

### A Mini Campaign for Triumph of the Will Richard Clarke

*“The artillery opened the attack and the colours were unfurled. The men were drawn up in battle array to the sound of music; bugles rang out, and standards floated on the breeze. Swords flashed and a cheer went up, and the men moved forward in a cloud of dust. War before the advent of the aeroplane, the motor car, the tank, and barbed wire, must have been like this, I thought as I watched the. This was what it must have been like even as far back as Napoleon when men in gorgeous uniforms charged with snapping banners over green meadows against enemy batteries.”*

Researching the Russian Civil War can often be a dark and bleak activity, where accounts, be they first hand or post event works of academe, so often focus on the horrors of this peculiarly grim conflict. There are, however, exceptions.

“Farewell to the Don” by Brigadier H.N.H. Williamson is the perfect antidote to dry history, as hopefully the excerpt above shows. Williamson had been born in 1886 and after education at Eton and Woolwich took up a commission with the Royal Artillery in 1907. He served in India and then in France throughout the entire four years of the Great War. He was awarded the M.C., the Belgian Croix de Guerre and was three times mentioned in despatches.

In 1919 he joined the British mission to South Russia, headed by General Holman, and was tasked with doing all he could to advise and assist the White forces of General Deniken without actually taking part in the fighting. Like

most “technical advisers” Williamson and his boss found it increasingly hard to avoid taking a fuller role, especially when faced with the lackadaisical approach of the Russians.

By July 1919 these British officers had engineered matters so that they could make a tour of the combat units that were advancing northwards. They were keen to see that British uniforms and equipment were getting through to the front line units, and also to examine the nature of warfare in this fluid war of movement, so divorced from the trenches of the Western Front.

After the fall of Kharkov Holman and the then Major Williamson were, fortunately for us, attached to General Mai-Maievsky’s forces as they advanced to take Poltava in the Ukraine. The latter’s observations on the conflict, recorded in his diary on a daily basis, are illuminating as they give a superb insight to the operations of these makeshift armies in the anarchy that followed the Russian Revolution. As the book has been out of print for many years I make no apology for quoting at length from this wonderful work in order to give the reader a taste of this conflict from a primary source.

From a wargamer’s perspective they present an excellent opportunity to fight a small campaign of linked battles during what was the watershed of the White advance towards Moscow.

#### **The Plan**

In the vastness that was Russia in the days before motor transport was the military norm, the importance of railway lines and cavalry were multiplied significantly. The most mobile of support for the infantry came from the armoured train; in essence battleships in a sea of steppe. However these battleships were, by definition, restricted to the railway lines, leaving vast gaps that, with the restricted manpower available, could simply not be covered by the entrenchments that had dominated the Western Front. In that environment cavalry became vital to screen off areas from a hostile enemy and protect the flanks of any advance.

Williamson’s comments on such military operations speak for themselves.

*“The generally adopted formation was to have a lightly-armoured repair truck (by truck Williamson means railway wagon. Ed.) then a truck with machine guns. Next would come the train itself with a light field gun and more*

*machine guns, heavily-armoured, and an armoured truck full of troops ready to reinforce the leading group. Finally, in most cases and sometimes taking the place of the field gun, would come a heavy naval type of gun which could indulge in long-range slogging in those cases when the lightly-armoured leading formations were not available. Bodies of infantry usually advanced in country carts along roads close to one flank or another of the railway tracks whilst the cavalry formations covered the flanks for considerable distances over the steppes. For short range reconnaissance the train might consist of the armoured engine with one truck carrying a field gun or even only men with machine guns."*

Such a description can only illustrate how central the armoured train was to the military operation, indeed the entire advance was centred around it. Once the lead elements had secured the next station any troops in reserve could be brought forward by more trains to support further advances, but at all times the armoured train would act as the main sword and shield of any force.



In the case of the operation Williamson was attached to the plan was consequently a simple one based around a single stretch of track from the south east of Constantinograd running through Karlovka and on to Poltava, over 100 miles in total.

