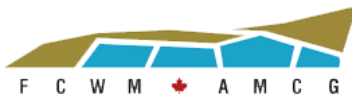
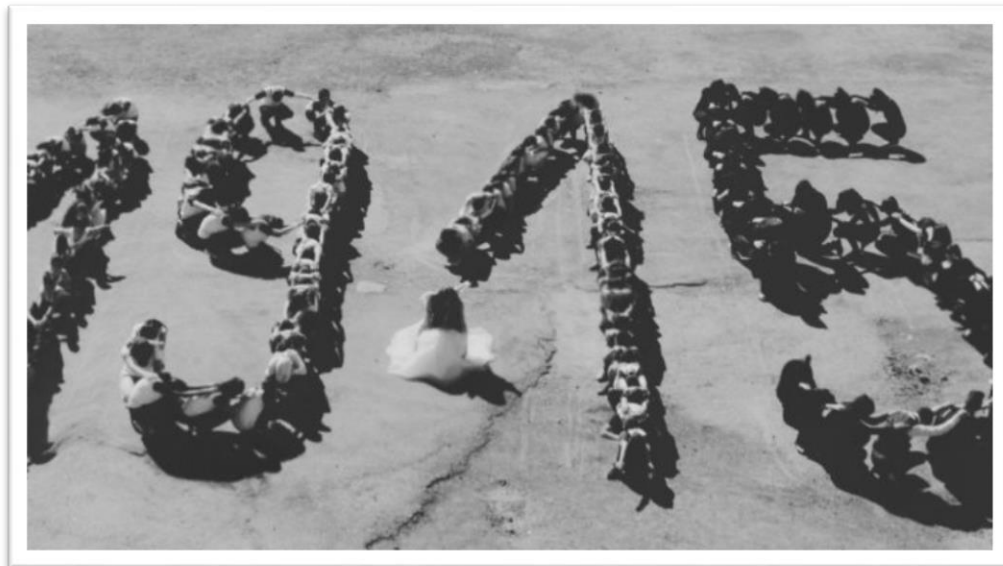


World War I
Day by Day
1915 – 1918

September 1915 / septembre 1915

La première guerre mondiale
De jour en jour
1915 – 1918



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1 September 1915

The Russian retreat continues



As August led into September, the great Russian retreat continued. Most strong points, even such as the mighty fortress of Brest-Litovsk, were conceded to the Germans after minimal resistance.

The Germans expressed their admiration for the “brilliant conduct” of the Russian retreat. It did prevent encirclement and battles of annihilation and most of the Russian army remained intact. At the same time, the Germans and Austrians extended their supply lines and often pursued Russian units into unfavourable territory where they bogged down for days at a time.



The picture at the local level was not so neat as these operational-level descriptions of armies retreating in good order. The Minister of the Interior, Prince Shcherbatov, described the military rear areas as one of “sickening outrages, anarchy, arbitrariness.” While special trains removed officers' comforts and even mistresses, refugees, estimated at more than a million, trudged along rail lines to uncertain futures in miserable conditions in the great Russian cities. Russian losses were 325,000 men and about 3,000 guns, although most artillery was successfully moved east.

Norman Stone, *The Russian Front 1914-1917*



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2 September 1915

King George V addresses the 2nd Canadian Division



On September 2, 1915, King George V accompanied by Lord Kitchener arrived at Shorncliffe Camp (near Folkestone, Kent) to inspect the 2nd Canadian Division, about to embark for France.

After the unpleasant experience of the 1st Division on Salisbury Plain during the first winter of the war, the Canadians were housed at established British Army camps, such as Shorncliffe, which had been an Army camp since 1790. Folkestone and the surrounding countryside would become the largest Canadian implantation of the War.

The King addressed the troops, expressing confidence that the discipline and training manifested during the day's Parade, would carry them through the hardships to come.

He concluded by saying that:

“History will never forget the loyalty and readiness with which you rallied to the aid of your Mother-Country in the hour of danger.”

Jonathan Vance, Maple Leaf Empire: Canada, Britain and the Two World Wars



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3 September 1915

The Fokker Scourge



In the earliest days of combat aviation, reconnaissance was the most important mission and soon, defeating reconnaissance missions became an imperative matched by equal determination to protect the observation aircraft. Early German and British “fighters” mounted machine guns on a swivel mount manned by a gunner but engagements were rare.

In 1915, the Fokker company developed (or adapted, the provenance is debated) a synchronisation gear allowing a machine gun to fire through the propeller arc, permitting faster and more nimble aircraft. The Fokker “Eindecker” series became the first effective fighter and by **August 1915** the Imperial German Air Service had begun to take a toll of Allied observation aircraft. A sort of panic set in among Allied aviators and home media, called the Fokker Scourge.

Cecil Lewis wrote that “Hearsay and a few lucky encounters had made the machine respected, not to say dreaded by the slow unwieldy machines then used by us for Artillery Observation and Offensive Patrols.”

In September 1915, with the Eindeckers dominating Allied aircraft, the Fokker Scourge was at its height and would last until well into 1916.

Cecil Lewis, *Sagittarius Rising*



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4 September 1915

Joffre receives Cardorna



Unfortunately, few details of this meeting of **4 September 1915** between the Commanders of the French and Italian armies can be found.

General Joffre, affectionately nicknamed Papa Joffre, was known for his unshakeable calm during the French retreat in August 1914.

In contrast, **General Luigi Cardorna** is remembered for his repeated sanguinary and futile assaults on the Isonzo front, throwing infantry with inadequate artillery support against Austro-Hungarian troops dug into rugged terrain.

Joffre was also known for his ruthless sackings of army, corps and divisional commanders whom he deemed inadequate and his replacing them by a new generation of generals, including General Foch.

Cardorna was an “unimaginative martinet...one of the most callous and incompetent of World War 1 commanders.”

Cardorna probably ordered more executions of failed junior commanders than any other general in the war and even imposed the Roman penalty of decimation on some units (executing one in ten).

