa, was a force consisting of the two Drina divisions, less the 17th Infantry, with its left on the south bank of the stream, facing Krupanj. (1) In all, including the cavalry, there were six divisions and a few battalions of the 3rd Ban. (2)

Behind this front, which extended 36 kilometers from the Save to Yarebitsa, and about 15 kilometers further to its extreme left flank, there were three divisions in reserve. At Oub, the 1st Timok; at Lazarevate, the 2nd Korava and the 2nd Timok. (3) The 1st and 2nd Danube Divisions were still in the Belgrad group. In the Ushitsa army, facing Visegrad, there was no change. (4)

On the Austrian side, the latest plans had the Fifth Army preparing to carry out its offensive mission, strengthening the south flank, where the 42nd Division had made good progress. A new column, composed of the 11th and 13th Mountain Brigades, received orders to march from Lioubovia on Patzka, and further to the east where it would extend the right of the front. It was supposed to reach its position by the evening of 16 August. (5) But contrary to appearances, it is not on this flank, but on the opposite one that the first decisive action would take place. (6)

The Serbian independent cavalry had reconnoitered the enemy, which north of the Tser, was interfering with the advance of the 1st Choumadia Division. It was found to be the Austrian 21st Chasseur Division, and also that it was the exterior column of the VIII Corps. The Serbian squadrons reached Zelerika, Tscouvitch, and Dobritch during the morning of 16 August. They engaged and stopped the advance of the Austrian division. (7)

That afternoon, the 1st Choumadia Division arrived to the rescue of the cavalry, following a forced march, and attacked at once, throwing the Austrians in to a panic. The Austrians

(1) CD, page 20
(2) CD, page 20
(3) CD, page 20
(4) CD, page 20

(5) CD, page 20
(6) CD, page 20
(7) CD, page 20

retreated in disorder, three regiments running away and back across the Drina. Austrian accounts state that the division was not properly covered, the officers were careless, and that the soldiers scattered in all directions. (1)

That night the remainder of the division recrossed the Drina. With a loss of some 3000, the 21st Division reorganized the following day, on the Bosnian side. (2) Serbian accounts state that the pursuit was continued close to Lesnitsa, and that 6 guns, 20 caissons, numerous rifles and other material were captured. (3)

That same night, the 16th, the Austrian G. H. Q. (4) moved from Vienna to Przemysl, where it arrived on the 17th. Prior to its departure, dispatches from the Serbian front had created a very favorable impression, particularly those of 15 August. Potiorek declared that he had started the offensive of his Sixth Army, and had reached the line: Chabats-Tekovas, on the Serbian side. (5)

On the 16th, up to the hour of departure, the news was still not bad. A dispatch from Potiorek renewed his previous request that the Second Army continue its demonstrations in force on its front. (6) This request seemed reasonable and Marshal Conrad telegraphed to the Second Army, "At the request of General Potiorek, I renew my instructions relative to the demonstrations on all your front, to the end of concealing the departure of the army, and to hold the enemy in the positions he now occupies" (7)

At the hour of sending that telegram, on the morning of the 16th, the latest information from the Balkan armies announced the defeat of two Serbian divisions at Chabats, with the help of the 62nd Brigade of the IV Corps, and the 29th Division. (8)

(1) CD, page 20
(2) CD, page 20
(3) CD, page 20
(4) CD, page 21

(5) CD, page 21
(6) CD, page 21
(7) CD, page 21
(8) CD, page 21

Following this, a series of reports were received from Potiorek which showed a more serious situation on the Serbian front. Potiorek reported the reverses already sustained, and demanded that the Second Army be left with him, and that it be ordered to take the offensive, so as to prevent the Serbian campaign from becoming a failure. (1)

This placed G. H. C. in a quandary. Conrad, the Austrian Chief of Staff, realizing the danger, did not wish to have the Second Army become involved in the battles on the Save and the Danube, when the main theater of operations was so much in need of its help. At the same time, he desired to gain a victory over Serbia, which would probably lead to the alliance of Turkey and Bulgaria with the central Empires, and prevent Rumania from joining their enemies. (2)

Balancing these thoughts, he finally sent a telegram to the Second Army, which was repeated to the Fifth and Sixth, directing it to use the IV Corps towards Chabats, if such intervention was required to bring about a victorious conclusion to the operation as a whole. (3)

