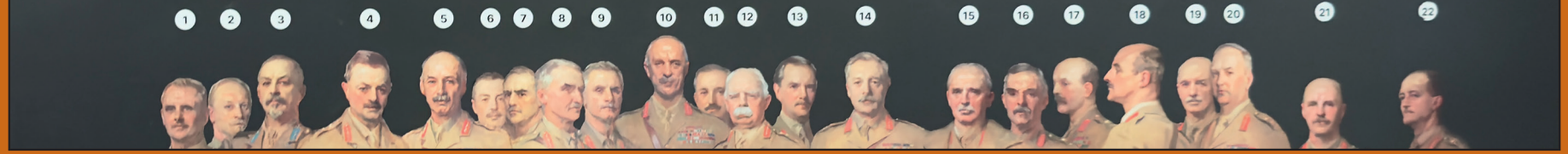
Some General Officers of the Great War

1 General Sir William Birdwood, 1885–1951
2 General Jan Christian Smuts, 1870–1950
3 General Louis Botha, 1862–1919
4 General Lord Byng, 1862–1935
5 General Lord Rawlinson, 1864–1925
6 Major General Sir Henry Lukin, 1860–1925
7 Lt-General Sir John Monash, 1865–1931
8 General Lord Horne, 1861–1929
9 General Sir George Milne, 1866–1948
10 Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, 1864–1922
11 Major General Sir Andrew Russell, 1868–1960
12 Field Marshal Lord Plumer, 1857–1932
13 General Sir John Cowans, 1862–1921
14 Field Marshal Earl Haig, 1861–1928
15 Field Marshal The Earl of Ypres, 1852–1925
16 Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, 1860–1933
17 Lt-General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude, 1864–1917
18 Field Marshal Viscount Allenby, 1861–1936
19 Lt-General Sir William Marshal, 1865–1939
20 General Sir Arthur Currie, 1875–1933
21 General The Earl of Cavan, 1865–1946
22 Major General Sir Charles Dobell, 1869–1954



Some General Officers of the Great War

After seeing this amazing painting in the National Portrait Gallery London, I decided to draw together the lives and experiences of the 22 officers portrayed therein.
None of what follows is original, it simply brings together, under one cover, much that has previously been written and is published on Wikipedia or elsewhere.
This publication will be available free to anyone who wishes to download it or request a copy by email.
It will not be printed for sale.

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Painting: General Officers of World War I (originally entitled Some General Officers of the Great War) is an oil painting by John Singer Sargent, completed in 1922. It was commissioned by South African financier Sir Abraham Bailey, 1st Baronet to commemorate the Generals who commanded British and British Empire armies in the First World War.

Sargent was initially unwilling to take on such a large project, but took the commission in January 1919 and began work in August 1920, after he completed his similarly huge painting, Gassed. He was also working on murals for the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts.
Sargent found it difficult to find a suitable composition for so many full-length portraits, and Sargent himself foresaw a "horrible failure". The resulting painting is unsatisfactory with 22 men in khaki uniforms standing like pillars in a crowd in front of an anonymous brownish void, possibly an open doorway, with the bases of fluted pillars to either side. Sargent described it as "painting them all standing up in a vacuum". They look forward with blank stares, with no discernible purpose, almost as if each was unaware of the others around him.

The completed painting measures 118 × 208 inches (3.0 × 5.3 m). It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1922.

Bailey commissioned two other commemorative portraits, Statesmen of World War I by Sir James Guthrie, and Naval Officers of World War I by Sir Arthur Stockdale Cope. Bailey paid £5,000 for each of the three paintings and donated all three to the National Portrait Gallery.

Obituary from The Times: April 16, 1925

We announce with much regret that Mr John Singer Sargent, RA, who was by general consent the greatest portrait-painter of his time, died suddenly at his house in Chelsea on Tuesday night at the age of 69.

More than a painter of genius is lost to the world by his death. His friends will sorely miss the burly figure, the gentleness that went with his great stature to make him something like a good giant in a fairy story, the quiet geniality, the brilliant talks among intimates, the modesty, the active good will. Music has lost a devout servant, and literature a lover more ardent than she is apt to find among artists. Oil-painting, water-colour and drawing are

the poorer by the lack of what a man who, though nearly seventy, seemed still full of vigour might yet have added to their stores of beauty.
Now and then it happens that the death of one man seems definitely to turn down a leaf that till then was not wholly done with. For nearly thirty years, from the eighteen-eighties to about 1910, one of the first questions (and for ten or fifteen of those years the very first question) asked about each exhibition of the Royal Academy was "What has Sargent sent?" More than had been the case with any painter since Sir Joshua, the age felt that Mr Sargent would show the very body of the time its form and pressure, painted with method that was always comprehensible.

This is not to say either that Mr Sargent was a mere "society" painter, or that he painted by rote and by formula. Henry James wrote of an early portrait by him that it "offers the 'uncanny' spectacle of a talent which on the very threshold of its career has nothing more to learn". Yet from the days when Frederic Leighton, meeting the youth in Tirol, admired his boyish efforts to the last hours of his working life, Mr Sargent was always learning, always approaching each new picture as a new problem in painting, always putting meaning and vitality into every touch upon the canvas.

Admiration is not likely to be denied to his masterpieces at any future moment, but, in spite of the strong individuality of his genius, he belonged to his own age; and the passing of the great painter drives home the truth that the age which he so brilliantly and shrewdly depicted is also past.

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In the painting, from left to right, they are:

1. Field Marshal William Birdwood, 1st Baron Birdwood (commander of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps from 1914 to 1916, and of the British Fifth Army in 1918)
2. Field Marshal Jan Smuts (commander of Imperial forces in East Africa in 1916)
3. General Louis Botha (commander in South West Africa) (blue lapel flashes)
4. Field Marshal Julian Byng, 1st Viscount Byng of Vimy (commander of the British Third Army from 1917 to 1919)
5. General Henry Rawlinson, 1st Baron Rawlinson (commander of the British Fourth Army from 1916 to 1919) (carrying a coat)
6. Major General Sir Henry Lukin (commander of the South African Brigade from 1915 to 1916, and of the 9th (Scottish) Division from 1916 to 1918)
7. General Sir John Monash (commander of the Australian Corps from 1917 to 1918)
8. General Henry Horne, 1st Baron Horne (commander of the British First Army from September 1917)
9. Field Marshal George Milne, 1st Baron Milne (commander of British forces in Salonika from 1916 to 1919)
10. Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, 1st Baronet (Chief of the Imperial General Staff from February 1918)
11. Major General Sir Andrew Hamilton Russell (Commander of the New Zealand Division from 1916 to 1919)
12. Field Marshal Herbert Plumer, 1st Viscount Plumer (Commander of the British Second Army from 1915 to 1917 and in 1918) (white moustache)
13. General Sir John Cowans (Quartermaster-General to the Forces from 1912 to 1919)

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14. Field Marshal Douglas Haig, 1st Earl Haig (Commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France from December 1915 to 1919) (with baton)
15. Field Marshal John French, 1st Earl of Ypres (Commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France in 1914 to December 1915) (with baton, wearing coat)
16. Field Marshal Sir William Robertson, 1st Baronet (Chief of the Imperial General Staff from December 1915 to February 1918)
17. Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Maude (Commander of British forces in Mesopotamia from 1916 to his death in 1917)
18. Field Marshal Edmund Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby (Commander of the British Third Army in 1916 to 1917, and the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in the Middle East) (turning away, with sword)
19. Lieutenant General Sir William Marshall (Commander of British forces in Mesopotamia from 1917 to 1919)
20. General Sir Arthur Currie (Commander of the Canadian Corps from June 1917 to 1918) (carrying coat)
21. Field Marshal Rudolph Lambart, 10th Earl of Cavan (Commander of the Italian Tenth Army from March 1918)
22. General Sir Charles Macpherson Dobell (Commander in Cameroon from 1914 to 1916, and then in the Middle East until 1917).

The Generals are mostly British, but some representatives from the British Empire are also included: Field Marshal Smuts, General Botha and Major General Lukin from South Africa, Generals Currie and Dobell from Canada, General Monash from Australia, and Major General Russell from New Zealand.

A list of potential subjects was compiled by Evan Charteris and Lewis Vernon Harcourt, 1st Viscount Harcourt, and approved by Bailey. Some were deliberately omitted (for example, General Ian Hamilton was blamed for the failure at Gallipoli and left out). Other prominent army commanders to be left out include Horace Smith-Dorrien, Hubert Gough, Charles Monro, Richard Haking, William Peyton, Charles Kavanagh, John Nixon, Percy Lake, and Charles Townshend; administrative officers such as Stanley Brenton von Donop, William Furse, Nevil Macready, George Macdonogh, Ronald Charles Maxwell and Travers Clarke, several Chiefs of the Imperial General Staff – Charles W. H. Douglas, James Wolfe Murray, and Archibald Murray – and army Chiefs of staff, such as Charles "Tim" Harington, Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, Launcelot Kiggell and Herbert Lawrence. There are no officers from the Royal Flying Corps, such as Hugh Trenchard, David Henderson and John Salmond, or the Tank Corps, such as Hugh Elles.

My thanks go to Andy Westfield, Beryl Whyatt and Margaret Fox for their help with proofreading and formatting this project.

Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood

Field Marshal William Riddell Birdwood, 1st Baron Birdwood, GCB GCSI GCMG GCVO CIE DSO (13 September 1865 – 17 May 1951) was a British Army officer. He saw active service in the Second Boer War on the staff of Lord Kitchener. He saw action again in the First World War as commander of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps during the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915, leading the landings on the peninsula and then the evacuation later in the year, before becoming Commander-in-Chief of the Fifth Army on the Western Front during the closing stages of the war. He went on to be General Officer Commanding the Northern Army in India in 1920 and Commander-in-Chief, India, in 1925.

Early life

William Riddell Birdwood was born on 13 September 1865 in Kirkee, India. His father, Herbert Mills Birdwood, born in Bombay and educated in the UK, had returned to India in 1859 after passing the Indian Civil Service examination. In 1861, Herbert Birdwood married Edith Marion Sidonie, the eldest daughter of Surgeon-Major Elijah George Halhed Impey of the Bombay Horse Artillery and Postmaster-General of the Bombay Presidency. They had five sons and a daughter; William was their second son. At the time of William's birth, his father held positions in the Bombay legislative council, and went on to become a Bombay high court judge. William Birdwood was educated at Clifton College.

Military career

After securing a militia commission in the 4th Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers in 1883, Birdwood trained at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, from which he was commissioned early, owing to the Russian war scare of 1885, becoming a Lieutenant in the 12th (Prince of Wales') Royal Lancers on 9 May 1885. He joined his regiment in India and then transferred from the 12th Royal Lancers to the Bengal Staff Corps on 20 December 1886. He subsequently transferred to the 11th Bengal Lancers in 1887, seeing action on the North-West Frontier in 1891. He later became adjutant of the Viceroy's Bodyguard in 1893. He was promoted to Captain on 9 May 1896 and saw action during the Tirah Campaign in 1897.

Birdwood served in the Second Boer War, initially as Brigade-Major with a mounted brigade in Natal from 10 January 1900 and then as Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General on the staff of Lord Kitchener from 15 October 1900. Promoted to brevet Major on 20 November 1901 and local Lieutenant Colonel in October 1901, he became military secretary to Lord Kitchener on 5 June 1902, and followed him on his return to the United Kingdom on board the SS Orotava, which arrived in Southampton on 12 July 1902. He received a brevet promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in the South African Honours list published on 26 June 1902. In a despatch from June 1902, Lord Kitchener wrote the following about his work in South Africa:

"This young officer has held a difficult position as Assistant Adjutant-General, Mounted Troops, and responsible adviser as to the distribution of remounts. In carrying out these duties he has proved himself to possess exceptional ability, and he has shown, moreover, remarkable tact in dealing with and conciliating the various interests which he had to take into consideration."

When Kitchener went to India as Commander-in-Chief in November 1902, Birdwood joined him there as assistant military secretary and interpreter. He was promoted to the substantive rank of Major on 9 May 1903 and appointed Military Secretary to Lord Kitchener with the rank

of full Colonel on 26 June 1905. Having been appointed an aide-de-camp to the King on 14 February 1906, he was given command of the Kohat Brigade on the North West Frontier in 1908 and promoted to temporary Brigadier General on 28 June 1909. Promoted to the rank of Major General on 3 October 1911, Birdwood became Quartermaster-General in India and a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council in 1912 and then Secretary of the Indian Army Department in 1913.

Gallipoli

In November 1914 Birdwood was instructed by Kitchener to form an army corps from the Australian and New Zealand troops that were training in Egypt. He was promoted to temporary Lieutenant General on 12 December 1914 and given command of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. Kitchener instructed General Sir Ian Hamilton, Commander of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, to carry out an operation to capture the Gallipoli peninsula and placed Birdwood's ANZAC Corps under Hamilton's command. Hamilton ordered Birdwood to carry out a landing on 25 April 1915 north of Kabatepe at a site now known as ANZAC Cove. The ANZAC Corps encountered high ridges, narrow gullies, dense scrub and strong Ottoman resistance and became pinned down. Major General William Bridges and Major General Alexander Godley, the divisional commanders, were both of the view that the Allied forces, dealing with stiffer-than-expected resistance, should be evacuated ahead of an expected attack by the Ottoman Army. Nevertheless, Hamilton ordered them to hold fast.

Birdwood took effective command of the First Australian Imperial Force in May 1915 while still commanding Allied troops on the ground at Gallipoli. He launched a Major attack on Ottoman positions in August 1915 (the Battle of Sari Bair) but failed to dislodge them from the peninsula. Notwithstanding this, Birdwood was the only corps commander opposed to abandoning Gallipoli. He was promoted to the permanent rank of Lieutenant General on 28 October 1915 and given command of the newly formed Dardanelles Army: the one outstanding success of the campaign was the evacuation led by Birdwood, which took place in December 1915 and January 1916, when the entire force was withdrawn before any Ottoman reaction.

Western Front

In February 1916 the Australian and New Zealand contingents, back in Egypt, underwent reorganisation to incorporate the new units and reinforcements that had accumulated during 1915: the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps were replaced by two corps, I ANZAC Corps and II ANZAC Corps, and Birdwood reverted to the command of II ANZAC Corps. When I ANZAC Corps became the first to depart for France, Birdwood, as senior corps commander, took over command. During early 1916 Birdwood advocated for the formation of an Australian and New Zealand Army or a Dominion Army also including Canadian forces under his command, but this did not occur. Birdwood was promoted to the permanent rank of full General on 23 October 1917 with command of a formation then known as the Australian Corps in November 1917. He was also appointed aide-de-camp General to the King on 2 November 1917 and given command of the British Fifth Army on 31 May 1918 and led the Army at the liberation of Lille in October 1918 and at the liberation of Tournai in November 1918.

After the war

Birdwood was made a Baronet, of Anzac and of Totnes, in the County of Devon, on 29 December 1919. He toured Australia to great acclaim in 1920 and then became General Officer Commanding the Northern Army in India later that year. He was promoted to Field Marshal (with the corresponding honorary rank in the Australian Military Forces) on 20 March 1925

and, having been appointed a Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India in July 1925, he went on to be Commander-in-Chief, India, in August 1925.
After leaving the service in 1930, Birdwood made a bid to become Governor-General of Australia. He had the backing of the King and the British government. However, the Australian Prime Minister James Scullin insisted that his Australian nominee Sir Isaac Isaacs be appointed. Instead, Birdwood was appointed Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge on 20 April 1931 and Captain of Deal Castle in 1934. In 1935 he wrote for the Western Australian distance education magazine Our Rural Magazine, saying that he had two granddaughters making good use of distance educational courses. In May 1936, he returned to Gallipoli aboard RMS Lancastria and visited war memorials on the peninsula. He retired from academic work in 1938. In retirement Birdwood was Colonel of the 12th Royal Lancers (1920–1951), the 6th Gurkha Rifles (1926–1951), and the 75th (Home Counties) (Cinque Ports) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery (1939–1951). In January 1936 he attended the funeral of King George V and in May 1937 he was present for the Coronation of King George VI.

He was raised to the peerage as Baron Birdwood, of Anzac and of Totnes in the County of Devon, on 25 January 1938, in recognition of his wartime service. His autobiography Khaki and Gown (1941) was followed by In My Time: recollections and anecdotes (1946). Lord Birdwood died at Hampton Court Palace, where he lived in grace-and-favour apartments, on 17 May 1951. He was buried at Twickenham Cemetery with full military honours; the Australian Government pays for the upkeep of his grave.

Field Marshal Jan Christian Smuts

Field Marshall Jan Christian Smuts OM CH DTD ED PC KC FRS (baptismal name Jan Christiaan Smuts, 24 May 1870 – 11 September 1950) was a South African statesman, military leader and philosopher. In addition to holding various military and cabinet posts, he served as Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa from 1919 to 1924 and 1939 to 1948.

Early life

Smuts was born to Afrikaner parents in the British Cape Colony. He was educated at Victoria College, Stellenbosch before reading law at Christ's College, Cambridge on a scholarship. He was called to the bar at the Middle Temple in 1894 but returned home the following year. In the leadup to the Second Boer War, Smuts practised law in Pretoria, the capital of the South African Republic. He led the republic's delegation to the Bloemfontein Conference and served as an officer in a commando unit following the outbreak of war in 1899. In 1902, he played a key role in negotiating the Treaty of Vereeniging, which ended the war and resulted in the annexation of the South African Republic and Orange Free State into the British Empire. He subsequently helped negotiate self-government for the Transvaal Colony, becoming a cabinet minister under Louis Botha.

Smuts played a leading role in the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, helping shape its constitution. He and Botha established the South African Party, with Botha becoming the union's first Prime Minister and Smuts holding multiple cabinet portfolios. As Defence Minister he was responsible for the Union Defence Force during the First World War. Smuts personally led troops in the East African campaign in 1916 and the following year joined the Imperial War Cabinet in London. He played a leading role at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, advocating for the creation of the League of Nations and securing South African control over the former German South-West Africa. In 1919, Smuts replaced Botha as prime minister,

holding the office until the South African Party's defeat at the 1924 General election by J. B. M. Hertzog's National Party. He spent several years in academia, during which he coined the term "holism", before eventually re-entering politics as Deputy Prime Minister in a coalition with Hertzog; in 1934 their parties subsequently merged to form the United Party. Smuts returned as Prime Minister in 1939, leading South Africa into the Second World War at the head of a pro-interventionist faction. He was appointed Field Marshal in 1941 and in 1945 signed the UN Charter, the only signer of the Treaty of Versailles to do so. His second term in office ended with the victory of his political opponents, the reconstituted National Party at the 1948 General election, with the new government beginning the implementation of apartheid.

Smuts was an internationalist who played a key role in establishing and defining the League of Nations, United Nations and Commonwealth of Nations. He supported racial segregation and opposed democratic non-racial rule. At the end of his career, Smuts supported the Fagan Commission's recommendations to relax restrictions on black South Africans living and working in urban areas.

Smuts was born on 24 May 1870, at the family farm, Bovenplaats, near Malmesbury, in the Cape Colony. His parents, Jacobus Smuts and his wife Catharina, were prosperous, traditional Afrikaner farmers, long established and highly respected. As the second son of the family, rural custom dictated that Jan would remain working on the farm. In this system, typically only the first son was supported for a full, formal education. In 1882, when Jan was twelve, his elder brother died, and Jan was sent to school in his place. Jan attended the school in nearby Riebeek West. He made excellent progress despite his late start, and caught up with his contemporaries within four years. He was admitted to Victoria College, Stellenbosch, in 1886, at the age of sixteen.

At Stellenbosch, he learned High Dutch, German, and Ancient Greek, and immersed himself in literature, the classics, and Bible studies. His deeply traditional upbringing and serious outlook led to social isolation from his peers. He made outstanding academic progress, graduating in 1891 with double first-class honours in Literature and Science. During his last years at Stellenbosch, Smuts began to cast off some of his shyness and reserve. At this time, he met Isie Krige, whom he later married.

On graduation from Victoria College, Smuts won the Ebden Scholarship for overseas study. He decided to attend the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom to read law at Christ's College. Smuts found it difficult to settle at Cambridge. He felt homesick and isolated by his age and different upbringing from the English undergraduates. Worries over money also contributed to his unhappiness, as his scholarship was insufficient to cover his university expenses. He confided these worries to Professor J. I. Marais, a friend from Victoria College. In reply, Professor Marais enclosed a cheque for a substantial sum, by way of loan, encouraging Smuts to let him know if he ever found himself in need again. Thanks to Marais, Smuts's financial standing was secure. He gradually began to enter more into the social aspects of the university, although he retained a single-minded dedication to his studies. During this time in Cambridge, Smuts studied a diverse number of subjects in addition to law. He wrote a book, Walt Whitman: A Study in the Evolution of Personality. It was not published until 1973, after his death, but it can be seen that Smuts in this book had already conceptualized his thinking for his later wide-ranging philosophy of holism.

Smuts graduated in 1894 with a double first. Over the previous two years, he had received numerous academic prizes and accolades, including the coveted George Long prize in Roman

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Law and Jurisprudence. One of his tutors, Professor Maitland, a leading figure among English legal historians, described Smuts as the most brilliant student he had ever met. Lord Todd, the Master of Christ's College, said in 1970 that *"in 500 years of the College's history, of all its members, past and present, three had been truly outstanding: John Milton, Charles Darwin and Jan Smuts."*
In December 1894, Smuts passed the examinations for the Inns of Court, entering the Middle Temple. His old Cambridge college, Christ's College, offered him a fellowship in Law. Smuts turned his back on a potentially distinguished legal future. By June 1895, he had returned to the Cape Colony, determined to make his future there.

Later life
In domestic policy, a number of social security reforms were carried out during Smuts's second period in office as prime minister. Old-age pensions and disability grants were extended to 'Indians' and 'Africans' in 1944 and 1947 respectively, although there were differences in the level of grants paid out based on race. The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1941 *"insured all employees irrespective of payment of the levy by employers and increased the number of diseases covered by the law,"* and the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1946 introduced unemployment insurance on a national scale, albeit with exclusions.

Smuts continued to represent his country abroad. He was a leading guest at the 1947 wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. At home, his preoccupation with the war had severe political repercussions in South Africa. Smuts's support of the war and his support for the Fagan Commission made him unpopular amongst the Afrikaner community and Daniel François Malan's pro-apartheid stance won the Reunited National Party the 1948 general election.

In 1948, he was elected Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, becoming the first person from outside the United Kingdom to hold that position. He held the position until his death two years later.

On 29 May 1950, a week after the public celebration of his eightieth birthday in Johannesburg and Pretoria, Field Marshal Jan Smuts suffered a coronary thrombosis. He died of a subsequent heart attack on his family farm of Doornkloof, Irene, near Pretoria, on 11 September 1950.

General Louis Botha

Louis Botha (27 September 1862 – 27 August 1919) was a South African politician who was the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, the forerunner of the modern South African state. A Boer war veteran during the Second Boer War, Botha eventually fought to have South Africa become a British Dominion.

Early life
Louis Botha was born in Greytown, Natal one of seven sons and eight daughters born to Louis Botha Senior (Somerset East, Eastern Cape, 26 March 1827 – Harrismith, Orange Free State, 5 July 1883) and Salomina Adriana van Rooyen (Somerset East, 31 March 1829 – Harrismith, 9 January 1886). Louis Botha briefly attended the school at Hermannsburg before his family relocated to the Orange Free State. The name Louis runs throughout the family, with every generation since General Louis Botha having the eldest son named Louis. Botha had three brothers who also served as Generals in the Second Boer War: an older brother Philip Rudolf (1851–1901), and two younger brothers, Chris (1864–1902), a police officer, and Theunis Jacobus Botha (1867–1930).

Louis Botha led Dinuzulu's Volunteers", a group of Boers that had supported Dinuzulu against Zibhebhu in 1884.

Botha later became a member of the parliament of Transvaal in 1897, representing the district of Vryheid.

Winston Churchill revealed that General Botha was the man who captured him at the Battle of Chieveley. Coetzer claims that Botha captured Churchill at train ambush 15 November 1899. Churchill was not aware of the man's identity until 1902, when Botha travelled to London seeking loans to assist his country's reconstruction, and the two met at a private luncheon. The incident is also mentioned in Arthur Conan Doyle's book, The Great Boer War, published in 1902. However more recent sources claim that Field cornet Sarel Oosthuizen was in fact the Boer soldier who, at gunpoint, captured Churchill. Another version claims that the unit to capture Churchill was the Italian Volunteer Legion and its commander, Camillo Ricchiardi.

Botha was prominent in efforts to achieve a peace with the British, representing the Boers at the peace negotiations in 1902, and was signatory to the Treaty of Vereeniging. In the period of reconstruction under British rule, Botha went to Europe with de Wet and de la Rey to raise funds to enable the Boers to resume their former avocations. Botha, who was still looked upon as the leader of the Boer people, took a prominent part in politics, advocating always measures which he considered as tending to the maintenance of peace and good order and the re-establishment of prosperity in the Transvaal. His war record made him prominent in the politics of Transvaal and he was a major player in the postwar reconstruction of that country, founding with Jan Smuts the Het Volk Party in the Transvaal Colony in 1904, which served as a springboard to campaign for responsible self-government for the colony.

After the grant of self-government to the Transvaal on 6 December 1906 and the success of his Het Volk Party at the first elections in February 1907, Botha was called upon by Lord Selborne to form a government as Prime Minister on 4 March 1907, and in the spring of the same year he took part in the conference of colonial premiers held in London. During his visit to England on this occasion General Botha declared the wholehearted adhesion of the Transvaal to the British Empire, and his intention to work for the welfare of the country regardless of racial differences. The following year Botha participated in the National Convention (South Africa) which opened up the way for the passage of the South Africa Act of 1909 by the British parliament which in turn allowed for the formation of the Union of South Africa.

When South Africa obtained dominion status in 1910, Botha became the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. In 1911, together with another Boer war hero, Jan Smuts, he formed the South African Party, or SAP. Widely viewed as too conciliatory with Britain, Botha faced revolts from within his own party and opposition from James Barry Munnik Hertzog's National Party. He was a South African Freemason. Botha, like Hertzog, advocated for the preservation of black traditions, which ultimately lead to the segregation of the black and white races.

At Versailles on 1 June 1919, 17 years after the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging, General Botha, now a member of the British Empire Delegation, put his hand on Lord Milner's shoulder, and said *"Seventeen years ago, my friend and I made peace at Vereeniging – it was a bitter peace for us, bitter hard. We lost all for which we had fought – our independence, our flag, our country. But we turned our thoughts and efforts then to saving our people; and they,*

the victors, helped us. It was a hard peace for us to accept, but as I know it now, when time has shown us the truth, it was not unjust – it was a generous peace that the British people made with us, and that is why we stand with them today side by side in the cause which has brought us all together."

At the end of the War, he briefly led a British Military Mission to Poland during the Polish–Soviet War. He argued that the terms of the Versailles Treaty were too harsh on the Central Powers, but signed the treaty. Botha was unwell for most of 1919. He was plagued by fatigue and ill health that arose from his robust waistline.

Botha married Annie Emmett at the Dutch Reformed Church in Vryheid on 13 December 1886. Annie Botha later converted from Anglicanism to Dutch Reformed Protestantism. Shortly after their wedding, they settled on the Waterval Farm in Vryheid. They had five children together, three sons and two daughters.

General Louis Botha died of heart failure at his home following an attack of Spanish influenza on 27 August 1919 in the early hours of the morning. He was 56. His wife Annie was at home and was joined by Engelenburg who had acted as a private secretary to Botha. Botha was laid to rest in the Heroes' Acre of the Church Street Cemetery in Pretoria.
Of Botha, Winston Churchill wrote in Great Contemporaries *"The three most famous Generals I have known in my life won no great battles over a foreign foe. Yet their names, which all begin with a 'B', are household words. They are General Booth, General Botha and General Baden-Powell..."*
After Botha's death in 1919, Annie Botha settled on a farm in Rusthof and spent winters in Sezela, where she died in 1937.

General Lord Byng

Field Marshal Julian Hedworth George Byng, 1st Viscount Byng of Vimy, GCB GCMG MVO (11 September 1862 – 6 June 1935), was a British Army officer who served as Governor General of Canada, the 12th since the Canadian Confederation.

Known to friends as "Bungo", Byng was born to a noble family at Wrotham Park in Hertfordshire, England and educated at Eton College, along with his brothers. Upon graduation, he received a commission as a militia officer and saw service in Egypt and Sudan before enrolling in the Staff College at Camberley. There, he befriended individuals who would be his contemporaries when he attained senior rank in France. Following distinguished service during the First World War—specifically, with the British Expeditionary Force in France, in the Battle of Gallipoli, as commander of the Canadian Corps at Vimy Ridge, and as commander of the British Third Army—Byng was elevated to the peerage in 1919. In 1921, King George V, on the recommendation of Prime Minister David Lloyd George, appointed him to replace the Duke of Devonshire as Canada's Governor General, a post he occupied until the Viscount Willingdon succeeded him in 1926. Byng proved to be popular with Canadians due to his war leadership, though his stepping directly into political affairs became the catalyst for widespread changes to the role of the Crown in all of the British Dominions.
After his viceregal tenure, Byng returned to the UK to be appointed Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and was promoted within the peerage to become Viscount Byng of Vimy. Three years after attaining the rank of Field Marshal, he died at his home, Thorpe Hall, on 6 June 1935.

Byng was born at the family seat of Wrotham Park, in Hertfordshire, as the seventh son and 13th and youngest child of George Byng, 2nd Earl of Strafford (who, due to the size of his family, ran a relatively frugal household) and Harriet Elizabeth Cavendish, daughter of Charles Cavendish, 1st Baron Chesham. Until the age of 17, Byng was enrolled at Eton College, although he did not enter the sixth form. At Eton Byng first received the nickname "Bungo"—to distinguish him from his elder brothers "Byngo" and "Bango" - but his time at the college was undistinguished, and he received poor reports; indicative of his attitude towards academics, he once traded his Latin grammar book and his brother Lionel's best trousers to a hawker for a pair of ferrets and a pineapple. Byng later claimed that he had been the school's worst "Scug", the colloquial term for an undistinguished boy.

Byng was from a military family; his grandfather having served with Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo. With three brothers already in the army and another already put up for the 7th Queen's Own Hussars, Byng's father did not think he could afford a regular army commission for his youngest son. Thus, at the age of 17, Byng was instead sent into the militia and on 12 December 1879 commissioned as a second Lieutenant into the 2nd (Edmonton) Royal Middlesex Rifles (later the 7th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps). He was promoted to Lieutenant on 23 April 1881. During this period, Byng also developed a liking for theatre and music halls, and by the age of twenty had taken an interest in the banjo.

At a meeting of the Jockey Club in 1882, Byng's father was asked about his sons by his long-time friend, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. Upon hearing that Byng had not yet found a permanent career, the Prince offered a place for him in his own regiment, the 10th Royal Hussars. This was the most expensive regiment in the army, and the Earl of Strafford could only afford to give Byng two hundred of the six hundred pounds he would need each year, but the Prince's offer could not be refused. Byng himself was delighted at the opportunity, as both his uncle, Lord Chesham, and his cousin, Charles Cavendish, had served in the regiment. By raising money through buying polo ponies cheaply, using his excellent horsemanship to train them, and then selling them on at a profit, Byng was able to transfer to the 10th Royal Hussars on 27 January 1883, and less than three months later he joined the regiment in Lucknow, India. It was while the regiment was on the way home to Great Britain in 1884 that the Hussars were diverted to the Sudan to join the Suakin Expedition, and on 29 February Byng, along with the rest of his regiment, rode in the first line of the charge at the first Battle of El Teb. The attack, which resulted in the deaths of both of Byng's squadron's other officers, was unsuccessful, and fighting continued, with Byng's horse being killed under him on 13 March at the Battle of Tamai. Most of the rebels were then dispersed shortly after, and on 29 March the regiment re-embarked for Britain, arriving on 22 April, and proceeding to their new base at Shorncliffe Army Camp in Kent. During the summer of 1884, Byng spent much of his time playing polo and training recruits and horses, and in July, for his services in Sudan, he was mentioned in despatches.

In June 1885, the regiment was relocated to the South Cavalry Barracks at Aldershot, where the Prince of Wales' eldest son, Prince Albert Victor, joined the regiment and thereafter the Prince of Wales and his other son, Prince George, became frequent visitors. Byng struck up a friendship with both Albert Victor and George, but did not socialise with them much outside of army circles. Byng was appointed as the regimental adjutant on 20 October 1886, only nine days before the death of his father, who left Byng a watch and £3,500. The regiment then moved again in 1887 to the barracks at Hounslow, where, after suspecting that contractors were selling him inferior meat, Byng spent several early mornings at the Smithfield market to learn the meat trade, eventually proving his case and having the contractors changed. It was also at

this time that Byng became acquainted with the Lord Rowton, who, along with the Guinness Trust, was trying to improve housing for skilled workers in London. Byng accompanied Rowton around the poorest areas of the city and suggested that retired senior soldiers from the rank-and-file be hired to maintain order in the Rowton Houses that Rowton had set up, thus starting a long-lived tradition.

Once Byng was enrolled at the Staff College, he found amongst his fellow students, men with whom he would be closely associated more than two decades later—Henry Rawlinson, Henry Hughes Wilson, Thomas D'Oyly Snow, and James Aylmer Lowthorpe Haldane—and in 1894, while on route to visit a friend at Aldershot, travelled with a cadet at the nearby Sandhurst, Winston Churchill. Byng also journeyed with his class to see the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War at Alsace-Lorraine and accompanied to the United States one of his lecturers who was compiling information on a book on Stonewall Jackson. By December 1894, Byng graduated from the Staff College and was immediately appointed to command A Squadron of the hussars. Only three years later, though, the regiment returned to Aldershot and Byng left to become adjutant of the 1st Cavalry Brigade, shortly before becoming the Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General (DAAG) of the Aldershot Command, and was promoted to the rank of Major on 4 May 1898. Later that same year, Byng met at a local party Marie Evelyn Moreton, the only daughter of Sir Richard Charles Moreton, who had himself served as comptroller at the Canadian royal and viceroyal residence of Rideau Hall, under the then Governor General of Canada the Marquess of Lorne.

Byng was deployed in November 1899 to South Africa, where he was to act as a provost marshal, but was instead immediately given the local rank of Lieutenant Colonel and tasked with raising and commanding the South African Light Horse during the Second Boer War. Byng thereafter served on the front lines, during which time he ended up in command of a group of columns, was mentioned in despatches five times (including by Lord Kitchener on 23 June 1902), and in November 1900 was promoted to brevet Lieutenant Colonel and in February 1902 to brevet Colonel. The beginning of 1902 brought more significant events for Byng, with his return to England in March, an audience with King Edward VII the following month, at which he was appointed to the Royal Victorian Order as a member 4th class (MVO), and his marriage to Moreton at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, on 30 April 1902. Following a second visit to the King in early October, Byng was sent back to India to command the 10th Royal Hussars at Mhow and was appointed to the rank of a substantive Lieutenant Colonel on 11 October 1902.

In his first two years of marriage, Byng's wife suffered several miscarriages, resulting in the declaration that she would be unable to bear children. By January 1904, Byng had also, while playing polo, broken his right elbow so severely that it was feared he would have to quit the Army. After four months' treatment in England, though, he was pronounced to be again fit for duty and in May became the first commandant of the new cavalry school at Netheravon. The posting was to be only a brief one, as, on 11 May 1905, Byng was made commander of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade at Canterbury, with the simultaneous temporary rank of Brigadier General and substantive rank of Colonel. After an appointment in the 1906 Birthday Honours as a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in June 1906, he was again back in Aldershot, in command of the 1st Cavalry Brigade.