Joffre eventually lost his position in part through political machinations, in part through failed offensives in 1916.

The crushing defeat of Caporetto, after twelve failed offensives finally doomed Cardorna.

Wikipedia 'Joffre' and 'Cardorna'



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5 September 1915

Tsar Nicholas II Takes Command



Tsar and Peter

In a letter dated **5 September 1915**, **Tsar Nicholas II** informed **Grand Duke Nicholas**, Commander of the Russian Army, that he would be transferred as Viceroy of the Caucasus and that the Tsar would assume personal command of Russia's armies.

The change was a political shock as the Grand Duke had supported the Liberals in the Duma and was popular with progressives. He had even been mentioned as a replacement for the Tsar.

Nicholas II was able to replace him in the aftermath of the fall of the Kovno fortress complex, taken after a desultory defence.

In fact the Tsar's command was essentially formal; he chose as his chief of staff Lieutenant General Mikhail Vasiliyevich Alexeyev, Chief of Staff of the Northwestern Front.

Alexeyev was an incorruptible man of common birth but a military traditionalist. He conducted a gradual retreat against the Central Powers' Triple Offensive in the summer of 1915 but was later criticized for conceding too much territory.

He cleared much of the aristocratic deadwood out of the General Staff but was never able to entirely rid the high command of incompetent titled officers.



6 septembre 1915

Bulgaria signs on the dotted line



The Quadruple Alliance

At the beginning of the war, Bulgaria, still reeling from its defeat in the Second Balkan war, decided to remain neutral. However, Bulgaria's strategic geographical position and military potential made it inevitable that both the Entente and the Central Powers would seek to gain the Kingdom as an ally.

After a prolonged diplomatic dance, the Bulgarian Crown opted to join the Central Powers. **On 6 September 1915**, Bulgaria formalized its alliance with the Central Powers in three secret documents. The first was the ***Treaty of Amity and Alliance Between the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the German Empire***. The second document was a secret Annex to the Treaty specifying the territorial gains guaranteed by Germany to Bulgaria and included a massive war loan. Thirdly, a military agreement – essentially a plan for the conquest of Serbia - was signed by the German and Austro-Hungarian Chiefs of the General Staffs and a Bulgarian military representative.

The outcome of these negotiations only became clear at the end of the month. Bulgaria's alliance with the Central Powers was a severe diplomatic defeat for the Allies; British Prime Minister Asquith blamed it on Russia and the rigidity of the Serbs who had essentially nullified Alliance diplomacy through their unwillingness to compromise.

Elinor F.B. Grogan, «Bulgaria», *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Twelfth Edition, 1922, XXX: 516-22.



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7 September 1915

Renewed Allied Assault on Mount Mora in German Kamerun



Major Ernst von Raben

The Allied campaign to conquer German colonies in West Africa had enjoyed success with Togo falling on August 26, 1914. Operations were next directed at Kamerun (Cameroon).

In German Kamerun the German army held a fortified town at Mora near the Nigerian border. The garrison consisted of about 200 African troops and 15 German troops under **Major Ernst von Raben**. The Germans retreated to Mount Mora which they proceeded to fortify. Allied attacks on Mora began in October 1914 but the Germans were able to repel a number of French and British attacks, often imposing heavy casualties.

On September 7, 1915. Allied artillery opened a heavy bombardment on the Mora fort, followed by a British infantry attack. This was repelled with considerable losses. After several more attacks, the British Commander, General Frederick Hugh Cunliffe, decided to stop costly infantry attacks against the well-protected German forces and rely on the classic tools of siegecraft, heavy artillery bombardments and progressive denial of food and water. Despite the success of these efforts to starve out the garrison, the Germans would hold on until February 1916.

Wikipedia, «Siege of Mora».

TIMES History of the War, VIII: Chap 131 The – Conquest of Cameroon and Togoland, p. 273-313.



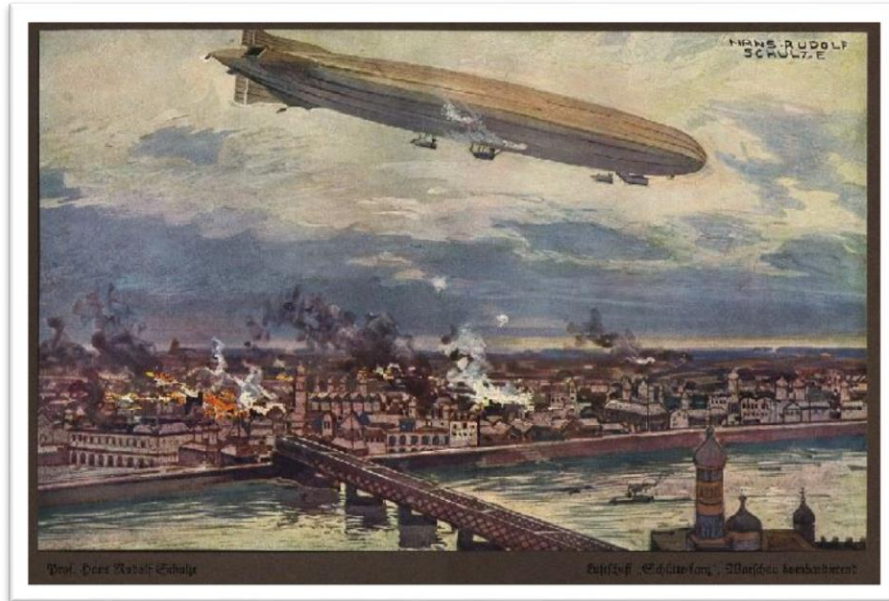
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8 September 1915

Damaging Zeppelin Raid on London



The German Navy air service mounted a three ship Zeppelin raid on London on **September 9, 1915**; of the three airships, one reached London, one turned back with engine trouble and the third suffered engine trouble and bombed a town in Norfolk before returning.