Last night, the situation on the Balkan front was as follows: the Sixth Army was making slow progress, the Fifth Army stopped, with a serious reverse to its north flank, and the Second Army about to be needed to protect and save the Fifth. Conrad, puzzled, finally decided to leave the IV Corps with the Balkan forces, move the remainder of the Second Army in accordance with the previous plan, have the Sixth Army disengage the Fifth, and have Potiorek so conduct the campaign as to prevent the Serbians from invading Austrian territory. (4)

Returning now to the field of battle on the Tser. In the region of Tokeria, the action has been less favorable for the Serbs there than on the plain. The combined division arrived there first, during the night of the 15th, after a forced march. They arrived to the north of the town, and came in contact with the advanced elements of the Austrian 9th Division. (5)

(1) CD, page 21

(3) CD, page 21

(5) CD, page 22

(2) CD, page 21

(4) CD, page 21-22

Attacking these columns vigorously, on the morning of the 16th, the combined Division drove everything before it. But, shortly after, a shortage of ammunition, and a violent artillery fire from the Austrians, accompanied by a vigorous attack, compelled the combined division to withdraw. But the Austrians did not follow up their advantage. The 1st Morava Division, arriving to the south of Tzerak, to the left of the combined division, retreating up the Yzerak, made it possible for the latter to reorganize without difficulty. (1)

During the first day of the battle, the Serbians perceived that the main effort of the enemy endangered their left flank. On the Sodar, especially on the right bank, the fighting continued around Yarebitse all day. It was almost stationary and indecisive in character, although on the south bank the Austrian 36th Division continued its advance, assisting the 42nd Division. Nevertheless, toward 1:00 PM, constant counterattacks held up their advance. (2)

The Serbs commenced to waver during the afternoon, the reduced effectives of the Third Army being insufficient to stand up against the pressure to the front, and that of the 42nd Division between Krupanj and Zavlaka. At nightfall, the Serbian left wing withdrew up the Sodar, under cover of darkness. (3)

General Juricic found that he was confronted by a difficult task, which was fully appreciated by the Serbian G. H. Q. He had sent the 1st Timok Division to Veliki-Bosniak, close to Draguigna, with the intention of sending one of its regiments to the Third Army. The 2nd Morava, of the two that were in reserve at Lazarevats, was ordered to return to Valjevo. (4) But the march was long, and the division could not arrive there before the morning of the 16th. Nevertheless, General Juricic decided to continue with the forces at hand. Fortunately, the enemy attacks of the 17th were not so vigorous as on the 16th, and it was on the Tser where the most serious engagements occurred. (5)

(1) CD, page 23

(3) CD, page 23

(5) CD, page 23

(2) CD, page 23

(4) CD, page 23

The combined division renewed its attack, but under better conditions than previously. It had made contact with the 1st Morava Division, which also attacked at daylight against the enemy deployed on the Yverak, and gained ground. At the same time the combined division gained some ground on the Tser. (1) Here it suspended its attack for the day, although the action continued with more or less success along the entire Tser- Yverak front, but nightfall found the Serbians slightly withdrawn. (2)

In the Matchva region, the 1st Choumadia Division did not press the pursuit of its defeated enemy, leaving it to the cavalry to cut the routes to Lesnitsa and the Tser. The division itself, was returning to the vicinity of Chabats, from which danger continued to threaten. (3)

The 18th did not bring the situation any closer to solution. (For the situation on 18 August, see Appendix 2, Special Map B) The Austrians renewed the attack on all fronts, from the Tser to just west of Petzka, where the two mountain brigades previously mentioned, entered the battle. These were stopped by the 2nd Morava Division, which attacked upon its arrival from Lazarevats. Although the Austrians advanced somewhat, their advance was limited, and on no part of the front did they achieve any but very limited success. As the day drew along, the Serbians had the impression that their enemy had weakened. (4)

However, the Serbs had also suffered a reverse in the region of Chabats. The 1st Choumadia Division had experienced a serious set-back, being forced to retire before a much superior force. This was the Austrian IV Corps, which had recrossed the Save, following the authorization from Przemysl, previously mentioned, and had attacked south from the town. The Serbian division, outnumbered, did not intend to be destroyed, but withdrew about 10 kilometers to the south, to the hills of Slatina-Varna. There it was in a much better location to cover the approaches to Kotselievo and the roads giving access to the Tser. The cavalry covered its left. (5)

