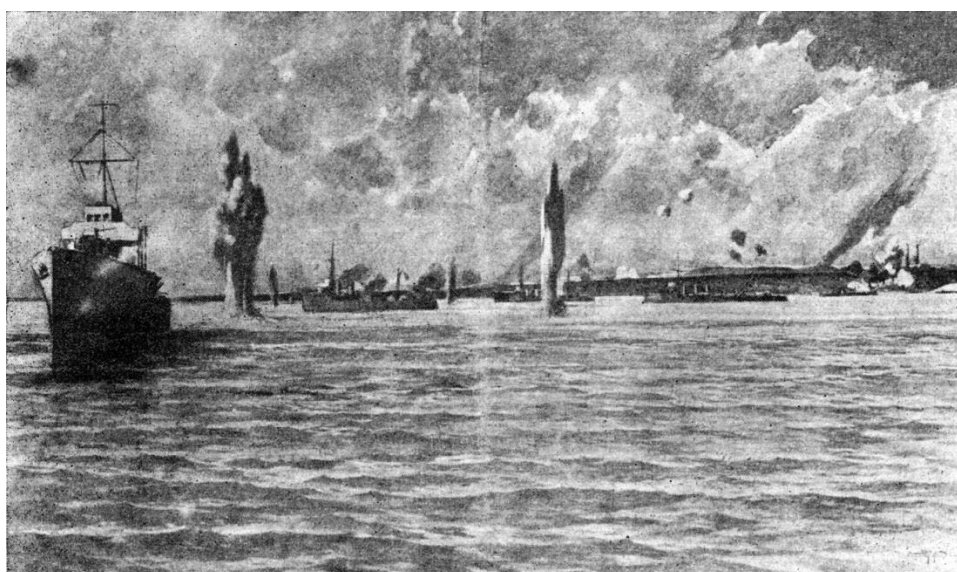




## Baltic Military History Newsletter October 2014

### Krasnaja Gorka Operation 13 October – 9 November 1919

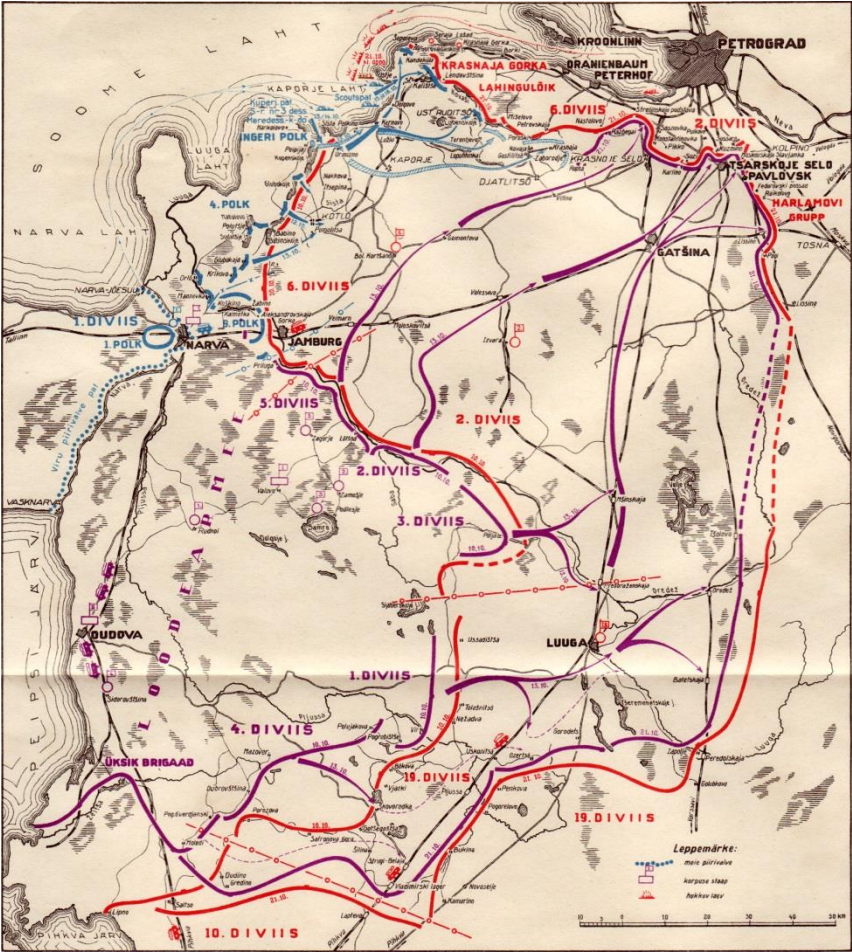


#### British naval vessels supporting the Estonian landing

In autumn 1919 the Russian Northwest Army under the command of General Nikolai Yudenitch intended to launch a new and vigorous offensive to the east via Jamburg and Gatsina with the capture of Petrograd as its main objective. The Northwest Army was thoroughly reorganized prior to the planned offensive and it also received great quantities of war materiel from the Allied governments. The effective strength of the Northwest Army at the time consisted of 18,500 officers and men with fifty-six artillery pieces, aircraft, six tanks and a number of armoured trains. The effective strength of the opposing 7<sup>th</sup> Red Army consisted of 26,500 officers and men with 148 artillery pieces however the fighting quality of its troops was low.

On 26 August 1919, a conference took place in Riga, under the tutelage of the Allied military representatives, between the representatives of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian armies the Northwest Army, and the West Russian Volunteer Army of Colonel Pavel Bermond-Avalov. The Allied representatives demanded that the forces of the participants at the conference should support the main officer of the Northwest Army on Petrograd though attacks on their respective fronts.

The Northwest Army launched its general offensive on 10 October 1919 and it initially developed with great success, by 13 October Luuga was taken and by 20 October Tsarskoje Selo and Pavlovsk were taken as well. In ten days the Northwest Army had advanced from Jamburg to the gates of Petrograd. However, as this was taking place, the 7<sup>th</sup> Red Army was considerably reinforced. It received an additional 28-29,000 officers and men from Petrograd. On 21 October 1919, the 7<sup>th</sup> Army launched a counter-attack and recaptured Pavlovsk and Tsarskoje Selo. The 15<sup>th</sup> Red Army also launched a strong attack on 26 October in the direction of Luuga – Volosovo which penetrated far into the rear of the Northwest Army and force it to withdraw quickly from Gatsina.



**Estonians in Blue – Bolshevick Forces in Red**

In accordance with the Riga agreement, the Estonian forces were obliged to support the Northwest Army. For this purpose, the Estonian Commander-in-Chief General