L 13 carried a 300 kg bomb, the largest ever delivered up to that time. L 13 hit textile warehouses near St. Paul's Cathedral, causing a huge fire which caused over a half million pounds damage. Other bombs hit Liverpool Street station.

L 13 was repeatedly caught by searchlights and all 26 anti-aircraft guns were in action, to no avail as the shells exploded at too low an altitude. Three fighters took off but no contact was made, one crashing fatally on landing.

Casualties amounted to 22 killed and 87 injured. The monetary damage from the textile warehouses amounted to over one sixth of the total material damage inflicted by all the German air raids of the war.

Zeppelins of both the Army and Navy air services made 20 raids on London and other towns in 1915.

Ian Castle, *London 1914-17: the Zeppelin Menace*, Osprey Books 193 (Michael Dawson)

Major-General Edward Bailey Ashmore, «Air Raids», EB (1922), XXX:95-100.



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9 September 1915

War at the cinema



Advertisement for New Royalty Kinema, 1915

The New Royalty Kinema located in Brixton, London opened in 1914 and stood on Water Lane (on the site of the current Curzon cinema). Like most local businesses at the time, the cinema openly supported the war, including hosting charity concerts to raise funds.

On 9 September 1915, it ran an advert in the Richmond Herald, stating “No German or Austrian pictures will be shown at this Theatre.”

Adapted from <https://richmondww1.wordpress.com/2015/09/09/richmond-wwi-diary-9-september-1915/>



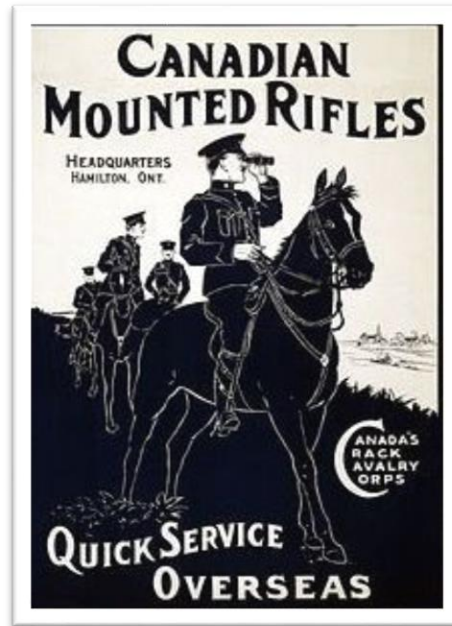
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10 September 1915

A horseman called Barker: Mounted Rifleman Billy Barker Deploys to France



In mid-September Trooper William Barker, who would become Canada's most decorated soldier as a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), was still Trooper Barker in the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles (CMR).

1 CMR was raised in a great Canadian military tradition, that of mounted infantry, ideal for campaigning in open country, as in the Boer War. About **10 September 1915**, 1 CMR received embarkation orders for the Ypres Salient, not as mounted infantry, but as regular infantry in trench fighting.

Barker, from Dauphin, Manitoba, was a machine gunner. The Canadian Expeditionary Force at the beginning of the war, was equipped with the .30 calibre Colt-Browning machine gun; 1 CMR had a section of four guns. The Colt-Browning was heavy, complex and jammed easily in the mud. Despite these faults, Barker, a natural crack shot, had demonstrated unusual prowess with the weapon and was Number One (i.e., the gunner) on the number one gun of 1 CMR.

His skill with the machine gun would be a major factor in his later success as an Observer, then as a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps.

Wayne Ralph, *Barker VC* (2007).



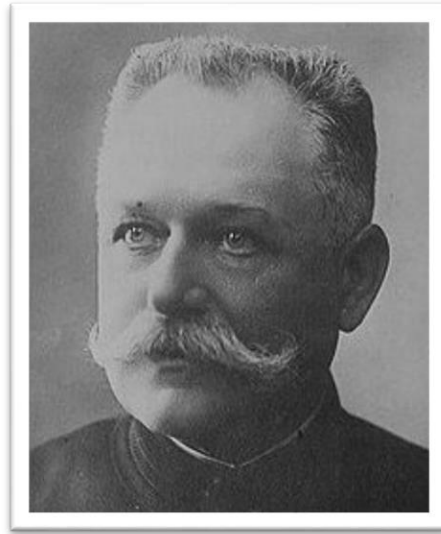
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11 September 1915

Une conférence Franco-britannique à Calais



Les représentants des gouvernements et des armées de la France et de la Grande Bretagne se rencontrent une deuxième fois à Calais pour échanger sur les plans et politiques des prochains mois. Une telle conférence s'était déjà produite les 6 et 7 juillet, où il avait été question des Dardanelles. Le général Joffre avait fait de belles promesses, mais n'avait pas vraiment changé d'idée. Aujourd'hui encore, il louvoie pour protéger les ressources pour ses opérations en Artois et Champagne. Joffre joue encore une fois au Bluff avec Kitchener, lui promettant des divisions qu'il n'a pas l'intention d'envoyer, et forçant la note sur l'importance que le Maréchal French parte en guerre à l'emporte-pièce dès le premier jour des opérations d'automne en France.

Un personnage vient toutefois s'interposer comme sujet de discussion. **Le Général Maurice Sarrail** a récemment été démis de ses fonctions comme commandant de la Troisième armée française par Joffre. Hors, Sarrail est un grand favori des politiciens socialistes et libéraux par la réputation d'honnêteté qu'il s'est acquise dans la fameuse affaire Dreyfus. Ceux-ci l'avaient vu comme Commandant-en-Chef avant Joffre, et ne peuvent accepter ce qu'ils considèrent un coup de Jarnac de sa part. Le gouvernement français veut réhabiliter Sarrail en lui donnant un commandement allié à Salonika, théâtre qui devient crucial avec la décision imminente de la Bulgarie.

Joffre essaie de faire la pluie et le beau temps, à Calais, mais les vents ne lui sont pas favorables...