Three columns were to be formed. The first was the Guard Corps under Baron Stackelberg with the 8<sup>th</sup> Kuban Plastoune (infantry) Brigade in reserve. The second column was made up of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division with an attached Battalion of Ossetine infantry. The Third column, the most mobile, was Shkuro's Wolves, the infamous cavalry force of Cossacks and Muslim tribesmen from the northern Caucasus.

The Guard Corps was to form the central column, advancing up the railway line and effectively being the main punch to knock out any enemy opposition. On the left, roughly twenty miles to the south, the second column was to advance in parallel, intent on advancing on Poltava from the south. On the right Shkuro was to move across country to cut the railway line that would allow the Reds to retreat on Kiev.

As can be seen, the idea was not just to defeat the Reds but to attempt to isolate and capture them. This was based largely on the need for manpower to keep the White advance going, and prisoners of war were the main source of recruitment, as Williamson relates.

*"In the station master's office we found several of our soldiers amusing themselves by covering the faces of their prisoners with burnt cork. It was difficult to see the reason for it and we asked each other cheerfully if it came within the terms of the Geneva Convention. It seemed harmless, however, and there was a great deal of laughter going on.*

*"It makes them look pretty ridiculous," Holman said. "But it hardly comes under the rules of war."*

*By the next morning they had all been recruited into the White forces and were good Volunteer soldiers - until next time!"*

### **The Campaign**

The aspect of the campaign I am keen to look at is the advance of Guard Corps column as this was the one that did all of the fighting in the event. In order to give a feel for this I have broken this down into brief sketches of the actions day by day.

#### **Day One:**

The advance began towards Constantinograd with the first objective being to seize the rail bridge across the river Berestovaya to the east of the town itself. The Whites needed their armoured train to provide the support needed for their infantry, so capturing this intact was critical.

The armoured trains led the way, directing their fire to keep Red Army engineers from demolishing the vital structure. To the south and north of the railway line White infantry from the Guard Corps advanced towards the bridge, hoping for an opportunity to rush across to seize it. A Red armoured train engaged the Whites with counter-battery fire of a fairly ineffective

nature, but sufficient to keep the White infantry from advancing further. As night fell the Russians allowed bad light to stop play.

### Day Two

The advance was to be resumed with day break, and the plan was to take Constantinograd by evening. White artillery, British 18 pounders in this case, were brought forward to support the attack of the Guards.

So effective was the initial bombardment that Red forces could be seen withdrawing back from bridgehead positions on the eastern bank of the Berestovya. The White infantry mounted their carts to take up a vigorous pursuit. Williamson and his colleague Holman were by now with one of the 18 pounder batteries that was firing rapidly into the retreating Reds, however this was not to continue for long.

*“(But) the gunners, having only received their equipment a month before from the artillery school at Mrmavir, were not very well trained and within ten minutes of our arrival three of the guns were in difficulty, one with a hopelessly jammed cartridge which has been thrust into the breech still covered in sand. Another had an overrun trigger, and the third had such weak springs in the buffers that the gun had to be pushed up by hand into its cradle after each round.*

*In no time at all the gunners were staring blankly at their silent weapons while the officers, who probably didn't know very much more about them than they did, cursed and waved their arms.*

*Holman looked at me. “Can we fix this?” he asked.*

*“I think so, sir.”*

*“Let's try”.*

*We took off our coats and got two of the three guns into action again, whilst all ranks of the Russians looked on from behind in amazement.*

*“A general!” I heard them saying. “A general who knows how to put a gun right himself, and doesn't mind doing it!”*

*As we worked the battery commander appeared. He distained to ride a horse and drove up to the position in a small and very shabby two horse Victoria, and now he began to protest violently at our undignified conduct.*

*“An officer does not serve a gun!” he insisted indignantly, almost spitting with rage. “That is the job of the men!”*

With the guns repaired the fire could continue, and a White armoured train advanced across the

bridge itself. To the north of the town a white column crossed a ford in the river supported by the fire of the 18 pounders, but were held up by the Reds on a ridge on the far side. After an hour a flank attack by the Whites cleared the ridge and threatened to now move around the north of the town and cut the road back to what were supposedly the main Bolshevik positions at Karlovka. This was enough for the Reds, they withdrew with all speed to the west.