(1) CD, page 23

(3) CD, page 24

(5) CD, page 25

(2) CD, page 24

(4) CD, page 24

At daylight of the 19th, the 1st Choumadia identified seven regiments that the enemy had deployed against it, and attacked along its entire front. The 1st Choumadia Division was being attacked by two divisions, with many guns. It was too much for it, so the Serbian division withdrew and established itself behind the Dobrava River. (1)

However, at that time, on the Tser, the balance turned in favor of the Serbs. For the third time, the combined division passed to the offensive. This third attack was important. The Austrian left gave ground and did not stop. Shortly afterwards, the right of the Austrian 9th Division was retreating, close to Lesnitsa. The retreat was decisive, and by nightfall the Serbians reached the Drina Valley, from the heights of Voyendenitsa to the town of Lesnitsa on the Jadar. The victors gathered in 20 guns, 39 caissons, and about a hundred wagons filled with various material. (2)

The same afternoon, the Austrian 36th Division started to withdraw, but more slowly and with less disorder. In the morning, the 1st Morava Division had started its attack. Its information indicated the enemy to be in strength at Zavlaka, and it engaged their left. At about this time, General Stepanovic received the 1st Timok Division, which had been sent to reinforce him. He ordered it to the region of Tekeris, giving it the line south of that town in the direction of Badanja. (3) This protected the left of the 1st Morava Division and relieved the pressure upon the Third Army, more than had the attack of the Second Army further to the north. (4)

During this time, the fighting had been more or less stationary on the front of the Third Army. Its mission of covering the attack of the Second Army was well performed. It protected the Second Army against the Austrians from Evornik and Moubovia, and co-operated absolutely with the plan of battle. (5)

(1) CD, page 24

(3) CD, page 25

(5) CD, page 25

(2) CD, page 24,25

(4) CD, page 25

On the right wing, Marshal Putnik seen the danger of a severe reverse, on the 19th started the 2nd Timok Division to the assistance of the 1st Choumadia Division and the independent cavalry, on the Dobrava. This division had been in reserve at Cut, as previously stated. Putnik also strengthened the detachment at Obronovats with a regiment from the Belgrad group, to prevent any possible attack near the mouth of the Kolubara River. (1)

The fighting of the 20th was a continuation, more or less, of that of the 19th, with nothing decisive in its nature. The 21st, however, saw the Serbian victory complete. As before, the Second Army attacked along the Drina, against the rear guards of the enemy, which covered the withdrawal of the main body across the river. On the extreme right, the 1st Choumadia Division was still held on the Dobrava on account of its limited forces. But on the 21st, after being reinforced by the 2nd Timok Division, General Boyovic recrossed the Dobrava. On the left, the Third Army, observing the enemy withdrawing from before it, advanced from its positions, and started in pursuit. The heads of its columns reached Zvornik and Lioubovia during the day. (2)

That night the battle was practically over, from the outskirts of Chabats and on the Drina. To the south, towards Visegrad, the situation remained unchanged. (3)

During all of this time, a series of reports, telegrams, requests and recriminations had been passing between Potiorek and the Austrian G. H. Q. at Przemysl. (4) This controversy finally had to be settled by the Emperor Franz Josef, at Vienna. (5)

This resulted in Potiorek being placed in supreme command in the Balkan theater, with instructions to take the action necessary to prevent the invasion of Austrian territory and guarantee the line of the Danube and the Save. The IV. Corps was transferred to the Russian front, leaving Potiorek the Fifth and Sixth Armies, and certain garrison troops. (6) He withdrew all of his mobile forces across the rivers from which they had come, but retained in his mind the idea of the eventual conquest of Serbia. (7)

(1) CD, page 25

(3) CD, page 26

(6) CD, page 26

(2) CD, page 25-26

(4) CD, page 27-28

(7) CD, page 26

(5) CD, page 26

CONCLUSIONS

That small covering forces, ably led, can by a combination of combat and maneuver, check greatly superior forces sufficiently to allow the main forces to get into position to strike a decisive blow.

That surprise, once gained, must be followed up promptly. The Austrians lost their initial advantage by their deliberate, even dilatory movements after gaining the initiative after crossing the Serbian frontier.

That the high command must evaluate information received from the covering forces, and other reconnaissance agencies quickly, and act promptly, without wasting time in preliminary maneuvers. The Serbian G. H. Q. acted vigorously, used to good advantage all of their available reconnaissance agencies, determined the main effort of the Austrians without undue delay, and then massed their forces for the counteroffensive which was to drive back the Austrian invader.