Liddell Hart, Foch, I:201. Hankey, Supreme Command, Chap 39, «Origin of the Balkan Campaign», 413-23, esp. 414-7.



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12 September 1915

Ontario's Regulation 17 – A National Issue



On 12 July 1915, the Appellate Court of Toronto approved the Ontario Government's Regulation 17 for the provincial school system. Regulation 17 oversaw the dismantling of the Ottawa Separate School Commission and banned French education in provincial primary and secondary schools.

With the beginning of the school year, in **September 1915**, French Canadians all over Canada were in an uproar over this Ontario policy. **Diane and Béatrice Desloges**, two Ottawa teachers, headed French Canadian protest in Ontario by unlawfully holding separate classes for French Ontarian pupils in storerooms. They were dismissed from their school and denied any government support to maintain separate French schools.

Henri Bourassa in Le Devoir of Montreal did not take long to compare the situation in Ontario with Home Rule in Ireland. If the Irish could be promised Home Rule for their participation in the war, French Canadians could be given a decent French school system in Ontario, where sufficient density of French-speaking population was never in question in many areas.

Regulation 17 became an important aspect of the attitude in French Canada toward participation in the war. Much was made of it in the Press and much was made of it in the streets.

Mason Wade, The French Canadians, 1760-1967 (Macmillan, 1955; Rev. Ed., 1968), Vol. II, p. 674ff.

<http://ontario400.ca/400jours/diane-beatrice-desloges/>



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13 September 1915

Formation of the Canadian Corps



Canada's experience in the Boer War shattered the myth of British military superiority. Canadian politicians, especially the effervescent LCol Sam Hughes, and public demanded that Canadians sent to South Africa not be dispersed as reinforcements to British formations but kept together in identifiable Canadian formations, albeit under the overall command of the British. The Militia Act of 1904 codified this structure and made important reforms to Canadian defence.

The formation of the Canadian Corps on **13 September 1915** was the functional realisation of the principle of national command which would guide Canadian participation in expeditionary missions into the far future. The Corps itself was a homogenous unit, not a shifting collection of divisions reflecting the expediency of the moment. The Canadian Corps would become the lasting symbol of Canada's sacrifices and triumphs in the Great War and a powerful symbol of a confident sense of Canadian nationhood.

The Corps was commanded by LGen E.A.H. Alderson and initially consisted of the 1st and 2nd Canadian Divisions under command of MGen 's Currie and Turner. The Corps numbered twenty-four battalions of infantry, with corps and divisional artillery, engineer, medical, machine gun and logistics troops.

John Swettenham, To Seize the Victory: The Canadian Corps in World War One (Toronto: Ryerson, 1965).



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14 September 1915

Conférence de Chantilly en préparation des offensives d'automne



Le 14 septembre 1915, dans le sillon de la conférence interalliée de Calais, Joffre mène une conférence à son Grand Quartier général de Chantilly, près de Paris, pour donner ses ordres aux commandants de groupes d'armées de l'Armée française. Ce sont les plans qu'il a discutés avec les Britanniques à Calais et qu'ils ont acceptés.

Il entrevoit d'aller saisir l'immense 'Saillant de Noyon', où se trouve la courbe dans les défenses allemandes qui suit la rivière Aisne, d'ouest en est pour remonter vers Arras, au Nord. Il entend effectuer cette manoeuvre pendant que les Allemands sont toujours occupés prioritairement en Russie.

Il favorise le Groupe d'armées centre, avec la Deuxième Armée de Pétain et la Quatrième Armée de Langle de Cary pour enfoncer en Champagne.

Au nord, Foch et French (BEF) vont pousser en Artois pour couper le saillant et le saisir. L'Opération commencera le 25 septembre.

Le plan diffère de la première campagne Champagne-Artois du printemps en ce que les objectifs sont plus limités et les ressources plus grandes. Joffre bouillonne d'optimisme.

Crutwell, *History of the Great War*, Chap 10 - «The Campaign in France and Flanders, 1915», p. 146-69.



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15 September 1915

Lord Kitchener addresses the House of Lords



General Kitchener is the Secretary for War of the British Cabinet since the beginning of the War. As such he enjoys an immense popularity with the British public. He is still seen, in September 1915, as the sole creator of the all-volunteer «Kitchener's Armies» that are now reaching the front in East and West.

Kitchener makes a review of the situation in the House of Lords on **15 September, 1915**. Addressing Their Lordships of the Realm, he acknowledges that difficulties are continuing on all fronts for the Imperial forces, and distribution of manpower is of main concern.

Unsaid in his speech is the tension that exists in the Cabinet on the question of British conscription. Prime Minister Asquith has promised that there would not be conscription. He counts on Kitchener to continue recruiting volunteers. Ministers Lloyd George (Munitions) and Bonar Law (Colonial Office) want Kitchener out for his mismanagement of the War Office, and conscription now.

Kitchener's recent commitment to an imminent offensive in France is a throw of the dice on which rides the whole Government. Many cannot see the point of it.



Sir Hedley Le Bas (Ed.), The Lord Kitchener Memorial Book (Published on Behalf of the Lord Kitchener National Memorial Fund by Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1917. Contains verbatim speech.

Magnus, Kitchener, Chap 16: «Loos and the Dardanelles».