It was April 1909 when Byng was promoted to Major General and, though he was placed on half pay, Byng—with added income from editing the Cavalry Journal and serving as the first North Essex district commissioner for the Boy Scouts—purchased his first house, Newton

Hall, in Dunmow, Essex. He would, however, only reside there for two years, as, exactly the same amount of time after taking command of the East Anglian Division of the Territorial Force (TF) in October 1910. In May 1912 he became Colonel of the 3rd (King's Own) Hussars.

In October 1912 Byng became General Officer Commanding (GOC) British Troops in Egypt, where he remained until the outbreak of the First World War in the summer of 1914. Kitchener, then on leave on England and soon to become Secretary of State for War, recalled Byng back to Britain to become GOC of the newly created 3rd Cavalry Division. This he did in late September, and, with his division, soon departed for the Western Front, landing at Ostend on 8 October, to reinforce the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). Both he and his division soon saw action at the First Battle of Ypres towards the end of the month, which lasted over four weeks. His actions there were rewarded in March 1915 with appointment as a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

Beginning in May 1915, Byng served as GOC of the Cavalry Corps, at which time he was also made a temporary Lieutenant General, which he led during the Second Battle of Ypres. After this, Byng was sent to Gallipoli to head the IX Corps and supervise the successful withdrawal of the British, Australian, and New Zealand forces from there. For this, he was on 1 January 1916 elevated within the Order of the Bath to the rank of Knight Commander, but was not allowed much rest, as he spent the next month commanding the Suez Canal defences before returning to the Western Front to lead the XVII Corps. He assumed command of the corps on 27 February, when he was re-granted the temporary rank of Lieutenant General. By May, he found himself in command of the Canadian Corps -"which was Generally regarded, not least by those in it, as one of the crack formations on the Western Front"–and was promoted when, for distinguished service, the King made substantive Byng's rank of Lieutenant General. He led the corps in the Battle of the Somme later in the year.
Byng's greatest glory then came when he led the Canadian victory in April 1917 at the battle of Vimy Ridge, a historic military milestone for the dominion that inspired nationalism at home.

In June 1917, and by now holding the temporary rank of General, Byng was rewarded for his success at Vimy Ridge and succeeded General Sir Edmund Allenby in command of Britain's largest field army, the Third Army, which he was to lead until the cessation of hostilities some seventeen months later. With his Third Army having missed the Battle of Passchendaele, Byng led the Army in the First Battle of Cambrai in November, conducting the first surprise attack using tanks. The battle, described by historian Robin Neillands as *"the great 'might-have-been' of the Great War"* - was later considered a turning point in the war and Byng was honoured on 24 November 1917 by having his temporary rank of General made substantive; however according to the war memoirs of Arthur S. Bullock, the battle failed to breach the Hindenburg Line, due to a lack of reserves, and it was at General Byng's second attempt to take Cambrai in 1918 that the British triumphed, owing to sufficient troops and supplies being in place *"to sustain the attack day and night until the Germans were broken".*

The Germans launched their spring offensive on 21 March 1918, which continued over the following weeks and managed to inflict heavy losses on Byng's Third Army, although it was able to retreat without breaking his line. By the summer of 1918 the tide of the war began to turn in favour of the Allies. Byng's Third Army launched an attack on the Germans on 21 August, where, on 27 September, it managed to break through the Hindenburg Line before continuing on to Maubeuge, which was reached on 10 November, the day before the Armistice with Germany.

After Byng was made in July 1921 a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, it was announced on 2 August that King George V had, by commission under the royal sign-manual and signet, approved the recommendation of his British prime minister, David Lloyd George, to appoint Byng as his representative in Canada. The designation proved less controversial than his predecessor, the Duke of Devonshire, due partly to the General's popularity, but also because the practice of prior consultation with the Canadian prime minister, at that time Arthur Meighen, was revived. Byng had not been Meighen's first choice for presentation to the King, since he preferred someone with more civilian credentials. Nevertheless, Byng was eventually chosen because he was both willing and available.

The Governor General travelled the length and breadth of the country, meeting with Canadians wherever he went. He also immersed himself in Canada's culture and came to particularly love ice hockey, rarely missing a game played by the Ottawa Senators. His wife Lady Byng, also a hockey fan, would donate a trophy to the National Hockey League starting in 1925 to be handed out each year to the player who best exhibited gentlemanly and sportsmanlike conduct on the ice while maintaining a high level of play; the trophy, known as the Lady Byng Memorial Trophy, is still awarded to this day. He was also fond of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, held each year in Toronto, and established the Governor General's Cup to be presented at the competition. He was the first Governor General of Canada to appoint Canadians as his aides-de-camp (one of whom was future Governor General Georges Vanier) and approached his vice-regal role with enthusiasm, gaining popularity with Canadians on top of that received from the men he had commanded on the European battlefields. Lord Byng also named and inaugurated the first annual Warriors' Day Parade military parade in Toronto in 1921.

While it had been acceptable prior to the turn of the 20th century for Canadian governors General to involve themselves in political affairs, being, as they were, representatives of the King in his British Council, Byng's tenure as Governor General was notable in that he became the first to step directly into political matters since the country had gained a degree of further autonomy following the First World War. In the summer of 1926 he denied the recommendation of his prime minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, who sought to have parliament dissolved in order to avoid a vote of non-confidence in his government. The Governor General's course of action in what came to be colloquially known as the King–Byng Affair remains debated, though the consensus amongst constitutional historians is that Byng's moves were appropriate under the circumstances. Mackenzie King, however, made much of the scenario and its outcome in the election that eventually followed on 14 September, in which King's Liberal Party won a plurality of seats in the House of Commons, while Meighen lost his seat. As a result, King was once again appointed prime minister. At the 1926 Imperial Conference, King then went on to use Byng and his refusal to follow his prime minister's advice as the impetus for widespread constitutional change throughout the British Commonwealth. Byng himself said of the matter: *"I have to await the verdict of history to prove my having adopted a wrong course, and this I do with an easy conscience that, right or wrong, I have acted in the interests of Canada and implicated no one else in my decision."*

Byng returned to England on 30 September 1926, and in January 1928 was created Viscount Byng of Vimy, of Thorpe-le-Sokenin the County of Essex. Later that year, he was appointed as the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and, before his retirement in 1931, introduced a number of changes to the force, including a system of promotion based on merit rather than length of service, improvement in discipline, retirement of inefficient senior officers, an irregularity to policemen's beats (which had previously allowed criminals to work out the system), police boxes, the extensive use of police cars, and a central radio control room. In

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

July 1932, Byng was once more promoted in the British military to the rank of Field Marshal —the highest rank an officer can attain—before he died suddenly of an abdominal blockage at Thorpe Hall on 6 June 1935.
Lord Byng of Vimy was buried at the 11th Century Parish Church of St. Leonard in Beaumont-cum-Moze.

General Lord Rawlinson

General Henry Seymour Rawlinson, 1st Baron Rawlinson, GCB GCSI GCVO KCMG (20 February 1864 – 28 March 1925), known as Sir Henry Rawlinson, 2nd Baronet between 1895 and 1919, was a senior British Army officer in the First World War who commanded the Fourth Army of the British Expeditionary Force at the battles of the Somme (1916) and Amiens (1918) as well as the breaking of the Hindenburg Line (1918). He commanded the Indian Army from 1920 to 1925.

Rawlinson was born at Trent Manor in Dorset on 20 February 1864. His father, Sir Henry Rawlinson, 1st Baronet, was an Army officer, and a renowned Middle East scholar who is generally recognised as the father of Assyriology. His mother was Louisa Caroline Harcourt Seymour (1828-1889). He received his early formal education at Eton College.
After passing through commissioned officer training at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, Rawlinson entered the British Army as a Lieutenant in the King's Royal Rifle Corps in India on 6 February 1884. His father arranged for him to serve on the staff of a friend, General Sir Frederick Roberts, the commander-in-chief in India. Rawlinson and the Roberts family remained close friends throughout his life. When Roberts died in November 1914, Rawlinson wrote, "I feel as if I have lost my second father". His first military experience was serving in Burma during the 1886 uprising.
In October 1889, Rawlinson's mother died and he returned to Britain. He transferred to the Coldstream Guards. Haldane, Thomas Snow, Hubert Hamilton, Alexander Hamilton-Gordon, Launcelot Kiggell, and Henry Wilson, all of whom would rise to high rank in the First World War. He served on Major General Herbert Kitchener's staff during the advance on Omdurman in Sudan in 1898, and was promoted to Major on 25 January 1899 and to brevet Lieutenant Colonel on 26 January 1899.

Rawlinson served with distinction in a field command in the Second Boer War from 1899 to 1902, earning promotion to the local rank of Colonel on 6 May 1901. He was in Western Transvaal during early 1902, and led a column taking part in the Battle of Rooiwal, the last battle of the war (11 April 1902).

Following the end of hostilities in June 1902, he returned to the United Kingdom together with Lord Kitchener on board the SS Orotava, which arrived in Southampton on 12 July. In a despatch dated 23 June 1902, Lord Kitchener wrote of Rawlinson that he *"possesses the qualities of Staff Officer and Column Commander in the field. His characteristics will always ensure him a front place in whatever he sets his mind to."* For his service in the war, Rawlinson was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath in the April 1901 South Africa Honours list (the award was dated to 29 November 1900), and he received the actual decoration after his return home, from Edward VII at Buckingham Palace on 24 October 1902.
Rawlinson had received the brevet rank of Colonel in the South Africa Honours list published on 26 June 1902, was promoted to the substantive rank of Colonel on 1 April 1903, and named as commandant of the Army Staff College.
Rawlinson was the first of three reforming commandants who transformed the Staff College into a real war school. The curriculum was modernised and updated, the teaching given a new

sense of purpose and instructors became 'directing staff' rather than 'professors', emphasising practicality. Major Godwin-Austen, historian of the college, wrote: *"Blessed with an extremely attractive personality, a handsome appearance, high social standing, and more than an average share of this world's goods, he was one to inspire his students unconsciously to follow in his footsteps."*

Promoted to temporary Brigadier General on 1 March 1907, he was made commander of the 2nd Infantry Brigade in place of Edwin Alderson at Aldershot that year. Having been promoted to Major General on 10 May 1909, he became General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 3rd Division in June 1910, in succession to Major General William Franklyn. In manoeuvres in June 1912, he showed an appreciation of the use of artillery, the Times's correspondent noting approvingly:

"An operation of altogether unusual character took place yesterday on Salisbury Plain when Major General Sir Henry Rawlinson's 3rd Division practised combined field firing on a scale, which, so far as the writer can recall, has never been attempted before."

The historians Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson praise Rawlinson's foresight in considering combining infantry with the fire-power of machine-guns and artillery. After handing over the division to his successor, Major General Hubert Hamilton, in May 1914 Rawlinson went on leave, returning on the outbreak of war to briefly serve as director of recruiting at the War Office.

In September 1914 Rawlinson was appointed General Officer Commanding 4th Division in France. Promoted to temporary Lieutenant General on 4 October 1914, he then took command of the IV Corps. In late September, the Belgian government formally requested British military assistance in defending Antwerp. IV Corps, acting under orders from the Cabinet, was chosen to reinforce the city. Rawlinson arrived in Antwerp on 6 October. It was soon obvious that the combined British, Belgian, and French forces were too weak to hold the city, and Kitchener decided on an evacuation two days later. IV Corps and the remnants of the Belgian Army successfully re-joined Allied forces in Western Belgium, with the Cabinet returning Rawlinson's corps to Field Marshal Sir John French's command. IV Corps marched into Ypres on the night of 13–14 October, where the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), advancing northwards, was preparing to meet the German Army. Located at the centre of the British line, IV Corps met the main thrust of the German attacks between 18 and 27 October and suffered heavy casualties. On 28 October, IV Corps was put under the temporary command of Douglas Haig while Rawlinson went to England to oversee the preparation of 8th Division. When he returned in November the German attacks on Ypres had died down.

Rawlinson wrote to the Conservative politician Lord Derby (24 December 1914) forecasting that the Allies would win a war of attrition but it was unclear whether this would take one, two or three years. In 1915, IV Corps formed part of the First Army (General Douglas Haig). At the battle of Neuve Chapelle (10–12 March 1915), he massed 340 guns. The weight of this bombardment on a comparatively narrow front enabled the attackers to secure the village and 1,600 yd (1,500 m) of the German front line. The arrival of German reinforcements prevented further advance. Rawlinson concluded that an enemy's line of trenches could be broken 'with suitable artillery preparation' combined with secrecy. He also drew a lesson, that trench warfare called for limited advances: *'What I want to do now is what I call "Bite & Hold" – bite off a piece of the enemy's line like Neuve Chapelle and hold it against all counter-attacks...there ought to be no difficulty in holding against the enemy's counterattacks and inflicting on him at least twice the loss that we have suffered in making the bite'.*

At the end of 1915, Rawlinson was considered for command of the First Army, in succession to Haig but the command was instead given to Sir Charles Monro. He was promoted to temporary General on 22 December 1915. Promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant

General on 1 January 1916, Rawlinson assumed command of the new Fourth Army on 24 January 1916. The Fourth Army would play a major role in the planned Allied offensive on the Somme. He wrote in his diary: "It is not the lot of many men to command an army of over half a million men". The Somme was originally conceived as a joint Anglo-French offensive but owing to the demands of the Battle of Verdun, French participation was greatly reduced, leaving the British, and especially Rawlinson's inexperienced army, to bear the brunt of the offensive. On the eve of the offensive, he *"showed an attitude of absolute confidence"*. To his diary he confided some uncertainties: *"What the actual results will be no one can say but I feel pretty confident of success myself though only after heavy fighting. That the bosh [sic] will break and that a debacle will supervene I do not believe..." He was not satisfied that the wire was well cut and enemy trenches sufficiently "knocked about".*

The Somme offensive was launched on 1 July 1916. In English writing, attention has been paid to the first day, a British disaster for three of the five attacking corps, although the battle lasted 141 days against two German armies. On 1 July, British forces were repulsed by the Germans along most of the front north of the Albert–Bapaume Road, suffering 57,000 casualties. The worst defeats were in front of Pozières and Thiepval. By the afternoon Rawlinson was aware of much of the disaster but not of the casualties. By 3 July he knew 8,000 prisoners had been taken. On the Allied right, the British and French had more success. Here they had a better fire plan but limited objectives as a flank guard to a main advance further north. This was more in keeping with Rawlinson's idea of "bite and hold". There is no documentary evidence that the corps commander on the right (southern) British flank, Lieutenant General Walter Congreve, commanding XIII Corps, telephoned Rawlinson to ask permission to advance beyond his set objectives or to send in cavalry.
The principal causes of the defeat in the north were the skill of German defenders, the siting of their defences and the failure of the long and heavy preliminary artillery bombardment to destroy the German barbed wire and trenches, except in the southern sector where French heavy artillery assisted. It is not true that heavily laden British infantry were required to advance at a slow walk. The researches of the historians Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson have shown that the majority of battalions were out in No Man's Land before whistles blew. This was of no avail, except in the south, against skilful placing of German machine guns in enfilade positions and German artillery fire falling on British trenches to prevent reinforcements reaching the 36th (Ulster) Division, who had penetrated the German position north of Thiepval. Rawlinson's 'Tactical Notes', initially drafted by his chief of staff Archie Montgomery, were not prescriptive, giving initiative to battalion commanders to choose their formations.

Haig told Rawlinson to exploit success in the south. Fourth Army fought its way forward towards the second German line atop the Bazentin Ridge. At first light on 14 July, following a night approach march, a two-day preparatory bombardment of over 375,000 shells and a five-minute intensive hurricane bombardment, the leading British attackers, some within 100 yd (91 m) of enemy lines attacked the German position. Nearly all first line objectives were taken. The Germans suffered 2,200 casualties and the British took 1,400 prisoners. The British were unable to exploit this success and a long period of difficult fighting followed. The Germans made excellent use of the woods on the battlefield, turning each into a strongpoint. Rawlinson mainly failed to intervene and coordinate attacks until late August and early September, when he massed guns and men, enabling brigades of the 16th (Irish) Division to capture Guillemont village. By late September, superior British artillery and better tactics enabled the British to achieve a striking success in the Battle of Morval. At the start of October, the rain and the temperature fell and the battlefield turned into a quagmire. The only late success was gained

by the Fifth Army (formerly Reserve Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Hubert Gough) capturing Beaumont Hamel.

The results of the Somme remain in dispute; casualties on both sides were immense. There is evidence that the German Army suffered enormous damage from an increasingly effective British artillery aided by French and British air superiority over the battlefield. "The unprecedented English artillery fire on the Somme is filling the hospitals more than ever" wrote the wife of a German aristocrat. Rawlinson contributed to this in his awareness of guns and aircraft and his planning aided by his chief of staff for attacks on 14 July and 25 September. On and before 1 July and during most of August he has been criticised for giving insufficient direction and did not consistently assert control over subordinate commanders. There was cautious British optimism at the end of the Battle and General Sir Henry Wilson's felt that Haig could defeat Germany in 1917 by fighting "two Sommes at once", but that he should be told how much manpower was available and told to plan accordingly.
In January 1917, Rawlinson was promoted to permanent General "for distinguished service in the field". For a period in 1917–18, he also commanded the Second Army. In February 1918 he was appointed British Permanent Military Representative to the inter-Allied Supreme War Council at Versailles.

On 28 March 1918, Rawlinson took over Fifth Army from Hubert Gough, sacked in the wake of the German March offensive, Operation Michael; his Fourth Army Staff joined him and Fifth Army became Fourth Army on 2 April. By this time the German Army's offensive had been checked, and the Allies were preparing a counter-offensive. Following the success of the Australian attack at Le Hamel on 4 July, Rawlinson proposed to Haig a larger attack, designed to force the Germans back from the city of Amiens and further to damage the German Army's weakening morale. At lunch on 16 July Haig agreed, saying he had already proposed such an operation. Rawlinson had learned from his experiences on the Somme:
The immeasurable superiority of the planning for 8 August 1918 over that for 1 July 1916 testified to the distance the BEF had travelled in the interim."
The attack was to be on a relatively narrow front, with no prior bombardment and limited objectives. To ensure a breakthrough, Haig gave Rawlinson command of virtually the whole British armoured forces. By this stage of the war British manpower was severely depleted, and to achieve the breakthrough, the Fourth Army comprised four Canadian, five Australian, five British and two American divisions.

The Allies achieved surprise and the Battle of Amiens proved a striking success. On 8 August, described by General Erich Ludendorff as *"the black day of the German Army"*, the Allies took 12,000 prisoners and captured 450 guns. The German and Allied commands were struck by the collapse in German morale and the high number of Germans surrendering without a fight. The Allies were still cautious about pressing their advantage too far and on 11 August Rawlinson advised Haig to halt the offensive. In September, again commanding a mixed force of British, Australian and American divisions, Rawlinson participated in the breaking of the Hindenburg Line, a major part of the Hundred Days Offensive. Initial planning was by John Monash, the Australian commander, but Rawlinson broadened the front and gave him more tanks. The Allied attack was preceded by a massive artillery bombardment. Allied success was most striking in the centre where the 46th (North Midland) Division crossed the St Quentin Canal and stormed trenches beyond, advancing up to 3 miles (4.8 km) and taking over 5,300 prisoners. The Fourth Army's advance continued in the Battles of the Selle and the Sambre and Oise Canal. In the Hundred Days, the Fourth Army had gained 85 mi (137 km), taking 80,000 prisoners and 1,100 guns.

Rawlinson was bestowed with many honours in reward for his role in the First World War. He was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order in 1917 and appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George 1918. In August 1919 the Houses of Parliament passed a vote of thanks to him for his military service, and awarded him the sum of £30,000 from the Exchequer. In 1919, he was raised to the peerage as Baron Rawlinson of Trent in the County of Dorset, and appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. Rawlinson was again called on to organise an evacuation, this time of the Allied forces that had been sent to Russia to intervene in the Russian Civil War. In November 1919, after returning to Britain, he succeeded General Sir Archibald Murray as General Officer Commanding-in-chief (GOC-in-C) of Aldershot Command.

In 1920, Rawlinson was made Commander-in-Chief, India. Winston Churchill as Secretary of State for War was instrumental in securing his appointment, over-riding a tradition that the post alternated between officers from the British and Indian Armies. He told Lloyd George that the post should go to the best qualified officer and that his military advisors "entirely supported my view that the best appointment we could make would be that of General Lord Rawlinson". He held the post until his death. He faced severe challenges. Brigadier Reginald Dyer's ordering his men to shoot at a crowd at Amritsar, killing 387 unarmed Indians, left a deep legacy of bitterness. The 3rd Afghan War had ended, but there was continued fighting in Waziristan. A hugely expanded army faced postwar demobilisation and continued cost of modernisation. The new commander-in-chief was expected to introduce a measure of "Indianisation", giving commissions to Indians. Under the system of Dyarchy, Indians, generally, opposed to military expenditure, took a share in government and Rawlinson would have to justify army budgets. The Moplah Rebellion of 1921 brought widespread disorder. When Gandhi launched the movement of non-cooperation with the British on 1 August 1920, he wished to avoid popular violence, but in 1922 the campaign degenerated: a crowd attacked a police station at Chauri Chaura, set fire to the building and 22 or 23 policemen were burnt to death or hacked down by the crowd. Gandhi cancelled the campaign, but he and other leaders of the resistance were arrested. Rawlinson certainly began his command believing that the Army would have to maintain order. On 15 July, he complained that:
"Unless we, as a government, are prepared to act vigorously and take strong measures to combat the insidious propaganda of the extremists we are bound to have something very like rebellion in India before long... You say what you like about not holding India by the sword, but you have held it by the sword for 100 years and when you give up the sword you will be turned out. You must keep the sword ready to hand and in case of trouble or rebellion use it relentlessly. Montagu calls it terrorism, so it is and in dealing with natives of all classes you have to use terrorism whether you like it or not."

John Newsinger argues that *"there is no doubt that the great majority of the British in India, soldiers, officials, civilians, agreed with Rawlinson on this. A few months later he noted in his journal that he "was determined to fight for the white community against any black sedition or rebellion", and, if necessary, "be the next Dyer".* Nonetheless, with Gandhi temporarily behind bars and increasing economic stability as the 1920s advanced, Rawlinson had the scope to reduce the Army's strength, modernise its equipment and work closely with Viceroys Chelmsford and Reading to try to make dyarchy a success. In Waziristan, the British and Indian Field Force backed by aircraft put an end to the fighting, built roads and established a brigade base at Razmak. Rawlinson announced a scheme of "Indianisation" to the Legislative Assembly on 17 February 1923. Its aim, he said, was to *"give Indians a fair opportunity of providing units officered by Indians will be efficient in every way".* The Prince of Wales' Royal

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Indian Military College was founded at Dehra Dun in 1922, run on English public school lines, to encourage potential officer candidates.
In January 1924, Rawlinson was appointed a Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India. By the end of his Indian command, he had reduced the Indian army in numbers and cost, but improved firepower, mobility and training. In financial matters he had been hugely helped by Sir Bhupendra Mitra, who had financial details "at his finger's ends". He had been appointed to succeed Lord Cavan as CIGS when he left India.

Rawlinson died on 28 March 1925 at the age of 61 at Delhi in India, after a medical operation for a stomach ailment, although not long before the operation he had played polo and cricket and seemed fit and well. His body was carried back to England on the SS Assaye, which was met on reaching the English Channel by a Royal Navy destroyer, onto which the coffin was transferred, then carried into Portsmouth Harbour, being met at the South Jetty by a military ceremonial receiving party. Rawlinson was buried in the chapel of St Michael and St George in the north transept of St Andrew's Church, Trent, in the county of Dorset.
Rawlinson was a gifted watercolour artist. In March 1920, he and Winston Churchill enjoyed a painting holiday together on the French estate of the Duke of Westminster. *"The General paints in water colours and does it very well,"* wrote Churchill. *"With all my enormous paraphernalia, I have produced very indifferent results here."*
He married Meredith Sophia Francis Kennard (1861–1931) at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, London on 5 November 1890, the marriage producing no children. On Henry Rawlinson's death the baronetcy passed to his brother Alfred Rawlinson.

Major General Sir Henry Lukin

Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin KCB CMG DSO (24 May 1860 – 15 December 1925) was a South African military commander. He fought in the Anglo-Zulu War (1879) and the Basutoland Gun War (1880–1881), the Bechuanaland Campaign (1897), and the Anglo-Boer War when he was in command of the artillery during the defence of Wepener for which action he was awarded a Distinguished Service Order. From 1900 to 1901 he commanded the Cape Mounted Riflemen, from 1904 to 1912 he was Commandant-General of the Cape Colonial Forces and in 1912 Inspector-General of the Permanent Force of the Union of South Africa.

Brigadier General Lukin transferred to the new Union Defence Forces in 1912 as Inspector-General of the Permanent Force. He commanded a formation in the German South West Africa Campaign (1914–1915), and commanded the 1st South African Infantry Brigade of the South African Overseas Expeditionary Force in Egypt (1916) and France (1916), at Delville Wood before being promoted to a divisional command in the British Army. He was knighted for his war service, and retired in 1919.

Lukin was the only son of barrister-at-law Robert Henry Lukin of the Inner Temple; Henry or Harry Lukin, as he was usually known, had a sister two years younger and lost his mother when sixteen years old. Henry Lukin did not enter Sandhurst despite a family military tradition. Following the death of his mother in 1867, Lukin instead sailed for Durban in South Africa in January 1879 and was commissioned as Lieutenant into the 77th Regiment of Bengough's Horse at the start of the Anglo-Zulu War during which he was seriously wounded at Ulundi in 1879. He transferred to the Cape Mounted Riflemen (CMR) on 23 March 1881 and participated in Basutoland Gun War that year. In 1893 he attended the gunnery

and signal course at Woolwich and Shoeburyness in Britain and in 1894 he was promoted to Captain.

He participated in the Bechuanaland campaign in 1897 and was deployed with the Colonial Division in the Cape Colony and Orange Free State in 1899 at the start of the Second Boer War. On 13 October 1900 he was appointed as commanding officer of the CMR with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and on 1 June 1901 he was made Second-in-Command of Colonel H. Scobell's column. A couple of days later he was mentioned by Lord Kitchener for gallantry in attack on laager in Cape Colony 8 June 1901, and received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). Then on 10 October 1901 he was appointed as Commander of the column of Lieutenant Colonel George Frederick Gorringe. He became Commander of No 1 Area, Queenstown, Cape Colony, in December 1901. In recognition of services during the Second Boer War, he was appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) in the South African Honours list published on 26 June 1902, shortly after the end of the war.

He remained in South Africa and served as Commandant General of the Cape Colonial Forces, CCF with the rank of Colonel from 1904. In 1910 he was the escort commander for first opening of the Parliament of the Union of South Africa and the following year he became Commander of South African detachment to attend the coronation of King George V.
On 1 July 1912 he was appointed as Inspector-General of the Permanent Forces of the Union Defence Force with the rank of Brigadier-General and in 1914 at the start of the First World War he became Commander of A-force for the occupation of German South-West Africa. In November and December 1914, he took part in operations against the rebels and on 23 September 1914 he fought at the Battle of Sandfontein in German South-West Africa. In July 1915 he was appointed as Commander of the demobilising force in German South-West Africa and on 11 August 1915 he became General Officer commanding, the 1st South African Infantry Brigade.

In September 1915 he sailed for Britain and then in December 1915 he sailed for Egypt to take part in the campaign against The Senussi Uprising. On 6 to 9 February 1916, he was acting commander of the Western Frontier Force in Egypt and on 26 February 1916 he commenced operations against the Senussi Uprising. In April 1916 he sailed for Marseilles and on 14 July 1916 the Battle of Delville Wood commenced. On 30 November 1916 he was appointed as General Officer commanding the 9th (Scottish) Division with the temporary rank of Major General. In 1917 he was appointed as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) and awarded the Order of the Nile, 3rd Class by the Sultan of Egypt. In April 1918 he was appointed as General Officer commanding the 64th (2nd Highland) Division, Eastern Command in Britain before his retirement later that year.
On 26 March 1920 he sailed for Cape Town and in July 1921 he was appointed as Deputy Chair of the Delville Wood Memorial Committee. In 1924 he became a member of the Defence Council of South Africa and on 28 October 1924 he was appointed as President of a Defence Commission of Enquiry.

In 1891 he married Lily Quinn. After Lukin's death on 15 December 1925, his brother-in-law Reverend R.E. Johnston wrote a biography in 1929 titled Ulundi to Delville Wood: The life story of Major General Sir Henry Timson Lukin, K.C.B., C.M.B., D.S.O., Chevalier Legion d'Honneur, Order of the Nile.

Lieutenant General Sir John Monash

General Sir John Monash (27 June 1865 – 8 October 1931) was an Australian civil engineer and military commander of the First World War. He commanded the 13th Infantry Brigade before the war and then, shortly after its outbreak, became Commander of the 4th Brigade in Egypt, with which he took part in the Gallipoli campaign.

In July 1916, he took charge of the newly raised 3rd Division in north-western France and, in May 1918, became Commander of the Australian Corps, at that time the largest corps on the Western Front. According to historian A. J. P. Taylor, he was "the only General of creative originality produced by the First World War".
Monash was born in 58 Dudley Street, West Melbourne, Victoria, to Jewish parents, both from Krotoschin in the Prussian province of Posen (now Krotoszyn, Poland). His birth certificate records his date of birth as 23 June 1865, but that is probably a mistake, because he was almost certainly born on 27 June. He was the first child of Louis Monash and his wife Bertha, née Manasse, who had arrived in Melbourne on the Empire of Peace on 5 June 1864. The family name was originally spelt Monasch and was pronounced with the emphasis on the second syllable.

The young family soon relocated from Dudley Street to larger premises on nearby Victoria Parade, before moving to a third rental property in Church Street, Richmond. In 1873, Bertha received a large inheritance from her mother, with which she purchased two houses, a large one in Yarra Street, Hawthorn, and a smaller one in Clifton Street, Richmond. The family resided in the smaller one and rented out the larger one. The young John was sent to St Stephen's School on Docker's Hill in Richmond, and was remembered as a bright and alert schoolboy, with a special interest in English, some skill in drawing, a keen sense of fun, and no interest whatsoever in organised sport. At home his mother taught him piano, and encouraged him to read to her in English, French and German. The family spoke German as their native language. As might be expected from a man brought up by cultivated German parents who had arrived in Australia barely two years before John's birth, Monash spoke, read, and wrote German fluently. However, from 1914 until his death, he had good reason not to attract attention to his German background.

In 1874, the family moved to the small town of Jerilderie, in the Riverina region of New South Wales, where his father ran a store. Monash later claimed to have met the bushranger Ned Kelly during the Kelly gang's raid there in 1879. Monash attended the state school and his intelligence was recognised. The family was advised to move back to Melbourne to let John reach his full potential, which they did in 1877. Although his parents had largely abandoned religious practice, Monash celebrated his Bar Mitzvah at the East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation and sang in its choir. He was educated under Alexander Morrison at Scotch College, Melbourne, where he passed the matriculation examination when only 14 years of age. At age 16, he was Dux of the school. He graduated from the University of Melbourne: a Master of Engineering in 1893; a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws in 1895, and a Doctor of Engineering in 1921.

On 8 April 1891, Monash married Hannah Victoria Moss (1871–1920), and their only child, Bertha, was born in 1893. Monash had previously engaged in an affair with Annie Gabriel, the wife of one of his colleagues, which ended as an active matter after his conscious choice of

'Vic' for marriage (though communication continued many years afterwards). He worked as a civil engineer, and played a major role in introducing reinforced concrete to Australian engineering practice. He initially worked for private contractors on bridge and railway construction, and as their advocate in contract arbitrations. Following a period with the Melbourne Harbor Trust, in 1894 he entered into partnership with J. T. N. Anderson as consultants and contractors. When the partnership was dissolved in 1905, he joined with the builder David Mitchell and industrial chemist John Gibson to form the Reinforced Concrete & Monier Pipe Construction Co, and in 1906 with them and businessmen from South Australia, to form the S. A. Reinforced Concrete Co. He took a leading part in his profession and became president of the Victorian Institute of Engineers and a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, London.

Monash joined the university company of the militia in 1884, and he became a Lieutenant in the North Melbourne battery on 5 April 1887. He was promoted to Captain in 1895 and in April 1897 was promoted to Major and given command of the battery. On 7 March 1908, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the intelligence corps. He was given command of the 13th Infantry Brigade in 1912, and was promoted Colonel on 1 July 1913.

When the First World War broke out in August 1914, Monash became a full-time army officer, accepting an appointment as the chief censor in Australia. Monash did not enjoy the job, and was keen for a field command. In September, after the Australian Imperial Force was formed, he was appointed as the commander of the 4th Infantry Brigade, which consisted of four battalions: the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th. His appointment was met with some protest within the military, in part due to his German and Jewish ancestry, but Monash was supported by numerous high-ranking officers, including James Legge, James McCay and Ian Hamilton, and his appointment stood.

When the first contingent of Australian troops, the 1st Division, sailed in October, the 4th Brigade remained behind. Training was undertaken at Broadmeadows, Victoria, before embarking in December 1914. After arriving in Egypt in January 1915, Monash's brigade established itself at Heliopolis, where it was assigned to the New Zealand and Australian Division under Major General Alexander Godley. After a period of training, in April, the brigade took part in the Gallipoli campaign against the Turks. Assigned the role of Divisional Reserve, Monash came ashore early on 26 April. The brigade initially defended the line between Pope's Hill and Courtney's Post, and the valley behind this line became known as "Monash Valley". There he made a name for himself with his independent decision-making and his organisational ability. He was promoted to Brigadier General in July, although the news was marred by spiteful rumours that were passed in Cairo, Melbourne and London about him being a "German spy". His promotion was gazetted in September, with effect from 15 September 1914.

During the August offensive, launched by the Allies to break the deadlock on the peninsula, Monash's brigade was to conduct a "left hook" to capture Hill 971, the highest point on the Sari Bair range. On the evening of 6/7 August, the brigade launched its attack, but poor maps, heavy resistance and the mountainous terrain defeated them. Elsewhere, the offensive also stalled, resulting in disaster for the last co-ordinated effort to defeat the Turkish forces on the Gallipoli Peninsula. By mid-August, Monash's brigade was down to just 1,400 men out of the 3,350 at the beginning of the campaign. On 21 August, Monash led them in an attack on Hill 60, before it was withdrawn from the peninsula for rest. While the brigade recuperated on Lemnos, Monash took leave in Egypt, where he learned of his appointment as a Companion

of the Order of the Bath. In November, the 4th Brigade returned to Gallipoli, occupying a "quiet sector" around Bauchop's Hill. Monash used his engineering knowledge to improve his brigade's position to withstand the winter, and he worked to improve the conditions that his troops would have to endure but, in mid-December, the order to evacuate the peninsula came. Monash's time on Gallipoli and his departure from it were not, however, without controversy for reasons unrelated to the fighting. While on Gallipoli he *"wrote very freely to his wife revealing much current information"* and *"opened himself to the criticism that he would not keep the rules by which his juniors had strictly to adhere."* Later, in a long diary-letter sent home by Monash and known by him to be illegal in Army terms, Monash implied that he was *"one of the very last off Gallipoli"*. However, *"he had left for the beach nearly five hours before the last. It was a clumsy deception as so many people knew the facts."*

Following the withdrawal from Gallipoli, Monash returned to Egypt, where the AIF underwent a period of reorganisation and expansion. That process resulted in the 4th Brigade being split, providing a cadre of experienced personnel to form the 12th Brigade. It was also reassigned to the 4th Division. After a period of training, Monash's brigade undertook defensive duties along the Suez Canal. On 25 April 1916, the first anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli, while at Tel-el-Kebir, Monash and his men solemnly observed Anzac Day. Monash distributed red ribbons to soldiers present at the first landing and blue ribbons to those who came later.

Western Front

In June 1916, Monash and his command were transferred to the Western Front, being sent to the front around Armentières. On 10 July, Monash was promoted to temporary Major General and placed in command of the Australian 3rd Division. He trained the division in England with attention to detail, and after the division was sent to the Western Front in November 1916, including Messines, Broodseinde, and the First Battle of Passchendaele, met with some successes, but incurring the usual heavy casualties. The British High Command was impressed by Monash and, according to biographer Geoffery Serle, while dining with Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, Monash was informed that Haig "wanted him as a corps commander".