Jonathan Laidoner developed a plan for the capture the naval fortress of Krasnaja Gorka. Laidoner tasked Commander of the Estonian Navy, Rear – Admiral Johan Pitka to carry out an amphibious operation to capture the fortress. To carry out the task Pitka had naval forces and army infantry and artillery detachments under his command as well as the support of the British Baltic Squadron. According to Estonian historian Evald Uustalu, as Krasnaja Gorka was a forward position to the east, protecting the naval base of Kronstadt, the Estonians undertook the operation, “not without the mental reservation that they might secure for themselves a strongpoint against possible White Russian treachery later on.”<sup>1</sup> Assisting the White Russians in the offensive also had the political objective of, if the Northwest Army was successful, obtaining cultural autonomy for the Ingrians – the Finno – Ugric people who inhabited the region between the Estonian border and Petrograd. By 13 October 1919, the majority of the landing force, altogether 1,600 men with four artillery pieces arrived at Kaporje Bay – they went ashore in the Peipija district 13 – 14 October from where they immediately pushed on in the direction of Krasnaja Gorka. Opposing the landing force were enemy troops consisting of 3,000 men with twelve artillery pieces. On 16 October, the landing force reached the strongly fortified positions around Krasnaja Gorka, however they did not succeed in breaking through. On 26 October 1919, the landing force was reinforced by the 4<sup>th</sup> Estonian Regiment bringing the total strength up to 2,200 men and the British fleet continued to provide effective naval gunfire support. At the end of October, failure of the Northwest Army’s offensive was apparent and the Estonians undertook a retrograde of the landing force withdrawing men and materiel by sea. The Krasnaja Gorka positions held by the landing force were all evacuated by 9 November 1919. During the operation the Estonians captured eight 3-inch artillery pieces, nine machine guns, several hundred rifles, parts for artillery pieces, two naval rangefinders, one field kitchen, horses, artillery shells, machine gun and rifle ammunition. Estonian losses consisted of forty – one killed and 278 wounded. Bolshevik materiel losses included one aircraft shot down, three naval vessels destroyed and personnel losses, in addition to prisoners, consisted of approximately one thousand men killed and wounded. The landing demonstrates the importance of flexibility and of an effective joint approach to operations.