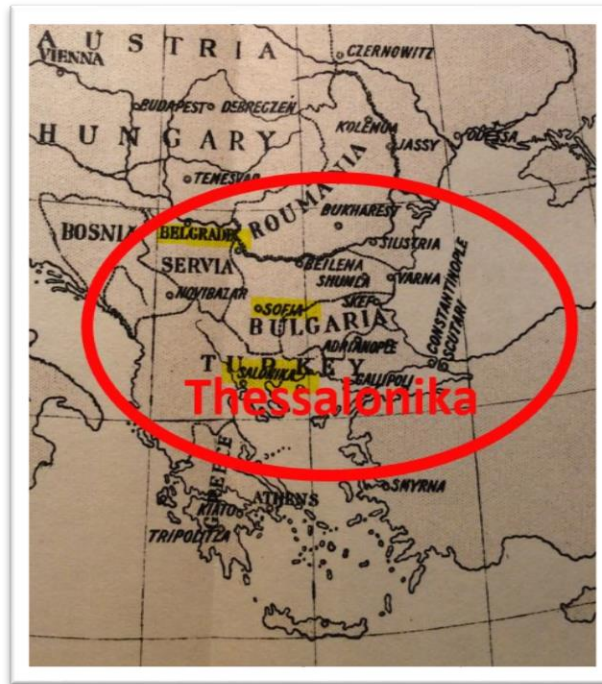
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16 September 1915

La décision bulgare imminente crée des tensions dans les Balkans



L'atmosphère dans les Balkans est tendue par des rumeurs qui vont s'avérer vraies que la Bulgarie a déjà signé un pacte avec les puissances de la Triple Alliance.

En Bulgarie même, des révoltes et soulèvements des partis agraires perturbent le climat politique avant même que la révélation en soit faite.

Les Serbes, qui voient que leur sécurité pourrait très bien être déjà compromise, acceptent une offre des Alliés pour des compensations territoriales inférieures à ce qu'ils convoitaient jusqu'alors.

Le théâtre de Salonique (*Thessalonika*) en Grèce, devient dès lors l'enjeu majeur en Méditerranée, éclipçant les Dardanelles.

C'est là que les Alliés doivent maintenant minimiser les effets de leur manque de succès en Turquie.

Crutwell, *A History of the Great War*, Chap 14: «The Collapse of the Entente Plans in the Balkans in 1915.»



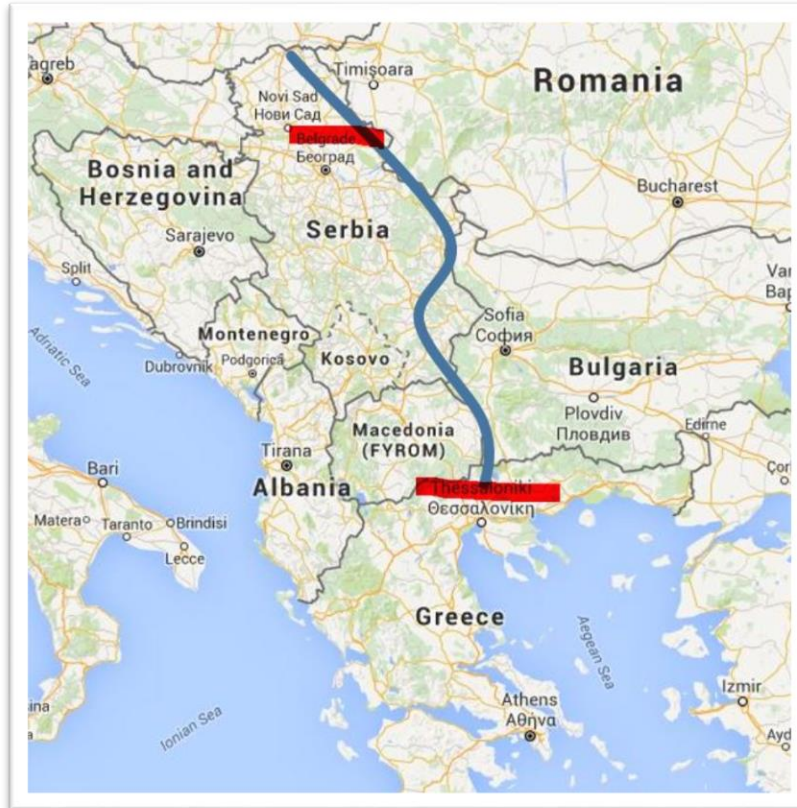
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17 September 1915

Beached in Salonika



On 17 September 1915, Bulgaria has not yet revealed to the world that it has already committed to an alliance with Germany.

But there are clear signs that something is afoot on the German-Austrian-Hungarian side to deal a blow to Serbia from the north.

Indications on the diplomatic networks are also that Bulgaria has obviously been influenced by the failures of the Allies in the Dardanelles to win Constantinople, and by the Russian retreat in Poland, especially since the fall of the fortress of Kovno.

The Allies are now divided on the emphasis to give to the support of Serbia from the Greek beachhead of Salonika.

It is already too late. The railway improvements that would have allowed the Allies to move in defence position have not been made in 1915.

They are beached!



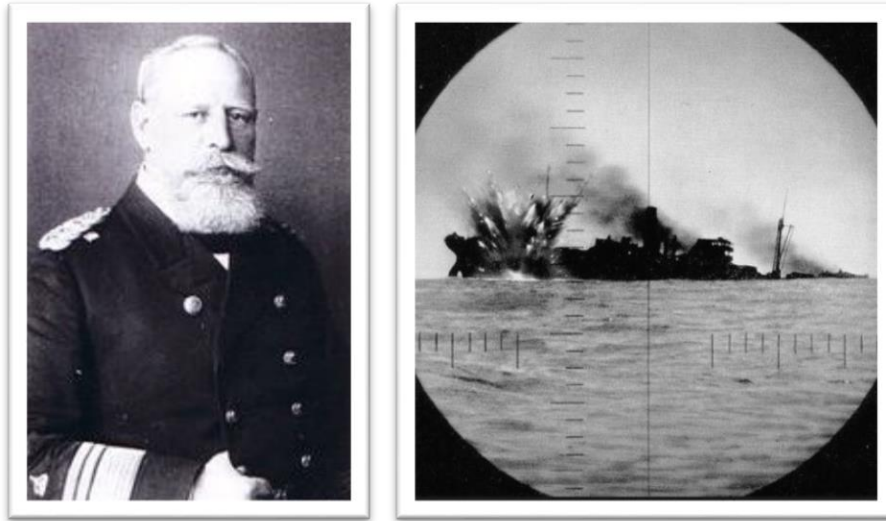
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18 September 1915

A debate in the British House of Commons on National Service



Opinion is divided in the British Isles if Conscription should be decreed.