Monash's division spent the winter of 1917–1918 around Ploegsteert. Early the following year, after the Germans launched their Spring Offensive, the 3rd Division was deployed to undertake defensive operations around Amiens. Throughout April and May, the division undertook several peaceful penetration operations. Monash later described the recapture of the town of Villers-Bretonneux on 25 April 1918, after the Germans had overrun the 8th British Division under General William Heneker, as the turning-point of the war. Sir Thomas William Glasgow's 13th Brigade, and Harold Elliott's 15th Brigade, were both heavily involved in the operation.

On 1 June 1918, the promotion of Monash to Lieutenant General and Commander of the Australian Corps, at the time the largest individual corps on the Western Front, was confirmed. Monash's promotion was not without contention. Among those who considered and advocated for Major General Brudenell White to have command of the Australian Corps were Australia's Official War Correspondent and later Official Historian, Charles Bean, and journalist Keith Murdoch, although historian Justin Chadwick has written that Bean was one of many of that view.

Bean had reservations about Monash's "ideals". and was said to have a general prejudice against Monash's Prussian Jewish background. According to Kelly, Bean's core motivation at that time was that Brudenell White's appointment was in the best interest of the AIF, and that it would be a big mistake for White to leave the Australian Corps and go with Birdwood to the

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

British Fifth Army. Historian Burness noted that Bean did recognise Monash's ability and was not concerned that he should be promoted, but he considered Brudenell White was better fitted to command the fighting corps. In that climate Hughes arrived at the front, before the Battle of Hamel, prepared to replace Monash but, after consulting with senior officers, and having seen the superb power of planning and execution displayed by Monash, he changed his mind. In his Official History, Charles Bean noted that Monash was more effective the higher he rose within the Army. His depth of knowledge not only of military matters, but also of engineering and business, ensured that his operational plans were the product of meticulous preparation and thorough and rigorous scrutiny.

Bean later wrote of his own *"high intentioned but ill-judged intervention"* and that *"those who took action (relating to Monash's appointment) did so as I afterwards realised, without adequate appreciation of Monash, who, though his reputation as a front-line soldier had been poor, was never the less a much greater man than most of us then thought."*
At the Battle of Hamel on 4 July 1918, Monash, with the support of the British 4th Army commander Sir Henry Rawlinson, commanded the 4th Australian Division, supported by the British 5th Tank Brigade, along with a detachment of American troops, to win a small but operationally significant victory for the Allies.

On 8 August 1918, the Battle of Amiens was launched. Allied troops under the command of Haig, predominantly Rawlinson's British 4th Army (consisting of the Australian Corps under Monash, Canadian Corps under Sir Arthur Currie, British III Corps under Butler and British Cavalry Corps under Kavanagh), attacked the Germans. The Australian Corps spearheaded the allied attack. Monash gave them, as a key objective in the first phase, the capture of enemy artillery, in order to minimise the potential harm to the attacking forces. The battle was a strong, significant victory for the Allies, the first decisive win for the British Army of the war, causing the Germans to recognise that for them the War was lost. The defeated German leader, General Erich Ludendorff, described it in the following words: *"August 8th was the black day of the German Army in the history of the war".* Those operations were just a start of a broad Allied offensive across the Western Front. On 12 August 1918, at Château de Bertangles, Monash was knighted by King George V as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath.
After that, the Australians achieved under Monash a series of victories against the Germans at Chuignes, Mont St Quentin, Peronne and Hargicourt. Of the battle of Mt St Quentin and the subsequent taking of the town of Peronne, Charles Bean wrote in the Official History: *"the dash, intelligence, and persistence of the troops dealt a stunning blow to five German divisions, drove the enemy from one of its key positions in France, and took 2,600 prisoners at a cost of slightly over 3,000 casualties."*

Monash had 208,000 men under his command, including 50,000 inexperienced Americans. He planned the attack on the German defences at the Battle of the Hindenburg Line between 16 September and 5 October 1918. The Allies had eventually breached the Hindenburg Line by 5 October, and the war was essentially over. On 5 October, Prinz Max von Baden, on behalf of the German Government, asked for an immediate armistice.

By the end of the war, Monash had acquired an outstanding reputation for intellect, personal magnetism, management and ingenuity. He also won the respect and loyalty of his troops. His motto was *"Feed your troops on victory".* Monash was regarded with great respect by the British. A British Captain on the staff of William Heneker's 8th Division described Monash as *"a great bullock of a man... though his manners were pleasant and his behaviour far from rough, I have seen few men who gave me such a sensation of force... a fit leader for the wild*

men he commanded". Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery later wrote: *"I would name Sir John Monash as the best General on the western front in Europe".*
For his services during the War, and in addition to his creation as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, Monash was appointed as a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George on 1 January 1919. He also received numerous foreign honours – the French appointed him a Grand Officer of the Légion d'honneur and awarded him the Croix de Guerre, the Belgians appointed him a Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown (Grand-Officier Ordre de la Couronne) and awarded him the Croix de Guerre, and the United States awarded him the Distinguished Service Medal. The Australian Government honoured Monash with promotion to the full rank of General explicitly *"in recognition of his long and distinguished service with the Australian military forces"* on 11 November 1929.

On October 1918, towards the end of the war, Australian War Historian, Charles Bean, had urged Prime Minister William Hughes to have a plan of repatriation drawn up by the AIF and to put Monash in charge of it. Soon after the cessation of hostilities in November 1918, Hughes requested that Monash return to London to take up the appointment as Director-General of Repatriation and Demobilisation, heading a newly created department to carry out the repatriation of Australian troops from Europe.

In August 1919, while in London, Monash wrote The Australian Victories in France in 1918 which was published in 1920. According to Geoffrey Searle: *"It was propaganda, but not far off the truth,"* and *"(it) laid the groundwork for the popular narrative of 'Monash- the-war-winner."* Monash was, nevertheless, a noted advocate of the co-ordinated use of infantry, aircraft, artillery and tanks. As he wrote in the book:
"... the true role of infantry was not to expend itself upon heroic physical effort, not to wither away under merciless machine-gun fire, not to impale itself on hostile bayonets, nor to tear itself to pieces in hostile entanglements—(I am thinking of Pozières and Stormy Trench and Bullecourt, and other bloody fields)—but on the contrary, to advance under the maximum possible protection of the maximum possible array of mechanical resources, in the form of guns, machine-guns, tanks, mortars and aeroplanes; to advance with as little impediment as possible; to be relieved as far as possible of the obligation to fight their way forward; to march, resolutely, regardless of the din and tumult of battle, to the appointed goal; and there to hold and defend the territory gained; and to gather in the form of prisoners, guns and stores, the fruits of victory."
He returned to Australia on 26 December 1919 to an enthusiastic welcome. On 1 January 1920, he was promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant General and returned to the reserves.
Shortly after his return, on 27 February 1920, Monash's wife, Vic, died of cervical cancer. Monash had a prolonged affair with Elizabeth "Lizette" Bentwitch, a first cousin of the prominent Zionist Herbert Bentwich. The two planned to marry after Vic's death but Monash's daughter put her foot down to stop the union. Later, Monash worked in prominent civilian positions, the most notable being as head of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) after October 1920. From 1923 until his death eight years later, he was vice-chancellor of the University of Melbourne. Monash was a founding member of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, Australia's first Rotary Club, and served as its second president (1922–1923). In 1927, he became president of the newly founded Zionist Federation of Australia and New Zealand.

In 1923, he was called upon by the Victorian Government of Harry Lawson to organise "special constables" to restore order during the 1923 Victorian Police strike. He was one of the principal organisers of the annual observance of ANZAC Day and oversaw the planning for

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Melbourne's monumental war memorial, the Shrine of Remembrance. Monash was honoured with numerous awards and decorations from universities and foreign governments. According to his biographer Geoffrey Searle: *"..in the 1920s Monash was broadly accepted, not just in Victoria, as the greatest living Australian".*

Monash died in Melbourne on 8 October 1931 from a heart attack, and he was given a state funeral. An estimated 300,000 mourners came to pay their respects, the nation's largest funeral crowd to that time. After a Jewish service, and a 17-gun salute, he was buried in Brighton General Cemetery. In a final sign of humility, despite his achievements, honours and titles, he instructed that his tombstone simply bear the words "John Monash". He was survived by his daughter, Bertha (1893–1979).

According to British historian A. J. P. Taylor, Monash was *"the only General of creative originality produced by the First World War."* Monash's impact on Australian military thinking was significant in three areas. First, he was the first Australian to fully command Australian forces and he took, as following Australian commanders did, a relatively independent line with his British superiors. Second, he promoted the concept of the commander's duty to ensure the safety and well-being of his troops to a pre-eminent position in a philosophy of "collective individualism". And finally, he, along with staff officer Thomas Blamey, forcefully demonstrated the benefit of thorough planning and integration of all arms of the forces available, and of all of the components supporting the front-line forces, including logistical, medical and recreational services. Troops later recounted that one of the most extraordinary things about the Battle of Hamel was not the use of armoured tanks, nor the tremendous success of the operation, but the fact that in the midst of battle Monash had arranged delivery of hot meals up to the front line.

Cultural impact

In recognition of his enduring influence, Monash's face is on the $100 note, Australia's highest-value currency note. Monash's success in part reflected the tolerance of Australian society but, to a larger degree, his success – in the harshest experience the young nation had suffered – shaped that tolerance and demonstrated to Australians that the Australian character was diverse, multi-ethnic, and a blend of the traditions of the "bush" and the "city". According to author Colin MacInnes, as recounted by Monash's biographer, Geoffrey Searle, Monash's "presence and prestige...made anti-Semitism...impossible in Australia". He is also honoured in a Cantata for chorus, soloists and orchestra called Peace – A Cantata for John Monash, by composer/conductor David Kram.

General Lord Horne

General Henry Sinclair Horne, 1st Baron Horne, GCB KCMG (19 February 1861 – 14 August 1929) was a military officer in the British Army, most notable for his Generalship during the First World War, where he commanded at division, corps, and field army level, rising to command the British First Army in 1916, which he held until the armistice of 11 November 1918. He was the only British artillery officer to command an army in the war.

Horne was born on 19 February 1861 in the parish of Wick in Caithness, Scotland, the third son of Major James Horne and Constance Mary Shewell. He was first educated at Harrow, receiving an artillery commission from the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich in May 1880, when he was appointed a Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery. Promotion to Captain followed on 17 August 1888, and to Major on 23 February 1898.

From 1899 to 1902 Horne fought with the cavalry in the Second Boer War in South Africa under Sir John French. He received the brevet promotion to Lieutenant Colonel on 29

November 1900, and in the latter stages of the war served as a remount officer and was mentioned in despatches. Following the end of hostilities in June 1902 he returned to England, leaving Cape Town in the SS Norman which arrived in Southampton in late August that year.
In November 1905 he received a substantive promotion to Lieutenant Colonel and served with the Royal Horse Artillery (RHA) under Douglas Haig. He was promoted to Colonel and succeeded Frederick Wing as a staff officer for Royal Horse and Field Artillery in September 1910. His military career was unremarkable until May 1912 when he was promoted to temporary Brigadier General and appointed Inspector of Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery.

First World War
War broke out two years later and Horne was appointed to command a force of artillery under Lieutenant General Douglas Haig, who commanded I Corps. At the Battle of Mons, Horne distinguished himself with a rearguard action that allowed Haig's I Corps to retreat almost effortlessly; admittedly the German Army made few attacks toward Haig's forces, as they were occupied by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's costly defensive action.
Horne fought with distinction in the British Expeditionary Force's (BEF) actions throughout 1914; in October of that year, he was promoted to Major General and created a Companion of the Order of the Bath. A few months later, he was given command of the 2nd Division. In May 1915, Horne's division participated in the first British night attack of the war, distinguishing itself at the Battle of Festubert; the attack faltered, partly because the artillery ran out of ammunition. The media launched vicious attacks on the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener; the blame was eventually laid on Field Marshal French who was forced to resign at the year's end. Significantly, the artillery were reorganised after this fiasco at Horne's suggestion.

Middle East
In November 1915, Horne accompanied Lord Kitchener to the Dardanelles, where they organised and executed the evacuation of Gallipoli. For several months, Horne was placed in charge of the Suez Canal defences (and given command of the XV Corps).
In March 1916, two months after being promoted to the temporary rank of Lieutenant General, and still GOC XV Corps, he returned to the Western Front. His corps was allotted to General Sir Henry Rawlinson's Fourth Army, which was preparing for an attack in the Somme area. In the pre-battle plans, Horne advocated and became an architect of the "creeping barrage", a tactic that was used for the rest of the war. On 1 July 1916, the first day on the Somme, Horne's XV Corps participated in the costliest battle of the First World War. His force consisted of the 7th and 21st Divisions. They attacked the villages of Fricourt and Mametz, capturing both on the first day although suffering 7,500 casualties in the process. The divisions bypassed Mametz Wood, a position the Germans had heavily entrenched and needed to be captured to allow XV to carry on the advance. As the 7th Division had suffered heavy casualties, the 38th (Welsh) Division was assigned to the Corps and ordered to take the wood. Horne interfered in the Division's efforts to attack the wood, issuing conflicting orders and going as far as to ordering a single platoon into action. Due to the miscommunication between Horne and the Division's Commander, Major General Ivor Philipps, was fired and replaced by the Commander of the 7th Division. Horne wrote a "self-serving" account of this event that did no justice to men of the division or the difficulties they had faced. On 9 July the Welsh launched a full-scale attack on the woods and cleared it by the following day. During their 6 days on the Somme, the Welsh division suffered 3,993 casualties. Historian Don Farr wrote that the reputation of the Welsh division suffered due to the repeated

interference by Horne in matters best left to the divisional or brigade staff and his "inexperience of battlefield command at this level". With the wood cleared, Horne would lead his corps during the Bazentin Ridge, the Battle of Delville Wood, and the Battle of Flers–Courcelette.

In September 1916, Horne was created a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath. After the successful capture of Flers, he was promoted to temporary General and succeeded General Sir Charles Monro (after a brief hiatus between 7 August and 29 September when the command was held by Haig's first choice, Lieutenant General Richard Haking, who was then blocked from receiving the promotion) as commander of the First Army.

On 1 January 1917, he was promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant General *"for distinguished service in the field"*. His first trial occurred in April 1917, when his troops were sent on a diversionary attack on the fearsome Vimy Ridge, which rose hundreds of feet over the surrounding landscape. French Army commander Robert Nivelle was critical of Horne's plan; Nivelle was the one found incompetent and, after one month of relative failure (and the beginnings of the 1917 French Army mutinies), Nivelle was sacked and replaced with Philippe Pétain.

The attack on Vimy Ridge was spearheaded by the First Army's "shock troops" (the Canadian Corps, under Lieutenant General Arthur Currie). The ensuing Battle of Vimy Ridge, the first of a series of actions known as the Battle of Arras, was successful: supported by Horne's 1,000-odd artillery pieces, the Canadian forces took the ridge in four days, with approximately 10,000 casualties (against 20,000 German casualties). The capture of Vimy Ridge would prove essential to the British Army: it served as the backbone of the British defence from March 1918 onwards. Nivelle's failure and sacking lengthened the actions around Arras. With success imminent, Haig began siphoning troops northward, where many would participate in the Battles of Messanine and Passchendaele. The First Army served mainly as a diversion and a placeholder until April 1918.

In April, the Germans embarked on the Spring Offensive which was similar to the Allied Somme Offensive two years previously. At first, the attack was successful. On Horne's front, nine German divisions attacked his weak left flank which was manned by two exhausted Portuguese divisions. The Germans advanced six miles to the banks of the River Lawe, where they were repulsed by the 55th (West Lancashire) and the 51st (Highland) Divisions.

After this final German offensive, the British took the initiative permanently. Haig's forces embarked on the Hundred Days Offensive, which ended the war; Horne's troops distinguished themselves in the lengthy offensive.

At the end of the war, Horne was promoted to the permanent rank of General in January 1919 and created a Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George and a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. For his wartime services he received the thanks of Parliament and was raised to the peerage as Baron Horne of Stirkoke in the County of Caithness. He was promoted to head of the Eastern Command in 1919 and retired from the army in 1923.

On 30 July 1920, Horne was appointed a deputy Lieutenant of Caithness. He was appointed Master Gunner of St. James's Park, an honorary position he would hold until his death; he was also appointed Colonel of the Highland Light Infantry in May 1929. He was the

Deputy Governor of the Church Lads' Brigade from November 1923 to February 1925, when he then became governor and commandant until his death.

Lord Horne married Kate (1860-1947), 5th surviving daughter of George McCorquodale (1817-1895), in 1897. While shooting in his Stirkoke estate in August 1929, he suddenly died of unknown causes, at the age of 68. He was buried on his family plot at Wick. Although by a special remainder his title could be inherited by a male grandchild, his only child, daughter Kate (also known as 'Kitten'), also only had daughters so the title became extinct.

It was believed that he had not kept a diary and that his wife had destroyed all his letters after his death, although, in reality, his papers had been handed down to his granddaughters, who had kept them safe. The donation of his extensive papers, which include his diaries and letters, to the Imperial War Museum by the family has allowed his career to be re-evaluated.

Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson

Field Marshal Sir Henry Hughes Wilson, 1st Baronet, GCB DSO (5 May 1864 – 22 June 1922) was one of the most senior British Army staff officers of the First World War and was briefly an Irish unionist politician.

Wilson served as Commandant of the Staff College, Camberley, and then as Director of Military Operations at the War Office, playing a vital role in drawing up plans to deploy an Expeditionary Force to France in the event of war. He acquired a reputation as a political intriguer for his role in agitating for the introduction of conscription and the Curragh incident of 1914.

As Sub Chief of Staff to the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), Wilson was Sir John French's most important advisor during the 1914 campaign, but his poor relations with Haig and Robertson saw him sidelined from top decision-making in the middle years of the war. He played an important role in Anglo-French military relations in 1915 and – after his only experience of field command as a corps commander in 1916 – as an ally of the controversial French General Robert Nivelle in early 1917. Later in 1917 he was informal military advisor to British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, and then British Permanent Military Representative at the Supreme War Council at Versailles.

In 1918 Wilson served as Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS the professional head of the British Army). He continued to hold this position after the war, a time when the Army was being sharply reduced in size whilst attempting to contain industrial unrest in the UK and nationalist unrest in Mesopotamia and Egypt. He also played an important role in the Irish War of Independence.
After retiring from the army Wilson served briefly as a Member of Parliament, and as security advisor to the Northern Ireland government. He was assassinated by two IRA gunmen in 1922.
The Wilson family claimed to have arrived in Carrickfergus with William of Orange in 1690, but may well have lived in the area prior to that. They prospered, as Ulster Protestants, in the Belfast shipping business in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and, following the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849, became landowners. Wilson's father James, the youngest of four sons, inherited Currygrane in Ballinalee (1,200 acres, worth £835 in 1878), making him a middle-ranking landowner. James Wilson served as a High sheriff, a Justice of the peace and Deputy Lieutenant for Longford, and attended Trinity College Dublin. As late as the 1960s the IRA leader Seán MacEoin remembered the Wilsons as having been fair landlords

and employers. The Wilsons also owned Frascati, an eighteenth-century house at Blackrock, Dublin.
Born at Currygrane, Henry Wilson was the second of James and Constant Wilson's four sons (he also had three sisters). He attended Marlborough public school between September 1877 and Easter 1880, before leaving for a crammer to prepare for the Army. One of Wilson's younger brothers also became an army officer and the other a land agent.

Wilson spoke with an Irish accent and at times regarded himself as British, Irish or an Ulsterman. Like many of his era, including Anglo-Irish or Ulster-Scots, he often referred to Britain as "England". His biographer Keith Jeffery suggests that he may well, like many Anglo-Irish, have played up his "Irishness" in England and regarded himself as more "Anglo-" while in Ireland, and may well also have agreed with his brother Jemmy's view that Ireland was not "homogenous" enough to be "a Nation." Wilson was a devout member of the Church of Ireland, and on occasion attended Catholic services, but disliked "Romish" ritual.

Junior officer
Between 1881 and 1882 Wilson made several unsuccessful attempts to get into the British Army officer-training establishments: two to enter the Royal Military Academy (Woolwich) and three for the Royal Military College. The entrance examinations to both relied heavily on rote learning. Sir John Fortescue later claimed that this was because as a tall boy he needed "time for his brain to develop".

Like French and Spears, among others, Wilson acquired his commission "by the back door", as it was then known, by first becoming a militia officer. In December 1882 he joined the Longford Militia, which was also the 6th (Militia) Battalion of the Rifle Brigade. He also trained with the 5th Battalion, Royal Munster Fusiliers. After two periods of training, he was eligible to apply for a regular commission, and after further cramming in the winter of 1883–84, and trips to Algiers and Darmstadt to learn French and German, he sat the Army exam in July 1884. He was commissioned into the Royal Irish Regiment, but soon transferred into the more prestigious Rifle Brigade.

Early in 1885 Wilson was posted with the 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade to India, where he took up polo and big game hunting. In November 1886 he was posted to the Upper Irawaddy, just south of Mandalay, in recently annexed Burma, to take part in the Third Burmese War, whose counter-insurgency operations in the Arakan Hills became known as "the subalterns' war". The British troops were organised into mounted infantry, accompanied by "Goorkha police". Wilson worked with Henry Rawlinson of the King's Royal Rifle Corps (KRRC), who described him in his diary as "a very good chap". On 5 May 1887 he was wounded above the left eye. The wound did not heal and after six months in Calcutta he spent almost the whole of 1888 recuperating in Ireland until he was passed fit for regimental duty. He was left disfigured. His wound earned him the nicknames "Ugly Wilson" and "the ugliest man in the British Army".

Marriage
While in Ireland, Wilson began courting Cecil Mary Wray, who was two years his senior. Her family, who had come over to Ireland late in Elizabeth I's reign, had owned an estate called Ardamona near Lough Eske, Donegal, the profitability of which had never recovered from the Great Famine of Ireland of the 1840s. On 26 December 1849 two kegs of explosive were set off outside the house, after which the family only ever spent one more winter there. From 1850 Cecil's father George Wray had worked as a land agent, latterly for Lord Drogheda's

estates in Kildare, until his death in 1878. Cecil grew up in straitened circumstances, and her views on Irish politics appear to have been rather more hardline than her husband's. They were married on 3 October 1891.

The Wilsons were childless. Wilson lavished affection on their pets (including a dog "Paddles") and other people's children. They gave a home to young Lord Guilford in 1895–1896 and Cecil's niece Leonora ("Little Trench") from December 1902.

Staff College

While contemplating marriage, Wilson began to study for the Staff College, Camberley, in 1888, possibly as attendance at Staff College was not only cheaper than service with a smart regiment but also opened up the possibility of promotion. At this time Wilson had a private income of £200 a year from a £6,000 trust fund. At the end of 1888 Wilson was passed fit for home (but not overseas) service, and joined the 2nd battalion at Dover early in 1889. Wilson was elected to White's in 1889.

After a posting to Aldershot, Wilson was posted to Belfast in May 1890. In May 1891 he passed 15th (out of 25) into Staff College. French and German were amongst his worst subjects, and he began study there in January 1892. After his difficulty in entering the Army, passing the entrance exam proved that he did not lack brains.

Colonel Henry Hildyard became Staff College Commandant in August 1893, beginning a reform of the institution, placing more emphasis on continuous assessment (including outdoor exercises) rather than examinations. Wilson also studied under Colonel George Henderson. Whilst at the College he visited the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War in March 1893. Rawlinson and Thomas D'Oyly Snow were often his study partners. Rawlinson and Wilson became close friends, often staying and socialising together, and Rawlinson introduced Wilson to Lord Roberts in May 1893, whilst both men were working on a scheme for the defence of India. Wilson became a protégé of Roberts.

Staff officer

Wilson graduated from Staff College in December 1893 and was immediately promoted Captain. He was due to be posted with the 3rd Battalion to India early in 1894, but after extensive and unsuccessful lobbying he obtained a medical postponement. He then learned that he was to join the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong for two years, but swapped with another Captain. There is no clear evidence as to why Wilson was so keen to avoid overseas service. Repington, then a staff Captain in the Intelligence Section at the War Office, took Wilson on a tour of French military and naval installations in July. After a very brief service with his regiment in September, with Repington's help Wilson came to work at the War Office in November 1894, initially as an unpaid assistant, then succeeding to Repington's own job. Wilson worked there for three years from November 1894. From November 1895 Wilson found time to assist Rawlinson with his "Officer's Note Book" based on a previous book by Lord Wolseley, and which inspired the official "Field Service Pocket Book".

Wilson worked in Section A (France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Latin America). In April 1895, despite intensive tutoring of up to three hours most days, he failed an exam in German for a posting to Berlin. On 5 May 1895, he took over from Repington as staff Captain of section A, making him the youngest staff officer in the British Army. His duties took him to Paris (June 1895, to inquire about the expedition to Borgu on the Upper Niger) and Brussels. In January 1896 he seemed likely to be appointed Brigade Major of the 2nd brigade at Aldershot

if the current incumbent, Jack Cowans, a notorious womaniser with a penchant for "rough trade", resigned, although in the event this did not happen until early September.

Believing war with the Transvaal "very likely" from spring 1897, Wilson canvassed for a place in any expeditionary force. That spring he helped Major H. P. Northcott, head of the British Empire section in the Intelligence Division, draw up a plan "for knocking Kruger's head off". Leo Amery later claimed that Wilson and Lieutenant Dawnay helped Roberts draw up what would become his eventual plan for invading the Boer republics from the west. He received a medal for riding in Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee procession, but regretted that he had not won a war medal. To his regret, and unlike his friend Rawlinson, Wilson missed out on a posting to the 1898 Sudan Expedition. When tensions mounted again in the summer of 1899, Wilson was appointed Brigade Major of the 3rd brigade, now renamed the 4th or "Light" brigade at Aldershot, which from 9 October was under the command of Neville Lyttelton. War was declared. On 11 October 1899, and he arrived at Cape Town on 18 November.

Wilson's brigade was amongst the troops sent to Natal – by late November it was encamped on the Mooi River, 509 miles from besieged Ladysmith. Wilson's brigade took part in the Battle of Colenso (15 December), in which British troops, advancing after an inadequate artillery bombardment, were shot down by entrenched and largely hidden Boers armed with magazine rifles. Buller, who was still in command in Natal despite having been replaced by Roberts as Commander-in-Chief, was awaiting the arrival of Sir Charles Warren's 5th Division. Artillery fire at the siege of Ladysmith could still be heard from Buller's positions, but he rejected a proposal by Wilson that the Light Brigade cross the Tugela River at Potgieter's Drift, 15 miles upstream. Wilson was critical both of the delay since 16 December and of Buller's failure to share information with Lyttelton and other senior officers. Buller allowed Lyttleton to cross at that spot on 16 January, with the bulk of his reinforced forces crossing unopposed at Trikhardt's Drift 5 miles upstream the following day. Wilson took credit for the Light Brigade's diversionary artillery fire during the Trikhardt's Drift crossing.

During the ensuing Battle of Spion Kop (24 January), Wilson was critical of Buller's lack of a proper staff, of his lack of communication, and of his interference with Warren whom he had placed in charge. In an account written after the battle he claimed to have wanted to draw off pressure by sending two battalions – the Scottish Rifles (Cameronians) and 60th King's Royal Rifle Corps, as well as Bethune's Buccaneers (a Mounted Infantry unit), to occupy the Sugar Loaf two miles East-North-East of Spion Kop, where Warren's men were under fire from three sides. Lyttelton – 25 years later – claimed that Wilson had suggested to him to send reinforcements to help Warren. Wilson's contemporary diary is ambiguous, claiming that "we" had sent the 60th to take the Sugar Loaf, whilst Bethune's men and the Rifles went to assist Warren, and that as the Kop became crowded Lyttelton refused Wilson's request to send the Rifles to the Sugar Loaf to assist the 60th.

After the defeat, Wilson was once again scornful of Buller's lack of progress and of his predictions that he would be in Ladysmith by 5 February. Leo Amery later told a malicious story that Wilson had suggested gathering the brigade majors together to arrest their commanding General, although Wilson in fact seems to have thought highly of Lyttelton at this time. He was also highly critical of Fitzroy Hart ("perfect disgrace … quite mad & incapable under fire"), commanding General of the Irish Brigade, for attacking Inniskilling Hill in close order on 24 February (see Battle of the Tugela Heights), and, on the same day, leaving the Durham Light Infantry (part of the Light Brigade) exposed to attack (Wilson visited the

position, and they were withdrawn on 27 February after Wilson lobbied Lyttelton and Warren), and for leaving Wilson to organise a defence against a Boer night attack on Light Brigade HQ after refusing Light Brigade requests to post pickets. The Light Brigade finally took Inniskilling Hill on 27 February and Ladysmith was relieved the following day, allowing Wilson to meet his old friend Rawlinson, who had been besieged there, again. After the relief of Ladysmith, Wilson continued to be highly critical of the poor state of logistics and of the weak leadership of Buller and Dundonald. After the Fall of Pretoria, he correctly predicted that the Boers would turn to guerrilla warfare, although he did not expect the war to last until spring 1902.

In August 1900 Wilson was summoned to see "the Chief" and appointed to assist Rawlinson at the Adjutant-General's branch, choosing to remain there rather than return to his Brigade-Majorship (which passed to his brother Tono). Part of Wilson's motivation was his desire to return home earlier. He shared a house in Pretoria with Rawlinson and Eddie Stanley (later Lord Derby), Roberts' secretary – they were all in their mid-thirties and socialised with Roberts' daughters, then aged 24 and 29. Wilson was appointed Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General (1 September 1900) and Roberts' assistant military secretary in September, which meant that he returned home with Roberts in December. Lyttelton had wanted him in South Africa on his staff, whilst Kelly-Kenny wanted him on the staff of Southern Command which he was hoping to obtain.

Repington divorce

On 9 October 1899 Lieutenant Colonel Repington, for the sake of his career, gave Wilson his written promise to give up his mistress, Mary Garstin. Wilson had been a friend of Mary Garstin's father, who had died in 1893, and she was a cousin of his friend Lady Guilford, who asked Wilson to get involved at Christmas 1898. On 12 February 1900 Repington told him that he regarded himself as absolved from his parole after learning that her husband had been spreading rumours of his other infidelities. During the divorce hearings Wilson refused Repington's request to sign an account of what had been said at their meeting, and was unable to grant the request of Kelly-Kenny (Adjutant-General to the Forces) for an account of the meeting as he had written no details of it in his diary (Lady Guilford had destroyed the letter which he had written her containing details). He was thus unable or unwilling to confirm Repington's claim that he had released him from his parole. Repington believed that Wilson had "ratted" on a fellow soldier. Army gossip later had it that Wilson had deliberately ratted out a potential career rival. Repington had to resign his commission.

Edwardian period: War Office

In 1901 Wilson spent nine months working under Ian Hamilton in the War Office, working to allocate honours and awards from the recent South African War. He himself received a Mentioned in Despatches and a Distinguished Service Order, which Aylmer Haldane later claimed Wilson had insisted on receiving out of jealousy that he had been awarded it. Wilson was also recommended for brevet promotion to Lieutenant Colonel on the substantive promotion to Major.

Between March and May 1901, at the behest of the Liberal Unionist MP Sir William Rattigan, and against the backdrop of St John Brodrick's proposed army reforms, Wilson – writing anonymously as "a Staff Officer" – published a series of twelve articles on Army Reform in the Lahore Civil and Military Gazette. He argued that given the recent great growth in the size of the Empire Britain could no longer rely on the Royal Navy alone. Wilson argued that the three main roles of the Army were home defence, defence of India (against Russia), Egypt and Canada (against the US, with whom Wilson nonetheless hoped Britain would remain on

friendly terms), and defence of major coaling stations and ports for the Royal Navy's use. Unlike St John Brodrick, Wilson at this stage explicitly ruled out Britain becoming involved in a European war. Without her major colonies, he argued, Britain would suffer "the fate of Spain". He wanted 250,000 men to be made available for overseas service, not the 120,000 proposed by Brodrick, and contemplated the introduction of conscription (which had been ruled out by the Liberal Opposition). In private Wilson – partly motivated by the poor performance of ill-trained Yeomanry units in South Africa – and other War Office officers were less complimentary about Brodrick's proposed reforms.

Battalion commander
Wilson gained both the substantive promotion to Major and the promised brevet in December 1901, and in 1902 became Commanding Officer of the 9th Provisional Battalion, Rifle Brigade at Colchester, intended to supply drafts for the South African War, then still in progress. The battalion was disbanded in February 1903.

Military education and training
Wilson went back to the War Office as Rawlinson's assistant at the Department of Military Education and Training under General Sir Henry Hildyard. The three men led a committee which worked on a "Manual of Combined Training" and a "Staff Manual" which formed the basis of Field Service Regulations Part II, which was to be in force when the Army went to war in August 1914. With £1,600 borrowed from his father, Wilson bought a house off Marylebone Road. In 1903 he became an Assistant Adjutant-General.

At this time Wilson was becoming friendly with political figures such as Arthur Balfour, Winston Churchill, Leo Amery and Leo Maxse. Some of St John Brodrick's proposed reforms were criticised by the Elgin Report in August 1903. Brodrick was being attacked in Parliament by Conservative MPs, including Amery, to whom Wilson was feeding information.

Esher reforms and General Staff
On Leo Amery's suggestion Wilson's colleague Gerald Ellison was appointed Secretary of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee (see Esher Report), which consisted of Esher, Admiral John Fisher and Sir George Clarke. Wilson approved of Esher's aims, but not the whirlwind speed by which he began making changes at the War Office. Wilson impressed Esher, and was put in charge of the new department which managed Staff College, RMA, RMC and officers' promotion exams. Wilson often travelled around Britain and Ireland to supervise the training of officers and examinations for promotion.

Wilson attended the first ever General Staff Conference and Staff Ride at Camberley in January 1905. He continued to lobby for a General Staff to be set up, especially after the Dogger Bank incident of October 1904. Wilson proposed a strong Chief of the General Staff who would be the Secretary of State for War's sole adviser on matters of strategy, ironically the position which would be held by Wilson's rival Robertson during the First World War. Despite pressure from Repington, Esher and Sir George Clarke, progress on the General Staff was very slow. In August Brodrick's successor Arnold-Forster issued a minute similar to Wilson's of three months previous. Lyttelton (Chief of the General Staff), unaware of Wilson's role, expressed support. In November Wilson released Arnold-Forster's memo to the press, claiming he had been ordered to do so; Arnold-Forster initially expressed "amazement" but then agreed that the leak had "done nothing but good".

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

The Wilsons had Christmas Dinner with Roberts in 1904 and 1905. Wilson assisted Roberts with his House of Lords speeches, and the closeness of their relationship attracted disapproval from Lyttelton, and possibly French and Arnold-Forster. Relations with Lyttelton became more strained in 1905–06, possibly out of jealousy or influenced by Repington. Wilson had predicted a hung Parliament in January 1906, but to his disgust, "that traitor C.B." had won a landslide.

There was a war scare in May 1906 when the Turks occupied an old Egyptian fort at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba. Wilson noted that Grierson (Director of Military Operations) and Lyttelton *("absolutely incapable ... positively a dangerous fool"*) had approved the proposed scheme for military action, but neither the Adjutant-General nor the Quartermaster-General had been consulted. Repington wrote to Esher that Wilson was an *"intriguing impostor"* and *"a low-class schemer whose sole aptitude is for worshipping rising suns – an aptitude expressed by those who know him in more vulgar language".* On 12 September 1906 Army Order 233 set up a General Staff to supervise education and training and to draw up war plans (Wilson had drafted an Army Order late in 1905, but it had been held up by disputes over whether staff officers should be appointed by the Chief of the General Staff as Wilson preferred or by an eleven-man selection board).