*“They were hastened on their way by the armoured trains which steamed across the bridge, clattering and roaring, their machine guns rattling away, and dashed into the station capturing about fifty prisoners and hunting the retiring Red train as far as ten miles further west”.*

### Day Three

Interrogation of prisoners revealed that the Reds had reinforced their position at Karlovka, seventeen miles away, and would hold it at all costs. The town stood on raised ground on the western bank of the river Orchik and the approach was via a raised causeway through the marshy ground.

The railway bridge at Fedorovka had been badly damaged by the retreating Reds and would require several hours work to enable any trains to cross, so the advance was to be attempted by infantry supported by artillery.

The Guards Regiment was to march in two separate columns. One would follow the railway line, taking the bridge at Fedorovka and then swinging north to attack Karlovka from the south. The other would take a more direct route, along the main highway that ran almost due east from Constantinograd.

Despite the advance making use of the small carts the columns did not approach Karlovka until dusk, having been slowed down by the appearance of a Red armoured train which has obliged them to keep to the eastern bank of the river and head north towards the main road. The two columns came within sight of their objective almost simultaneously, with the one on the main road being spotted first by the Reds who engaged it with long range machine gun fire. It turned northwards to seek a crossing out of enemy range. The southern column was now almost up to the main road and the bridge itself.

*“I looked at the position in front of us, which we had to take with about 2,000 troops at the end of a hard day, it struck me that it was nearly as impregnable as possible, and could be*



held by a man, a boy and a catapult if the defending forces had one atom of pluck or skill. I was very anxious to see how the Russians would handle the situation.

The column commander, the O.C. of the Guards Battalion, didn't appear worried in the least, however, nor did he think it necessary to halt his column or make any new disposition. There was no reconnaissance, no fire plan, just a few verbal orders and in half an hour all the batteries were firing away anyhow, while the infantry edged up to the causeway. The sounds of the Guards' little battle became quite pronounced, as we could see shell flashes clearly in the deepening darkness along the lower edge of the village.

Suddenly the column commander halted his men, called up several of his officers, held a hurried discussion and, before I realised that anything could possibly happen, the column was off again. Two companies trotted up from the main body in their country carts with two Lewis guns and dashed down the hill in support of the advanced guards in great style, rattling and clattering past, the carts bouncing over the folds of the ground at top speed and flinging up stones and great clouds of dust, the men clinging to them for dear life, clutching their weapons."

"The little Martini battery went after them in approved Horse Artillery style, clattering and bouncing over the rough ground, and the remainder of the body moved forward again at a steady pace, with the 18 pounder and 4.5" howitzer batteries deployed to right and left of the road and coming into action with a rattle and jingle. Within ten minutes, sharp cracking explosions showed that the Martinis were in action in close support of the advanced guard, while in the distance we could see the flashes and smoke of the bursting shells, as the field guns searched the far end of the bridge and the outskirts of Karlovka with a slow rate of fire."

From his position with the lead elements of the left hand column Williamson now saw advanced forces from the right hand column that had turned north from the main road. They had forced a crossing of the river at Varvarovska and were now approaching Karlovka from the north on the western bank.

A Very pistol was used to signal to the White artillery to halt their fire.

"They've seen the signal and understood" someone said. Knowing the Russians by this time, I was more than doubtful but we decided to chance it. So off went the infantry,

scrambling and running at full speed over the causeway, and all shouting and cheering for all they were worth. By some marvellous coincidence those who had already worked up to the Bolsheviks at the far end elected to cheer and make a rush at exactly the same moment and we could make them out pouring forward, waving flags and sweeping towards the Red positions in a swarm.

Holman and I, with about twenty cavalrymen, rode after them. We were inclined to be more cautious as the causeway could have been swept with fire if properly defended but we were carried away by the others and found ourselves clattering forward into the village surrounded by wild-looking horsemen waving sabres and discharging rifles all around us."



The town was taken at the rush, but chaos reigned.