The reason is not that there is an acute shortage of manpower at the front, although recruiting is slowing down after the massive intakes of the Kitchener's Armies in the first half of 1915. These armies are in fact sent out to France and to Gallipoli to great advantage.

But voluntary enlistment has left industry in grave need of skilled workers and managerial leadership. Many of those who insist on full Conscription of all manpower want it so as to give the Government the necessary power to return skilled workers to their trade, to boost war industrial production, and to curtail trade guilds and workers' unions.

On **18 September, 1915**, the British House of Commons witnesses a debate on National Service.

The result of this debate is that all come to understand that the Prime Minister of the present coalition, Liberal **Herbert Henry Asquith**, will not opt for Conscription. He has promised that he would not, and he is sticking to his promise.



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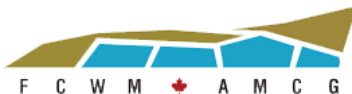
19 September 1915

Second Division Moves to France



Present day in Kimmel Belgium

The Second Canadian Division under Major General Turner was moved to France from 14 - 23 September. The division sails from Folkestone to Boulogne, then marching to Kimmel, Belgium, with HQ in Westouter. First Division is already in line at Ploegsteert.



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20 September 1915

Halt to All Out German Submarine Warfare



SS Arabic, circa 1905

On August 19, 1915, German U-24 sank without warning the White Star liner *SS Arabic* en route to the United States, with the loss of 44 lives.

Fearing that the US would sever relations, German Chancellor Bethman Hollweg recommended a change in imperial naval policy. The Kaiser agreed to order that passenger ships be attacked only «in the cruiser system», that is, after the submarine had surfaced, had served warning, and given opportunity to abandon ship.

The Commander in Chief of the High Seas Fleet (von Pohl) and the Chief of the Naval Staff (Bachmann) both resigned over this policy, objecting that many Allied decoy ships had now been armed and had sunk three submarines in the summer. The Kaiser nevertheless supported the Chancellor's diplomatic approach toward the United States, and stuck to the decision, on 30 August.

On 20 September 1915, Admiral von Holtzendorff, the new CNS, under the influence of naval recommendations, ordered submarines out of the west coast and from the Channel. This spelled an end to all-out submarine warfare against British and neutral shipping.

From 20 September 1915 to January 1916 activity against merchant shipping practically ceased in the British waters and was transferred to the Mediterranean.

But that policy will prove temporary. Holtzendorff will return to Unrestricted Submarine Warfare.

Captain Alfred C. Dewar, RN, «Submarine Campaign», *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (Twelfth Ed., 1922), XXXII: 605-12, esp. 606.



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21 September 1915

Prisonniers de guerre



Des prisonniers de guerre

Les prisonniers de guerre sont maintenant réunis par milliers dans des camps partout en Europe et en Russie à la suite des batailles de 1914 et 1915.

Les principaux règlements qui régissent le traitement des prisonniers de guerre sont la Convention de Genève de 1864, la Déclaration de Paris, 1864, et la Convention de La Haye, 1864, modifiée en 1907.

Selon ces conventions internationales, les prisonniers de guerre doivent être traités avec dignité et générosité. Ils ne doivent pas subir un sort généralement réservé à des criminels. Les prisonniers de guerre doivent donc être bien nourris, décemment logés, et payés, et doivent recevoir les aménités qui leur sont envoyées par leurs concitoyens sans interférence. Les conventions régissent les conditions de leur travail et exigent des paiements semblables à ceux des soldats.

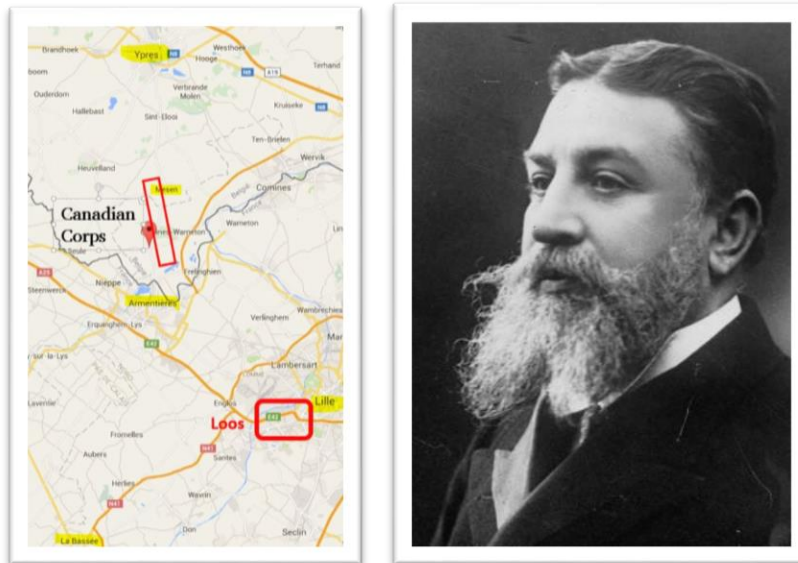
«Bien qu'il soit évident que l'envoi de boîtes d'alimenttion à une grande échelle soulageait le gouvernement allemand d'une grande responsabilité, il doit être reconnu au crédit de la nation allemande que tous les envois, sauf un petit pourcentage, ont atteint leur adresse malgré le fait qu'ils contenaient des objets impossibles à obtenir en Allemagne, sauf pour les gens très riches.»¹

Sir Thomas Barklay, «War», *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th Ed., 1911, 28:314-7; Sir Reginald Brodie Duke Acland, «Prisoners of War», 12th Edition (1922), Vol. 32, pp. 150-63.; ¹ Ibid, p. 154.