Wilson had hoped, as early as March 1905, to succeed Rawlinson as Commandant at Staff College, Camberley. In July Lyttelton (Chief of the General Staff), who appears to have disliked Wilson, raised the job to a Brigadier-General's position, for which Wilson was not yet senior enough.

On 16 July 1906 Rawlinson told Wilson that he wanted him to succeed him at the end of the year, and the news appeared in the press in August amidst praise for Rawlinson, suggesting that he rather than Wilson had leaked it. Field Marshal Roberts wrote to Richard Haldane (Secretary of State for War) and Esher recommending Wilson on the basis of his excellent staff work in South Africa, and as a strong character needed to maintain Rawlinson's improvements at Camberley. Wilson, who learned indirectly from Aylmer Haldane on 24 October that he was to get the job, wrote to thank Roberts, and was in little doubt that his support had clinched it for him. Wilson remained very close to Roberts, often joining him for Christmas Dinner and attending his Golden Wedding in May 1909. French (then commanding 1st Army Corps at Aldershot Command) had initially been suspicious of Wilson as a Roberts protégé, but now supported his candidacy, and by 1912 Wilson had become his most trusted adviser.

Wilson was promoted to substantive Colonel on 1 January 1907 and his appointment as temporary Brigadier General and Commandant Staff College, Camberley, was announced on 8 January 1907. He was at first short of money – he had to borrow £350 (£46768 in 2016) to cover the expense of moving to Camberley, where his official salary was not enough to cover the cost of entertaining expected – and initially had to cut back on foreign holidays and social trips to London but after inheriting £1,300 on his father's death in August 1907 was able to buy polo ponies and a second car in subsequent years. His pay as commandant rose from £1,200 in 1907 to £1,350 in 1910.

In May and June 1909 Wilson had been tipped to succeed Haig as Director of Staff Duties, although he would have preferred command of a brigade. In April and May 1910, with his term of office at Camberley still officially running until January 1911, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), William Nicholson, told Wilson that he was to succeed Spencer

Ewart as Director of Military Operations that summer and vetoed him from accepting Horace Smith-Dorrien's offer of a brigade at Aldershot.
Wilson recommended Kiggell as his successor and thought the appointment of William Robertson "a tremendous gamble". Robertson visited Camberley with Lord Kitchener (28 July 1910), who criticised Wilson; this may have been one of the causes of the poor relations between Wilson and Kitchener in August 1914. Edmonds later told a story of how Wilson had left a bill for £250 for furniture and improvements to the Commandant's residence, and that Wilson's predecessor Rawlinson, when approached by Robertson for advice, had commented that many of these improvements had been made by his own wife or by previous Commandants. Whatever the truth of the matter, relations between Wilson and Robertson deteriorated thereafter.

Repington (whom Wilson thought a "lying brute") attacked the current standards of British staff officers in The Times on 27 September 1910, arguing that Wilson had educated staff officers to be "sucking Napoleons" and that Robertson was a "first rate man" who would sort it out. On 22 June 1922, two London-based members of the Irish Republican Army, Reginald Dunne and Joseph O'Sullivan, assassinated Wilson outside his house at 36 Eaton Place at approximately 2:20 pm. He was in full uniform as he was returning from unveiling the Great Eastern Railway War Memorial at Liverpool Street station at 1:00 pm. He had six wounds, two of them fatal, to the chest.

Stories later circulated that the first shot missed, but rather than taking shelter in the house, he drew his sword and advanced on his attackers, who were able to shoot and kill him. These stories often stressed that he had died a martyr. His housemaid testified that she found his drawn sword lying by his side. These details are not in the three witness accounts quoted by Keith Jeffery (Reginald Dunne's account smuggled out of prison, or the inquest testimonies of one of two road menders working nearby and of the taxi driver who had just dropped Wilson off). One of the road menders' accounts, as published in the Daily Mail, mentions Wilson turning on his attackers with the words "you cowardly swine!" but Jeffery suggests this was an embellishment by the newspaper.

Two police officers and a chauffeur were also shot as the men attempted to avoid capture. They were then surrounded by a crowd and arrested by other policemen after a struggle. Dunne and O'Sullivan (who while serving as a British soldier had lost a leg in World War I) were captured by an angry crowd. Dunne (also a combat veteran of the British Army) had returned to try to help O'Sullivan. He was also captured after shooting and wounding two police officers and a passerby. Convicted of murder, both men were hanged on 10 August 1922.

Wilson had regarded himself as Irish and to the end of his life Currygrane, County Longford was the first address in his "Who's Who" entry. In early July 1919 Wilson, in uniform and in an open car, had still been able to drive his mother there, the last time he ever visited the place. During the War of Independence, the IRA had taken the family guns and the house had been taken over by Auxiliaries. By 1921, he and his brothers had all had to leave, unable to access papers and valuables, his brother Jemmy living in impecunious circumstances at Rye in Sussex (Wilson had to pay for the schooling of Jemmy's daughter) and it was unsafe for Wilson even to book a ferry crossing to Dublin under his own name. On the day Wilson's killers were hanged, Currygrane was burned to the ground, possibly as a reprisal although possibly as an unrelated part of the unrest in that county. Referring to Wilson in his statement before execution, Dunne said: *"He was at the time of his death the Military Advisor to what is colloquially called the Ulster Government, and as Military Advisor he raised and organized a*

body of men known as the Ulster Special Constabulary, who are the principal agents in his reign of terror."

The guns used by the assassins were sent to David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill in the Cabinet Room at 10 Downing Street; *"There was no Henry Wilson. The Prime Minister and I faced each other, and on the table between us lay the pistols which an hour before had taken this loyal man's life".* The House of Commons was immediately adjourned as a mark of respect and King George V sent his equerry, Colonel Arthur Erskine, to Eaton Place to convey the royal sympathy to Lady Wilson. A dinner to celebrate the Prince of Wales's birthday, arranged at Buckingham Palace for the evening, was also cancelled.

Cabinet Ministers held a conference at 10 Downing Street on 5pm on the day of the assassination. They suspected Anti-Treaty forces (who had recently seized the Four Courts in Dublin) might be responsible – this was in fact not the case – and thought the Irish Provisional Government "should be pressed to deal with the matter". Macready was summoned to London, where he found the Cabinet worried about their personal safety but also keen for a dramatic gesture of retaliation, and was asked whether it was possible for British troops to seize the Four Courts – he said that it was but cautioned against precipitate action which might reunite the two Irish factions, and on his return to Dublin deliberately delayed taking such action. Nonetheless, suspicion of Anti-Treaty complicity in Wilson's murder, and perceived British pressure to do something about it, was one of several triggers of the Irish Civil War.

The assassination was greeted with horror in the UK, and compared to the Phoenix Park killings of 1882, which had – it was said – set back the cause of Irish Home Rule by a generation. It was the first assassination of an MP since Prime Minister Spencer Perceval in 1812 and the last until Airey Neave's assassination by the INLA in 1979. Wilson's widow blamed the government for his death – when Conservative leader Austen Chamberlain called on the evening of his death to offer his condolences, he was by one account greeted by her with the word "murderer" and by another simply asked to leave by Wilson's niece – and she was only persuaded to allow government representation at the funeral on the grounds that not to do so would be disrespectful to the King. Wilson's mother wrote to Bonar Law (former Conservative leader and increasingly seen as an alternative if the Coalition ended) complaining that, in a noisy Commons debate, Lloyd George had claimed to have been a personal friend of Wilson's.

Wilson's funeral was a public affair attended by Lloyd George and the cabinet, Foch, Nivelle and Weygand from France as well as many of his former army colleagues including French, Macready, Haig and Robertson. The Field Marshal was buried in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Major General Sir Andrew Russell

Major General Sir Andrew Hamilton Russell KCB, KCMG (23 February 1868 – 29 November 1960) was a senior officer of the New Zealand Military Forces who served during the First World War.

Born in Napier, New Zealand, Russell spent most of his youth in England. He joined the British Army in 1888 and served in India before transferring to the Indian Army in pursuit of a more active life. He grew disillusioned with his career and resigned his commission in 1892 to become a farmer in New Zealand. Running a sheep farm on land owned by his father, he retained an interest in soldiering and helped raise a local militia unit before becoming a senior officer in the New Zealand Territorial Force.

Appointed to command the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade upon the outbreak of war, he rose swiftly to high command during the Gallipoli campaign and in December 1915 became commander of the New Zealand and Australian Division. He oversaw the evacuation of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps from Gallipoli. He commanded the New Zealand Division, formed in March 1916, throughout its service on the Western Front, leading it during major engagements during the Battles of the Somme, Messines and Passchendaele, the German spring offensive and the Hundred Days Offensive. After the war, he returned to farming life. He soon became heavily involved in veteran's affairs, lobbied in favour of defensive spending, and participated in local body politics. In the early years of the Second World War, he served as the Inspector General of New Zealand Military Forces. He died in 1960 at the age of 92 and is commemorated in Hastings Civic Square with a bronze statue standing over Russell Street next to the Hastings Cenotaph.

Andrew Hamilton Russell, known as Guy to his family, was born on 23 February 1868 at Napier, New Zealand, the oldest son of Andrew Hamilton Russell, a farmer, and his wife. His family had a long military tradition dating back to the Napoleonic Wars, during which his great-grandfather served in the Black Watch Regiment while a grandfather served with the 58th Regiment during the New Zealand Wars and after retiring from the British Army took up farming in the Hawke's Bay region of New Zealand. Russell's father also served in the 58th Regiment before emigrating to New Zealand where he ran an isolated sheep station with his brother in Hawke's Bay.

After tiring of life in colonial New Zealand, Russell's father moved his family to England in 1874 and settled in Sedgley. After three years, the family returned to New Zealand, setting up a home in Flaxmere. The family were less isolated than at their previous home in the country and they had an active social life. However, finances became tight and the Russell family went back to England and then on to Switzerland, where they lived on the rental income from their property in New Zealand. Russell remained in England to be educated at Twyford School, near Winchester. In 1882, after coming top of his final year at Twyford, and encouraged by both his father and grandfather to pursue a career in science or law, he went on to Harrow School. He did not perform well in his academic studies, preferring instead sports and the school's Cadet Corps.

In 1885, Russell left Harrow and after spending several months in Germany learning the language, he sat the entrance examination for the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. Two days before taking the exam, he received the news of his mother's death. Despite this he scored high marks and duly entered Sandhurst in September 1886. Excelling in his military studies, he won the Sword of Honour as the best performing cadet of his intake, making him "the first

New Zealand-born officer to achieve that distinction", and passed out in August 1887. He was commissioned as a second Lieutenant into the 1st Battalion of the Border Regiment of the British Army, which was then stationed in Sialkot in British India, where he arrived in January 1888.

There was little action to enliven Russell's time in India and he found duty there tedious. Much of his time was spent riding and he earned a "great reputation as a polo player". A year later, his battalion was transferred to garrison duties in Burma which, at the time, was experiencing some unrest as bandits carried out guerrilla warfare against the British rulers. However, apart from one minor skirmish, Russell saw little action and spent much of his time training mounted infantry. The battalion was stationed in Burma for six months before it moved to England to return to its home barracks in Dover, Kent. Disillusioned with how his military career was developing, he began to consider leaving the army. In June 1891, after applications to join units in Southern Africa were rejected, he transferred to the British Indian Army. Assigned to a substandard infantry regiment back in Burma, he grew even more dissatisfied with his military career and in August 1892, he resigned his commission.

Russell returned to New Zealand to pursue sheep farming, albeit somewhat unenthusiastically. At one stage, he went to Australia to investigate farming prospects there but soon decided New Zealand offered better opportunities. He was taken on as a farming cadet on sheep stations in Tunanui and Flaxmere, jointly owned by his father and uncle, with a view to running his father's share of the property. In 1895, when the farming partnership between his father and uncle was amicably dissolved and the stations subdivided, Russell took on responsibility for his father's land. The same year, he began a courtship with Gertrude Williams whose family had extensive land holdings in the Hawke's Bay. The couple eventually married in August 1896, and would go on to have five children.

Farming was at times difficult; much of his father's land was bush country and needed to cleared before it could be converted to pasture. Russell also had to contend with low wool and meat prices as well as occasional floods and droughts. However, the farm was running at a profit by 1905 and he requested his father give him a lease on the land and this was granted the following year. A few years later he took over full ownership of the farm by buying out his siblings' interest in the property. In addition to his farming, Russell pursued business and political interests. In 1899, he played a role in the development of the Farmers' Union and later became chairman of its Hawke's Bay chapter. He took up directorships of several large businesses in the area. In 1905, he became heavily involved in the Political Reform League which worked to promote conservative views and candidates for public office.

Despite an active working and business life, Russell was prominent in the raising of a militia unit of the New Zealand Volunteer Force following the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899. He commanded the unit, the Wellington (East Coast) Mounted Rifles Regiment, which by 1901 numbered about 900 men. Most of his volunteers were young farm workers who provided their own horses and saddles, while the Defence Department provided rifles and other equipment. Russell set about training his unit, an experience that he greatly enjoyed and which rekindled his interest in the military. However, his work and family commitments kept him from volunteering for active service in South Africa.

The New Zealand Volunteer Force declined in the years after the Boer War and Russell endeavoured to keep his regiment, comprising five squadrons of mounted infantry, well trained and prepared for any future hostilities. He was promoted to Major in 1907, and Lieutenant

Colonel in 1910. At this time, New Zealand's military was being reorganised under the overview of Major General Alexander Godley, an officer in the British Army and newly appointed commander of the New Zealand Military Forces. Compulsory military training was introduced and the Volunteer Force was abolished and replaced with a Territorial Force. Godley was impressed with Russell's work with his regiment of mounted infantry and in 1911, he was appointed commander of the 9th Wellington East Coast Mounted Rifles. Godley later offered Russell a position as a professional soldier, holding the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, in the New Zealand Military Forces. He declined, preferring a role in the field. Instead, Russell went to England for six months on secondment to the British Army.

In October 1913, New Zealand's military provided assistance to the government in maintaining order during a strike in Wellington involving mining and waterfront unions. Infantry were drawn from territorial formations and appointed special constables in order to support the police in Wellington. Russell commanded the mounted contingent of special constables, which became known as "Massey's Cossacks" after William Massey, the prime minister. His men broke up pickets and cleared the docks of striking workers, duties which would occupy them for nearly two months before order was fully restored. The following year, Russell's men would again be used to maintain order, this time at a training camp in the Hawke's Bay, following a riot by territorial infantry protesting at the imposition of compulsory military training and its effect on their ability to work and support their families.
On the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, the New Zealand government offered Great Britain a New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF) for service in the war. The offer, the first to be made by a Dominion of Great Britain, was quickly accepted. Godley set about raising the NZEF, the main body of which was to consist of an infantry brigade, a mounted brigade, an artillery brigade and various support units. Russell was offered command of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade which he duly accepted. Promoted to Brigadier General, he departed New Zealand with the main body of the NZEF on 16 October 1914 as its highest-ranking territorial officer.

The NZEF was originally destined for France to serve on the Western Front but the Turks then entered the war and were perceived to be a threat to the Suez Canal. Subsequently the NZEF and the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), travelling in convoy, were diverted to the Middle East. Now based in Egypt, the NZEF carried out intensive preparations for active service. Russell oversaw the training of his brigade in shooting, tactics, map reading and navigation. While in Egypt, the New Zealand and Australian Division was formed, with Russell's brigade joining the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, 1st Australian Light Horse Brigade and the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade. The new division was part of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force that was to be landed at Gallipoli, in the Dardanelles. The area designated for the landings was not appropriate for horses and only the division's two infantry brigades embarked for Gallipoli. Much to his frustration, Russell's brigade remained in Egypt. However, casualties amongst the infantry eventually led to the transfer of Russell's command, without its horses which remained in Egypt, to Gallipoli in early May.

On its arrival in the front lines on 12 May 1915, the Mounted Rifles was deployed on the northern (or left) sector of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) perimeter and relieved a brigade of Royal Marines Light Infantry. It would remain here for three months. The area was overlooked by the Sari Bair range and the Turks dominated with snipers and machine gun fire. Russell set his men to improving the defensive arrangements of their positions, digging trenches and saps and implementing countermeasures. He made his headquarters on an elevated plateau which would become known as Russell's Top, only 40

metres (130 ft) from the front line and sharing the discomfort and dangers with his men. A week after arriving, the Mounted Rifles helped to fend off a Turkish night attack across the entire front line. The Turks lost 10,000 men killed and wounded, and the next morning, Godley, the divisional commander, ordered a counterattack. Russell, aware of how exposed to Turkish machine gun fire an advance across the front lines would be, refused to order the attack. Despite insisting his orders be followed, Godley eventually conceded.

In August 1915, Russell's brigade participated in the Battle of Sari Bair, an attempt to break the stalemate that existed at Gallipoli. Commanding a contingent of Maori pioneers in addition to his own brigade, the Turkish positions at No. 3 Outpost, Table Top Hill and Bauchop's Hill, guarding the approach to the Sari Bair ridge, were captured in a well organised attack on the night of 6 August. Russell took care to ensure his men fully understood their roles and the tactics to be used. Originally, Russell's brigade was to have been the spearhead of the attack on Chunuk Bair itself but was shunted into the supporting role of securing the approach. The capture of the Turkish positions cleared the way for the New Zealand Infantry Brigade to make its way up the slopes of Chunuk Bair. Heavy losses were incurred amongst the infantry making an initial attack during daylight hours. A nighttime attack was planned using two squadrons of Russell's command together with the Wellington Infantry Battalion. This succeeded and the peak of Chunuk Bair was captured in the early hours of 8 August. The peak was exposed to gunfire from neighbouring Hill Q, which made it difficult to dig in. The battalion held Chunuk Bair for a day until relieved by the Otago Infantry Battalion and two more squadrons of Russell's mounteds. The peak was lost the following day after it was handed over to two British battalions and the Sair Bair ridge remained in Turkish hands. Later, Godley regretted the change to the original plan, considering that Russell, after taking the approaches to the Sari Bair ridge, could have proceeded on and secured Chunuk Bair and Hill Q with his brigade.

Two weeks later, Russell's brigade was involved in attacks on Hill 60, positioned between the ANZAC positions and the British 9th Corps at Suvla Bay. Russell's command, which also included 500 men from the Australian 4th Infantry Brigade and a battalion of Irish Rangers, was part of a three-brigade attack, commanded by Brigadier General Charles Cox, from the ANZAC front while elements of 9th Corps attacked from the other side. On 21 August, in broad daylight but supported by artillery, Russell's forces succeeded in capturing a portion of the Turkish trenches. The upper reaches of the hill remained in Turkish hands and an attack by Australian reinforcements the following day failed. Russell had wanted the reinforcements to advance at night but was overruled by Cox. Instead, he committed the inexperienced Australians without adequate preparation. On 27 August, Russell mounted a further attack. The New Zealanders managed to gain a foothold further up the slopes of Hill 60 and the next day, the Australian 10th Light Horse supplemented the gains made when they captured a trench on the crest of the hill. The remainder of the crest remained in Turkish hands for the rest of the campaign. Despite the fighting at Hill 60 only being a partial success, Godley noted that Russell *"...is really quite an exceptionally good man".*

On 13 September Russell and his men were withdrawn to Lemnos for a rest. By this time, casualties had seen his brigade, which had arrived at Gallipoli with 2,000 men, reduced to around 250. Shortly afterwards, Russell went to Egypt to inspect reinforcements for the brigade. He also advised on the state of the British Territorial regiments at Gallipoli and was unimpressed with their quality. He returned to Lemnos with 1,100 reinforcements and reorganised his brigade. It returned to Gallipoli in November although it was understrength despite the reinforcements. He was mentioned in despatches shortly afterwards.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Promoted to Major General, Russell took over command of the New Zealand and Australian Division on 27 November from Godley, who became commander of ANZAC. He was the first New Zealand-born soldier to reach this rank. By this time, the Allies had decided to abandon the campaign in Gallipoli and evacuate its forces. Russell was placed in command of the rearguard, numbering 20,000 men, which covered the evacuation from Anzac Cove. The withdrawal went smoothly, and in the early hours on 20 December, Russell departed the beaches of Gallipoli, with the final 2,000 men of his rearguard following shortly afterwards. Russell was one of the few General officers to have performed creditably during the Gallipoli campaign. Both Godley and Birdwood thought highly of him, the latter describing him as "an excellent commander". General Sir Ian Hamilton, commander of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force for most of the campaign, had come to view Russell as *"the outstanding personality on the [Gallipoli] Peninsula"*.

The New Zealanders were back in Egypt by late 1915 to recover and recuperate. When the New Zealand Division was formed in March 1916, Russell was selected as its divisional commander. He immediately set about a training regime for his soldiers, many of whom were inexperienced replacements, to prepare them for combat. Initially, the division was tasked with defending a section of the Suez Canal but it was then decided that it would join two Australian divisions in France.

The New Zealand Division, which totalled some 15,000 men in its ranks, departed Egypt in early April and proceeded to the Armentières sector of the Western Front, as part of General Herbert Plumer's Second Army. Here the New Zealanders would undergo intensive training in trench warfare. The Armentières front line was regarded by the Allies as a nursery sector where new units could undergo familiarisation without being called upon for intensive offensive operations. By 16 May, Russell's command had responsibility for a 5.4 kilometres (3.4 mi) stretch of the front line. He was not content to take a defensive posture as the German troops opposing his division did; instead he sought to control no-man's land, ordering regular patrols be dispatched and seeking to establish dominance over the enemy's sniping activities. It also carried out raids on the opposing trenches, seeking to capture prisoners and gain intelligence.

Soon the New Zealand Division was involved in supporting the Somme Offensive, which opened on 1 July, with the objective being to tie down German troops so they could not be transferred to the Somme sector. This exposed problems and strained the men as extensive raids and patrols were carried out. Russell pushed for improvement, his goal being to create the best division in France. He inspected units daily and regularly visited the front line, even going into no-man's land on two occasions. He closely monitored discipline, and not just that of the enlisted personnel; officers were expected to perform well if they were to lead troops and Russell was not above removing those that did not meet his expectations. His insistence on rigid discipline was balanced by intensive training and tempered by close attention to the welfare of the troops under his command. In a letter to James Allen, the New Zealand Minister of Defence, Russell wrote: "What we want is a platoon officer who will look after his men exactly as a mother does her boy of 10".

British High Command planned on using the New Zealand Division in the ongoing Somme offensive and the New Zealanders were withdrawn from the Armentières sector on 18 August, having incurred over 2,000 casualties. It began preparing for a role in its first Major attack, in particular, practicing advancing behind a creeping artillery barrage. The attack was to be accompanied by tanks although Russell was not convinced of their value when he attended a

demonstration on their use. In early September the division moved from its rest area at Hallencourt to the Somme, reaching Fricourt on 9 September. It was to be part of XV Corp's attack on the villages of Flers and Gueudecourt, with the New Zealanders tasked with the capture of two key trench systems; Russell considered that the task was to his "liking".

The New Zealand Division began its attack on 15 September, ending the day with three of its four objectives in hand. By nightfall the next day, it had achieved the last of its objectives, having incurred losses of around 2,500 men. The next few days were spent improving their positions and then, on 25 September, it was part of another attack forward.
It spent the longest period in the front line of all of the divisions involved and gained a reputation for its fighting prowess. This came at a cost of 7,400 casualties since its introduction to the offensive on 15 September.

In June 1917 the New Zealand Division was involved in the capture of Messines Ridge. On a visit to the front line at Messines, Russell was nearly killed when a "sniper's bullet passed through his steel helmet, creasing his scalp". Failure came however on 12 October that year at the First Battle of Passchendaele, when – in what is still the costliest day in New Zealand's military history – the New Zealanders' second assault was repulsed with 2,735 casualties. Russell took the blame, in what military historian Christopher Pugsley called *"a rare example of a military commander's willingness to accept responsibility for failure",* though Pugsley attributes the main fault to the staff of the corps commander, General Godley.

After further failure at Polderhoek in December and a hard winter in the Ypres salient, Russell worked to rebuild the division and its morale. Despite this, by now, as historian Les Carlyon notes: *"There were no better troops on the western front than the New Zealanders".* Throughout 1918, Russell emphasised training as new mobile warfare tactics evolved: this proved its worth during the Hundred Days Offensive that ended the war. In June Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, who was a great admirer of Russell, offered him command of a British corps – the only Dominion commander to be so asked – but he diplomatically declined in order to stay with the New Zealanders. Russell commanded the New Zealand Division for the remainder of the war. In the 1918 New Year Honours, he was appointed a Knight Commander in the Order of the Bath.

At the end of the war, the New Zealand Division performed garrison duty in Germany, based at Cologne. To prepare his soldiers for a civilian life, Russell secured funding from the New Zealand government for educational and trade training. By December 1918, the longest serving personnel of the New Zealand Division were demobilising and returning to New Zealand. Russell remained in command of those remaining until the end of January 1919 when, due to pneumonia, he took sick leave. He recuperated in the south of France but was soon taking care of his sister and daughter when they became stricken with the Spanish flu. The stress led to a collapse while traveling in France.

Russell returned to New Zealand in April 1919 aboard Arawa, accompanied by his now recovered daughter. He attended civic receptions in Christchurch and Wellington, being hailed at the latter as New Zealand's 'Ariki Toa', or 'Fighting Chief'. When speaking to the audience, he reminded listeners of the fighting deeds of the men under his command during the war. When in Wellington, and being hosted at a Parliamentary lunch, he spoke of the need to care for the returning fighting soldiers after their war service.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

After a final reception at Hastings, Russell returned to his farm in New Zealand where he would spend much of the next two years resting from the strain of his command during the war. He had been recognised with numerous awards for his service in the war. In addition to his British honours, he received a number of foreign decorations including the French Légion d'honneur (croix d'officier) and Croix de Guerre (avec palme), the Belgian Ordre de Léopold (commander) and Croix de Guerre, the Serbian Order of the White Eagle (first class) and the Montenegrin Order of Prince Danilo I.

Even though he was physically recuperating at his farm, Russell remained keenly interested in current affairs. He anticipated the postwar recovery of Germany and also the increased presence of Japan in world affairs and argued New Zealand needed to be prepared. He became the president of the National Defence League (NDL), which agitated for improved defensive arrangements in response to the New Zealand government's trimming of its expenditure on the military. The NDL also promoted the idea of a "White New Zealand", a bastion of Western civilisation in the South Pacific that should be resistant to immigrants from Asian countries. He was also appointed Dominion Commandant of the New Zealand branch of the Legion of Frontiersmen.

An economic slump in 1921 affected the rural sector of New Zealand, with meat and wool fetching lower export prices. This impacted the running of Russell's farm. He trimmed domestic staff at his homestead and, after consulting with his farm workers, reduced wages instead of making redundancies. The previous year, he had leased small sections of land, with a right to purchase, to returned soldiers for farming. They too suffered financially and were unable to take up their option to purchase the leased land. Russell ensured they did not unduly suffer financially. The reduced income from the farm affected his ability to send funds to his sisters in England.

In 1922, Russell contested the Hawke's Bay electorate in the 1922 election. Although he was the Reform Party's candidate, he described himself as an independent. He did not agree with his party's position on land settlement and establishment of business initiatives for farmers. He came second after Gilbert McKay of the Liberal Party, securing 3,552 votes to the winner's 3,903. Russell also occupied himself with veterans' affairs; he was unanimously elected president of the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association (RSA) in 1921. His involvement in the RSA helped establish it in New Zealand society during the immediate postwar period. Always interested in the welfare of the soldiers he had formerly commanded during the First World War, he sought to assist their integration back into society. He agitated for improvements in pensions for war widows and disabled soldiers. Thanks in part to his efforts, the introduction of the War Pensions Act was introduced the following year, improving the financial position of many returned soldiers.

In 1924, Russell stood down as president of the RSA so he could travel abroad, but resumed his leadership role in 1926. He remained in this capacity until 1935, when, increasingly tired of the impositions on his time, he resigned. In honour of his presidency, a portrait of Russell by the war artist Archibald Baxter was donated to the nation. Although no longer the organisation's leader, he subsequently led a 1500-strong contingent of the RSA to Sydney in 1938, commemorating 150 years of European settlement in Australia.

Russell was involved in the Territorial Force in an honorary capacity and on 12 May 1935, presented a guidon to the 9th (Wellington East Coast) Mounted Rifles at that year's training camp in Napier.

Although Russell had long ended his military career, having been moved to the retired list in 1932, he was called upon following the outbreak of the Second World War. As the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force (2NZEF) was being organised, his advice on its use was sought after. He also approved of the appointment of Major General Bernard Freyberg as the commander of the 2NZEF, regarding him as "a good fighting man". He was also appointed to the War Council, which made recommendations to the War Cabinet on military matters. However, the War Council lacked executive powers and proved to be relatively ineffective. In September 1940, he was appointed the Inspector-General of New Zealand Military Forces which was responsible for inspecting and reporting on the country's home defences. It was an important role, for there was a genuine threat of a Japanese invasion and it had been made clear to the New Zealand government that the Royal Navy, long thought to be part of the country's defence arrangements, would be unlikely to help.

In his inspectorate role, Russell travelled extensively throughout the country, assessing its defensive arrangements as well as the training and equipping of military personnel. He recommended the Royal New Zealand Air Force prioritise the acquisition of long-range reconnaissance aircraft, seeing these as vital to the defence of New Zealand. He also identified training issues in the New Zealand Territorial Force and the best use of the Home Guard which, by 1941, numbered 100,000 men. However, his recommendations were often not enacted and his working relationship with Fred Jones, the Minister for Defence, was strained. In fact, he advocated for Jones to be sacked. Increasingly frustrated at his lack of traction, and believing a younger man would be better suited for the role, he retired his inspectorate in July 1941. He recommended that the duties of the role be devolved onto the military district commanders. He remained on the War Council until June 1942, by which time he had tired of its lack of impact on the direction of the war effort. Despite the protestations of Prime Minister Peter Fraser, he tendered his resignation.

In the postwar period, Russell continued to farm his property although he ceased the physical labour and left day to day management to staff. The farm struggled with drought and pests, which saw him having to sell much of his cattle. He also began to step down from the many boards and trusts with which he had been involved. Two of his sisters that he had supported for much of his life died in 1945 and 1953 respectively and their property in England was sold, with Russell inheriting the proceeds. He remained an important figure in the Hawkes Bay community and on 11 November 1956, laid the foundation stone for what became Hastings's Second World War memorial, the Hastings and District War Memorial Library.

Andrew Russell died on 29 November 1960, aged 92, at the family homestead near Hastings. After a well-attended service at St Matthew's Anglican Church in Hastings, at which his pallbearers included several senior officers of the New Zealand Army including the Chief of General Staff Major General Leonard Thornton, his remains were cremated. He was survived by his wife and four children. One of his two sons, John Tinsley Russell, served with the New Zealand Divisional Cavalry during the Second World War and was killed in action during the Western Desert campaign. John's death affected his father deeply; as a way of coping, Russell would write letters to him for the rest of his life. Russell's ashes were buried on a hill overlooking his farm, along with those of his wife and eldest son.

In 1921, Russell Street in Hastings was renamed from Station Street in honour of Andrew Russell. The street is adjacent the city's war memorial. A bronze statue of him was installed

on the street and unveiled on 25 April 2017. A bust of Russell is displayed at the Hastings and District War Memorial Library.

Field Marshal Lord Plumer

Field Marshal Herbert Charles Onslow Plumer, 1st Viscount Plumer (13 March 1857 – 16 July 1932) was a senior British Army officer who fought in the First World War, being perhaps most notable for commanding the Second Army of the British Expeditionary Force on the Western Front from 1915 to 1918.

Herbert Plumer was son of Hall Plumer of Malpas Lodge, Torquay, Devon (a grandson of Sir Thomas Plumer), and Louisa Alice, daughter of Henry Turnley, of Kensington. He was educated at Eton College and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

Plumer was commissioned as a Lieutenant into the 65th Regiment of Foot on 11 September 1876. He joined his regiment in India and became adjutant of his battalion on 29 April 1879. Promoted to Captain on 29 May 1882, he accompanied his battalion to the Sudan in 1884 as part of the Nile Expedition. Plumer was present at the battle of El Teb in February 1884 and the battle of Tamai in March, and was mentioned in dispatches. He spent from 1886 to 1887 attending the Staff College at Camberley, England, before being appointed deputy assistant adjutant General in Jersey on 7 May 1890.

He was promoted to Major on 22 January 1893 and posted to the 2nd Battalion the York and Lancaster Regiment before being appointed assistant military secretary to the General Officer Commanding Cape Colony in December 1895. He went to Southern Rhodesia in 1896 to disarm the local police force following the Jameson Raid and then later that year returned there to command the Matabele Relief Force during the Second Matabele War. He became deputy assistant adjutant-General at Aldershot with promotion to brevet Lieutenant Colonel on 8 May 1897.

In 1899 Plumer returned to Southern Rhodesia where he raised a force of mounted infantry and, having been promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 17 October 1900, he led them at the Relief of Mafeking during the Second Boer War. He was promoted to Colonel on 29 November 1900 and was then given command of a mixed force which captured General Christiaan de Wet's wagon train at Hamelfontein in February 1901.

Plumer arrived back in the United Kingdom in April 1902, dated 23 June 1902, Major General Lord Kitchener, Commander-in-Chief in South Africa during the latter part of the war, wrote how Plumer had "invariable displayed military qualifications of a very high order. Few officers have rendered better service." He was promoted to Major General for distinguished service in the field on 22 August 1902, and was appointed Commander of the 4th Brigade within 1st Army Corps on 1 October 1902. The following year he became General Officer Commanding 10th Division within IV Army Corps and General Officer Commanding Eastern District in December 1903. He became Quartermaster-General to the Forces in February 1904, General Officer Commanding 7th Division in April 1906 and General Officer Commanding 5th Division within Irish Command in May 1907. Promoted to Lieutenant General on 4 November 1908, he went on to be General Officer Commanding-in-Chief for Northern Command in November 1911.

In addition to his military duties, he served as the Commissioner for London Boy Scouts from 1910 to 1912.

Following the unexpected death of Lieutenant General Sir James Grierson on his arrival in France in 1914, Plumer was considered for command of one of two corps of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) alongside the GOC I Corps, Lieutenant General Douglas Haig: this position eventually went to General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien. Plumer was sent to France in February 1915 and given command of V Corps which he led at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915.

He succeeded Smith-Dorrien in command of the Second Army of the BEF in May and, having been promoted to full General on 11 June 1915, and having been largely unemployed during the battles of the previous two years, he won an overwhelming victory over the Imperial German Army at the Battle of Messines in June 1917. The battle started with the simultaneous explosion of a series of mines placed by the Royal Engineers' tunnelling companies beneath German lines. The detonation created 19 large craters and was described as the loudest explosion in human history. After the mines were fired, Plumer's men left their trenches and advanced 3,000 yards. He won further victories at the battle of the Menin Road Ridge and the battle of Polygon Wood in September 1917 and the battle of Broodseinde in October 1917 advancing another 5,000 yards in the process.

In November 1917 Plumer, who in August had been made Colonel of the York and Lancaster Regiment, was given command of the Italian Expeditionary Force sent to the Italian Front after the disaster at Caporetto. Early in 1918, Plumer was sought by Lloyd George for the position of Chief of the Imperial General Staff as a replacement for General Sir William Robertson: he declined the position. Plumer instead commanded the Second Army during the final stages of the war, during the German spring offensive and the Allied Hundred Days Offensive.

Plumer was appointed General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the British Army of the Rhine in December 1918 and Governor of Malta in May 1919. He was promoted to Field Marshalon 31 July 1919, and was created Baron Plumer of Messines and of Bilton on 18 October 1919.