"No outposts of any kind were put out, or the smallest steps taken for security - so much so that a Red armoured train which had lost touch with its own troops, was in the station for half an hour after we arrived before slipping away unmolested!"

#### Day Four

The plan was to advance as rapidly as possible along the railway lines to seize Seleschina Station before nightfall. Again damage to the bridges meant that no support

from the armoured trains would be available, leaving the advancing column in danger from roving Red trains.

Williamson followed the White advanced guard, a mere company of infantry and a handful of cavalry scouts, with a single 18 pounder and an ammunition wagon, catching up with the lead elements as they entered the small hamlet of Sachnivsina.

*"If we can get the gun concealed just short of that village" I explained carefully, "we should be well placed to face the Red train as it comes down from the skyline. It's bound to try to prevent our infantry passing through the village"*

Having outlined his plan in painstaking French to the Russian subaltern Williamson moved forward to speak to the officer commanding the infantry.

*"I had hardly been gone ten minutes, pushing through the long sweet smelling grass and scrub, when, sure enough, I saw the Bolshevik train appear over the brow of the hill and slowly begin moving down the slope in front of us at a distance of about 5000 yards. On it came, stopping only once to fire a few rounds at the village, until as far as I could judge, it must have been at the very spot we expected it to be. I watched in tense silence, watching carefully as it halted again, the snouts of its guns moving slowly in search of a target."*

Williamson continues:

*"Come on," I murmured, still waiting for the crack of an indignant 18 pounder. But nothing happened. What was wrong? In a rage, I ran back to the gun position.*

*The column was waiting for lunch and the gunners were all asleep on the sunshine!*

*"Get this damned gun going!" I stormed as they scuttled to their posts. In a rage I made my way back to the observation post where the officer, who had been told that the mad Englishman was looking for him, was slowly stretching himself after a midday nap. He had decorated his carriage with corn stooks and had slept contentedly out of the sun underneath it"*

Very quickly the Red train was now damaged by what Williamson found to be pretty impressively accurate fire from the gunners, but a shortage of ammunition allowed the Reds to withdraw. Nevertheless the single gun had been sufficiently effective to open the route for the infantry who re-commenced their advance on Selecshina Station.

By 4pm, as the column passed through the village of Masivka just two miles short of their objective. To Williamson's amazement the entire column began to speed up, trotting forward in their carts. Without halting they galloped into the main street. There the Whites inexplicably halted with the station still a thousand yards ahead of them.

Williamson and General Holman again joined the advanced guard which was cleaning the Red rearguard out of the village. Williamson moved off to the left to view the countryside on that flank and was horrified to discover a Red armoured train waiting in a hollow, in position to enfilade the Whites were they to push on to the station.

The White batteries were brought forward and the infantry deployed to advance against this fresh threat, but after a sharp but short exchange of fire the Bolshevik train decided that discretion was the better part of valour and withdrew in the direction of Poltava.



This was to be the British officers' final day in the front line. News of their activity had filtered back to Russian headquarters and was not well received. Williamson and Holman received a visit from a staff officer.

*"The General is too important a personage to take the risks which this sort of civilian guerrilla warfare entails," Svegintsev explained.*

*Then he went on, looking a little sheepish. "Besides," he said, "Russian Generals do not make a habit of frequenting the forward positions and might feel hurt. It would be more suitable for the Russian Command to carry out the final capture of Poltava on their own and for the General to follow on as their guest, rather than precede them with the fighting troops."*

*Very regretfully, therefore, we packed into the Vauxhall and drove back to Karlovka, where we climbed on to the first train again. Late in the evening, receiving news that the First Guards Brigade were already on the outskirts of Poltava, we moved forward and arrived at the station early next morning.”*

In five days the Whites had covered in excess of an hundred miles, fought actions each day, and taken Poltava. These were rates of advance that would not have been out of place during the blitzkrieg of 1941, and it is thanks to Williamson that we are able to read such frank and interesting observations on the conduct of operations.

### **Gaming the Advance on Poltava**

The following mini campaign is designed to replicate the actions of the main body of the Guards under Baron Stackelburg. The four main choke points on the route of advance have been selected, but how long it takes the Whites to fight their way through depends on how effective they are at maintaining the initiative. They need to keep pushing on with all haste, capturing enough Red troops to fill the gaps in their ranks.