That an effective, and probably the best, method of defense is to absorb the initial shock of an invasion with relatively weak covering forces, meanwhile holding the main forces centrally located for the decisive counterstroke.

That while the Austrians had their Second Army available, only a minor portion of it was actually used in the offensive. While it is true that the Austrian G.H.Q. planned to use this force in a different theater, it should have been used as a whole, and not in piece-meal fashion, for the time it was engaged.

It is believed that the Austrian G. H. Q. considerably underestimated the strength and effectiveness of the Serbian army. Otherwise it is difficult to see why the Austrians undertook to invade Serbia with insufficient means. Surely, the political and strategical value of administering a crushing defeat to Serbia promptly, should have shown Austria the necessity of employing sufficient strength to accomplish the desired results. The defeat of the initial offensive was to cost the Austrians a great deal later. A portion of the later effort expended initially would have saved greatly in men and material later in the war. One is forced to the conclusion that it is folly to under-rate an enemy, and to attempt an offensive with insufficient means to carry it to a successful end, barring unforeseen and accidental contingencies.

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The foregoing is an account of the first Allied victory of the World War, the importance of which has been literally drowned out by the thunder of the guns of Tannenberg and the first battle of the Marne, as well as the long years of terrific combat preceding the Armistice. Through all of the limited sources available, one catches some glimmerings of the leadership and military genius of the Serbian Chief-of-Staff, Marshal Putnik. It is with regret that I am compelled to close this study without including a detailed account of this outstanding personality.

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*This bibliography
(with comments) will
be useful in con-
nection with further
studies of the Jadar
campaign.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Austria-Hungary's Last War, 1914-1918, Volume I. (translation by Army War College, 1933) M 9403 E 4 E 436

Excellent source material, being a translation from official records, as incorporated in "Osterreich-Ungarns Letzter Krieg, 1914-1918". Includes only the initial plans and mobilization of the two armies. The work from which the translation was made is in German, and should be one of the best sources of material, particularly from the Austrian standpoint, especially for one able to read German. As I do not, I was unable to obtain any information from the work itself, but found the translations of extracts very interesting and instructive.

Military History of the World War, Volume I. By- C. R. Howland M 9403 E 3 C .73

Very few facts concerning this campaign. Of no particular value to this study except as a catalogue of events.

Les Campagnes de Serbie en 1914 et 1915. - By - Foyler M9403 J49-8 pages 13-26.

An excellent narrative of events of the campaigns in question. Based upon authentic material obtained from official records and other sources. Is believed to be one of the best sources now available in the C & G S B Library, and is relatively impartial.

Les Victoires Serbes en 1914. By- Des Vazes and Nagumovitch. M 9403 J 49 S.4 (This has been translated by Captain J. C. Farbox, Infantry.)

Excellent material. However, it was not available to me until very late in my research. The translation is perhaps the best available material in English. Gives a good, detailed description of the battle of the Jadar, and other battles in Serbia in 1914.

History of the World War. By Francis A. March M 9403 E 3 C .73
page 62.

Only a reference to the declaration of war by Austria on Serbia, July 28, 1914. Preceding this is an analysis of the underlying causes of the war. Nothing of interest as far as this paper is concerned.

A Reference History of the War. By- Irwin Scofield Guernsey M 9403
E 3 C .73

Merely a catalogue of events of the World War.

Literary Digest History of the World War. By- Francis Whiting Halsey
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Has only a slight reference to the battle of the Jadar River. Of no particular value.

Harper's Pictorial Library of the World War. Harper and Brothers,
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A mere reference to the fact that there was a battle of the Jadar River, and to the first Serbian victories.

Nelson's History of the War. By- Buchan M 9403 E 3 D .42

Very short account of the initial Serbian campaigns. Not particularly valuable, as it is too general.

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Valuable as a general outline of the Serbian campaigns, limited though authentic material.

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A short reference to the first Austrian campaign.
Many page follow giving the accounts of Austrian atrocities.
Of no particular for my purpose.

Osterreich-Ungarns Letzter Krieg, 1914- 1918 (In German)
Volume I M 9403 E 4 E .436

Probably one of the best sources of material,
particularly to one reading German. As I am unable to
do so, was unable to utilize this source, although the
translation of certain extracts from this work, previously
referred to, was referred to insofar as applicable.

The Slavs of the War Zone. By- W.F.Baily M 9496

Of no value to a study of the campaign. A
description of the characteristics of the people of
the Balkan peninsula. Not particularly interesting.