In August 1925 he was appointed High Commissioner of the British Mandate for Palestine. He resisted Arab pressure to reverse commitments made by the British Government in the Balfour Declaration, and dealt firmly with both the Zionists and the Arab Nationalists. On one occasion, an Arab delegation protested a proposal by Jewish battalions to install their regimental colours in the chief synagogues, saying they *"wouldn't be responsible for the consequences".* Plumer replied, *'That's all right, you're not asked to be responsible for the consequences. I'll be responsible."* In Mandatory Palestine Plumer gained a reputation as being "genuinely even handed" and was one of the few British administrators who was consistently popular with both the Jewish community and the Arab community in that territory. Privately, he was sympathetic to the cause of establishing a homeland for the Jewish people but he tried his best to "be fair" to Arab concerns as well while he was High Commissioner.

On 24 July 1927 he conducted the inauguration ceremony for the Menin Gate memorial at Ypres in Belgium. Plumer was created Viscount Plumer for his "long and distinguished public services" on 3 June 1929.
In July 1884 Plumer married Annie Constance Goss (1858–1941), daughter of George and Eleanor Goss; they had three daughters and one son. Their youngest daughter, Marjorie, married Major W.H. Brooke who had studied at University College, Oxford and was a chief mourner at the Leeds funeral of Robert Middleton in October 1912.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Plumer died at his home in Knightsbridge in London on 16 July 1932 at the age of 75. His body was interred in Westminster Abbey.

General Sir John Cowans

General Sir John Steven Cowans, GCB GCMG MVO (11 March 1862 – 16 April 1921) was a senior British Army officer who served as Quartermaster-General to the Forces from 1912 to 1919, covering the period of the First World War.

Educated at Burney's Academy at Gosport and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, Cowans was commissioned into the Rifle Brigade in 1881. He graduated from the Staff College, Camberley, in 1892 and became a Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General at Army Headquarters in 1898. In this role he organised the deployment of troops to the Second Boer War. He became Assistant Quartermaster-General of 2nd Division at Aldershot Command in 1903, and went on to become Director of Staff Duties and Training at Army Headquarters in India in 1907. He commanded the Presidency Brigade in Calcutta from 1908 to 1910, when he returned to the United Kingdom as Director-General of the Territorial Force.

Cowans became Quartermaster-General to the Forces in 1912, and in this capacity, he was responsible for finding accommodation and supplies for more than a million newly enlisted servicemen at the start of the First World War. He was the only member of the Army Council to retain his position throughout the entire war.

John Steven Cowans was born in Woodbank, St Cuthbert Without, Carlisle, on 11 March 1862, the oldest of three sons of John Cowans, an engineer who co-founded the Carlisle firm of Cowans, Sheldon & Co., and his wife Jeannie (née Steven). Cowans was always known as "Jack".

Cowans was educated at Burney's Academy at Gosport, a preparatory school for the Royal Navy. It was intended that he should enter the Navy, but, at the age of thirteen, he failed the entrance exam. He was sent on a tour of France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland with a tutor, before returning to Burney's Academy to prepare for the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, which he entered in 1878. After passing out near the top of his class, Cowans was commissioned as a second Lieutenant in the Rifle Brigade on 22 January 1881, having secured a nomination from its Colonel-in-Chief, Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn. He embarked for India on HMS Jumna in March 1881 to join the 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, which was based at Poona and Ahmednagar. Soon after arriving in Poona, he became temporary aide-de-camp to Major General John Ross until a permanent replacement arrived in January 1882, and he rejoined C Company. He passed examinations in the Hindustani language and played cricket. He was promoted to Lieutenant on 1 July 1881.

In late 1883, Cowans returned to the United Kingdom on sick leave and was assigned to the Regimental depot. He married Eva Mary Coulson, the eldest daughter of Reverend John Edmund Coulson, the Vicar of Long Preston in Yorkshire, on 14 February 1884. The wedding ceremony was held in the parish church in Grange-over-Sands, Lancashire, and was presided over by Reverend Henry White, the chaplain of the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy and Chaplain-in-Ordinary to Queen Victoria. They had no children.

Cowans was posted to the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade at Woolwich in May 1887. He was the only married subaltern in the battalion. His fellow junior officers included George

Bingham, Ronald Lane, Reginald Byng Stephens, George Thesiger and Henry Wilson, all of whom later became Generals.

Cowans decided to further his career by entering the Staff College, Camberley. This was seen as a means of speedy advancement, and competition for places was keen. Cowans managed to narrowly pass the entrance examination, and entered on 1 February 1890. His class of thirty was a distinguished one; half of them later became Generals. While he was there, he was promoted to Captain on 3 September.

Upon graduation in January 1892, Cowans was attached to the War Office under the Assistant-Adjutant-General, Major General Sir Coleridge Grove. His section (AG.7) worked on the mobilisation scheme, the first version of which had been issued shortly before Cowans arrived. He was officially seconded to the staff on 13 June 1893. On 1 September 1894, he became the brigade Major of the 2nd Infantry Brigade at Aldershot, which was considered a plum job for a young staff officer who, despite the title, was still a Captain.

His appointment as brigade Major ended on 1 September 1897, and Cowans departed for India to join the 3rd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, which then engaged in the Tochi Expedition. He reached the regimental depot at Rawalpindi on 28 October, but active service continued to elude him; the 3rd Battalion was on its way back to its station at Umballa, having taken heavy losses, mainly from sickness. He was offered a position on the staff of the British Indian Army at Simla, but, on the advice of Coleridge Grove, he declined the appointment. Soon after, he was promoted to Major on 9 March 1898, and reassigned to one of the battalions in the United Kingdom.

Cowans did not return to his regiment. On 11 May 1898, he was appointed a Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General in succession to Major Henry Merrick Lawson at the War Office, working in the movements section (QMG.2). He was involved with arrangements for the deployment of troops to the Sudan for the Nile Expedition of 1898, and for the autumn military manoeuvres in September 1898, the largest military manoeuvres since 1872, with 50,000 troops involved. Cowans had to make the required arrangements for rail and maritime transport.

On 11 October 1899, the Second Boer War began when the Boers invaded Natal. Cowans's section had considered this prospect in a series of conferences in April, May and June. It was calculated that £97,000 would be required to outfit ships to transport a corps and a cavalry brigade, but no provision had been made for this, and the Secretary of State for War, the Marquess of Lansdowne, declined to request a supplementary vote. On 23 September, Parliament provided £25,000. Once hostilities commenced, the Admiralty would provide a ship and fit it out, and inform Cowans when it would be ready to sail. Cowans would then allocate troops to the ship and arrange for them to be moved to the port by rail for embarkation. Between 1 August 1899 and 31 May 1902, he arranged for the embarkation of 98,826 regular and 36,568 auxiliary troops, and more than 90,000 reinforcements. Rail movements involved up to 25 special trains per day.

Some division commanders requested Cowans's services as a staff officer, but the Quartermaster-General to the Forces, Lieutenant General Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke, declined to release him. He did, however, promise Cowans that no officer of the Rifle Brigade would be promoted over his head. Thus, Cowans was promoted to the brevet rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 28 March 1900, ahead of officers on active service. He was involved in arrangements for the Coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. For this service

he was invested as a Member (fourth class) of the Royal Victorian Order (MVO) on 11 August 1902. The following year, he was promoted to the substantive rank Colonel on 16 April and became Assistant Quartermaster-General of the 2nd Division at Aldershot Command.

In February 1906, Cowans was appointed Director-General of Military Education of the British Indian Army, and was replaced by Colonel Alexander Godley. He assumed the post on 22 March, but when the General Staff of India was created he became Director of Staff Duties and Training at Army Headquarters in India on 1 April. In this role he was involved with the new staff college in India at Deolali, which relocated to Quetta in April 1907, ensuring that the curriculum was brought into line with that of Camberley. He acted as Director of Military Operations for a time, and as Chief of the General Staff (India) when Lieutenant General Sir Beauchamp Duff was in England.

General officer

Cowans became commander of the Presidency Brigade in Calcutta with the temporary rank of Brigadier General on 5 December 1908. He was promoted to Major General on 21 March 1910. A minor crisis erupted later that year when a Chinese expedition to Tibet caused the Dalai Lama to flee to Darjeeling, and it was feared that Chinese forces might pursue him. Cowans was about to depart on four months' leave, and he asked General Headquarters, India (GHQ) whether he should cancel. The reply he received was: *"everybody knows you have never heard a shot fired in anger, except by an angry husband, so I don't think you need to forgo your leave."*

While on leave in Évian-les-Bains in France, Cowans was summoned back to England by Secretary of State for War Richard Haldane, who offered him the recently created position of director General of the Territorial Force (TF), which had come into being as a result of the Haldane Reforms. Cowans returned to India briefly to settle private affairs and hand over command of the Presidency Brigade to Brigadier-General Hew Dalrymple Fanshawe, before he assumed his new post on 7 November 1910, taking over from Lieutenant General Sir Henry Mackinnon.

The TF was administered by county associations, military committees chaired by the lord Lieutenants with local commanding officers as members, that handled the raising, recruiting, equipping and supplying of their units. When the units were called up for training, the county associations became responsible for the welfare of the wives and children of the troops as well. Cowans developed good personal relationships with the chairman of the county associations, for whom he was invariably approachable and sympathetic.

Most of their problems were financial, and Cowans had little additional money to give them, but he gave them the benefit of his time, energy, enthusiasm and administrative skills, and was able to secure some additional latitude in spending their funding. He noted that one of the duties of the county associations was to provide the riding horses and draught horses for the TF. Cowans drew up a scheme for the compulsory purchase of horses for both the TF and the Expeditionary Force in the event of war. It was estimated that on mobilisation, the Expeditionary Force would require 42,000 horses and the TF would need 86,000. Cowans was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in the 1911 Coronation Honours on 19 June 1911 in the civil division, as his lack of active service precluded a military division award.

Quartermaster General to the Forces

Cowans became the Quartermaster-General to the Forces and third military member of the Army Council on 3 June 1912. He was advanced to Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in the 1913 Birthday Honours on 3 June 1913, and promoted to Lieutenant General on 28 October 1915.

In the days leading up to the declaration of war on 4 August 1914, Cowans urged the government to cancel the Territorial Army's annual camps, which for most of them was in the first week of August. This was not done, and trains needed for the expeditionary force had to collect Territorials and return them to their depots. Despite this, the first shipload of stores departed on 9 August, and by 23 August, five infantry and two cavalry divisions of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) had reached their wartime stations in France.

The Army Council realised that the existing barracks could hold only 175,000 men, and this would be inadequate for Kitchener's Army. Plans had been drawn up before the war for standard 18.3-by-6.1-metre (60 by 20 ft) huts with a wooden frame and corrugated iron exterior that could accommodate thirty men; forty of these could house a battalion. The plans incorporated officers' and sergeants' messes, a recreation hut and a cookhouse with dining halls on either side. Major General George Scott-Moncrieff recommended that priority be given to the facilities, with the men initially sleeping under canvas, but Cowans disagreed, and directed that every effort be made to complete both simultaneously. At the time, this seemed reasonable, but by October the requirements had grown from 100,000 to 850,000 men. Existing barracks became overcrowded. Shortages of labour and materials developed, and the expanded program could not be completed before winter set in. Although there was no shortage of tents, some of the new sites were poorly chosen and flooded or became quagmires under heavy rains in November. Some 800,000 troops had to be billeted in private homes.

The large number of troops needed to be outfitted. In peacetime this had been done through contracts with a small number of firms, and production could not be rapidly expanded. As an interim measure, 500,000 blue serge suits were obtained from Post Office stocks, and some units were supplied with nineteenth-century scarlet tunics. Cowans reduced expenditure wherever possible by eliminating middlemen. He arranged for the whole of the British wool production to be purchased from the farmers, and the entirety of Australian wool production was made available by the Australian government.

Accoutrements presented a greater problem. The British Army had adopted 1908 Pattern Webbing equipment, which was superior to the old leather equipment as it did not sweat and corrode ammunition cartridges. However, only two firms in the UK had the specialised machinery to manufacture webbing, which was fine in peacetime when the annual requirement was 100,000 sets. In the interim, 1914 Pattern Leather Equipment was issued in which only backpacks and haversacks were made from webbing, with leather being substituted for other components.

While horses were still the mainstay of transport in the field, as the war went on, there was a tendency to substitute motor transport for horse transport. To economise on manpower, women were trained to drive and maintain motor vehicles. Cowans successfully resisted attempts to absorb his drivers into the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. By July 1915, UK production of military vehicles reached 250 per week. Contracts were placed in the United States but in 1916 Cowans was directed to cancel American contracts to save foreign exchange. This was done, but later that same year the contracts had to be reopened to produce seventy lorries per week.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

The Holt Manufacturing Company continued to supply the caterpillar tractors needed to pull heavy artillery pieces, as these were not manufactured in the UK. By the later stages of the war the forces in France alone were consuming forty-eight megalitres (ten point five million imperial gallons) of petrol per month. Storage tanks were established at Rouen and Calais so that fuel could be received from oil tankers sailing directly from the United States.
Cowans worked well with the original Quartermaster-General of the BEF, Lieutenant General Sir William Robertson, but Robertson became Chief of the General Staff of the BEF on 25 January 1915, and was replaced by Major General Ronald Charles Maxwell. Cowans's relationship with Maxwell slowly deteriorated until, on 23 December 1917, Maxwell was replaced by Lieutenant General Sir Travers Clarke.

Cowans liked to work late, seldom retiring for the night before 0200, but waking around 0800. Working late at night enabled him to write without interruptions. When he could he left London for the weekend, staying with General Sir Arthur Paget at Kingston Hill or Lord Pembroke in Wilton, Wiltshire. He also liked to play golf at Cooden. In November 1916, Cowans became embroiled in a scandal. Patsy Cornwallis-West began a relationship with Patrick Barrett, a much younger sergeant in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, and wrote to Cowans urging that Barrett be commissioned. This was done but they subsequently had a falling out and she forwarded a letter he wrote to her to his commanding officer, Colonel Henry Delmé-Radcliffe, who decided to have Barrett transferred from the 12th Battalion to the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers. When she heard that Barrett's friends were seeking to take action, she again wrote to Cowans, who replied that orders had already gone out, adding, *"I would fight for you if I had the time."* The government convened a court of inquiry, which declared that *"Cornwallis-West's conduct was highly discreditable."* Delmé-Radcliffe was relieved of his command, and the government expressed its displeasure at Cowans, but given his excellent service as Quartermaster-General, took no action against him.

One reason for this was the course of the Mesopotamian campaign, where maladministration and the British defeat in the Siege of Kut led to responsibility for the campaign being transferred from the government of India to the War Office, making Cowans responsible for its logistics.

Cowans became Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George in the 1918 New Year Honours, and a Knight of Grace of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem on 28 March 1918. He was promoted to General in the 1919 New Year Honours, and to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath on 20 March 1919. He was the only member of the Army Council to retain his position throughout the entire war.

Cowans abruptly resigned on 15 March 1919 and joined the Shell Transport and Trading Company, and soon after set off on a business trip to survey oil production in the Middle East. On 18 September, he returned to Carlisle to be presented with the Freedom of the City. No longer a serving officer, he used the occasion to express his disappointment at the omission of the administrative services from the government's Thanks To The Forces. He declared: *"This has been a war of administration rather than of strategy or tactics"*.

In November 1920, after consulting with John Thomson-Walker, Cowans underwent surgery for a kidney complaint. In early 1921, he went to stay with friends at Cap Ferrat in the south of France. His condition deteriorated, and he was moved to a nursing home in Menton. He decided to convert to Roman Catholicism, as his mother and brother had done, and was received into the church on 11 April. He died on 16 April. A requiem mass was held at the Basilica of St

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Michael the Archangel, Menton. His body lay in state at Westminster Abbey and he was buried at St Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Kensal Green, London on 25 April.

Cowans never served in combat, so he never earned any campaign medals or decorations for gallantry, but he was awarded the King Edward VII Coronation Medal, the King Edward VII Delhi Durbar Medal and the King George V Coronation Medal. He also received several foreign awards and decorations, including being made a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour of France, of the Order of the Crown of Belgium, and of the Order of the Crown of Italy a Grand Cordon of the Order of the Sacred Treasure of Japan the second class of the Order of the Golden Grain of China and the United States Distinguished Service Medal. In October 1919, he was appointed a Grand Cross of the Order of the Redeemer by Alexander of Greece, King of the Hellenes, the highest grade of the highest order of Greece.

Cowans died insolvent; his fortune of £8,000 was consumed by his debts. His widow put his medals up for sale. They were purchased anonymously by his friends, and Lady Cowans was permitted to retain them until her death, when they were deposited in the United Service Museum. The King offered her a Civil List pension of £100 per year, but she declined.

In March 1925, Dorothy Muriel Dennistoun revealed that she had lived as Cowans's mistress with the consent of her husband, Lieutenant Colonel Ian Onslow Dennistoun. She alleged that she had used her influence with the General to secure important Army positions for her husband. The couple had divorced in May 1921, and had agreed to forgo a formal claim of alimony in return for his financial support. He had since married Almina Herbert, Countess of Carnarvon, the widow of George Herbert, 5th Earl of Carnarvon, and another close friend of Cowans. Dorothy sued to claim money that she said he owed her. The jury awarded Dorothy £5,000, but the judge, Henry Alfred McCardie, voided the verdict, and awarded her £472.

Historian Peter Simkins considered Cowans to be *"the only truly outstanding officer on the Army Council",* Prime Minister H. H. Asquith described him as *"the best Quartermaster since Moses",* and his successor, David Lloyd George regarded him as *"the most capable soldier thrown up by the War in our Army".* Nonetheless, historian Clem Maginniss concluded that:
"It is of course the lot of logisticians, regardless of rank and appointment, to be forgotten. Great War history is replete with well-known Generals whose names spring quickly to mind, but Cowans is not one of them."

Field Marshal Earl Haig

Field Marshal Douglas Haig, 1st Earl Haig (19 June 1861 – 29 January 1928), was a senior officer of the British Army. During the First World War he commanded the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) on the Western Front from late 1915 until the end of the war.

His military career included service in the War Office, where he was instrumental in the creation of the Territorial Force in 1908. In January 1917 he was promoted to the rank of Field Marshal, subsequently leading the BEF during the final Hundred Days Offensive. This campaign, in combination with the Kiel mutiny, the Wilhelmshaven mutiny, the proclamation of a republic on 9 November 1918 and civil unrest across Germany, led to the armistice of 11 November 1918. It is considered by some historians to be one of the greatest victories ever achieved by a British-led army.

He gained a favourable reputation during the immediate post-war years, with his funeral a day of national mourning. However, he also had some prominent contemporary detractors and, beginning in the 1960s, has been widely criticised for his wartime leadership. He was nicknamed "Butcher Haig" for the two million British casualties under his command. The Canadian War Museum comments: *"His epic but costly offensives at the Somme (1916) and Passchendaele (1917) have become nearly synonymous with the carnage and futility of First World War battles."* Since the 1980s many historians have argued that the public hatred of Haig failed to recognise the adoption of new tactics and technologies by forces under his command, the important role played by British forces in the allied victory of 1918, and that high casualties were a consequence of the tactical and strategic realities of the time.

Haig was born in a house on Charlotte Square, Edinburgh. His father, John Richard Haig, an alcoholic, was head of the family's successful Haig & Haig whisky distillery; he had an income of £10,000 per year (£1,160,000 in 2018), an enormous amount at the time. His mother, Rachel (daughter of Hugh Veitch of Stewartfield), was from an impoverished gentry family. The family home was Haig House in Windygates, Fife.

Haig's education began in 1869 as a boarder at Mr Bateson's School in St Andrews. Later in 1869, he switched to Edinburgh Collegiate School, and then in 1871 to Orwell House, a preparatory school in Warwickshire. He then attended Clifton College. Both of Haig's parents had died by the time he was eighteen.

After a tour of the United States with his brother, Haig studied Political Economy, Ancient History and French Literature at Brasenose College, Oxford, 1880–1883. He devoted much of his time to socialising – he was a member of the Bullingdon Club – and equestrian sports. He was one of the best young horsemen at Oxford and part of the University polo team. While an undergraduate he was initiated as a Freemason in Elgin's Lodge at Leven, Fife, taking the first and second degrees of Freemasonry. In 1920 the Earl of Eglinton encouraged Haig to complete his Masonic progression, and he returned to his lodge to take the third degree, serving as Worshipful Master of the lodge from 1925 to 1926. He became an officer of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

Although he passed his final exam at Oxford (a requirement for university applicants to Sandhurst), he was not eligible for a degree as he had missed a term's residence owing to illness, and if he had stayed for longer, he would have been above the age limit (23) to begin officer training at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, which he entered in January 1884. Because he had been to university, Haig was considerably older than most of his class at Sandhurst. He was Senior Under-Officer, was awarded the Anson Sword and passed out first in the order of merit. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant into the 7th (Queen's Own) Hussars on 7 February 1885.

Early in his military career, Haig played polo for England on a tour of the United States (August 1886). He would remain a polo enthusiast all his life, serving as Chairman of the Hurlingham Polo Committee from 1914 until 1922, President of the Army Polo Committee, and founder of the Indian Polo Association.

Haig saw overseas service in India (sent out November 1886), where he was appointed the regiment's adjutant in 1888. He was something of a disciplinarian, but impressed his superiors by his administrative skill and analysis of training exercises. He was promoted to Captain on 23 January 1891.

Haig left India in November 1892 to prepare for the entrance exam for the Staff College, Camberley, which he sat in June 1893. Although he was placed in the top 28 (the number of places awarded by exam) he was not awarded a place as he had narrowly failed the compulsory mathematics paper. He concealed this failure for the rest of his life and in 1910 recommended dropping the mathematics paper as a requirement. Adjutant-General Sir Redvers Buller refused to award Haig one of the four nominated places, citing his colour blindness, despite Haig having his eyesight rechecked by a German oculist and despite glowing testimonials. It has been postulated that Buller was looking for a rationale to give a place to an infantry officer.
Haig returned briefly to India as second-in-command of the squadron which he had himself commanded in 1892, then returned to the UK as Aide-de-camp to Sir Keith Fraser, Inspector General of Cavalry. Fraser was one of those who had lobbied for Haig to enter the Staff College, and he was finally nominated in late 1894, a common practice in the day for promising candidates. While waiting to take up his place, he travelled to Germany to report on cavalry manoeuvres there, and served as staff officer to Colonel John French on manoeuvres. The careers of French and Haig were to be entwined for the next twenty-five years, and Haig helped French write the cavalry drill book, published 1896.

Haig entered Staff College, Camberley in 1896, where he was apparently not popular with his peers. For example, they chose Allenby as Master of the Drag Hunt, despite Haig being the better rider. Haig impressed the Chief Instructor, Lieutenant Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, and completed the course, leaving in 1897. Camberley's old-fashioned curriculum especially influenced Haig, as he was an absorber of doctrine rather than an original thinker. Haig was taught that victory must come from defeating the main enemy army in battle, and that attrition (the "wearing out fight") was merely a prelude to the commitment of reserves for a decisive battlefield victory; traces of this thought can be seen at Loos and the Somme. Great emphasis was placed on morale and mobility, and on Murat's cavalry pursuit after Napoleon's Jena campaign of 1806.

Mahdist War, 1898
In early January Haig was picked by Evelyn Wood (by then Adjutant-General) as one of three recent staff college graduates requested by Kitchener for a campaign in the Mahdist War in the Sudan. He may have been picked to keep an eye on Kitchener, as Wood invited him to write to him in confidence. Haig needed little encouragement to (privately) criticise his superiors – he was especially critical of Kitchener's dictatorial habits. Kitchener's force was Anglo-Egyptian, and Haig was required to formally join the Egyptian Army, most of whose officers were British. The plan had been for him to train and take command of an Egyptian cavalry squadron, but Kitchener did not want a command reshuffle with combat imminent. Unlike many British officers, Haig believed that the Egyptians could make good soldiers if properly trained and led. Still without a formal position but accompanying the cavalry, Haig saw his first action in a skirmish south of Atbara (21 March). In his report to Wood about the skirmish, Haig commented on the lack of British machine guns. While later criticized for his failure to optimize the use of machine guns, Haig made a special trip to Enfield to study the Maxim Gun, and throughout the campaign commented on its worth.
Four days later he was made staff officer of Broadwood's cavalry brigade. Haig distinguished himself at his second action, the Battle of Nukheila (6 April), where he supervised the redeployment of squadrons to protect the rear and then launch a flank attack. He was present at the Battle of Atbara (8 April), after which he criticised Kitchener for launching a frontal attack without taking the Dervishes in flank. During the latter action Haig risked his life

rescuing a wounded Egyptian soldier under enemy fire, an act which moved several officers present to believe Haig should receive the Victoria Cross. After Atbara, Kitchener was given reinforcements and Haig received a squadron of his own, which he commanded at Omdurman (in reserve during the battle, then on a flank march into the town afterwards). He was promoted to brevet Major on 15 November 1898.

Marriage and children

On leave from India, Haig married Dorothy Maud Vivian on 11 July 1905 after a whirlwind courtship (she had spotted him for the first time when he was playing polo at Hurlingham two years earlier). She was a daughter of Hussey Vivian, 3rd Baron Vivian and Louisa Duff.
Early in his military career, Haig played polo for England on a tour of the United States (August 1886). He would remain a polo enthusiast all his life, serving as Chairman of the Hurlingham Polo Committee from 1914 until 1922, President of the Army Polo Committee, and founder of the Indian Polo Association.

Second Boer War, 1899–1902

Haig returned to the United Kingdom hoping for a position at the War Office, but was instead appointed (May 1899) brigade Major to the 1st Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot.
Haig had recently lent £2,500 (in a formal contract with interest, worth £400,000 in 2024) to the brigade commander, John French, to cover his losses from South African mining speculations. The loan allowed French to maintain his commission. Haig was promoted to the substantive rank of Major on 26 June 1899. Haig was soon appointed Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General (September 1899) and then Assistant Adjutant General (i.e. chief staff officer) of French's brigade-sized force as it was sent to the Boer War. He took part in French's first battle, Elandslaagte (21 October). French and Haig were ordered to leave Ladysmith as the four-month siege began, to take charge of the new Cavalry Division arriving from the UK. The two men escaped on the last train to leave Ladysmith (2 November 1899), lying down as it passed through enemy fire.

Haig continued to be sceptical of the importance of artillery, basing his opinions on interviews with enemy prisoners. After French's Colesberg Operations to protect Cape Colony, Frederick Roberts, newly arrived as Commander-in-Chief, appointed his protégé Colonel the Earl of Erroll, over French's protests, to the job of Assistant Adjutant General of the Cavalry Division, with Haig, who had been promised the job (and the local rank of Lieutenant Colonel), as his deputy. Cavalry played a leading role in this stage of the war, including the relief of Kimberley (15 February 1900), which featured a spectacular British cavalry charge at Klip Drift. Haig was briefly (21 February 1900) given command of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, then made AAG to the Cavalry Division after Erroll was moved to a different job. French's Division took part in the capture of Bloemfontein (13 March 1900) and Pretoria (5 June 1900). Haig privately criticised Roberts and thought him a *"silly old man"*.

After Roberts had won the conventional war, Kitchener was left in charge of fighting the Boers, who had taken to guerrilla warfare. The Cavalry Division was disbanded (November 1900) and French, with Haig still his chief of staff, was put in charge of an all-arms force policing the Johannesburg area, later trying to capture the Boer leader de Wet around Bloemfontein. In January 1901 Haig was given a column of 2,500 men with the local rank of Brigadier-General, patrolling Cape Colony, and chasing Commandant Kritzinger. As was standard policy at that time, Haig's actions included burning farmsteads as part of the scorched earth policies ordered by Lord Kitchener as well as rounding up Boer women and children to be placed in concentration camps.

Throughout the war Haig's sister, Henrietta, had been lobbying Evelyn Wood for her brother to have command of a cavalry regiment when the war was over. French, probably not wanting to part with a valuable assistant, recommended Herbert Lawrence for the vacant command of the 17th Lancers, but Roberts, now Commander-in-Chief back in Britain, overruled him and gave it to Haig (May 1901). As the 17th Lancers were in South Africa at the time Haig was able to combine that command with that of his own column.
As the war drew to a close Haig had to locate and escort the Boer leader Jan Christiaan Smuts to the peace negotiations at Vereeninging. Haig was mentioned in despatches four times for his service in South Africa (including by Lord Roberts on 31 March 1900, and by Lord Kitchener on 23 June 1902), and appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in November 1900. He was promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 17 July 1901.

Following the war, Haig left Cape Town with 540 officers and men of the 17th Lancers on the SS German in late September 1902. The regiment was supposed to stay in South Africa but in the end returned home sooner than planned, and arrived at Southampton in late October, when they were posted to Edinburgh. Haig was appointed an aide-de-camp to King Edward VII in the October 1902 South Africa Honours list, with the brevet rank of Colonel.

Inspector General of Cavalry, India
Haig continued as the commanding officer of the 17th Lancers until 1903, stationed in Edinburgh. In October he was then appointed Inspector General of cavalry in British India, for which he was promoted to substantive Colonel whilst holding the local rank of Major General while in his new assignment. He would have preferred command of the cavalry brigade at Aldershot, where French was now General Officer Commanding, but had first to spend a year on garrison duty at Edinburgh until the previous incumbent completed his term.

Haig's war service had earned him belated but rapid promotion: having been a Captain until the relatively advanced age of thirty-seven, by 1904 he had become the youngest Major General in the British Army at that time. He was present at the Rawalpindi Parade 1905 to honour the Prince and Princess of Wales' visit to India. At this time a great deal of the energies of the most senior British Generals were taken up with the question of whether cavalry should still be trained to charge with sword and lance (the view of French and Haig). Lord Roberts, now Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, warned Kitchener (now Commander-in-Chief, India) to be *"very firm with Haig"* on this issue, and wrote that Haig was a *"clever, able fellow"* who had great influence over Sir John French.

War Office
The Boer War had exposed Britain's lack of a General Staff and modern reserve army. In August 1906 Haig was appointed Director of Military Training at the War Office. Haldane later wrote that Haig had *"a first-rate General staff mind"* and *"gave invaluable advice"*. Although both men later claimed that the reforms had been to prepare Britain for continental war, they created a small professional army within a budget, with conscription politically impossible.

The reforms reorganised the militia, yeomanry and volunteers into the new Territorial Force. Haig was intolerant of what he regarded as old-fashioned opinions and not good at negotiating with strangers. Haig had wanted a reserve of 900,000 men, but Haldane settled for a more realistic 300,000. Haig's skills at administration and organising training and inspections were better employed in setting up an Expeditionary Force of 120,000 men in 1907. As an intimate

of Haldane, Haig was able to ensure high priority for cavalry, less for artillery, contrary to the advice of Lord Roberts (now retired). Haig's records of his time supervising artillery exercises show little interest in technical matters.

In November 1907 Haig was moved sideways to Director of Staff Duties. He required commanders to take the staff officers assigned to them (rather than choose their own by patronage) and assigned staff officers to the new Territorial Army. He supervised publication of "Field Service Regulations", which was later very useful in expanding the BEF, although it still stressed the importance of cavalry charging with sword and lance. At this time, he was completing a separate work, "Cavalry Studies", and devoting much time to cavalry exercises.

Chief of Staff, India

By 1909 it seemed likely that an Anglo-German War loomed and Haig was reluctant to accept appointment as Chief of the General Staff in India. He passed the Director of Staff Duties job to his loyal follower Brigadier-General Kiggell, to whom he wrote with "advice" every fortnight. Haig, who had been knighted for his work at the War Office, was promoted to Lieutenant General in November 1910. In India he had hoped to develop the Indian General Staff and to organise despatch of the British Indian Army to a future European war. The latter was vetoed by Viceroy Lord Hardinge. An Indian Corps would serve on the Western Front early in the conflict, and Indian troops were used in comparatively small formations in the Middle East.

Aldershot

Haig left India in December 1911, and took up an appointment as GOC Aldershot Command (1st and 2nd divisions and 1st Cavalry Brigade) in March 1912.

In the Army Manoeuvres of 1912 he was decisively beaten by Lieutenant General Sir James Grierson despite having the odds in his favour, because of Grierson's superior use of air reconnaissance. At dinner afterwards Haig abandoned his prepared text, and although he wrote that his remarks were *"well received",* John Charteris recorded that they were *"unintelligible and unbearably dull"* and that the visiting dignitaries fell asleep. Haig's poor public speaking skills aside, the manoeuvres were thought to have shown the reformed army efficient. In June 1913 he was appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) in the 1913 Birthday Honours.

First World War

1914 Outbreak of war

During the Curragh Mutiny (March 1914) Haig urged caution on his chief of staff John Gough, whose brother Hubert Gough was threatening to resign rather than coerce Ulstermen into a semi-independent Ireland. Haig stressed that the army's duty was to keep the peace. Sir John French was forced to resign as CIGS, after putting in writing a promise that officers would not be required to coerce Ulster; Haig respected Hubert Gough's principled stand but felt French had allowed himself to be used as a political tool by H. H. Asquith.

Upon the outbreak of war in August 1914, Haig helped organize the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), commanded by Field Marshal Sir John French. As planned, Haig's Aldershot command was formed into I Corps. In a letter to Haldane (4 August), Haig predicted that the war would last for months if not years; Haig wanted Haldane to delay sending the BEF to France until the Territorial Army had been mobilised and incorporated. Haig attended the War Council (5 August), at which it was decided that it was too dangerous to mobilise forward in

France at Maubeuge near the Belgian border, as British mobilisation was running three days behind that of France and Germany. There were no other contingency plans – Haig and Kitchener proposed that the BEF would be better positioned to counter-attack in Amiens. Sir John French suggested landing at Antwerp, which was vetoed by Winston Churchill as the Royal Navy could not guarantee safe passage. A critical biographer writes that Haig was *"more clear-sighted than many of his colleagues"*.

In his much-criticised memoirs 1914, French claimed that Haig had wanted to postpone sending the BEF, which may be partly true given what Haig had written to Haldane. Haig was so angry at this claim that he asked Cabinet Secretary Maurice Hankey to correct French's *"inaccuracies"*. However, Haig also rewrote his diary from this period, possibly to show himself in a better light and French in a poor one. The original manuscript diary does not survive but there is no positive evidence that it was destroyed, and it is just as likely that the extant typed version was prepared from dictation or notes now lost. Hankey's notes of the meeting record that Haig suggested delaying or sending smaller forces, but was willing to send forces if France was in danger of defeat or if France wanted them (which it did). Haig predicted that the war would last several years and that an army of a million men, trained by officers and NCOs withdrawn from the BEF, would be needed.
Haig had been appointed aide-de-camp to King George V in February 1914. During a royal inspection of Aldershot (11 August), Haig told the King that he had *"grave doubts"* about French's temper and military knowledge. He later claimed that these doubts had gone back to the Boer War but there appears to have been an element of later embellishment about this; Haig had in fact praised French during the Boer War and had welcomed his appointment as CIGS in 1911.

Haig crossed over to Le Havre. The BEF landed in France on 14 August and advanced into Belgium. Haig was irritated by Sir John French, who ignored intelligence reports of German forces streaming westwards from Brussels, threatening an encirclement from the British left. Although II Corps fought off the German attack at Mons on 23 August the BEF was forced to withdraw.

The retreats of I and II Corps had to be conducted separately because of the Mormal Forest. The two corps were supposed to meet at Le Cateau but I Corps under Haig were stopped at Landrecies, leaving a large gap between the two. Haig's reactions to his corps' skirmish with German forces at Landrecies (during which Haig led his staff into the street, revolvers drawn, promising to "sell our lives dearly") caused him to send an exaggerated report to French, which caused French to panic. The following day 26 August, General Horace Smith-Dorrien's II Corps engaged the enemy in the Battle of Le Cateau, which was unsupported by Haig. This battle slowed the German advance. However, a critical biographer writes that too much has been made of the *"moment of panic"* at Landrecies, and that the 200-mile (320 km) retreat, over a period of 13 days, is a tribute to the *"steady and competent leadership"* of Haig and Smith-Dorrien.