For the Reds it is important to decide where and when to fight, ensuring that their lines of communication are secure and that if they are to fall back they do so having inflicted maximum casualties for minimal losses.

The structure of the campaign is simple. The first game is fought at Constantinograd, and providing that Whites are successful they then move on to Karlovka, Seleschina Station and finally Poltava itself.

In the campaign the victorious force will find its forces regenerate themselves, either through a boost of morale, which is what the unit strengths represent within *Triumph of the Will*, or by incorporating Prisoners of War within their ranks. The losing force will find that their strength dwindles quicker, as forces desert their ranks.

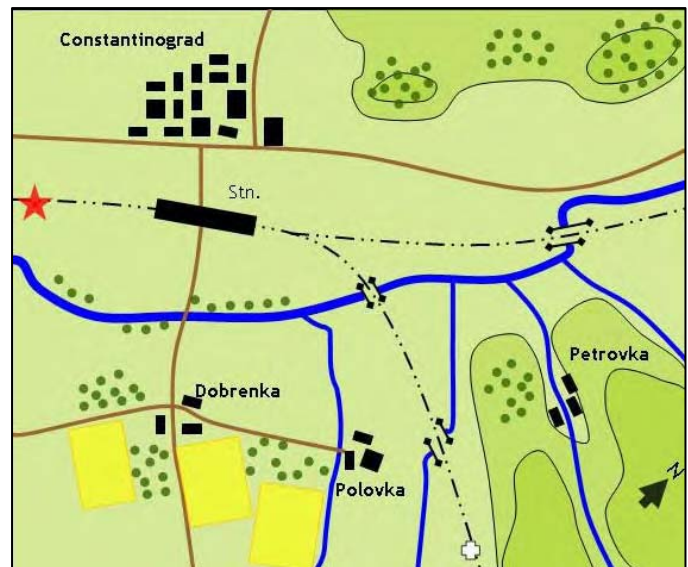
The specific mechanics for this are as follows.

#### **Unit Replenishment**

At the end of each game the winner will replace two out of every three casualties that his units have taken, rounding down where needed. Any units left may be amalgamated to bring companies up to full strength.

Any enemy units that have been captured on the battlefield, or that may be judged as unable to escape capture will replace one third of their casualties and may then be amalgamated into any of the White units as reinforcements. These troops will be considered to adopt the qualities of their new unit.

Any units on the losing side that have succeeded in leaving the table, or that may be judged as being capable of leaving the table, may replace half of their casualties, rounding down where required.



#### **Reinforcements**

The forces that start the campaign in Scenario One will fight throughout the campaign, with reinforcements fed in with each fresh scenario. In addition the White player has an option, should he fail to win any one scenario and be obliged to refight it, to bring in early one or both of the Cossack Infantry Battalions that are designated as reinforcements for Scenario Four, that assault on Poltava. Naturally if these forces are brought into the campaign earlier then the will not be available again when (and if) Poltava is reached.

On the first three maps the lines of communication markers have been noted by a Res Star and a White Cross. These are important, as discussed in the rules. On the fourth map no such markers are present as Poltava is the only important goal for each side.



## Scenario One

### The Bridge at Constantinograd

#### *White Briefing*

July 1919, and the Armed Forces of Southern Russia are advancing on all fronts, we shall be in Moscow by Christmas.

Ahead of you lies the river Berestowkia and the town of Constantinograd. It is vital for our advance on Poltava that we seize the railway bridges intact, and our troops are being deployed to probe all along the river prior to making an assault. Our force is as follows:

Commander - Major-General Baron Stackelberg, Aggressive Commander

#### **Guards Composite Regiment**

- Three Battalions, each of four companies of Regular troops, 10 man companies with one MMG platoon per battalion.
- One squadron of Kuban Cossacks, 8 figures, Drilled.
- Armoured Train "General Alexseev", two 76.2mm guns and one MG carriage with four MGs (two each side).
- Two batteries of two 18-pounder guns, regular, elite, 4 crew.