22 September 1915

Bulgaria Begins Mobilization



The Bulgarian government decreed general mobilization on **22 September 1915**. With the arrangements struck on 6 September with Germany and Austria-Hungary still secret, **Prime Minister Radoslavov** announced the terms of the Turco-Bulgarian agreement and proclaimed assuming a posture of “armed neutrality.”

The Bulgarian army was organised in three Field Armies, 10 infantry divisions, 40 infantry regiments, 19 artillery regiments, 11 cavalry regiments, 5 engineer battalions, and one each railway and telegraph battalions. National manpower was approximately 577,000 trained men from age 20 to 48 with another 231,000 available. Bulgaria was to provide 4 infantry divisions to be placed under command of German Generalfeldmarschall August von Mackensen, who was charged with the overall campaign against Serbia.

The Bulgarian army was reasonably well equipped, except for the small number of machine guns, 248 Maxims. Bulgaria had lost much of its artillery in the Second Balkan War but by 1915, these losses had been made good with new cannons from both Krupp and Schneider including 428 modern Schneider quick-firing 75 mm cannons. However Bulgaria had no indigenous capability for manufacturing artillery ammunition and its holdings were inadequate.

The Bulgarian navy was a small coastal defence force and the air force had barely taken wing.

Elinor F.B., Grogan, «Bulgaria», *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Twelfth Edition, 1922, XXX: 516-22.



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23 September 1915

The Canadian Corps on the front line for the Allied campaign in France



Ploegsteert Wood Military Cemetery is located 12.5 kilometres south of Ieper town centre,

The Second Canadian Division has now rejoined the First Division on the front line. The brand new Canadian Corps, part of the British Second Army, extends over five kilometers facing No Man's Land west of Messines, Belgium, with five infantry brigades and one cavalry brigade in line, with a sixth brigade in Corps reserve — the cavalry in the role of infantry.

It covers from the Bois de Ploegsteert to the south to one kilometer north of Wytshaete.

This is the position that the Canadians will hold in the forthcoming British battle of Loos, due for 25 September.

That battle will be fought mainly by First British Army (Haig), to the south of Second Army. The Canadians will therefore have a secondary role in these British operations.

The main show will however be well to the south, by the French Army, which will simultaneously attack in Champagne and Artois.

Nicholson, Canadian Expeditionary Force, Chap 4: «Festubert and Givenchy».



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24 September 1915

Salonica: Trop Peu Trop Tard, La Grèce s'inquiète



Les Gouvernements britannique et français ont maintenant reçu une demande implorante du premier ministre de la Grèce pour que le Corps expéditionnaire Allié de Salonica soit immédiatement renforcé en prévision de l'attaque combinée allemande-autrichienne-hongroise-bulgare contre la Serbie, qui ne manquera pas de menacer la Grèce.

Venizelos est dans la position difficile de devoir opposer son Roi et convaincre l'opinion publique et militaire grecque que les renforts Alliés seront suffisants pour résister aux poussées des puissances du Centre.

Il faut donc pour les gouvernements de Paris et de Londres identifier des divisions à déménager en toute hâte, alors même que Joffre s'apprête à donner un grand coup en Artois et Champagne, et que le général French se prépare pour la bataille de Loos, pour laquelle il se dit démuni.

Ceci signifie à toutes fins pratiques la fin des opérations sérieuses aux Dardanelles. Il faut désormais transporter des divisions terrestres et l'appui maritime vers la Grèce pour rassurer les Serbes, les Grecs, Albaniens et les Roumains qu'il leur reste un espoir.

Une victoire à Constantinople aurait complètement évité cet imbroglio.



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25 September 1915

The Western Front Erupts: Artois, Champagne and Loos – The Battle of Loos



Scottish troops marching to Loos before the battle.

In the autumn of 1915, General Joffre decided that a major effort by the Entente in the Champagne and Artois sectors might break the stalemate and open a war of movement.

The simultaneous British attack in the Loos area of Artois, **on 25 September 1915**, was designed to exploit new artillery tactics and the first British use of poison gas (chlorine). A large cavalry reserve would exploit the anticipated breakthrough.

Unfortunately the preliminary artillery bombardment was hampered by shell shortages and did not cut the German wire. Gas was often blown back on the British themselves. The attacking infantry suffered very heavy casualties. In the first four hours of the attack, the 12 battalions in the first wave suffered 8,000 casualties among the 10,000 infantrymen.

Field Marshall French was slow in deploying the reserves; where the British had made big gains, their attack stalled because of artillery shell shortages and lack of fresh troops. German casualties were also heavy but their system of elastic defence successfully contained the British attack.

The battles around Loos will peter out with a final, failed British attack on 13 October.

Cruttwell, *A History of the Great War*, p. 165-9.



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26 September 1915

New CIGS skirts Kitchener



Sir Archibald Murray (appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff)

The British Cabinet has now come to the conclusion that Field Marshal Kitchener's style of personal administration at the War Office has proven inadequate to the management of many theatres of war.

It has therefore imposed on Kitchener that he use, as all other Secretary of State for War have used, a Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) to coordinate the staff work of the War Office, and conduct formal staff liaison with commanders in the field.

Major General Sir Archibald Murray was Chief of Staff for FM John French in France and became Deputy CIGS in London in January. On **26 September 1915**, he became CIGS as Lieutenant General. His job will henceforth be to represent to Cabinet the technical advice on behalf of the British Army so as to inform Government War policy.

This, quite unknown to the public, takes Kitchener a notch down from the position that he formerly occupied, of taking upon himself of feeding the Cabinet with the information that it wanted, -- and denying it the information that he did not want it to have...

Of course the movement towards this decision sprang from the frustration experienced by the Minister of Munitions, Lloyd George, who loathed the way in which Kitchener fought a turf war so as to exclude other ministers' prodding into his domain.