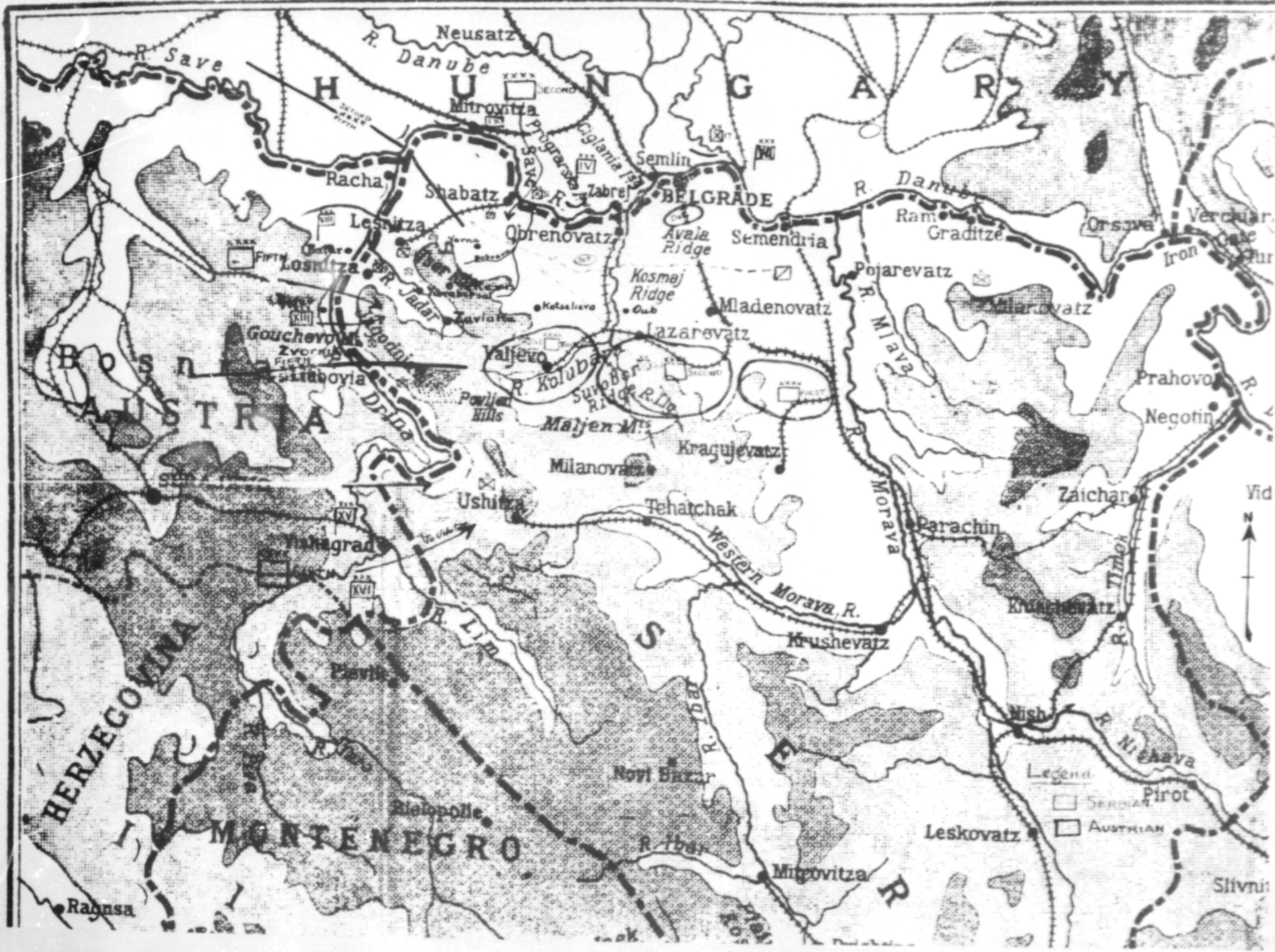
A History of the Great War - By John Buchan.