Objective: Cross the river, seize the town.

#### *Red Briefing*

KomDiv Uri Nzampul of the Workers and Peasants Red Army. For the past months your force, largely workers from the Ukraine, have formed a defence against the Whites from Odessa to Kharkov. Now the enemy is advancing. Last week Kharkov fell, now a fresh advance has been launched in the direction of Poltava. If the enemy is successful then they could continue on to Kiev, breaking your lines of supply with Moscow and leaving the 12<sup>th</sup> Red Army at the mercy of the Whites and that lunatic Maknov.

Your lead forces are defending Constantinograd, you must attempt to downgrade the White forces through a stout defence. Whilst Constantinograd is of little importance Poltava is. You must attempt to stop the enemy on the river lines that lie between him and his goal. Your force is as follows:

Commander - KomDiv Uri Nzampul, Measured Commander  
406<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment

- Four Battalions, Militia, 6 figures per Company. One MG platoon per Battalion.

- Two batteries of two 76.2mm Field Guns each, drilled.
- Armoured Train "The Workers Control the Means of Production", One 76.2mm gun turret. One MG carriage of two MGs.

Objective: Hold the river line.

#### *Umpire's Notes*

Whilst the Whites are concerned about capturing the rail bridge intact, the truth is that the Reds cannot damage it. In fact they have prepared the bridges to the west of the town for demolition should any withdrawal be necessary.

The river is fordable by infantry in places, when a unit reaches the bank roll a D6, on a 5 or 6 it is fordable at that point. The Whites should know that it may be forded but not exactly where. The buildings in the villages and in Constantinograd offer light cover only.

The Reds may deploy anywhere on the west bank of the river, but may also have up to one battalion deployed on the east bank within 6" of the river. All the Reds may be dug in.

The Whites start the game on the eastern table edge at the start of turn one.

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## Scenario Two

### The Town in the Marshes

#### *White Briefing*

Having seized Constantinograd the advance continues. Reports from prisoners tell you that the Reds have reinforced at Karlovka and will hold the position to the last.

Your column was to sweep round and attack from the south, but a Red armoured train stopped you crossing the river at the Fedorovka bridge, so you have swung north. The causeway across the marshes will be difficult if the enemy are not softened up first, but you hear that a battalion of the Guards Rifles has moved north to Varvarovka and is attempting to outflank the enemy from the north. Hopefully they will arrive to assist you.

#### **Forces:**

The remnants from Scenario One but without the armoured train, which is awaiting bridge repairs to the east. Additionally you have:

- One 1.5" Martini Horse Battery, one gun, regular, elite, 4 crew.
- One 4.5" howitzer, regular, 3 crew.

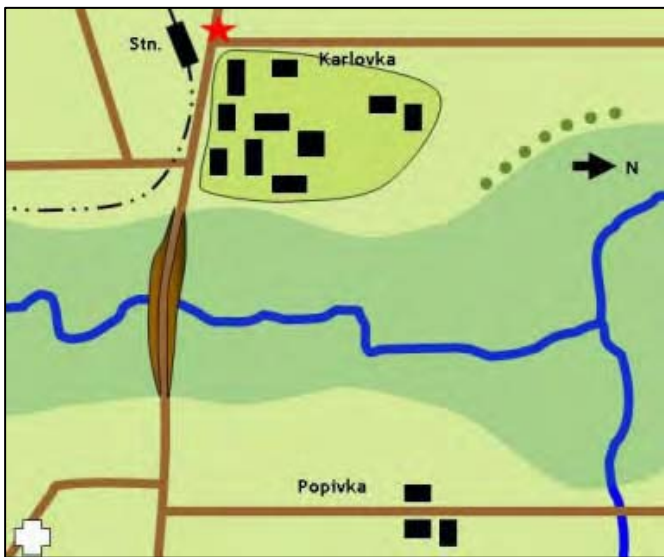
- One additional Cossack Squadron, 8 sabres, drilled.

Objective: Cross the river and seize the town.