On 25 August the French commander Joseph Joffre ordered his forces to retreat to the Marne, which compelled the BEF to further withdraw. Haig was irritated by the high-handed behaviour of the French, seizing roads which they had promised for British use and refusing to promise to cover the British right flank. He complained privately of French unreliability and lack of fighting competence, a complaint which he would keep up for the next four years. He wrote to his wife that he wished the British were operating independently from Antwerp, a proposal

which he had rejected as *"reckless"* when Sir John French had made it at the War Council on 4 August.

The retreat caused Sir John French to question the competence of his Allies and led to his decision to withdraw the BEF south of the Seine. On 1 September, Lord Kitchener intervened by visiting French and ordering him to re-enter the battle and coordinate with Joffre's forces. The battle to defend Paris began on 5 September and became known as the first Battle of the Marne. Haig had wanted to rest his corps but was happy to resume the offensive when ordered. He drove on his subordinates when he thought them lacking in *"fighting spirit"*. Although Sir John French praised Haig's leadership of his corps, Haig was privately contemptuous of French's overconfidence prior to Mons and excessive caution thereafter.

First Battle of Ypres

On 15 October, after two weeks of friction between British and French Generals, Haig's I Corps was moved to Ypres in Flanders as part of the "Race to the Sea". In the belief that the German northern flank was weak, Haig was ordered to march on Ghent, Bruges and Courtrai in western Belgium but the new German Chief of Staff Falkenhayn was trying to do the opposite and roll up the Allied northern flank. I Corps marched headlong into a thrust westward by fresh German forces, resulting in the First Battle of Ypres. German forces, equipped with 250 heavy guns (a large number for this stage in the war), outnumbered I Corps by two to one and came close to success. At one point Haig mounted his horse to encourage his men, who were retreating around Gheluvelt, although the town had just been recaptured by a battalion of the Worcesters. Haig cemented his reputation at this battle and Ypres remained a symbolic location in later years. Haig was also influenced by the fact that the Germans had called off their offensive when they were on the verge of success, concluding that attacks needed to be kept up so long as there was any chance of success.

After a fortnight of intense fighting, I Corps had been reduced from 18,000 men to just under 3,000 effectives by 12 November. After six days of bickering between British and French Generals, I Corps was relieved by French troops; Haig was very suspicious of the pro-French sympathies of Henry Wilson. French, who had been ordered by his doctor to relieve the strain on his heart, recommended Haig for immediate promotion to General. Haig travelled to London on French's behalf to consult Kitchener about the plan to expand the BEF and reorganise it into two armies.

At this point it was thought that the war would end once the Germans were defeated by the Russians at Lodz and the difficulties of attacking on the Western Front were not yet appreciated. A failed attack by Smith-Dorrien's II Corps on Messines–Wytschaete (14–15 December) was blamed on poor GHQ staff work, and on 18 December, Haig met French, who said he wanted to sack the BEF chief of staff Archibald Murray, whose performance had been unsatisfactory throughout the campaign and promote his deputy Henry Wilson. Haig thought that Wilson had *"no military knowledge"* and recommended Quarter-Master General "Wully" Robertson. This was also the view of Lord Kitchener, so Robertson received the promotion. Haig received promotion to General on 16 November 1914.

1915

Like French, Haig wanted to push along the North Sea Coast to Ostend and Zeebrugge but Joffre did not want the British acting so independently. Germany had recently sent eight infantry divisions to the Eastern Front, so French and Joffre agreed that a French offensive in Artois and Champagne, should be accompanied by a British offensive at Neuve-Chapelle to be

conducted by Haig. At Neuve Chapelle, Haig wanted a quick bombardment and his subordinate Henry Rawlinson a longer and more methodical one. Shortage of shells meant that only a thirty-five-minute bombardment was possible but the small front of the attack gave it the concentration to succeed.

Haig was greatly interested in the potential of aircraft and met Major Trenchard of the Royal Flying Corps to organise photographic air reconnaissance and a map of German lines was obtained; aircraft were also used for artillery spotting. Four divisions attacked at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on 10 March and penetrated 1,600 yards (1,500 m) but no progress was made on subsequent days, as the Germans brought in reinforcements. Casualties were around 12,000 on each side. Rawlinson had wanted to end the offensive after the first day and Haig felt that reserves should have been committed quicker. On Rawlinson's suggestion Haig came close to sacking Major General Joey Davies until it was found that Davies had followed Rawlinson's orders; Haig reprimanded Rawlinson but thought him too valuable to sack. This may have made Rawlinson reluctant to stand up to Haig thereafter.

Whilst the Germans attacked Smith-Dorrien at the Second Battle of Ypres (April), new Allied offensives were planned by the French at Vimy and by Haig at Aubers Ridge (9 May). It was believed on the British side that the lessons of Neuve Chapelle had been learned – reserves were ready to exploit and mortars were ready to support attackers who had advanced beyond artillery cover – and that this time success would be complete not partial. The attack was less successful than Neuve Chapelle as the bombardment was over a wider front and against stronger defences; Haig was still focussed on winning a decisive victory by capturing key ground, rather than amassing firepower to inflict maximum damage. Attacks (at Festubert, 15–25 May) as a diversion, gained 1,100 yards (1,000 m) over a front of 4,400 yards (4,000 m), with 16,000 British casualties to around 6,600 German losses. Sir John French was satisfied that the attacks had taken pressure off the French at their request but Haig felt that German reserves were being exhausted, bringing victory nearer.

Lack of shells at these offensives was, along with Admiral Fisher's resignation over the failed Dardanelles Campaign, a cause of the fall of the Liberal Government (19 May). Haig did not approve of the Northcliffe press attacks on Kitchener, whom he thought a powerful military voice against the folly of civilians like Churchill (despite the fact that Kitchener was an opponent of the strong General Staff which Haig wanted to see). French had been leaking information about the shell shortage to Charles à Court Repington of The Times, whom Haig detested and which he likened to *"carrying on with a whore"*. French also communicated with Conservative leaders and to David Lloyd George who became Minister of Munitions in the new coalition government.

Haig was asked by Clive Wigram (one of the King's press staff) to smooth relations between French and Kitchener. At Robertson's suggestion, Haig received Kitchener at his HQ (despite French's attempt to block the meeting), where they shared their concerns about French. The two men met again in London (14 July), whilst Haig was receiving his GCB (awarded on French's recommendation after Neuve Chapelle) from the King, who also complained to him about French. Over lunch with the King and Kitchener, Haig remarked that the best time to sack French would have been after the retreat to the Marne; it was agreed that the men would correspond in confidence.

Haig had long thought French petty, jealous, unbalanced, overly quick to meddle in party politics and easily manipulated by Henry Wilson. Haig was increasingly irritated by French's

changes of orders and mercurial changes of mood as to the length of the war, which French now expected to last into 1916. Haig still thought Germany might collapse by November, although at the same time he was sending a memo to the War Office recommending that the BEF, now numbering 25 divisions, be equipped with the maximum number of heavy guns, ready for a huge decisive battle, 36 divisions strong in 1916.

The war was not going well – besides the failure at Cape Helles (landing 25 April), Bulgaria had joined the Central Powers (Serbia was soon overrun). Allied attacks in the west were needed to take pressure off the Russians, who were being flung out of Poland. The original plan was to attack in July. At Joffre's insistence the offensive was planned next to the French Tenth Army at Loos.
Haig inspected the Loos area (24 June) and expressed dissatisfaction with the ground. French and Haig would have preferred to renew the attack at Aubers Ridge. French was dissuaded by Foch, who felt that only a British attack at Loos would pull in enough German reserves to allow the French to take Vimy Ridge. French wrote to Joffre saying he was willing to go along with these plans for the sake of Anglo-French cooperation, but then wrote to Joffre again suggesting an artillery bombardment with only limited British infantry attacks. Kitchener listened sympathetically to Joffre's suggestion that in future Joffre should set the size, dates and objectives of British offensives, although he only agreed for the Loos attack for the moment. It is unclear exactly why Kitchener and then Haig agreed to go along with Joffre's wishes – possibly the disastrous plight of the Russians, but it may be that a promise that poison gas could be used may have persuaded Haig. The French then postponed the attack as they picked new attacking ground in Champagne and arranged for extra shelling at Vimy, in both cases because of the very reasons – German-held villages and other obstructions – to which the British Generals had objected.

Only 850 guns were available, too few for concentrated bombardment over a frontage far wider than at Neuve Chapelle. There was also argument over the placement of the reserve (including inexperienced New Army divisions), which Haig wanted close to the front. Haig had persuaded himself that decisive victory was possible, and it may be that French wanted to keep control of the reserve to stop them being thrown into battle needlessly. French tried in vain to forbid Haig to discuss his plans with Kitchener (on the grounds that Kitchener might leak them to politicians). Battle began (25 September) after Haig ordered the release of chlorine gas.
The attack failed in the north against the Hohenzollern Redoubt but broke through the German first line in the centre. The reserves were tired after night marches to reach the front in secrecy and were not available until 2 pm, but were thrown into battle without success on the second day.

Haig replaces French
Haig wrote a detailed letter to Kitchener claiming "complete" success on the first day and complaining that the reserves had not been placed as close to the front as agreed and that French had not released control of them when requested. Haig strengthened his case by reports that captured enemy officers had been astonished at the British failure to exploit the attack and by complaining about the government's foot-dragging at introducing conscription and the commitment of troops to sideshows like Salonika and Suvla Bay.

The failure of Loos was debated in the British press. Kitchener demanded a report and Lord Haldane was sent to France to interview French and Haig. French in turn demanded a report from Haig, in particular his claim to have penetrated the German lines. Lord Stamfordham, the King's Secretary, telephoned Robertson to ask his opinion of French and Robertson conferred

with Haig – who was pushing for Robertson to be appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff – before giving his opinion. The King also discussed the matter with Haig over dinner on a visit to the front (24 October). Haig again told him that French should have been sacked in August 1914. Four days later the King, whilst inspecting troops, was injured when thrown by one of Haig's horses and had to be evacuated to England on a stretcher, which embarrassed Haig. French had his orders releasing the reserves published in The Times (2 November), with an article by Repington blaming Haig. Haig demanded a correction of French's "inaccuracies", whereupon French ordered Haig to cease all correspondence on this matter. Haig met with the Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith on 23 November and Bonar Law (Conservative Leader) the next day. Rumours were rife that French was to be sacked. Matters had been delayed as Kitchener was away on an inspection tour of the Mediterranean and French was sick in bed. Kitchener returned to London (3 Dec) and at a meeting with Haig that day, told him that he was to recommend to Asquith that Haig replace French.

Haig's appointment as Commander-in-Chief BEF was announced on 10 December and almost simultaneously Robertson became Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London. Haig and Robertson hoped that this would be the start of a new and more professional management of the war. Monro was promoted to GOC First Army in Haig's place, not Rawlinson whom Haig would have preferred, and for reasons of seniority Haig was forced to accept the weak-willed Launcelot Kiggell, not Butler as chief of staff BEF in succession to Robertson. Haig and French, who seemed ill, had a final handover meeting (18 December, the day before the formal change of command), at which Haig agreed that Churchill – recently resigned from the Cabinet and vetoed from command of a brigade – should be given command of a battalion.

Prelude to the Somme

For the first time (2 January) Haig attended church service with George Duncan, who was to have great influence over him. Haig saw himself as God's servant and was keen to have clergymen sent out whose sermons would remind the men that the war dead were martyrs in a just cause.

Robertson and Kitchener wanted to concentrate on the Western Front, unlike many in the Cabinet who preferred Salonika or Mesopotamia. Haig and Robertson were aware that Britain would have to take on more of the offensive burden, as France was beginning to run out of men, but thought that the Germans might retreat in the west so they could concentrate on beating the Russians. Haig thought that the Germans had already had plenty of "wearing out", that a decisive victory was possible in 1916 and urged Robertson to recruit more cavalry. Haig's preference was to regain control of the Belgian coast by attacking in Flanders, to bring the coast and the naval bases at Bruges, Zeebrugge and Ostend into Allied hands and where the Germans would suffer great loss if they were reluctant to retreat.

Lloyd George visited Haig at GHQ and afterwards wrote to Haig, to say that he had been impressed by his *"grip"* and by the *"trained thought of a great soldier"*. Subsequent relations between the two men were not to be so cordial. Haig thought Lloyd George *"shifty and unreliable"*. Haig had thought that the German troops reported near Verdun were a feint prior to an attack on the British but the Verdun Offensive began on 21 February. In March 1916 GHQ was moved from Saint-Omer to Montreuil, Pas-de-Calais. For his residence Haig commandeered Beaurepaire House a few kilometres away.

Haig decided that Verdun had "worn down" the Germans enough and that a decisive victory was possible at once. The Cabinet were less optimistic; Kitchener would have preferred smaller, purely attritional attacks but sided with Robertson in telling the Cabinet that the

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Somme offensive should go ahead. Haig attended a Cabinet meeting in London (15 April) where the politicians were more concerned with the political crisis over the introduction of conscription.

The French had already insisted on an Anglo-French attack at the Somme, where British and French troops were adjacent, to relieve the pressure on the French Army at Verdun, although the French component of the attack was gradually reduced as reinforcements went to Verdun. Haig wanted to delay until 15 August, to allow for more training and more artillery to be available. When told of this Joffre shouted at Haig that *"the French Army would cease to exist"* and had to be calmed with "liberal doses of 1840 brandy". The British refused to agree to French demands for a joint Anglo-French offensive from the Salonika bridgehead. Eventually, perhaps influenced by reports of French troop disturbances at Verdun, Haig agreed to attack on 29 June (later put back until 1 July). It later turned out that Pétain at Verdun was warning the French government that the *"game was up"* unless the British attacked.
The government was concerned at the volume of shipping space being used for fodder and wanted to cut the number of cavalry divisions. Haig opposed this, believing that cavalry would still be needed to exploit the imminent victory. Most of the fodder was for the horses, donkeys and mules which the BEF used to move supplies and heavy equipment. Discussing this matter with the King, Haig told him that Germany would collapse by the end of 1916. This round of planning ended with a sharp exchange of letters with the Cabinet, Haig rebuked them for interfering in military matters and declared that *"I am responsible for the efficiency of the Armies in France"*. Lloyd George thought Haig's letter *"perfectly insolent"* and that the government *"had the right to investigate any matter connected with the war that they pleased"*.

From 1 July to 18 November 1916, Haig directed the British portion of the Battle of the Somme. Although too much shrapnel was used in the initial bombardment for 1 July, Haig was not entirely to blame for this – as early as January 1915 Haig had been impressed by evidence of the effectiveness of high explosive shells and had demanded as many of them as possible from van Donop (Head of Ordnance in Britain). On 1 January 1917, Haig was made a Field Marshal. King George V wrote him a handwritten note ending: *"I hope you will look upon this as a New Year's gift from myself and the country"*. Lloyd George, who had become Prime Minister in December 1916, infuriated Haig and Robertson by placing the BEF under the command of the new French Commander-in-Chief Robert Nivelle. The failure of the Nivelle Offensive in April 1917 (which Haig had been required to support with a British offensive at Arras) and the subsequent French mutiny and political crisis, discredited Lloyd George's plans for Anglo-French co-operation. During the second half of 1917, Haig conducted an offensive at Passchendaele (the Third Battle of Ypres). Haig hoped to liberate the North Sea coast of Belgium from which German U-boats were operating, provided that there was assistance from the French, support from Britain and that Russia stayed in the war.

The Admiralty, led by John Jellicoe, believed that the U-boat threat could jeopardise Britain's ability to continue fighting. Another objective was to commit German resources to Belgian Flanders, away from the Aisne sector in France, where the French mutiny had been worst, to give the French Army time to recover. Haig was worried that the Russian Revolution would result in Russia and Germany making peace and forming an alliance. If this happened the German troops located on the Eastern Front would be transferred to the west by late 1917 or early 1918, making a decisive victory much more difficult.

The Third Battle of Ypres caused the British far fewer casualties than the Battle of the Somme and the substantial success of the occupation of the ridges around Ypres, the first stage of the

offensive strategy and inflicted comparable losses on the Germans, who were far less capable of replacing losses and which contributed to their defeat in 1918.

Cambrai

By the end of 1917, Lloyd George felt able to assert authority over the Generals and at the end of the year was able to sack the First Sea Lord Admiral Jellicoe. Over the objections of Haig and Robertson, an inter-Allied Supreme War Council was set up. When the council was inaugurated (11 November), Lloyd George attributed the success of the Central Powers to unity and scoffed at recent Allied "victories", saying he wished *"it had not been necessary to win so many of them"*. His speech angered several leading politicians and Derby assured Haig of his backing. Haig and Pétain objected to a common command, arguing that coalitions work better when one power is dominant, which was no longer the case now that British military power had increased relative to that of France. Lloyd George got his wish to send British forces to Italy, after the Italian defeat at Caporetto in November. Haig knew that manpower was scarce in the BEF and at home and wrote to Robertson that an offensive at Cambrai would stem the flow of reinforcements to Italy; Robertson delayed the despatch of two divisions.

Plans for a III Corps attack at Cambrai had been proposed as far back as May. Haig had informed the War Office (5 June) that *"events have proved the utility of tanks"*. The plan was to trap German troops between the River Sensee and Canal du Nord, with the cavalry to seize the St Quentin Canal crossings, then exploit north-east. The first day objective was the high ground around Bourlon Wood and Haig was to review progress after 48 hours.

The Third Army attacked at Cambrai early on 20 November with 1,000 guns (using a surprise predicted barrage rather than a preliminary bombardment) and nine tank battalions. On the first day the British penetrated 5 miles (8.0 km) on a 6 miles (9.7 km) front with only 4,000 casualties, limited by blown bridges and the shortness of the November day. The 51st (Highland) Division was held up at Flesquieres village, which fell the following day. Haig's intelligence chief Brigadier-General Charteris told him that the Germans would not be able to reinforce for 48 hours and James Marshall-Cornwall, then a junior intelligence officer, later an admiring biographer of Haig, alleged that Charteris refused to have reported fresh German divisions shown on the situation map as he did not want to weaken Haig's resolution.

Haig visited the battlefield (21 November), inspecting the fighting at Bourlon Wood through his binoculars. He thought the attacks *"feeble and uncoordinated"* and was disappointed at the lack of grip by corps and division commanders and encountering 1st Cavalry Division, which had been ordered to fall back, resisted the temptation to countermand the order. At around 9 pm he decided to continue the attack on Bourlon Wood, a decision which has been much criticised but which made good military sense at the time and was supported by Byng, although the political need for a clear victory may have been a factor. The offensive continued but with diminishing returns. Bourlon Wood fell on 23 November but German counter-attacks had begun. Haig arrived at a Third Army planning meeting (26 November) and ordered further attacks the following day but then had to bow to Byng deciding to go onto the defensive. Haig complained that the lack of extra divisions had prevented a breakthrough, a view described by one biographer as *"self-deception, pure and simple"*.

Some of the gains were retaken after 30 November, when the Germans made their first counter-offensive against the British since 1914, using new Sturmtruppen tactics. GHQ intelligence had failed to piece together warnings. British casualties had mounted to over 40,000 by 3

December, with German losses somewhat less. One biographer argues that the initial success at Cambrai helped to save Haig's job but another view is that the ultimate disappointment did more damage to Haig's political credibility than Passchendaele. Lloyd George was particularly angry at the embarrassing Cambrai reverse, but Haig's support amongst the Army, the public and many politicians made sacking him impossible; a plan that Haig be "promoted" to a sinecure, as Generalissimo of British forces, was scotched when Lord Derby threatened resignation.

Asked to provide a statement to the House of Commons, Haig attributed the German success to *"one cause and one alone ... lack of training on the part of junior officers and NCOs and men",* a verdict supported by the court of enquiry which, at Derby's instigation, Haig ordered, although the enquiry also criticised "higher commanders" for failing to enforce defensive doctrine. In a later report to Robertson Haig accepted the blame, stating that the troops had been tired as a result of the attack on Bourlon Wood. Although Haig defended Charteris, he was required to dismiss him. Robertson had arrived at Haig's Headquarters with orders (signed by Derby) for his dismissal, in case Haig refused to do as he was asked. A common criticism is that Haig only accepted intelligence from Charteris (who told him what he wanted to hear) and did not cross-check it with other intelligence.

Over lunch at 10 Downing Street with Derby and Lloyd George in January, Haig predicted that the war would end within a year because of the "internal state of Germany". Haig left the War Cabinet with the impression that he thought the Germans would launch small attacks on the scale of Cambrai Haig recommended that the British draw in German reserves by renewing the offensive around Ypres, which did not meet with political approval. By now Haig's 1917 offensives were being criticised in the press and in Parliament, where J.C. Wedgwood openly demanded a change of command. The purge of Haig's staff continued, with the removal of Maxwell (Quartermaster-General) and Lt-Gen Launcelot Kiggell as BEF Chief of Staff.

In January the Cabinet Minister Jan Christiaan Smuts and the Cabinet Secretary Maurice Hankey were sent to France to discreetly see whether any of the Army Commanders were willing to replace Haig – none were. At the Supreme War Council at Versailles Haig and Pétain complained of shortage of troops, but Haig's political credibility was so low that Hankey wrote that they *"made asses of themselves".* It was agreed that an Allied General Reserve be set up, under Foch with Henry Wilson as his deputy; Haig was reluctant to hand over divisions and argued against a common command, claiming that it would be "unconstitutional" for him to take orders from a foreign General, and that he did not have the reserves to spare. Milner thought Haig's stance "desperately stupid"

Lloyd George proposed that the CIGS be reduced to his pre-1915 powers (i.e. reporting to the Secretary of State for War, not direct to the Cabinet) and that the British military representative at the Supreme War Council in Versailles be Deputy CIGS and a member of the Army Council (i.e. empowered to issue orders to Haig). He offered Robertson a choice of remaining as CIGS with reduced powers or else accepting demotion to Deputy CIGS at Versailles. Derby summoned Haig to London, expecting him to support him in backing Robertson. In a private meeting with Lloyd George, Haig agreed with Robertson's position that the CIGS should himself be the delegate to Versailles, or else that the Versailles delegate be clearly subordinate to the CIGS to preserve unity of command. However, he accepted that the War Cabinet must ultimately make the decision, and according to Lloyd George *"put up no fight for Robertson"* and persuaded Derby not to resign. Haig thought Robertson egotistical, coarse, power-crazed and not *"a gentleman"* and was unhappy at the way Robertson had allowed divisions to be

diverted. Henry Wilson now became CIGS, with Rawlinson as British military representative at Versailles. Although Haig had been suspicious of Wilson, they gradually established a warily respectful relationship.

German 'Michael' offensive

By March 1918 Germany's Western Front armies had been reinforced by the release of troops from the Eastern Front. At this point British troops were tired and weakened, and British divisions had been cut in size from 12 battalions to 9. Allied intelligence did not fall for German deceptions that they might attack in Italy or the Balkans, but thought that the main attack might fall in the Cambrai-St Quentin sector. Haig inspected the Fifth Army (7–9 March) and noted widespread concerns, which he shared, at lack of reserves. As late as 17 March, Cox, who had replaced Charteris as Intelligence Chief, predicted that the German Offensive was not yet immediately imminent. By 20 March, deployment of German trench mortars had been reported by deserters, and British artillery began some spoiling fire.

Germany launched an attack, "Michael" (21 March 1918), with a force larger than the entire BEF and enjoying superiority of 5:1 over Hubert Gough's Fifth Army, which were spread thinly over lines recently taken over from the French. Haig was initially calm on 21 March, as owing to the communications of the time GHQ was *"an information vacuum"* where news often took over a day to reach him, and spent much of the day entertaining foreign dignitaries including the US War Secretary. The Third Army retreated as planned from the Flesquieres Salient. With three-quarters of the 50-mile front under attack, the British troops fought hard and the Germans failed to reach their first-day objectives. However, lacking reserves Gough had to retreat behind the Crozat Canal. 22 March saw the Fifth Army retreat to the Somme; Haig still anticipated further German attacks in Champagne or Arras. The Germans did not initially realise the importance of Amiens as an objective.

Haig did not speak to or visit Gough until 23 March. That day Haig arranged for reserves to be sent down from Flanders. Formal orders were issued to the Fifth Army to maintain contact with the Third Army to their north and the French to their south. After initial optimism, Tim Travers has written of "panic" setting in amongst senior officers at GHQ on 23 March, and there is evidence that a retreat towards the Channel Ports may have been considered.

Doullens

Haig had a GHQ Reserve which was massed in the north, 72 hours' march away, to protect the Channel Ports. The French Commander-in-Chief, Pétain, agreed to place two French armies under Fayolle as a reserve in the Somme valley, but could not agree to Haig's request to send 20 French divisions to Amiens.

24 March was *"probably the most traumatic day (Haig) had endured since"* First Ypres in 1914. Half of BEF supplies came into Le Havre, Rouen and Dieppe and passed by train through Amiens, making it a Major choke point. Planning that winter had left open the question of whether the BEF would retreat southwest or form "an island" around the Channel Ports through which Haig's armies drew the other half of their supplies. A retreat on the ports does not seem to have been decided until some days after 21 March.

This is one of the occasions where doubt has been cast on the authenticity of Haig's diary. For example, Haig's typed diary – probably based on notes prepared in April – describes Pétain as *"almost unbalanced and most anxious",* claiming that after attending a Cabinet meeting in Paris, where he had been ordered to *"cover Paris at all costs",* he threatened to retreat on Paris,

leaving the British right flank uncovered. Tim Travers argues that Pétain said at the meeting that he would only retreat on Paris if Haig retreated on the Channel Ports, and that Pétain had come away satisfied that Haig would not break contact. In a postwar exchange of letters with Haig, Pétain denied that he had ordered a retreat on Paris or had threatened Haig that he might, a recollection which Herbert Lawrence appears to have supported. It has been suggested that Haig and Lawrence may simply have misunderstood his intentions, and that any factual errors in Haig's diary were honest if mistaken recollections.

Haig's letter of 25 March, sent via Weygand, asked for 20 French divisions to cover the southern British flank as the BEF fought its way back *"covering the Channel Ports".* The letter is ambiguous and does not specifically mention a retreat "to" the ports. Sheffield argues that orders to Third Army were not a precursor to retreat but *"a means to an end",* pointing to orders for, if needs be, a counterattack onto the northern flank of the German attackers, and also argues that although GHQ had a duty to consider contingency plans, unlike in 1940, evacuation was never actually likely. Wilson claimed that Haig suggested Pétain be appointed Allied Generalissimo (which is not consistent with Haig's later claim that Pétain was unwilling to help the British) and that he proposed Foch over Haig's objections.

At the Doullens Conference (26 March), Haig accepted the appointment of Foch to coordinate reserves of all nationalities wherever he saw fit. In his typed diary Haig claimed much of the credit for Foch's appointment and to have insisted that he have wider powers over Pétain than Clemenceau had wanted to grant him. Milner, who represented the British government at Doullens, recorded that Clemenceau was unhappy with Pétain's recent efforts, but claimed that he himself had persuaded Haig to accept the appointment of Foch; Haig's official biographer Duff Cooper gave Haig the credit but commented that the idea had probably occurred to several participants simultaneously.
After a German offensive near Arras was beaten back, between 29 and 31 March the Germans pushed on Amiens. A Canadian brigade took part in an action at Moreuil Wood. Attacks on 4 April (Villers-Bretonneux, east of Amiens) and 5 April on the Third Army front were beaten back by British and Australian forces, although contingency plans were still being prepared to cover Rouen and Le Havre in case Amiens fell.

German Georgette offensive

To ALL RANKS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS
Three weeks ago today, the enemy began his terrific attacks against us on a fifty-mile front. His objects are to separate us from the French, to take the Channel Ports and destroy the British Army. In spite of throwing already 106 Divisions into the battle and enduring the most reckless sacrifice of human life, he has as yet made little progress towards his goals. We owe this to the determined fighting and self-sacrifice of our troops. Words fail me to express the admiration which I feel for the splendid resistance offered by all ranks of our Army under the most trying circumstances. Many amongst us now are tired. To those I would say that victory will belong to the side which holds out the longest. The French Army is moving rapidly and in great force to our support. There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the Freedom of mankind alike depend upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment. ***(Signed) D. Haig F.M. Commander-in-Chief British Armies in France, 11 April.***

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Lloyd George demanded Haig sack Gough, and when Haig was reluctant, he was given a direct order to do so by Derby. Haig offered to resign; Lloyd George wanted to accept, but the other ministers, and Henry Wilson, thought there was no obvious successor.
During the second major German offensive, "Georgette" in Flanders (9 April), Haig issued his famous order that his men must carry on fighting *"With Our Backs to the Wall and believing in the Justice of our Cause" to protect "the safety of our homes and the Freedom of mankind". Just as "Michael"* had swept over the Cambrai and the Somme battlefields, won at such cost by Haig's own offensives in previous years, this one swept over Passchendaele although not Ypres itself. The offensive threatened Hazebrouck, "the Amiens of the north", a key railhead through which supplies were brought from the Channel Ports.

Foch had earlier refused to send four French divisions to Flanders but now redeployed Maistre's Tenth French Army to the Somme sector, freeing up British forces. During a renewed attack (17 April) Foch drew attention to the valour of the British at First Ypres and refused to send further French reinforcements so as to keep a strategic reserve. 24 April saw a further unsuccessful German attack at Villers-Bretonneux near Amiens, featuring the first tank-to-tank combat. Haig was suspicious of Foch's request to move British divisions to the French sector to free up French reserves, worrying that this might lead to "a permanent amalgam" of French and British forces. At a meeting on 27 April the dispute was smoothed over, and British IX Corps moved to the French sector. On 30 April Ludendorff called a halt to the Flanders offensive.
Although some American divisions were now serving with the British forces, Haig thought Pershing *"very obstinate and stupid"* for refusing to integrate US troops with Allied units. At Abbeville (2 May) it was agreed that in the event of renewed attack British forces would retreat south if necessary and abandon the Channel Ports rather than lose touch with the French.

The near-debacle of March 1918 was an object of political controversy. Repington wrote that it was *"the worst defeat in the history of the Army".* Bonar Law claimed in a House of Commons debate (23 April) that Haig and Pétain had agreed the extension of the British line, which was not wholly true as in January 1918 the Supreme War Council had ordered a longer extension than Haig and Pétain had agreed between themselves in December 1917. Lloyd George was accused (in the Maurice Debate of 9 May 1918 in the House of Commons) of having hoarded troops in the UK to make it harder for Haig to launch offensives. Lloyd George misled the House of Commons in claiming that Haig's forces were stronger (1.75 million men) at the start of 1918 than they had been a year earlier (1.5 million men) – in fact the increase was caused by an increase of 335,000 in the number of labourers, and Haig had fewer combat infantry holding a longer stretch of front. Haig had opposed Maurice in taking his concerns into public, but was disappointed at how Lloyd George was able to get off the hook with a *"claptrap speech".* Maurice believed he had saved Haig from dismissal.

In July and August, the Germans were defeated at the Second Battle of the Marne and Amiens. The latter victory was described by General Erich Ludendorff as *"The Black Day of the German Army"* after mass surrenders of German troops. On 11 August Haig, contrary to the wishes of Marshal Foch, insisted on a halt to the Amiens offensive and launched a new attack on 21 August between the Scarpe and the Ancre. As with his previous offensives in 1916 and 1917, Haig encouraged his subordinates to aim for ambitious objectives, in this case a thrust from Albert to Bapaume, and this time with more success than in previous years. On 10 September Haig, on a brief visit to London, insisted that the war could end that year and asked Lord Milner (Secretary of State for War) to send all available men and transportation. Milner

afterwards shared with Wilson his concerns that Haig would embark on *"another Passchendaele".*

Haig's forces continued to enjoy much success, but when they began to advance towards the Hindenburg Line Haig received a supposedly "personal" telegram from the CIGS Henry Wilson (31 August), warning him that he was not to take unnecessary losses in storming these fortifications. Haig, surmising that the War Cabinet were not forbidding him to attack but might dismiss him if the assault failed, telegraphed Wilson back that they were a *"wretched lot"* and wrote that attacking the Germans now would be less costly than allowing them time to regroup. There is some dispute over how much direct operational control Haig maintained at this time, Tim Travers in particular arguing that he allowed his Army Commanders a very free hand, whilst Ferdinand Foch was exerting ever-greater influence over strategy. Haig was irritated that Foch insisted that Plumer's Second Army remain part of an Army Group commanded by the King of the Belgians, so that the French and Belgians could take credit for liberating Brussels.

Germany first requested an Armistice after the penetration of the Hindenburg Line at its strongest point, St Quentin/Cambrai, on 28 September, and the almost simultaneous capitulation of Bulgaria, and discussions continued until the ceasefire on 11 November. When consulted on terms for an armistice in October, Haig stated that *"Germany is not broken in the military sense. During the last weeks her forces have withdrawn fighting very bravely and in excellent order".* In private correspondence Haig was more sanguine. In a mid-October letter to his wife he stated that *"I think we have their army beaten now".* Haig noted in his diary for 11 November that the German army was in *"very bad"* condition due to insubordination and indiscipline in the ranks. Haig urged moderation, suggesting that Germany only be asked to give up Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine, and warning that humiliating terms might lead to a militarist backlash. Haig suspected Wilson, a staunch Unionist, of wanting to prolong the war as an excuse to subdue southern Ireland by bringing in conscription there. The collapse of Austria-Hungary encouraged the politicians to demand stricter terms (although less strict than Foch or Pershing would have liked) and Germany was required to evacuate the Rhineland as well. However, once Germany had accepted the strict armistice terms, Haig suggested Germany be split into independent states at the peace treaty.

Whereas the French, American and Belgian armies combined captured 196,700 prisoners-of-war between 18 July and the end of the war, Haig's forces, with a smaller army than the French, engaged the main mass of the German Army and captured 188,700 prisoners. British daily casualty rates (3,645 per day) were heavier during this period than at the Somme (2,950) or Passchendaele (2,121), because British forces were attacking across the line, instead of being rotated through a single offensive. The military historian, Gary Sheffield, called this, the so-called Hundred Days Offensive, *"by far the greatest military victory in British history".*

Executions during the First World War

As commander-in-chief, one of Haig's responsibilities was to give the final signature to the death warrants of British and Commonwealth soldiers (but not Australian – these went to the Governor-General of Australia) who had been first sentenced to death by Field General Court Martial. Although the book Shot at Dawn (1983), which began the campaign for pardons, says that it is *"quite incorrect"* to hold Haig solely responsible as he was part of a legal process, by the late 1990s Haig was perhaps best known to the general public because of publicity which implied him to be a brutal disciplinarian – this was not the view of contemporaries. Of the 3,080 men sentenced to death in all theatres, 346 were executed, 266 (77%) were for desertion,

37 for murder and 18 for cowardice. Just over 250 of the executions took place during Haig's time as Commander-in-Chief, but only executed men's records survive, so it is hard to comment on the reasons why men were reprieved.

Promotion of army dentistry during the First World War
During the war, Haig suffered from toothache and sent for a Parisian dentist. Consequently, within months the British Army had hired a dozen dentists and, by the end of the war, there were 831. This led to the formation of the Royal Army Dental Corps in 1921.

Lloyd George arranged a ceremonial reception for Marshal Foch on 1 December; Haig was asked to travel in the fifth carriage with Henry Wilson but not invited to the reception. Feeling that this was a snub and an attempt to win votes for the imminent election, Haig declined to attend at all. In November 1918 Haig refused Lloyd George's offer of a viscountcy, partly as he felt it was another snub, as his predecessor Sir John French had been awarded the same rank on being removed from command of the BEF, and partly to use his refusal to bargain for better state financial aid for demobilised soldiers. Haig held out despite being lobbied by the King, until Lloyd George backed down in March 1919, blaming a recently sacked pensions minister. Haig was created Earl Haig, Viscount Dawick and Baron Haig of Bemersyde in the County of Berwick, received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament and a grant of £100,000.