---

<sup>1</sup>Evald Uustalu. *The History of the Estonian People*. (London: Boreas Publishing Company. Ltd. 1952), 187



## The Study of Military History and the Future

*The chief objects of our [historical] studies should be to discover lessons for the future and to gain an insight into the human element in war. The human element often seems to be the only stable factor in a changing world. Military history may also be studied with the special objects of learning something about the topographical features and climate of a potential theatre of war, or the characteristics of a possible enemy. A study of history, in addition, trains the minds of budding commanders. – ‘Juniper’ – “Military History and Modern Warfare” (1936)*

### Estonian Uniforms in Late 1919



**From Left to Right: Non-commissioned Officer, Artilleryman, Land forces Officer, Cavalryman, Naval Officer, Light Machine Gunner, Armoured Train Trooper, Infantryman**

## Conferences

### 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BALTIC MILITARY HISTORY CONFERENCE: Adaptation and Innovation in Baltic Military History

**14-15 October 2014 - DRAFT PROGRAMME**

Tuesday	14 October
<b>1245-1300</b>	<b>Registration and Coffee</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, in front of Main Hall/</i>
<b>1300-1330</b>	<b>Welcoming Remarks by Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras</b> Commandant of the Baltic Defence College  <b>Dr Eric Allan Sibul</b> BALTDEFCOL Academic and Conference Organizer <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, Officers Club/</i>
<b>SESSION 1 1330-1430</b>	<b>Early History</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, Officers Club/</i>  <a href="#">The Battle of Karuse February 16, 1270</a> Mr Ričardas Dediala
<b>SESSION 2 1430-1530</b>	<b>Maritime Operations and Affairs</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, Officers Club/</i>  <a href="#">Swedish operation in the Ålands, February 1918</a> Mr Enrico Magnani  <a href="#">Estonian Maritime Development and the Establishment of the Estonian Navy, 1918 - 1920</a> Dr Eric Allan Sibul
<b>1535-1600</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, in front of Main Hall/</i>
<b>SESSION 3 1600-1700</b>	<b>Italian Perspective on the Baltic 1918 – 1920</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, Officers Club/</i>  <a href="#">News on the Baltic situation published by the Italian Press in 1919</a> Ms Loredana Vannacci  <a href="#">Latvia in fall 1919 through the papers of the Italian mission</a> Mr Ciro Paoletti

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>15 October</b>
<b>0900-0930</b>	<b>Coffee</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, in front of Main Hall/</i>
<b>SESSION 4 0930-1030</b>	<b>Lithuanian Military Development 1918 – 1940</b> <i>/Venue: 12 Riia Str, Officers Club/</i>  Lithuanian Military Aircraft Design 1921 – 1940 Major Gintautas Jakštys  The Lithuanian Artillery Park 1919 – 1940 Mr Egidijus Papečkys
<b>SESSION 5 1030-1115</b>	<b>Post World War II</b>  Combatant for Europe. International relations in the journal Võitlus 1953 – 1991 Dr Pauli Heikkilä
<b>1115-1130</b>	<b>Reflections and Conference Summation</b> Dr Eric Allan Sibul

**If you are interested in attending:** Please contact the Baltic Defence College by email [info@baltdefcol.org](mailto:info@baltdefcol.org) or by telephone: +372 717 6000.