### **Red Briefing**

The Whites have taken Constantinograd, but at Karlovka you intend to make them pay. Fresh reinforcements have arrived and dug into the position on the hill commanding the marshes.

Remember, it is not imperative to hold Karlovka, but to minimise your own losses whilst maximising the damage you can do to the enemy.



### **Forces**

The remnants from Scenario One who have recently arrived and are not dug in. The armoured train is off to the south blocking any enemy crossing there so your flanks are secure.

Additionally you have the following fresh reinforcements from the 407<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment under the control of a Voyenspets military adviser. They are dug in on the high ground.

- Two infantry Battalions, Militia, six figures per company. One MG platoon per Battalion.

Objective: Hold the enemy for as long as possible, inflict as much damage to them as possible.

### **Umpire's Notes**

Again the Reds must consider that their ultimate goal is the defence of Poltava rather than Karlovka, however this is a good defensive position and the one where they are most likely to inflict real damage on the Whites.

The marshes are very poor going for infantry, they will move at half the normal speed for crossing obstacles, and impassable for any other units. As such they are more or less obliged to use the causeway, which is dangerous as it offers no cover whatsoever to units crossing it.

The Guards Rifle Battalion, making their attempted flank march to the north will arrive as early as turn six, however they may be delayed, or not arrive at all, as per the Flank March rule in the RCW section of Triumph of the Will. They are considered to be making a flank march to the third quarter of the table, and, as regular troops will have a 45% chance of appearing on turn 6, a 40% on turn 7, 35% on turn 8 and so on. The White player should not be aware of this, but will take control of them when, and if, they arrive.

The Guards Rifle Battalion is comprised of four 10 figure companies of Regular troops with two MMG platoon.

The Reds may start the game anywhere to the west of the river and marshes. Only troops on the high ground may be dug in.

The Whites start the game within 9" of the road at the south-east corner of the table.

## **Scenario Three A Country Station**

### **White Briefing**

With Karlovka in our hands we can now push on towards the final goal of Poltava, the only natural barrier before us is the river crossing at Seleschina, a point easily reinforced by the Reds if we give them time.

We must advance with all speed to seize the crossing and the railway halt at Seleschina Station. Damage to the railway line to the west of Karlovka means that we must operate with no support from our armoured trains, but this can be no excuse to slacken our pace.

Objective: On to Moscow!

### **Forces:**

Remnants of Scenario Two

### **Red Briefing**

Despite our best efforts the Whites have taken our main defences at Karlovka and now threaten





Poltava. The only natural defensive position where we can now even consider stopping them is at the village of Seleschina where the remnants of the defenders of Karlovka have rallied. This is especially true as we know that the enemy cannot bring up their armoured trains as we destroyed several culverts to the west of Karlovka.

An armoured train has been despatched to assist their resistance. Once again we must attempt to stop the enemy from reaching Poltava by inflicting such disproportionate losses that they are too weak to storm the city. Up the workers!

#### **Forces**

The remnants of Scenario Two, but with armoured train "The Peasants Are Revolting" arriving to the west of Seleschina Station on turn five. This train has two 76.2mm gun turrets and one company of Red Armoured train troops. These are 10 figure, regular forces who will operate as per the "Comrade Trotsky's Red Hundred" rule.

Objective: Ensure that Poltava does not fall.

#### **Umpire's Notes**

This is a scenario that the Red player may choose to skip in order to conserve his forces for the final battle. On the other hand the river crossing and the promise of an armoured train when the Whites have no such support could make the option of a stand here seductive enough.

The Reds start the game to the north of the river, or anywhere within 6" of its southern bank. The Whites all enter the table on the road at the south-east corner.

## **Scenario Four Into the City**

### **White Briefing**

Poltava, ancient Russian city where our ancestors under the Great Tsar Peter, defeated the Swedes. Here we will again vanquish the enemies of Mother Russia!

Ahead of us lie the crossings across the Vorskla river, we must force a crossing and break into the city. There can be no thought of failure, the freedom of Russia is at stake.

#### **Forces**

The Whites will have the remnants from scenario three, but will add the armoured train "Russia Unified", two heavy gun turrets and one carriage of four MGs.