In January 1919, disturbances broke out among troops at Calais, as men returning from leave were expected to return to full army discipline and key workers with jobs to go to (who had often been the last to enlist) were – contrary to Haig's advice – given priority for demobilisation. Haig accepted the advice of Winston Churchill that exercising his right to shoot the ringleaders was not sensible. For much of 1919, Haig served as Commander-in-Chief Home Forces, a key position as a General Strike seemed likely. Haig kept a low profile in this job and insisted the Army be kept in reserve, not used for normal policing. His military career ended in January 1920. Lord Haig arranged for his Dispatches to be published in 1922 as the General Election loomed, although in the end his nemesis Lloyd George was ousted for unrelated reasons.

After retiring from the service, Lord Haig devoted the rest of his life to the welfare of ex-servicemen. Haig pushed for the amalgamation of organisations, quashing a suggestion of a separate organisation for officers, into The British Legion which was founded in June 1921. He visited South Africa in 1921, Newfoundland in 1924, and Canada in 1925 (visits to Australia and New Zealand were being planned when he died) to promote ex-servicemen's interests. He was instrumental in setting up the Haig Fund for the financial assistance of ex-servicemen and the Haig Homes charity to ensure they were properly housed.

An avid golf enthusiast, Haig was Captain of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, from 1920 to 1921. He was president of The British Legion until his death and was chairman of the United Services Fund from 1921 until his death.

Haig maintained ties with the British Army after his retirement; he was honorary Colonel of the 17th/21st Lancers (having been honorary Colonel of the 17th Lancers from 1912), The London Scottish, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and the Royal Horse Guards. He was Lord Rector and later Chancellor of the University of St Andrews.

Haig died in London from a heart attack on 29 January 1928, and was given an elaborate funeral on 3 February. *"Great crowds lined the streets ... come to do honour to the chief who*

had sent thousands to the last sacrifice when duty called for it, but whom his war-worn soldiers loved as their truest advocate and friend." The gun-carriage that had carried the Unknown Warrior to his grave in 1920 took Haig's body from St Columba's Church, where it had been lying in state, to Westminster Abbey. Three royal princes followed the gun-carriage and the pall-bearers included two Marshals of France (Foch and Pétain). The cortege was accompanied by five guards of honour, representing the Royal Navy, the Irish Guards, the Royal Air Force, the 1st French Army Corps, and the Belgian Regiment of Grenadiers. After the service at the Abbey, the procession re-formed to escort the body to Waterloo Station for the journey to Edinburgh, where it lay in state for three days at St Giles's Cathedral.

Haig was buried at Dryburgh Abbey in the Scottish borders; the grave being marked with a plain stone tablet in the style of the standard headstones of the Imperial War Graves Commission issued to British military casualties in the First World War.

The Earl Haig Memorial, an equestrian statue in Whitehall commissioned by Parliament and sculpted by Alfred Frank Hardiman, aroused some controversy and was not unveiled until just before Armistice Day in 1937.

Field Marshal The Earl of Ypres

Field Marshal John Denton Pinkstone French, 1st Earl of Ypres, KP GCB OM GCVO KCMG PC(28 September 1852–22 May 1925), known as Sir John French from 1901 to 1916, and as The Viscount French between 1916 and 1922, was a senior British Army officer.

Born in Kent, he saw brief service as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, before becoming a cavalry officer. He achieved rapid promotion and distinguished himself on the Gordon Relief Expedition. He became a national hero during the Second Boer War. He commanded I Corps at Aldershot, then served as Inspector-General of the Army, before becoming Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS, the professional head of the British Army) in 1912. He helped to prepare the British Army for a possible European war, and was among those who insisted that cavalry still be trained to charge with sabre and lance. During the Curragh incident he had to resign as CIGS after promising Hubert Gough in writing that the Army would not be used to coerce Ulster Protestants into a Home Rule Ireland.

French's most important role was as Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) for the first year and a half of the First World War. After the British suffered heavy casualties at the battles of Mons and Le Cateau, French wanted to withdraw the BEF from the Allied line to refit and only agreed to take part in the First Battle of the Marne after a private meeting with the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, against whom he bore a grudge thereafter. In May 1915 he leaked information about shell shortages to the press in the hope of engineering Kitchener's removal. By summer 1915 French's command was being increasingly criticised in London by Kitchener and other members of the government, and by Haig, Robertson and other senior Generals in France. After the Battle of Loos, at which French's slow release of XI Corps from reserve was blamed for the failure to achieve a decisive breakthrough on the first day, H. H. Asquith, the British Prime Minister, demanded his resignation.

French was appointed Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces for 1916–1918. He then became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1918, a position he held through much of the Irish War of Independence (1919–1922), in which his own sister was involved on the republican side. During this time he published 1914, an inaccurate and much criticised volume of memoirs.

French's family was related to the French/De Freyne family which had gone to present-day County Wexford in the fourteenth century and had substantial estates at Frenchpark, County Roscommon. French always regarded himself as "Irish", although his branch of the family had lived in England since the eighteenth century.

His father was Royal Navy Commander John Tracey William French, who had fought at Navarino and under Napier in the Portuguese Civil War. His mother was Margaret Eccles, from Glasgow, who after suffering a breakdown following her husband's death was eventually institutionalised. She died in 1867 leaving French to be brought up by his sisters. He was educated at a Harrow preparatory school and Eastman's Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth before joining the Royal Navy in 1866.

Royal Navy
He joined the Royal Navy because it gave him a chance to leave home four or five years earlier than the Army. From August 1866 he trained on board the three-decker battleship HMS Britannia at Dartmouth. He obtained only an "average" certificate which required him to do a further six months of training on board the frigate HMS Bristol at Sheerness from January 1868 before qualifying as a midshipman.

In 1869 he served as a midshipman on HMS Warrior commanded by Captain Boys, an old friend of French's father. She patrolled in the English Channel and off Spain and Portugal. During his service he witnessed the accidental sinking of HMS Captain. He resigned from the Royal Navy in November1870 as he was discovered to be acrophobic and to suffer from seasickness.

Early army career
French joined the Suffolk Artillery Militia in November 1870 where he was expected to put in about two months a year with the regiment. He initially failed his exams (mathematics and foreign languages) for a regular commission. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars on 28 February 1874, but there is no evidence that he ever served with them.

He transferred to the 19th Hussars on 11 March 1874 possibly as it was less expensive—following the sale of the family home at Ripple Valley French's private income of £1,000 per annum was enough to cover the £500–£600 required by his new regiment. He was posted to Aldershot Command. He became an expert hunter and steeplechaser, permanently damaging the little finger of his right hand in a fall. The 19th Hussars were posted to Ireland in June 1876. In September 1877 French was one of two Lieutenants who persuaded 70 drunk and mutinous troopers, who had armed themselves with sticks and threatened "murder", to return to barracks. In 1880 the 19th were deployed to Ballinrobe and Lough Mask to protect labourers ricking hay at the height of the Captain Boycott disturbances.

An Irishman hamstrung French's horse with a sickle while he was sitting on it. He became adjutant of his regiment on 1 June 1880. At that time the 19th Hussars had only one Major but as three different men held that rank in three years (1877–1880) the resulting turnover of officers brought French his promotion to Captain on 16 October 1880.

He became adjutant of the Northumberland Hussars on 1 April 1881. While in Northumberland he missed out on active service: the 19th Hussars took part in the occupation of Egypt and

Battle of Tel el-Kebir (13 September 1882) but French's applications to rejoin his regiment were rejected by the War Office. An increase in the number of Majors in the 19th Hussars brought French promotion to that rank on 3 April 1883. These promotions (Captain at the age of 28, Major at 30) were relatively rapid.

Sudan

French was initially expected to rejoin his regiment when they returned to Ireland, but the emergence of the Mahdi in the Sudan required them to fight Mahdist forces near Suakin. French rejoined the regiment when they returned to Cairo in October 1884.

French took part in the Sudan expedition to relieve Major General Charles Gordon in 1884. He was second-in-command to his friend Lieutenant Colonel Percy Barrow, with the cavalry which accompanied Brigadier Sir Herbert Stewart as he took the short route across 176 miles of desert. Most of the cavalry work was in reconnaissance and warding off Dervish raids, although they did—at a walk—pursue the retreating enemy after the Battle of Abu Klea in January 1885. By the time they reached the Nile the horses had not been watered for between 56 and 72 hours. During the retreat back across the desert via Jakdul (the expedition had reached Khartoum too late to save Gordon) French led a rearguard of thirteen men, warding off Dervish attacks and impressing Redvers Buller and Sir Garnet Wolseley.

He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on 7 February 1885. Once again, this was an unusually early promotion, and he was appointed second-in-command of the 19th Hussars. His experience of handling cavalry with scarce water would stand him in good stead in South Africa. In January 1886 he briefly acted as Commanding Officer when Colonel Barrow died, but French was considered too young for the position, and Colonel Boyce Combe was transferred in.

From June 1886 to April 1888 French was stationed at Norwich with the regiment. He became Commanding Officer of the 19th Hussars on 27 September 1888. He impressed Evelyn Wood by his initiative in organising his regiment into squadrons.

He was promoted brevet Colonel (7 February 1889), and was posted to India in September 1891. There, at cavalry camp during an exercise in November 1891, he first met Captain Douglas Haig, with whose career his own was to be entwined for the next 25 years. French became Assistant Adjutant-General of Cavalry in 1893.

In India serving initially at Secunderabad and Bangalore, French worked as a staff officer under Sir George Luck, a noted trainer of cavalry, albeit with perhaps an excessive emphasis on parade-ground drill. French commanded a brigade of Indian Cavalry on manoeuvres near Lahore in January 1893. He seems not to have acquired the deep affection for India common in officers who served there.

French's wife did not accompany him to India (they seem to have lived apart for a while after his return from Egypt). When commanding the 19th Hussars in India, French was cited for adultery with the wife of a brother officer during his leave in the Indian hills; he was lucky this did not terminate his career. There were also unsubstantiated rumours that French had had affairs with the daughter of an Anglo-Indian railway official and also, earlier in his career, with his commanding officer's wife. A later tale, that he had once been the lover of the Irish nationalist Maud Gonne, appeared in Mary Colum's Life and the Dream (1947), although his biographer comments that it *"lacks firm evidence"*.

He was on half-pay in 1893–1895, possibly as a result of the Indian divorce scandal, and reduced to bicycling with his sons as he could not afford to keep horses. According to his son Gerald he would hop alongside the bicycle as he never mastered the art of mounting it.

Career saved twice

Two years on half pay would normally have meant compulsory retirement but in autumn 1894 he temporarily commanded a cavalry brigade on the manoeuvres in the Vale of the White Horse in Berkshire. French commented that the role of modern cavalry was not to *"cut and hack and thrust"* but rather to herd the enemy within range of friendly artillery. His handling of the brigade was seen as one of the few successful parts of the manoeuvres. He was appointed Assistant Adjutant-General at Army Headquarters on 24 August 1895, writing a new cavalry training manual (in practice extensively assisted by Captain Douglas Haig).

French went on to be Commander of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade at Canterbury on 1 May 1897 and Commander of the 1st Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot Command on 12 January 1899. Haig, recently returned from the Sudan War, was French's Brigade-Major at Aldershot. French was promoted to temporary Major General early in 1899. There were some accusations that these promotions, for a man whose career had so recently nearly ended, relied too much on powerful patrons. Early in 1899, at his own request, French borrowed £2,500, in a formal contract with interest, from Haig. He was within 24 hours of bankruptcy—which would have required him to resign his commission—after unwise investments in South African mining shares (Transvaal Golds), which crashed in value as war loomed. Richard Holmes believed the loan was never repaid, but Haig's biographer Walter Reid believes that the loan was probably repaid in 1909.

Boer War

Arrival

French embarked from Southampton for the Second Boer War on 23 September 1899, inviting Haig to share his cabin. War had not yet officially been declared when French put to sea. British troops were being sent in the hope of intimidating President Paul Kruger of the Transvaal into granting equal voting rights to the Uitlanders—non-Boer settlers—which would break the Boer stronghold on political power. It had the opposite effect, as the Boers issued their own ultimatum on 9 October, while the British troops were still at sea, in the hope of provoking an anti-British rising by the Boers of the British-ruled Cape Colony. He was appointed both a Major General on the staff and a local Major General.

French arrived at Cape Town on 11 October. He had expected to command a cavalry brigade under Lieutenant General George White in Natal, White also had the equivalent of a division of infantry but Colonel Brocklehurst was appointed to this command, while French and Haig were ordered to proceed to Natal "for the present" after receiving a cable from the Nord Office, which they guessed correctly meant that they were to take charge of the Cavalry Division when Buller's Army Corps arrived. After steaming to Durban French and Haig arrived in Ladysmith at 5:40am on 20 October, just as hostilities were beginning.

Elandslaagte

On the morning of his arrival, French was ordered to investigate reports that the Boers had taken Elandslaagte. Taking with him the 5th Lancers, six squadrons of Natal Carbineers and Natal Mounted Rifles, a battery of field artillery and a brigade of infantry under Colonel Ian Hamilton, he made contact with the Boers at 13:00 that day. White was initially cautious but on 21 October, having learned of Symons' victory at Talana the previous day, he permitted French to attack. Concerned at French's lack of experience at commanding infantry,

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

White initially proposed that his chief of staff Major General Archibald Hunter take command, but Hunter advised that French should be left in command. White himself came merely to observe. French enjoyed numerical superiority of around 3:1.

Elandslaagte saw British cavalry charge with the lance, cutting down fleeing Boers amid gory scenes described by one British officer as *"most excellent pig-sticking"*. This was portrayed as proving the continued relevance of cavalry charges, but in fact owed much to the success of Hamilton's preceding infantry attack and the fact that the charge was carried out at dusk. French celebrated the anniversary of this small battle for the rest of his life and it was seized on by the press in Britain.

That night White ordered all British forces to fall back on Ladysmith, where it was soon clear that they were about to be besieged by the combined Transvaal and Orange Free State forces. French spent much of 26 and 27 October patrolling around the advancing Boer forces. On 30 October his cavalry fought dismounted at Lombard's Kop north-east of Ladysmith; this was the right flank of three unsuccessful actions—the others being Nicholson's Nek and an infantry action at Long Hill in the centre which ended in near-rout—fought by White's troops on *Mournful Monday*.

Mournful Monday

Although French pointed out that cavalry was unlikely to be of much use in a besieged town, White refused him permission to break out. On 2 November, after he had spent the morning on a raid on a Boer laager, French received orders to leave Ladysmith. French and Haig escaped under fire on the last train out as the Boer siege began; Boers tore up the track minutes after the train passed. Steaming from Durban on 3 November, he arrived at Cape Town on 8 November, meeting with Buller, whose Army Corps was then arriving.

Colesberg operations

French was initially ordered to assemble the Cavalry Division at Maitland, near Cape Town. Now a local Lieutenant General like Buller's other four division commanders, he was then ordered to take command of forces covering the Colesberg area, filling the gap between Methuen's division (operating at Orange River Station, with a view to relieving Kimberley and Mafeking) and Gatacre's Division at Stormberg. On 18 November he went up to De Aar, nearer the front, to confer with Major General Wauchope, in charge of the lines of communication.

French arrived at Naawpoort on the afternoon of 20 November, and personally led a reconnaissance the following morning. The Boer force of General Schoeman had been reinforced by local Boers, and French, not strong enough to attack Arundel directly, conducted an active defence. At one stage, in late November and until 14 December, he was also required to extend his forces east to Rosemead to protect the railway to Port Elizabeth. A Boer penetration here would have cut off Cape Colony from Natal. French was proud of having kept the initiative over the Boers despite his force of 2,000 men being outnumbered two to one. French's subordinate Colonel T. C. Porter won a small action near Vaal Kop on 13 December, but the Boers captured that place on 16 December, causing French to go forward and take personal command. Around this time, he offered to cancel his plans to advance on Colesberg and lend his cavalry to Methuen, who had been defeated at Magersfontein, but this was rejected as there was insufficient water even for Methuen's own horses in the sector.

Between Field Marshal Frederick Roberts' appointment as Commander-in-Chief on 17 December 1899 (following the defeats of Black Week) and arrival at Cape Town on 10

January, French was the only senior British commander to conduct active operations. Although Schoeman's force had grown further in size, he had lost the confidence of his subordinates and, after a Boer council of war, fell back on a strong position surrounded by hills at Colesberg (29 December) just as French had been preparing to outflank him. French instead (1 January 1900) pinned down the Boer forces and turned their right flank (the British left). The fighting went on until 25 January, with French several times attempting to turn the Boer flanks but pulling back as his forces ran into resistance.

French did not succeed in capturing Colesberg, but he had prevented a Boer invasion of the Cape and tied down Boer forces which might have been used elsewhere. Leo Amery's Times History, highly critical of British Generalship during this period, later wrote of his *"almost unbroken series of successes",* showing grasp of tactics. Cavalry—often fighting dismounted—never made up more than half of his force, and were usually outnumbered three-to-one by Boer cavalry. There were some accusations that French was a glory-hunter.

Under Roberts

Cavalry Division

French was one of the few senior officers to be retained by Roberts. Roberts summoned French to Cape Town on 29 January to inquire about expenditure of horses and ammunition around Colesberg. French came away with the impression that he had *"only with difficulty persuaded (Roberts and Kitchener) on 29 January to send the Cavalry Division and himself in command of it".* French's insecurity was increased by this turn of events—not only did he belong to the wrong faction in the Army—the followers of Wolseley and Buller—now in eclipse, but he had up until now been denied command both of the cavalry brigade in Natal and the Cavalry Division (instead being given ad hoc forces to command in both cases).

French was affectionate about "dear old Bobs" but sometimes took a dim view of his military abilities. He correctly predicted that the centralisation of transport would lead to a collapse in supply arrangements. French disliked William Nicholson, under whose control Roberts had centralised all transport, and retained autonomy for Cavalry Division transport.

Unlike Roberts, French and Haig believed that cavalry should still be trained to charge with steel as well as to fight dismounted with firearms. They appreciated the value of good colonial troops and trained Mounted Infantry, but had already insisted that the New Zealand Mounted Rifles fix bayonets to their carbines to use as lances, and were sceptical about the Colonial "Skallywag" units which Roberts was raising. Roberts also appointed the Earl of Erroll as Assistant Adjutant-General (AAG) of the Cavalry Division, with Haig, to whom Buller had promised the job, as his deputy—French did his best to bypass Erroll and work through Haig. On 31 January French returned to the Colesberg front to break up his old command, leaving Major General R. A. P. Clemens to cover the Colesberg area with a mixed force.

March to relieve Kimberley

Kitchener ordered French (10 February) *"The cavalry must relieve Kimberley at all costs".* French promised Roberts that if he were still alive, he would be in Kimberley, where the civilian population was urging Colonel Robert Kekewich to surrender, in five days.

French's Cavalry Division consisted of three cavalry brigades and two brigades of mounted infantry, although the latter did not accompany them when they broke camp at 3 am on 11 March—a separate provisional brigade of mounted infantry was provided instead. Roberts gave an inspirational speech to French's brigade and regimental commanders. Rather than cross the Modder River directly (Kimberley lay around 25 miles north-east), they made an

envelopment move: first over 20 miles south to Ramdam, then about 15 miles east to seize the Riet River Crossings, then about 25 miles (roughly north-north-east) to Klip Drift on the Modder, then another 20 miles north-west to Kimberley. This was to be accomplished across arid land in five days, with much of the travel by moonlight as it was the middle of summer. French carried only six days' rations for the men and five days' forage for the horses.

The force left Ramdam at 2 am on 12 February, with only 4,000 horsemen rather than the 8,000 he had expected to have, but French felt he had to push on rather than wait for straggling units to catch up (the brigades' staffs were all new, and Brigadiers only joined their units in the course of the march). De Kiel's Drift on the Riet was seized by mid-afternoon—French ordered his cavalry to gallop for it as soon as he saw the way was clear—but the crossing was soon in what Haig called *"an indescribable state of confusion"* as Roberts had neglected to order priority for Cavalry Division baggage. Kitchener, arriving in the evening, ordered French to seize Waterval Drift, another crossing a few miles to the northwest where he had left a brigade masking a small Boer force under Christiaan de Wet. Although this was done, the advance could not be resumed until 10.30am on 13 February, and accompanied by five baggage wagons which had managed to get through the logjam at De Kiel's Drift.

Klip Drift

French's division moved in line of squadron columns across a five-mile wide front, halting between 12.30 and 1 pm at the well at Blauuwboschpan, where he left a garrison to hold until the infantry arrived. He brushed aside a small Boer force (perhaps 300 men) which attempted to block his path to the Modder River, but concerned that he might be attacked from the east by de Wet's main force, moved quickly at 2 pm to seize the crossings at Rondeval and Klip Drift (he aimed to at least threaten two crossings to avoid the delay which had happened at De Kiel's Drift). By 5 pm he was able to send a galloper to Roberts with the message that he was across the Modder. He had lost only three men wounded, although 40 horses had died of exhaustion and over 500 were incapable of further work. French then had to wait a day while Thomas Kelly-Kenny's 6th Infantry Division made a forced march from the Riet Crossings to the Modder Crossings, during which time Piet Cronje, believing French's advance to be a feint, missed an opportunity to reinforce the area.

Equipped with three days' supplies, French resumed his advance at 9.30 am on 15 February. At Abon's Dam, five miles north of the Modder, French sent his cavalry, supported by the fire of 56 guns, charging up a valley between two Boer held ridges. The charge was led by the 9th and 16th Lancers. The Boer riflemen, perhaps 600 in number, were able to achieve little at ranges of 1,000 yards.

Amery's Times History later wrote *"the charge at Klip Drift marks an epoch in the history of cavalry",* arguing that French had *"divined"* that a cavalry charge made with *"reckless, dare-devil confidence"* could cut through a line of *"unseen"* enemy infantry who could have resisted a cautious attack by British infantry. The Official History called it *"the most brilliant stroke of the war".* He was also later praised by the cavalry writer Erskine Childers and by the German history of the campaign, which cited Klip Drift as evidence that cavalry could still charge infantry armed with magazine rifles. These claims were exaggerated. French had attacked a thinly-held part of the line, under cover of artillery fire and dust clouds, inflicting only 20 Boer casualties to sword and lance (as opposed to 60 at Elandslaagte). French himself saw it as a triumph of the cavalry spirit rather than a charge with cold steel per se.

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French entered Kimberley at 6 pm on 15 February, and was entertained at the Sanatorium by Cecil Rhodes, who soon persuaded him to relieve Kekewich, the military commander of the town. Holmes cites this as evidence of French's tendency to take against people based only on superficial evidence.
French was congratulated by Roberts, and Queen Victoria praised the cavalry's *"brilliant success"*. For his success with the relief, French was promoted for distinguished service in the field on 21 February 1900, from substantive Colonel to supernumerary Major General, and to local Lieutenant General. Although French was later criticised for attacking the Boers around Kimberley on 16 February, Roberts' orders to pursue the retreating Cronje did not reach him owing to a cut telegraph line, and there is no evidence that Roberts made further efforts to contact him, although French heliographed to request orders.

Paardeberg
Orders to pursue Cronje were hand-delivered to French at 10 pm on 16 February. French had only 1,500 mounted men and 12 guns fit for duty, but, setting out at 3 am on 17 February, he and Broadwood led an advanced guard on a forced march, twice as fast as Cronje's force, to intercept them at 10 am as they tried to cross the Modder at Vendutie Drift (around 30 miles from Kimberley). Outnumbered three to one, and with another 2,000 Boers close by, French held his position long enough for the British infantry to catch up with Cronje's army at Paardeberg.
French was too far away to interfere in the Battle of Paardeberg, although he sent a message urging caution—Kitchener ignored this and launched a disastrous frontal assault on 18 February. French spent the day holding off Boers who attempted to reinforce Cronje's force. French also prevented the main Boer field army from escaping across the Modder River after the battle.

Poplar Grove
Cronje at last surrendered his field army to Roberts on 27 February. On the morning of Klip Drift French had had 5,027 horses, but by 28 February exhaustion had reduced this number to 3,553. As Roberts prepared to advance on Bloemfontein, French was now, on 6 March, ordered to take his division and two Mounted Infantry Brigades and swing seventeen miles around the left flank of the Boer position at Poplar Grove on the Modder River, while Roberts' main force prepared to attack them from the front. Although French now had 5,665 horses again, many of these were of poor quality and sick, and he was short of fodder. On the basis of incorrect information from Colonel Richardson, Director of Supplies, who had not realised that sick horses were also entitled to fodder, Roberts gave French a dressing-down in front of his Brigadiers, for consuming too many supplies. This was probably a turning point in their relationship.

French led his men out of camp at 3 am on 7 March, amid confusion as Kelly-Kenny's Division, which was supposed to follow his, had started an hour earlier owing to unclear orders. The moon had set and French had to halt between 5 am and 5.45 am to await daybreak. By 7 am he had reached Kalkfontein Dam, a march of 12 miles, and spent 45 minutes watering his horses. By 7.30 am the Boers began to retreat from their position. Roberts later blamed French for failing to cut them off (and missing a chance to capture President Kruger). French argued that his horses were too weak to do more than trot, and that he was not strong enough as Kelly-Kenny's men had not yet arrived. He concentrated his Division for a pursuit, but even then was beaten off by the Boer rearguard. The Official History supported French's decision, although some felt that French was giving less than wholehearted co-operation after his unjustified public rebuke over the fodder issue. Holmes suggests that French carried out a plan in which

he had no confidence because of Roberts' reputation for ruthlessness with unsatisfactory officers.

French and Haig were sceptical about the riding abilities of Mounted Infantry, and felt that Roberts was wasting too many horses on them (Haig letter to his sister 16 March 1900) and that the cavalry had been *"practically starving"* since 11 February. Bloemfontein fell on 13 March, and soon suffered an outbreak of typhoid. In an implicit criticism of Roberts, French recorded (22 March 1900) that there *"would be a grand opportunity for a great strategist at the head of affairs"*. With Roberts' main army immobilised by disease at Bloemfontein, de Wet was still active making raids around the British periphery. Roberts eventually (20 March) sent French with a single cavalry brigade and some guns and mounted Infantry in a vain attempt to intercept Olivier's column (numbering 6,000–7,000 men) at Thabanchu. French made another raid to Karee Siding (29 March)—but until the middle of April he devoted most of his energies to inspecting the horses, many of them Argentinian, with which his division was being remounted.
French was summoned to see Roberts (5 April 1900), who told him (5 April 1900) that the fighting at Poplar Grove proved that the future lay with Mounted Infantry. French wrote to Colonel Lonsdale Hale, former professor at Staff College (12 April 1900), for speaking out for the idea of cavalry against the *"chatter and cackle"* of its opponents, quoting the opinion of a German officer that Mounted Infantry were too poor at riding to fight effectively. French also clashed with Edward Hutton (14 April) when he asked for French's cavalry to be used to relieve his mounted infantry on outpost duty.

Kroonstad
On the march to Pretoria (early May 1900) French's three brigades made up the left wing of Roberts' main thrust. (Other thrusts were by Mahon and Hunter over the Bechuanaland border, by Buller up from Natal and a semi-independent command under Hamilton, which might have been French's had he not been out of favour.) French lost another 184 of his still unacclimatised horses making—on Roberts' orders—a forced march to the Vet River.

Botha was now making a stand along the River Zand, in front of the Orange Free State's temporary capital at Kroonstad. French was ordered to encircle Botha from the left, accompanied by Hutton's Mounted Infantry, while Broadwood struck from the right. Roberts over-ruled French's wish to make a wide encirclement and ordered a shallower one—this lost the advantage of surprise, and Botha pulled his forces back so that French ran into strong resistance on 10 May. Roberts now ordered French to pull back and make a deeper encirclement as he had originally proposed, with a view to cutting the railway behind Kroonstad. However, French's cavalry was now too tired, after an advance of forty miles, to achieve much, and Botha's army escaped. The Times History later praised French's rapidity of movement but criticised him—unfairly in Holmes' view—for failure to concentrate his forces.

Transvaal
Roberts halted in Kroonstad to repair the railway and refit between 12 and 22 May. New horses arrived for French, but a third of them were unfit for action, and French and Hutton were only able to muster 2,330 effectives. French and Hamilton were now sent to threaten Johannesburg from the left.

Roberts entered Johannesburg (31 May) and Pretoria (5 June), although without pressing Botha to a decisive battle in either case. French correctly dismissed talk of victory as premature, and continued to spend much of his time inspecting remounts—the job of Director of Remounts

at Stellenbosch had been given to an incompetent and manic-depressive officer, who eventually shot himself. French played a key role at the victory over Louis Botha at Diamond Hill (11–12 June) in the north-east Transvaal. French, leading one of his own brigades in the usual encircling movement, came under heavy fire—a medical Major was shot at his side—but held his position despite Roberts' permission to withdraw.

In mid-July French operated against de Wet's guerrilla force around Pretoria, although he did not understand that this was an autonomous force, and advised Roberts that the best defence would be to continue to attack Botha's main army. French was then recalled to take part in another attack on Botha's army, but once again Roberts vetoed French's proposal of a deeper encirclement (on the British right this time), allowing Botha's army to escape.
In late July 1900 Reginald Pole-Carew, commander of 11th Division, refused to accept French's orders. French at first asked to be relieved of responsibility for Pole-Carew's sector, but matters were patched up after what French described as a "somewhat stormy" meeting.

Barberton
By August 1900 the Boer forces had been pushed into the northeast Transvaal. French was holding a position beyond Middelburg, maintaining moral ascendancy over the enemy by active probing and patrolling as he had around Colesberg earlier in the year. Roberts' plan was to push slowly eastward along the Delagoa Bay railway connecting Pretoria with the sea, while he ordered French to co-operate with Buller as he marched up from Natal. French wrote (24 August) "We sadly want someone in Chief Command here". Roberts at first refused French permission to concentrate the Cavalry Division for an outflanking move towards Barberton, an important Boer depot, and when he at last gave permission in late August Botha's force had retreated too far to be encircled as French had intended. Barberton is surrounded by 3,000 foot mountains, and French once again made a bold encircling move—first (9 September) south from the railway to Carolina, deceiving the Boer commandos that he intended to move southwest. He then moved back, and personally led his 1st Cavalry Brigade up a bridle path through the mountains ready to attack Barberton from the west. As soon as Henry Jenner Scobell, who had been sent around with two squadrons of the Greys, heliographed that he had cut the railway, French led his men down into the town. Scobell captured £10,000 in gold and notes, while French telegraphed to Roberts: *"Have captured forty engines, seventy wagons of stores, eighty women all in good working order"*. Boer sniping from the hills ceased after French threatened to withdraw his men and shell the town.

The war seemed over as Kruger left the country on 11 September 1900 (he sailed to the Netherlands from Portuguese Lourenço Marques on 19 November 1900). French was promoted from supernumerary to substantive Major General on 9 October 1900, while continuing to hold the local rank of Lieutenant General.

Under Kitchener
Johannesburg Area
French's colonials were sent home and replaced by regular Mounted Infantry. Roberts told French that the Cavalry Division was to be broken up, although he would retain "nominal command", and gave him command of Johannesburg Area. On 17 December 1900 Pieter Hendrik Kritzinger and Herzog invaded Cape Colony, hoping to stir up rebellion among the Cape Boers. Although Kitchener had a paper strength of 200,000 men in early 1901, so many of these were tied down on garrison duty that French had only 22,000 men, of whom 13,000 were combatants, to fight 20,000 Boer guerrillas.

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By April 1901, French's eight columns had captured 1,332 Boers. French was appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB), for his role in the conventional phases of the war (the award was dated 29 November 1900 and gazetted in April 1901, but French did not receive the decoration itself until an audience with King Edward VII at Buckingham Palace on 8 August 1902).

Cape Colony

On 1 June 1901 Kitchener ordered French to take command in Cape Colony. He was ordered to use *"severity"* against captured rebels—this was intended to complement lenient treatment for those who surrendered voluntarily. Milner had already warned French not to treat every Cape Boer as a rebel unless it was proven so. French, who had lost several friends during the war, believed that stern measures would help end matters more quickly. French even forced the inhabitants of Middelburg to watch one hanging, incurring a concerned inquiry from St John Brodrick (Secretary of State for War).

During this period of the war—conducting "drives" across the country for Boer guerrillas, and eventually dividing up the country with barbed wire and imprisoning Boer civilians in camps—French had to struggle with out-of-date information, and trying to maintain communications between British forces by telegraph, heliograph and dispatch rider. Kritzinger was driven out of the Cape in mid-August 1901, and Harry Scobell captured Lotter's commando (5 September 1901). On 7 September Smuts defeated a squadron of Haig's 17th Lancers at Elands River Poort. Gideon Scheepers was captured on 11 October.

Relations with Kitchener

French had a serious personality clash with the ascetic Kitchener, worsened by both men's obstinacy; French would later have a poor relationship with Kitchener during the First World War. Although he had been unimpressed by his handling of Paardeberg, he seems to have broadly welcomed his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, not least because he was not as opposed as Roberts to the *"arme blanche"*. In August 1900 Kitchener praised French to the Duke of York (later George V) and wrote to Roberts that French was *"quite first rate, and has the absolute confidence of all serving under him, as well as mine"*.

Kitchener wrote to Roberts praising French for the capture of Lotter's commando, but by 17 January 1902 he wrote to Roberts *"French has not done much lately in the colony. I cannot make out why, the country is no doubt difficult but I certainly expected more."* After meeting French at Nauuwport Kitchener recorded (14 February 1902) *"he was quite cheerful and happy about progress made, though it appears to me slow"*. Ian Hamilton, now Kitchener's chief of staff, wrote that French was *"very much left to his own devices ... he was one of the few men that Kitchener had trusted to do a job on his own"*.

Kitchener later wrote of French *"his willingness to accept responsibility, and his bold and sanguine disposition have relieved me from many anxieties"*. Kitchener wrote of him to Roberts: *"French is the most thoroughly loyal, energetic soldier I have, and all under him are devoted to him—not because he is lenient, but because they admire his soldier-like qualities"*.

War ends

Roberts (now Commander-in-Chief of the Forces) ordered French to convene a committee to report on cavalry tactics; French accepted that cavalry should fight dismounted with firearms, but that they needed a better sword. French was appointed (23 October 1901) to command 1st Army Corps at Aldershot, in place of the disgraced Buller. French wrote to thank Roberts, to

whose recommendation he guessed – correctly – that he owed the job, but also wrote to Buller, stressing that he had not been offered the position, but had been appointed to it by the King.

The report on cavalry tactics (8 November 1901) demanded an effective rifle for cavalry rather than the existing carbine, but only as a "secondary" weapon. Roberts ordered cavalry to give up their steel weapons for the duration of the campaign, over the protests of French. In early November 1901 French, who was by now reliant on methodical operations and excellent field intelligence, was infuriated by Kitchener's attempt to micromanage operations. In March French had expected the war to drag on until September 1902, but Kritzinger was captured in mid-November. The war ended at the start of June 1902, after over a month of negotiations. French and Lord Kitchener returned to Southampton on 12 July 1902, and received an enthusiastic welcome with thousands of people lining the streets of London for their procession. He was appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (KCMG) in recognition of his services in South Africa, an unusual award for a soldier. He also received honorary degrees from Oxford and Cambridge Universities and the freedom of a number of cities and livery companies.

Edwardian period
Corps Commander, Aldershot
French was promoted to permanent Lieutenant General for distinguished service in the field on 22 August 1902. In September 1902, he accompanied Lord Roberts and St John Brodrick, Secretary of State for War, to Germany to attend the German army manoeuvres as guest of Emperor Wilhelm.
French took office as Commander of 1st Army Corps at Aldershot Command, from 15 September 1902. He attracted the attention of Lord Esher when he testified before the Elgin Commission. Esher reported to the King that he regarded French as the outstanding soldier of his generation, both as a field commander and a thinker. However, Balfour (Prime Minister) blocked French's appointment to the Esher Committee.