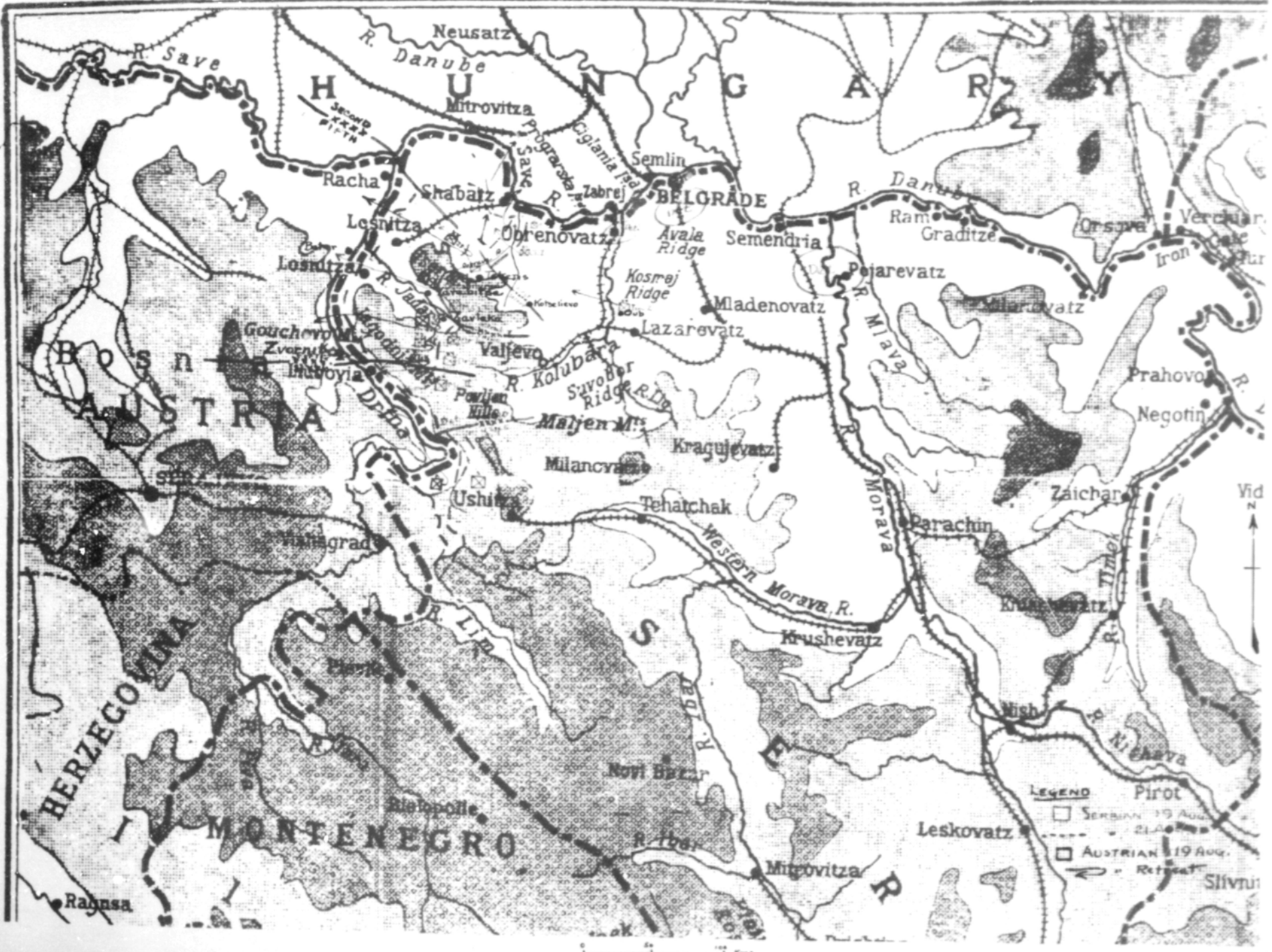
In common with many of the general histories
of the Great War, this history barely mentions the
Serbian theater of operations.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Key: AHLW (1) = No. 1 Text (below), page being given following
abbreviation.

1. AHLW Austria- Hungary's Last War, 1914- 1918 (War College
Translation)
2. MHW Military History of the World War- C. R. Howland.
3. CD Les Campagnes de Serbie en 1914 et 1915- Feylor
4. VT Les Victoires Serbes en 1914- Dos Mares and Naumovitch
(Warbox Translation)





H U N G A R Y

B O S N I A
S L O V E N I A

HERZEGOVINA
MONTENEGRO

S E R B I A

LEGEND
 [Solid Line] SERBIAN 19 AUG.
 [Dashed Line] AUSTRIAN 19 AUG.
 [Arrow] Retreat

Vid N
↑

Scale: 0 20 40 Miles