## Call for Articles and Publication Opportunities

### Baltic Scholars for the Ukraine

The Baltic Studies Program of Stanford University Libraries and The Museum of Occupations in Tallinn have created the blog, Baltic Scholars for Ukraine (<https://balticscholars.stanford.edu/>), in order to foster thoughtful and analytical discussion on the Russian occupation and annexation of Crimea, and the situation in Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Russia in general.

Baltic Scholars for Ukraine is intended to serve as a platform where political scientists, historians and other scholars from the Baltic States and/or researching the Baltic States have an opportunity to share their thoughts about the recent events in Ukraine, and the background and implications of these events.

Stanford University Libraries and the Museum of Occupations do not dictate the content of the posts in this blog. We give our contributors a chance to choose the subjects and nuances they would like to stress, and we are sure their academic background and knowledge of Russia and Eastern Europe will result in insightful and interesting analysis about the situation in Ukraine, as well as its meaning to the region in general.

We are currently looking for new contributions to our blog. If you are interested, please contact us via e-mail: [liisi.eglit@stanford.edu](mailto:liisi.eglit@stanford.edu)

## **Baltic Security and Defence Review**

The Baltic Security and Defence Review is a peer reviewed academic journal published twice a year by the Baltic Defence College, a staff college for the three Baltic States located in Estonia. The language of the journal is English. We welcome scholars to submit academic articles of 6,000 – 12,000 words in length with endnotes (Chicago style) on subjects dealing with security issues and military history of the Baltic region as well as articles on current NATO and European security issues. Submit all articles and enquiries to: Dr. Bradley Thayer, Dean, Baltic Defence College and Editor, The Baltic Security and Defence Review The Baltic Defence College, Riia 12 51013 Tartu, Estonia Email [augustine.meaher@baltdefcol.org](mailto:augustine.meaher@baltdefcol.org) Send all article drafts as a word file.

## **Baltic Military History Newsletter**

The Baltic Military History Newsletter endeavours to publish material of interest primarily dealing with the military history of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. We also publish in a broad manner material on operational art, military theory war studies and military affairs of interest to the Baltic armed forces. The newsletter also prints information regarding Baltic military history related events, meetings, seminars, conferences, recent books and articles, history courses, museum exhibits, status of collections, and recent scholarship. The preference is for articles (and especially announcements) to be as brief as possible, but there is flexibility on length. Lengthy pieces maybe published over multiple months. If you have material to publish or have questions or inquiries, please contact the general editor Dr. Eric A. Sibul at [eric.sibul@baltdefcol.org](mailto:eric.sibul@baltdefcol.org).

## **Northern Interests**

The Baltic Defence College is establishing an e-journal that hopes to start publishing sometime in autumn 2014 or spring 2015. The journal will focus on security issues concerning the wider Baltic region (to include the countries on the Baltic and far north) and contain commentary on a broad variety of security issues as well as information from institutions and scholars interested in the security and strategic issues. The e-journal – which will be called The Northern Interest -- is looking for short articles/commentary on subjects concerning security (defining security in its broadest sense to include foreign policy, energy security, strategic communications, cyber security, economic security etc. as well as military security). Articles can be: commentaries, of 800 - 1,500 words; analytical pieces, 1,500 - 2,500 words; book reviews, interviews, etc., not longer than 1,000 words We will also publish announcements of conferences and workshops dealing with greater Baltic/Northern security, as well as notes about ongoing scholarly activity in the security field. If you want to contribute to the e-journal or wish to publish information about events and scholarship on Greater Baltic/Northern security at your institution please contact Mr. James Rogers at the Baltic Defence College at his email: [james.rogers@baltdefcol.org](mailto:james.rogers@baltdefcol.org).



**Linked in.**