Additionally they may have two Battalions of Cossack Infantry UNLESS they have already been drawn on as reinforcements should any scenario have needed to be refought due to a successful Red defence.

Two Kuban Plastoun Battalions, each of four 8 figure companies, drilled aggressive troops, and one MG platoon per Battalion.

Objective. Storm the city!

### **Red Briefing**

There can be no retreat, there can be no failure. Poltava must remain in Red hands or the 12<sup>th</sup> Red Army will be isolated and Kiev under threat. You have ample reinforcements to hold the line, any failure will be directly accountable to you and your family. Do not fail comrade!

Objective: You will hold the city at any cost.

#### **Forces**

The remnants of Scenario Three plus an additional Brigade of three Battalions from the 408<sup>th</sup> Division.

- Three infantry Battalions, Drilled, eight figures per company. One MG platoon per Battalion.
- Two Political Commissars
- One Battery of heavy artillery, militia, 3 crew.

### ***Umpire's Notes***

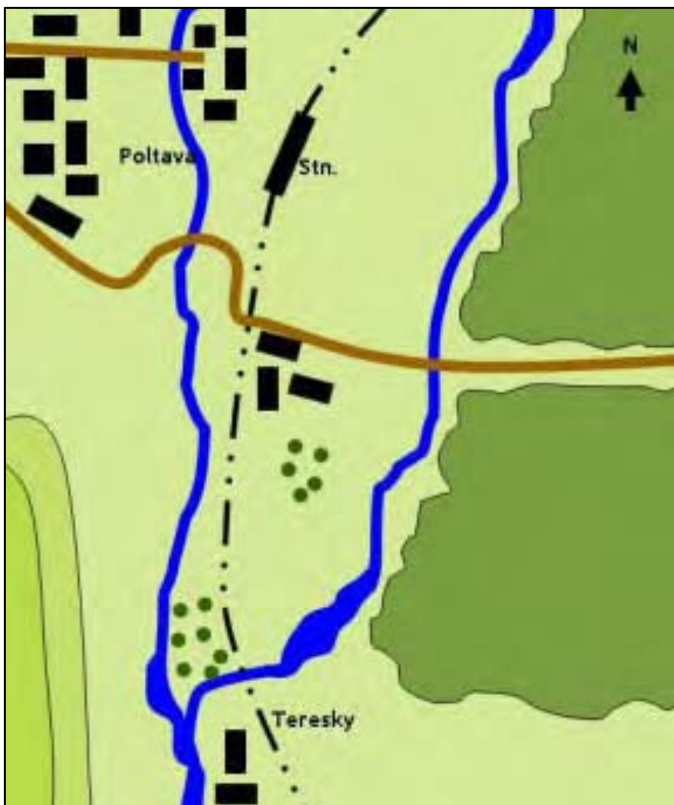
The Reds may deploy anywhere west of the river and on the east bank as far south as the main road that heads east to Kharkov. The fresh forces may all be dug in, the remnants of previous battles may not be.

The Whites will all enter the table on the southern edge around Teresky, between the river and the eastern table edge.

Ultimately the Whites win the campaign if they cross the river and take the outskirts of Poltava. The Reds win if they stop them.

last, able to challenge the Whites in the extensive no-mans-land between the railway lines, and subsequently drive back the White tide.

Some equally exciting first hand accounts can be found in print regarding other theatres, such as the campaigns around Archangel in northern Russia from British and American sources, and the notes in the Royal Tank Corps journal of 1919 charting the advance of the White forces on Leningrad are another fantastic source that I hope to present in a similar format in the future.



### **Conclusion**

**W**ell, hopefully by the time you have played the campaign through you'll have had an enjoyable time, and perhaps have a better insight into the nature of the Civil War in Russia thanks to our correspondent, Brigadier Williamson.

This advance represented the high point of the White counter-revolutionary forces in Russia. Trotsky's phenomenal, and ultimately thankless, efforts to build an effective, professional Red Army would soon see a better class of Bolshevik forces come to the battlefield. Not least would be the contribution of the new Red Cavalry forces led by Semyon Budyenny that were, at