Mr Lloyd George is slowly but assuredly seeing his way toward better Cabinet policy decision-making.

Magnus, Kitchener, 416.



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27 September 1915

Le Front Ouest en bataille: Troisième jour des opérations de Joffre



Loos-en-Gohelle, détruit

Les assauts des Français en Champagne et en Artois, et celui des Anglais, à Loos, ont eu des succès immédiats, mais peu de conséquences stratégiques sur le front occidental.

Frappés dur par des bombardements d'artillerie d'un volume inconnu jusqu'alors, les Allemands ont perdu leurs premières lignes, subissant des pertes importantes et des prises de prisonniers en grands nombres.

Mais leur système de défense de deuxième ligne en contre-pente s'est avéré d'une force incontestable. Dès qu'ils apparaissaient au faite des hauteurs occupées par la première ligne, les attaquants Alliés étaient décimés par un feu nourri de mitrailleuses employées en défense avec une habileté déconcertante, et des concentrations d'artillerie efficaces. Les pertes ont donc été graves des deux côtés.

Mais ce sont les défenseurs qui ont réussi à atteindre leur but.

Ni en Champagne, ni en Artois, ni à Loos, l'infanterie n'a pu percer de façon à déstabiliser le front et atteindre les arrières vulnérables des Allemands.

Les attaques de l'automne se poursuivent, mais les résultats d'abord célébrés parlent maintenant d'eux-mêmes. Les champs sont, ici encore, jonchés de milliers de cadavres.



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28 September 1915

Mesopotamia – Drawn in up on the Tigris



British-Indian Force Captures Kut-al-Amara

The capture of Kut-al-Amara, on **28 September 1915**, by a Indian Army force commanded by General Sir Charles Townshend was the high water mark in the British campaign in Mesopotamia.

The bulk of his force was the Indian Army's 6 (Poona) Division, considered one of the best divisions in the Indian Army, with a brigade of Indian cavalry attached.

Townshend faced relatively weak Ottoman opposition as the Mesopotamian front was seen by Turkey as of secondary importance. At Kut, the Turks lost 5,300 men and all their guns, with relatively light casualties suffered by the Indian units.

Townshend was ordered by Sir John Nixon, in overall theatre command, to press on with Baghdad only 120 miles up river.

His supply lines, already thinly stretched, failed to keep up with the advance, leaving the 6 Poona Division vulnerable to renewed Turkish efforts.



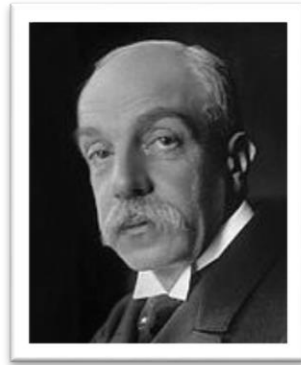
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29 September 1915

The Dumba Affair



Dr. Constantin Theodor Dumba

In September 1915, the Dumba affair was very newsworthy in the United States.

Dr. Constantin Theodor Dumba, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to the United States, was given his passport and returned home.

Dr Dumba was shown to have plotted for the creation of labor unrest in the United States by trying to convince a significant numbers of Hungarian, Bohemian, Moravian, Dalmatian, Carniolanese, Croatian, Slavonian and other people of the races from Austria-Hungary, all workers of the Bethlehem big steel industry in New England, to rise against owners for better working conditions.

It became evident that the intention was to disrupt war industry production supporting the Entente countries.

Dr Dumba was caught infringing a number of International and American laws, including hiring an American diplomatic messenger to transport treasonable messages. He was also trying to make American immigrant workers undermine the weapons industry so as to protect Austria-Hungary.

The incident was one more event that turned American opinion against the Central Alliance.

The string of sinkings of passenger ships with American victims, most notably the Lusitania (7 May), the Arabic (19 Aug) and Hesperian (4 Sep) had already raised public opprobrium.

«The Archibald Incident – Dr. Dumba’s Recall Requested», in New York Times’ Current History, Vol. III - The European War, October 1915, pp. 10-7.



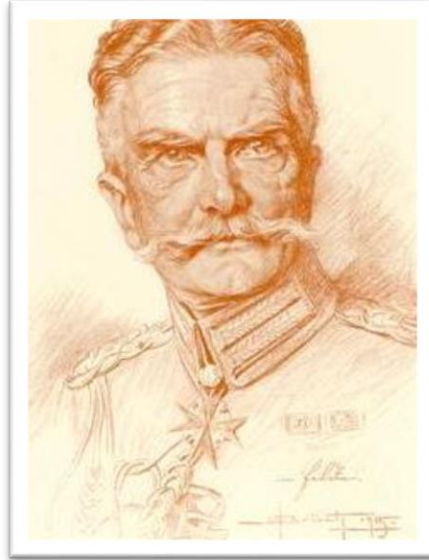
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30 September 1915

Change of focus for the alliance: From Russia to Serbia



Field Marshal August von Mackensen

After five months of campaign through the Polish kingdom against the Russian armies, the German Chief of the General Staff, General Falkenhayn, decides to put a stop to the operations in the East in view of the coming winter, the long lines of communications, and the loss of hope that large bodies of Russians can still be encircled.

Falkenhayn also decides that a very successful general of the Southern Army Group in this campaign, – promoted Field Marshal in June, –will be transferred to the Balkans to take command of the new Quadruple Alliance Front.

Field Marshal August von Mackensen is now seen to eclipse the renowned tandem of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who have taken part in the Eastern Drive with the Northern Army Group. Indeed, Mackensen proved a tremendous field commander.

His new command consisting of the German Eleventh, the Austrian-Hungarian Third and the Bulgarian First armies will be a juggernaut against the war-weary and outnumbered Serbs.

His aim will be to free the Constantinople Railroad so as to allow German material support to reach Turkey through Serbia and Bulgaria.

Cyril Falls, The Great War, (1959), Vol. II, Chap – «The Fatal Hellespont».



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