French was proposed as a potential Chief of Staff in 1903–04. Esher wrote *"he has never failed"* while Admiral Fisher—who stressed French's excellent record in South Africa, his skill as a judge of men, and his openness to army-navy operations—wrote *"plump for French and efficiency",* although Fisher hoped that French would be an ally in opposing Army plans for deploying an expeditionary force to Europe. French's appointment was—to his relief, as he did not relish having to fight with Arnold-Forsterover his mooted reforms—vetoed by the king, who thought him too junior. Esher pressed Neville Lyttelton, who was appointed instead, to give French as free a hand as possible.

French had been insisting since January 1904 that, irrespective of what reforms the War Secretaries were pushing through, I Corps should be the Army's main strike force with at least one of its divisions kept up to strength for service overseas, and managed to force his view through the Army Council in August 1904. French may have privately shared the doubts which others had about his intellectual capacity, but Esher wrote of him that his grasp of strategy and tactics broadened, and, although naturally gregarious, he became more aloof and solitary as he prepared himself for high command. In 1904 French urged the adoption of the 18 pounder field gun on Esher. He also recognised the importance of howitzers. At the 1904 Manoeuvres French commanded an "invasion force" which advanced inland from Clacton—many horses and supplies were lost, which apparently persuaded French that an enemy would find it hard to invade Britain successfully. In October 1904 French won Fisher's approval with a paper on the strategic importance of the Dardanelles.

French threatened resignation unless his aide de camp Major Algy Lawson, who had not attended Staff College, was appointed Brigade-Major of the 1st Cavalry Brigade. He suspected a War Office plot led by the rising staff officers Henry Rawlinson and Henry Wilson, whom at this stage he distrusted. Despite being advised by Esher that this was not a sufficiently serious matter to justify such obstinacy, French got his way (December 1904) by threatening to appeal to the King. He also got his way over a similar matter involving Esher's son Lt Maurice Brett, who served as French's ADC, and on this occasion did approach the King's secretary (February 1905).

French was given General Officer Commanding-in-Chief status at Aldershot on 1 June 1905. He was on the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1905, possibly because of his willingness to consider amphibious operations including at various times, in the Baltic and on the Belgian Coast. Philpott discusses French's significant influence on pre-war strategic planning. He Generally confined his advice to practical questions such as the difficulties of keeping horses at sea for long periods. French had a poor regard for staff officers and had poor relations with the General staff. At one meeting of the CID he became speechless with rage while listening to Lyttelton proposing that Egypt could be defended by warships in the Suez Canal.

On 19 December 1905 and 6 January 1906, as a result of the First Moroccan Crisis, French was one of a four-man committee convened by Esher to discuss war planning: the options were purely naval operations, an amphibious landing in the Baltic, or a deployment of an expeditionary force to France. At the second meeting French presented a plan for deployment to France or Belgium ten days after mobilisation, possibly mobilising on French territory to save time. Although French helped to draw up deployment plans as asked, it is not entirely clear from the surviving documents that he wholeheartedly supported such a commitment to France ("WF"—"With France"—as this scheme was known) until he was eventually persuaded by Henry Wilson, and he did not entirely rule out an amphibious landing in the Baltic. He also maintained an interest in a possible deployment to Antwerp.

French generally had good relation with Haldane, the new Secretary of State for War, but lobbied him against cutting two Guards battalions (the Liberals had been elected on a platform of retrenchment). In February 1906 French told Major General Grierson (Director of Military Operations) that he was to be Commander-in-Chief of the BEF during the next war, with Grierson as his chief of staff. He had meetings with Grierson throughout March until the Moroccan crisis was resolved. French told the Daily Mail (12 May 1906) that a force of trained volunteers would deter an enemy invasion. In June 1906 French still believed that another war scare might come soon, and in July he attended French Army manoeuvres in Champagne, by which he was impressed, although he was less impressed by the Belgian Army. On this trip he was accused of giving unauthorised interviews to the French press, after uttering what Grierson called "a few platitudes" to the Figaro correspondent.

Haldane confirmed to Esher (26 September 1906) that French was to be Commander-in-Chief of the BEF during the next war. He visited France unofficially in November 1906 in an attempt to improve his French, although he never became fluent in the language. A Special Army Order of 1 January 1907 laid down that in the event of war Britain would send an Expeditionary force of six infantry and one cavalry division to assist the French. French was promoted to full General on 12 February 1907. In the summer of 1907 he entertained General Victor Michel, French Commander-in-Chief designate, at Aldershot to observe British manoeuvres.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Cavalry controversy

French testified to the Elgin Commission that cavalry should be trained to shoot but that the sword and lance should remain their main weapons. Hutton wrote to French that cavalry should retain some shock capacity but that the real issue was recruiting "professional" officers in place of the present aristocratic ones. French strongly disagreed, although he remained on friendly terms with Hutton and recognised that the expense of being a cavalry officer deterred many able young men. The Adjutant-General's memorandum (10 March 1903) recommended the retention of the sword but not the lance. Haig's heavily traditional "Cavalry Training" appeared in 1904, leaning heavily on the 1898 Cavalry Drill Book which he had helped French to write, although with a "reforming" preface by Roberts.

In response to a request from Arnold-Forster, French submitted a memorandum (7 March 1904) arguing that cavalry still needed to fight the old-fashioned way as a European War would begin with a "great cavalry battle". He also sent a copy to the King. In response to Roberts' claim that he wanted to give cavalry the ability to act independently, French wrote in the margin that the campaigns of early 1900 had seen cavalry acting independently, although he replied politely that their differences were not as great as Roberts seemed to think. Roberts had the support of Kitchener (who thought cavalry should be able to seize and hold positions, but not to roam about the battlefield looking for enemy cavalry), but he was away as Commander-in-Chief, India. French's memorandum was supported by Baden-Powell (Inspector-General of Cavalry), Sir Francis Grenfell (who commented that he had not spoken to any junior officer who agreed with Roberts) and by Evelyn Wood. In February 1905, after Roberts' removal as Commander-in-Chief, the Army Council authorised the publication of Haig's "Cavalry Training" but without Roberts' preface, although the lance was declared abolished as a weapon of war—a decision ignored by French, who allowed his lancer regiments at Aldershot to carry the lance in field training.

The first edition of the Cavalry Journal appeared in 1906, promoted by C. S. Goldman, an admirer of French. It was put on an official basis in 1911. Lieutenant General Friedrich von Bernhardi's Cavalry in Future Wars was published in 1906, with a preface by French, repeating his arguments that cold steel gave the cavalry moral superiority, and that the next war would see an opening clash of cavalry. French also claimed that Russian cavalry in the Russo-Japanese War had come off worse as they were too willing to fight dismounted—this was the opposite of the truth. The new edition of Cavalry Training in 1907 reaffirmed that cold steel was the main weapon of the cavalry. However, at the end of the 1908 Manoeuvres, French criticised cavalry's poor dismounted work, and—to Haig's annoyance—declared that the rifle was cavalry's main weapon. He also noted that infantry lacked a doctrine for the final stages of their attack, as they closed with the enemy—something which was to prove a problem in the middle years of the Great War. The lance was formally reinstated in June 1909. However, in his 1909 Inspection Report French again criticised cavalry's poor dismounted work.

Although French believed that the "cavalry spirit" gave them an edge in action, his tendency to identify with his subordinates—in this case the cavalry, whose identity seemed under threat—and to take disagreements personally caused him to be seen as more of a reactionary than was in fact the case. In the event, cavalry would fight successfully in 1914: the "cavalry spirit" helped them to perform well on the Retreat From Mons, while they were still capable of fighting effectively on foot at First Ypres.

There was General agreement that the greater size of battlefields would increase the importance of cavalry. The publication of Erskine Childers' War and the Arme Blanche (1910) with a

preface by Roberts went some way to reinstating the reformers' case. Childers argued that there had been only four real cavalry charges in South Africa, inflicting at most 100 casualties by cold steel, but acknowledged that French, *"our ablest cavalry officer",* disagreed with him. However, in September 1913 the Army Council decreed that Mounted Infantry would not be used in future wars and the two existing Mounted Infantry brigades were broken up.

Inspector-General of the Army

After extensive lobbying by Esher, and with the King's support, French was selected as Inspector-General of the Army in November 1907. Irish MP Moreton Frewen demanded – apparently in vain – a Court of Inquiry into French's dismissal of his brother Stephen Frewen from command of the 16th Lancers during the Boer War, pointing out to Haldane that French was *"an adulterer convicted in a court of law".* French was also appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order in 1907.

French openly opposed conscription. He was generally supportive of the new Territorial Army, although he had some doubts about the effectiveness of Territorial Artillery. In 1907–08 he sat on a CID committee to consider the risk of German invasion—it was decided to retain two divisions at home as a deterrent to invasion, until the Territorial Force was ready. At the August 1908 manoeuvres, French's poor report ended the military career of Harry Scobell, who commanded the Cavalry Division on the exercise, despite being well connected, a personal friend of French, and a successful commander from the South African campaigns. French's reports showed great interest in trenches, machine guns and artillery. He also believed strongly that peacetime drill was necessary to prepare men for combat discipline. In the winter of 1908–09 French served on the "Military Needs of the Empire" sub-committee of the CID, which reaffirmed the commitment to France in the event of war. He was advanced to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath in 1909. French courted unpopularity with some infantry officers by urging a doubling in the size of infantry companies. In the winter of 1909–10 he toured British troops in the Far East, and in the summer of 1910, he inspected the Canadian Militia.

This period also saw the beginning of the feud between French and Smith-Dorrien, his successor at Aldershot. Smith-Dorrien annoyed French by insisting that cavalry improve their musketry, abolishing the pickets which trawled the streets for drunken soldiers, more than doubling the number of playing fields available, cutting down trees, and building new and better barracks. By 1910 the feud was common knowledge throughout the Army. Smith-Dorrien also objected to French's womanising.

French was made an Aide-de-Camp General to the King on 19 June 1911. The Second Moroccan Crisis was occasion for French to push again for greater Army-Navy co-operation. On 23 August Henry Wilson carried a CID meeting with a lucid presentation of the Army's plans for deployment to France; Admiral Wilson's plans to land on the Baltic Coast were rejected. French spoke to the Navy Club that year on the need for co-operation. The autumn 1911 manoeuvres were cancelled, supposedly because of shortage of water but in reality, because of the war scare. French accompanied Grierson and the French military attaché Victor Huguet to France for talks with de Castelnau, Assistant Chief of the French General Staff. On the journey, French talked of how Douglas and Paget would command armies under him in the event of war. Plans for British deployment were especially welcome as French war plans were in a state of flux, with Joffre having been appointed Commander-in-Chief designate on 28 July. After his return from France in 1911 French inspected German cavalry manoeuvres in Mecklenburg, and was summoned from his bath to receive the Order of the Red Eagle. On

presenting him with a signed photograph of himself the Kaiser told him: *"You may have seen just how long my sword is: you may find it just as sharp".*

In January 1912 French attended the annual staff conference at Staff College, and was impressed by the quality of the discussion. However, he lectured staff officers that they should not consider themselves the superiors of regimental officers, but that their job was to provide the commander with impartial advice and then endeavour to carry out his wishes.

Chief of the Imperial General Staff

He became Chief of the Imperial General Staff ("CIGS"—professional head of the Army) on 15 March 1912 although he neither had staff experience nor had studied at Staff College. On his first day, he told his three directors (Wilson—Director of Military Operations, Murray—Director of Military Training and Kiggell—Director of Staff Duties) that he intended to get the Army ready for war. French was receptive to Wilson's wishes to explore co-operation with Belgium. French had initially been suspicious of Wilson as a Roberts protégé, but in 1906 had supported Wilson's candidacy for Commandant of Staff College. By 1912 Wilson had become French's most trusted adviser. On 8 November 1912, with the First Balkan War causing another war scare, Wilson helped French draw up a list of key officers for the Expeditionary Force: Haig and Smith-Dorrien were to command "armies", Allenby the cavalry division, and Grierson was to be chief of staff.

In February 1913 Repington wrote a series of articles in The Times demanding conscription for home defence. The Prime Minister led the CID "Invasion Inquiry", on which French sat. The conclusions, which were not reached until early 1914, were that two divisions should be retained at home, reducing the size of the BEF. (French and Roberts had agreed with one another that one division would have sufficed.)

In April 1913, French told Wilson that he expected to serve as CIGS (extending his term by two years) until 1918, and to be succeeded by Murray. He was promoted to Field Marshal on 3 June 1913.

French's efforts "to get the Army ready for war" were hampered by budgetary constraints, and he was unsuited by temperament or experience for the job. French caused controversy by passing over four Generals for promotion in the autumn of 1913, and angered some infantry officers by forcing through the changes to infantry battalions so that they comprised four large companies commanded by Majors rather than eight small companies commanded by Captains. French lobbied Seely for an increase in pay and allowances for officers, to widen the social base from which officers were recruited—this was enacted from 1 January 1914.

In the summer of 1913 French, accompanied by Grierson and Wilson, again visited French manoeuvres in Champagne. After the September 1913 Manoeuvres Repington wrote in The Times that French had found it difficult to defeat even a skeleton army. Since 1904 French himself had to act as Director of the Annual Manoeuvres, so that although other officers had the chance to learn to handle divisions, he himself had little chance to learn to handle a force of several divisions. This lack of training may well have been factor in his poor performance in August 1914. The BEF senior officers (French, Haig, Wilson, Grierson and Paget who had replaced Smith-Dorrien by then) met to discuss strategy on 17 November 1913. In his diary Wilson praised "Johnnie French" for "hitting out" at the Royal Navy over their poor transport arrangements, but recorded his concerns at French's lack of intellect and hoped there would not be a war just yet.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Curragh incident

With Irish Home Rule about to become law in 1914, the Cabinet were contemplating military action against the Ulster Volunteers (UVF) who wanted no part of it, and who were seen by many officers as loyal British subjects. In response to the King's request for his views, French wrote that the army would obey *"the absolute commands of the King",* but he warned that some might think *"that they were best serving their King and country either by refusing to march against the Ulstermen or by openly joining their ranks".*

With political negotiations deadlocked and intelligence reports that the Ulster Volunteers (now 100,000 strong) might be about to seize the ammunition at Carrickfergus Castle, French only agreed to summon Paget (Commander-in-Chief, Ireland) to London to discuss planned troop movements when Seely (Secretary of State for War) repeatedly assured him of the accuracy of intelligence that UVF might march on Dublin. French did not oppose the deployment of troops in principle but told Wilson that the government were *"scattering troops all over Ulster as if it were a Pontypool coal strike".* On 19 March French was summoned to an emergency meeting at 10 Downing Street with Asquith, Seely, Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty), Birrell (Chief Secretary for Ireland) and Paget, where he was told that Carson, who had stormed out of a Commons debate, was expected to declare a provisional government in Ulster. French was persuaded by Asquith to send infantry to defend the artillery at Dundalk, and by Seely that a unionist coup was imminent in Ulster.

The result was the Curragh incident, in which Hubert Gough and other of Paget's officers threatened to resign rather than coerce Ulster. French, advised by Haldane (Lord Chancellor) told the King on 22 March that he would resign unless Gough, who had confirmed that he would have obeyed a direct order to move against Ulster, was reinstated. French suggested to Seely that a written document from the Army Council might help to convince Gough's officers. The Cabinet text stated that the Army Council were satisfied that the incident had been a misunderstanding, and that it was *"the duty of all soldiers to obey lawful commands",* to which Seely added two paragraphs, stating that the Government had the right to use *"the forces of the Crown"* in Ireland or elsewhere, but had no intention of using force *"to crush opposition to the Home Rule Bill".* Gough insisted on adding a further paragraph clarifying that the Army would not be used to enforce Home Rule "on Ulster", to which French added in writing *"This is how I read it. JF CIGS".*

Asquith publicly repudiated the *"peccant paragraphs".* Wilson, who hoped to bring down the government, advised French to resign, as an officer could not be seen to break his word, even at the behest of politicians. Asquith at first wanted French to stay on as he had been *"so loyal and well-behaved",* but then changed his mind despite French drawing up two statements with Haldane, claiming that he had been acting in accordance with Haldane's statement in the House of Lords on 23 March. Seely also had to resign. French resigned on 6 April 1914.

French had been made to look naive and overly friendly to the Liberal government. Most officers were Conservative and Ulster Unionist sympathisers, but, with a few exceptions, took pride in their loyalty to the King and professed contempt for party politics. French for his part blamed Roberts for stirring up the Incident. After 1918 French became a Home Ruler, but at this stage he simply thought his duty to be ensuring that the Army obeyed the government's orders.

French told Wilson that Asquith had promised him command of the BEF in the event of war, although nobody realised how quickly this would come. Margot Asquith wrote that he would soon be "coming back", suggesting that Asquith may have promised to appoint French Inspector-General. Churchill described him as "a broken-hearted man" when he joined the trial

mobilisation of the fleet in mid-July. French was still seen as a potential Commander-in-Chief of the BEF, although even in early August French himself was uncertain that he would be appointed.

Commander-in-Chief, BEF
1914: BEF goes to war
The "Precautionary Period" for British mobilisation began on 29 July. French was summoned by Sir Charles Douglas (CIGS) and told he would command the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). British mobilisation began at 4pm on 4 August, and Britain joined the war at midnight.

French attended the War Council at 10 Downing Street (5 August), and there presented the War Office plans (drawn up by Wilson) to send the BEF to Maubeuge, although he also suggested that as British mobilisation was lagging behind France's it might be safer to send the BEF to Amiens. French also suggested that the BEF might operate from Antwerp against the German right flank, reflecting French's reluctant acceptance of the continental commitment. This suggestion was dropped when Churchill said the Royal Navy could not guarantee safe passage. Kitchener, believing the war would be long, decided at Cabinet that the BEF would consist of only 4 infantry divisions (and 1 cavalry); French, believing the war would be short, demanded 5 infantry divisions but was overruled. Embarkation began on 9 August.
On 12 August, French, Murray, Wilson and the French liaison officer Victor Huguet met at French's house and agreed to concentrate at Maubeuge, and after another meeting with Kitchener (who had had an argument with Wilson on 9 August—given Wilson's influence over French, this served to worsen relations between French and Kitchener), who still preferred to concentrate further back at Amiens, they left to obtain the Prime Minister's agreement.
French crossed to France on 14 August. President Poincaré, meeting French on 15 August, commented on his *"quiet manner ... not very military in appearance"*. French told Poincare that he would not be ready until 24 August, not 20 August as planned. French also met Messimy (French War Minister) and Joffre. Sir John's orders from Kitchener were to co-operate with the French but not to take orders from them, and given that the tiny BEF (about 100,000 men, half of them regulars and half reservists) was Britain's only army, to avoid undue losses and being exposed to *"forward movements where large numbers of French troops are not engaged"* until Kitchener had had a chance to discuss the matter with the Cabinet.

Mons
Despite the events of the previous evening, French had—perhaps under the influence of Henry Wilson—reverted to the belief that an advance might again be possible soon. French's and Smith-Dorrien's accounts differ about the conference at 5.30 am on 23 August. French's account in his memoirs '1914',stated that he had become doubtful of the advance and warned his officers to be ready to attack or retreat, which agrees largely with his own diary at the time, in which he wrote that he had warned Smith-Dorrien that the Mons position might not be tenable. When 1914 was published, Smith-Dorrien claimed that French had been *"in excellent form"* and had still been planning to advance. However, in his own memoirs, Smith-Dorrien admitted that French had talked of either attacking or retreating, although he claimed that it had been he who had warned that the Mons position was untenable. Edmonds in the Official History agreed that French had probably been prepared either to attack or to retreat.

French at first believed that the German attacks at Mons were merely trying to *"feel"* the British position and drove off to Valenciennes to inspect a French brigade. On his return he sent a letter to Lanrezac in which he talked of resuming the attack the following day. Wilson had "calculated" that the BEF was faced only by one German corps and a cavalry division, and was

allowed to draw up orders for an attack the next day. Although Macdonogh warned that the BEF was faced by at least two German corps, French did not cancel the planned advance until a message from Joffre (7 pm) warned that he was faced by at least three German corps, although he still ordered Smith-Dorrien to try to hold his ground. At midnight Spears arrived with the news, which disgusted Sir John, that Lanrezac was falling back, and the French Third and Fourth Armies were also falling back after being defeated at Virton and Neufchateau. Murray summoned the Corps Chiefs of Staff at around 1 am on 24 August and ordered them to retreat. Even after Mons, French still thought that a deeper Allied thrust into Belgium would have disrupted the German advance.

Von Kluck sent von der Marwitz's II Cavalry Corps (3 cavalry divisions) around the British west flank to prevent a British retreat on the Channel ports. Sir John French sent a message (24 August), with an unmistakable tone of pique, to Lanrezac, which Spears insisted on writing down, warning that the BEF might have to retreat southwest towards Amiens on its lines of communication, although it is unclear that this would actually have been practicable if the Germans had actually been moving in force around the British left flank. However, Sir John agreed to Joffre's request that the BEF, now numbering 5 divisions as it had been joined by the 4th Infantry Division, would instead fall back on Cambrai if it had to, so that the BEF could still protect the French left flank. Joffre also sent a further two French reserve divisions to the British left flank, the beginning of the redeployment of French forces which would see Maunoury's Sixth Army form around Amiens and then fight near Paris. French considered, but rejected, the option of sheltering the BEF in the fortified town of Maubeuge, partly out of instinct that the Germans were hoping to tempt him into allowing himself to be besieged there and partly because he remembered that Edward Hamley had likened Bazaine allowing himself to be besieged in Metz in 1870 to a shipwrecked man taking hold of the anchor. French himself issued no direct written orders between 11.15 pm on 21 August and 8.25 pm on 24 August; Terraine argued that this, along with his absence during the battle of Mons (although on the German side von Kluck also played little direct role in the battle), marks the point when he and GHQ began to disengage from active command of the BEF, leaving Smith-Dorrien and Haig in effective control of their corps.

1914: Retreat to the Marne

Le Cateau

GHQ moved back from Le Cateau to St Quentin on 25 August. French had a long discussion with Murray and Wilson (25 August) as to whether the BEF should stand and fight at Le Cateau. Wilson and Murray were concerned about the risk of encirclement from the left. Sir John did not agree but wanted to fall back as agreed with Joffre, and hoped that the BEF could pull out and refit behind the River Oise. Besides concern for his men, he was also worried that he was exposing his small force to the risk of destruction which Kitchener had forbidden. Wilson ordered Smith-Dorrien to retreat from Le Cateau the next day.

French was awakened at 2 am on 26 August with news that Haig's I Corps was under attack at Landrecies, and ordered Smith-Dorrien to assist him. Smith-Dorrien replied that he was *"unable to move a man"*. French was woken again at 5 am with the news that Smith-Dorrien had decided to stand and fight at Le Cateau. Insisting that the exhausted Murray not be woken, French telegraphed back that he still wanted Smith-Dorrien to *"make every endeavour"* to fall back but that he had *"a free hand as to the method",* which Smith-Dorrien took as permission to make a stand. On waking properly, French ordered Wilson to telephone Smith-Dorrien and order him to break off as soon as possible.

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French and his staff believed that the Cavalry Division had been completely destroyed at Le Cateau (it had in fact suffered no more than 15 casualties) and that 5th Division had lost nearly all its guns, destroying II Corps as a fighting unit (in fact units reassembled after the retreat). French later told Haig that he should have had Smith-Dorrien court-martialled after Le Cateau. In his memoirs French later claimed that Smith-Dorrien had risked destruction of his corps and lost 14,000 men and 80 guns (actual losses of each were around half of this number). However, it has also been argued that the vigorous defensive action at Le Cateau relieved the pressure and allowed the troops to re-organise and make a fighting withdrawal.

On the morning of 26 August, while the Battle of Le Cateau was in progress, Sir John had a hostile meeting with Joffre and Lanrezac at St Quentin. This meeting, held at Joffre's insistence, was the second and last time Sir John met Lanrezac, who attended only reluctantly. He complained of Lanrezac's behaviour, to which Lanrezac *"merely shrugged"* and gave a vague and academic reply. Joffre talked of his Instruction Generale No 2 which talked of a new French Sixth Army forming around Amiens, but although this had been received by GHQ during the night French had not been shown it. French insisted that he must retreat further, although he agreed to press Kitchener to send the remaining British division bringing the BEF up to six infantry divisions, to France rather than to Belgium. Joffre stayed for lunch (Lanrezac declined to do so), at which the atmosphere improved as he confessed that he too was dissatisfied with Lanzerac. Joffre und at the *"rather excited tone"* in which Sir John criticised Lanrezac, unlike his calm demeanour of a few days' earlier, and came away deeply concerned at the obvious personal friction between French and Lanrezac, but also at Sir John's reluctance to stand and fight.

Retreat

GHQ fell back to Noyon (26 August). Huguet reported to Joffre that the British had been defeated at Le Cateau and would need French protection to recover cohesion; he also reported that although the BEF's fighting spirit was undaunted, the British Government might order the BEF to retreat to Le Havre. Colonel Brecard, another liaison officer attached to the British staff, reported that two out of the five British divisions were destroyed and that, in Wilson's view, the BEF would need a week to refit. Sir John warned Huguet that there would be *"bitterness and regret"* in England over British losses, and Joffre, who had decided to order an attack by Fifth Army to take the pressure off the BEF, visited Sir John at Noyon on 27 August and gave him a message congratulating the BEF for its efforts protecting Fifth Army's flank. In fact, Smith-Dorrien's staff were making intense efforts to hold II Corps together, although at a meeting (held at 2 am on 27 August, as Smith-Dorrien had found GHQ's present location with great difficulty) French accused him of being overly optimistic. GHQ moved back to Compiegne on 28 August, although Sir John was able to visit his troops on the march for the first time since 25 August, telling men who were resting on the ground of Joffre's message.

French refused Haig permission to join in an attack by Lanrezac, who wrote of French's *"bad humour and cowardice".* Even Spears felt Sir John was in the wrong here. The BEF also did not join in Lanrezac's attack on German Second Army at Guise (29 August). Joffre, who had spent the morning with Lanrezac, was concerned by rumours that the BEF might retreat towards the Channel Ports. He visited French in the afternoon, urging him to hold his place in the line promising that Russian successes would soon allow the Allies to attack. However, French insisted that his forces needed 48 hours of absolute rest, and Murray, whom Joffre noticed had been tugging at French's tunic throughout this, then showed an intelligence report of the strength of the German forces facing the BEF. After Joffre had departed in bad humour,

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French received an incorrect report that Fifth Army was falling back behind the Oise, and issued orders for the BEF to fall back to Rethondes-Soissons; when he received fresh reports that the French were holding their positions after all he replied that it was too late to cancel his orders. Sir John's opinion of Lanrezac was so low that he did not believe reports of his success at Guise (29 August) until he had sent Seely to interview the French corps commanders.

French returned to England to be appointed Commander-in-Chief of the British Home Forces in December 1915, and in January 1916, he was created Viscount French of Ypres and of High Lake in the County of Roscommon. Robertson prevented him having the same powers as the old Commander-in-Chief of the British Army or having a seat on the Army Council.

Despite estimates that the Germans could land up to 170,000 men, French thought an invasion unlikely unless the Germans had first won on the Western Front. He was energetic about inspecting defences, and appealed to Asquith to obtain the services of Arthur Paget and Bruce Hamilton.

French became increasingly critical of Haig's Western Front Offensives, particularly the choice of Rawlinson to command the Somme. In August 1916 Robertson warned Haig that "Winston, French and various *'degommed people' are trying to make mischief*".

In October 1916, Lloyd George (then War Secretary) sought French's advice about recent press criticism of British artillery and discipline, then sent him to France to sound out the opinion of the French Generals about why the French had gained ground with fewer losses on the Somme. Foch (C-in-C French Army Group North) confessed to Wilson that Haig's methods invited criticism, and Haig refused to meet him. Haig and Robertson were both concerned that Lloyd George might appoint French CIGS in Robertson's place. On 25 November 1916 the King summoned French to Buckingham Palace and warned him to stop criticising Haig. In January 1917 French refused an invitation from Derby to dine with Haig, but on 22 June, after pressure from the King, a meeting was arranged for French and Haig to bury the hatchet, at which, by Haig's account, French confessed that in his bitterness at being removed from command he had *"said things then which he was ashamed of now"*. Haig, according to his own diary, congratulated him for *"speaking out like a man"* and they shook hands as they parted, but their rapprochement was short-lived.

In July 1917, French asked to advise the War Cabinet, aware that this was breaking the monopoly of advice on which Robertson insisted. On 11 October 1917, French and Wilson were invited to the War Cabinet. French's paper criticised GHQ's inflated estimates of German casualties compared to War Office figures, pointed out that there was no firm evidence that German losses were commensurate with Allied, and that any further Western Front Offensive *"has become more of a 'gamble' than anything else we have undertaken"* and that any future plans and forecasts by Haig should be most carefully examined. He recommended the "Petain solution" (i.e. standing mainly on the defensive on the Western Front until the Americans arrived in force) and urged the creation of an Allied Supreme War Council.

Hankey met French and Wilson on 24 October and urged them to reconsider, concerned that if Robertson resigned the Conservatives might bring down the government. French refused, saying Haig was *"always making the same mistake"* and *"we shall do no good until we break down the Haig-Robertson ring"*. Hankey thought that "there was envy, hatred and malice in the old boy's heart as he spoke". Haig regarded French's paper as *"the outcome of a jealous and disappointed mind"*.

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Lord Lieutenant of Ireland
1918

French noted that Irish divisions could no longer be kept up to strength by voluntary recruitment. In March 1918, when the Cabinet planned to extend conscription to Ireland, French claimed that *"opinion was about evenly divided"* on the issue, and thought it would cause opposition but not *"bloodshed"*. In the event the threat of Irish conscription provoked great opposition and contributed to the growth in support for Sinn Féin.
Lloyd George intended to replace the Lord Lieutenant—normally something of a figurehead position—with three "Justices": James Campbell, Midleton and French himself. The three met on 30 April 1918 and jointly demanded immediate conscription and martial law in Ireland. When Lloyd George refused, Campbell declined any further involvement; Lloyd George also dropped Midleton when the latter demanded the right to "advise on policy". French eventually accepted appointment as sole Lord Lieutenant in May 1918 on condition it was as a *"Military Viceroy at the Head of a Quasi-Military Government"*. French also arranged for Shaw, his chief of staff at Horse Guards, to replace Mahon as Commander-in-Chief, Ireland and that Irish Command should become a separate command, rather than under Home Forces.

French also set up an Executive Council and a Military Council to which senior officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP) were sometimes invited. He also set up an Advisory Council, with the support of the King, Haldane and Carson, which he hoped might contain representatives of all strands of Irish opinion but in practice its members were all well-connected wealthy men. Sinn Féin were not involved despite Haldane's hopes and the proposal angered the existing administrators at Dublin Castle. The body provided useful advice on commercial and industrial questions, and advised that Home Rule could work as a federation of separate assemblies in Belfast and Dublin (also French's view), but ceased to meet regularly after April 1919.

French was convinced that the Sinn Féin leaders had little support amongst the majority of the Irish people. He wanted Home Rule to be implemented, provided the violence was stopped first. In 1917 he had bought a country house at Drumdoe in Frenchpark, County Roscommon, but in practice was seldom able to visit the place as the situation in Ireland deteriorated.

On the night of 17/18 May 1918 French had Sinn Féin leaders arrested and documents were seized, but even supporters like Repington and Macready were disappointed at the lack of clear evidence of collaboration with the Germans and the flimsy legal grounds for the arrests, which caused endless legal wrangles. Michael Collins and Cathal Brugha escaped arrest and increased their own power in the vacuum created by the arrest of more moderate leaders.

The Irish Volunteers and Sinn Féin were proclaimed "dangerous organisations" in certain areas. French obtained a cash bonus for Irish policemen, and pressed for them to receive decorations. He also came down hard on senior Irish police officers whom he thought useless, threatening resignation unless the Inspector-General of the RIC, Brigadier Joseph Byrne, was removed.

French, who like many Generals of his generation believed that the government owed a moral duty to those who had served, urged that a *"Comrades of the Great War (Ireland)"* be set up to prevent returning Irish war veterans joining the Sinn Féin-dominated *"Soldiers' Federation";* he also recommended that soldiers be given cash and land grants, perhaps in *"Soldiers' Colonies"*. This plan was stymied by cash shortage and inter-departmental infighting.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

French clashed with the Chief Secretary Edward Shortt over his insistence that he exercise executive authority in Dublin, and when Lloyd George formed a new government in January 1919 Shortt was replaced by the more pliable Ian Macpherson. French was appointed to the British Cabinet.

French secured the appointment of Sir James Macmahon as Under-Secretary at Dublin Castle. Macmahon was Catholic, which caused Walter Long and to some extent, French himself concerns that this would increase the power of the Church hierarchy over Irish government. In practice Macmahon was frozen out of decision-making by Macpherson while French was ill with pneumonia between February and April 1919, and despite warnings from French of administrative chaos at Dublin Castle it was not until 1920 that the highly able John Anderson was appointed as Joint Under-Secretary with Macmahon.
The shooting deaths of two Catholic constables of the RIC in an ambush at Soloheadbeg, County Tipperary (21 January 1919) caused French to call off tentative talks between Haldane and the recently elected Irish Dáil.

French and Macpherson wanted Sinn Féin declared illegal and pressed for a free hand to deal with the militants, although the issue received little priority while Lloyd George was at Versailles in the first half of 1919. Sinn Féin was declared illegal on 5 July 1919 after District Inspector Hunt was killed in broad daylight, in Thurles (23 June). By October 1919 French was urging martial law. By December he was furious at the government's lack of support and their insistence that the RIC buy army surplus vehicles on the open market instead of simply being given them.
Shaw was sceptical about the legality of martial law and thought it might be impractical in cities like Dublin and Cork. French was advised that 15 army battalions and 24 cycle units (half a battalion in size) were needed to keep order, but British strength did not reach these levels until the summer of 1920. In November 1919, Irish Command listed its minimum requirement as 25,000 "bayonet strength"—at the time there were just over 37,000 troops in Ireland, many of them non-combatants. Even in January 1920 only 34 battalions were available, rather than the 36 required. British military strength in Ireland reached 51 battalions during the martial law period early in 1921.

IRA intimidation caused traditional RIC sources of information to dry up. By late 1919, with French's approval, the RIC was recruiting in England: first the "Black and Tans", then the Auxiliary Division (ex-army officers with the powers of police sergeants) from July 1920. French had been receiving death threats since January 1919, which he believed were a sign that government measures were having an effect. On 19 December 1919 a group of eleven IRA men, including Seán Treacy, Seamus Robinson, Seán Hogan, Paddy Daly, Joe Leonard, Martin Savage and Dan Breen, sought to ambush and kill French as he returned from Ashtown railway station to the Vice-Regal Lodge in Phoenix Park, Dublin. Savage, Kehoe and Breen were interrupted by a RIC officer as they pushed a hay-cart halfway across the road blocking the path of French's car. He was dragged off the road after one of them lobbed a grenade at him, which did not go off but knocked him unconscious. When French's car convoy appeared minutes later the IRA unit focused their attack upon the second car on the basis of incorrect intelligence: French was actually in the first car. In the ensuing crossfire, Breen was hit in the leg and Savage was killed by a bullet in the neck. French's bodyguard was wounded, and he was saved in part by the quick thinking of his driver. A grenade, which would almost certainly have killed him, exploded in the back seat of the second car.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

The Cabinet agreed that the Irish Government could impose martial law whenever it pleased, although in the event this did not happen for almost another year, by which time executive authority had been returned to London. Suspects could now be interned under Defence of the Realm Act 1914 s.14B on warrants signed by the Chief Secretary and French pressed Macpherson, who had been shocked by the attempted assassination, to intern as many as possible, although he advised against interning politicians like Arthur Griffith *"simply for making seditious speeches".*

Final period

Political support from London for internment wavered. French opposed the release of hunger strikers under the "Cat and Mouse" Act and wanted them simply left to die, but in April 1920, under pressure from London, they were paroled.

French lost a good deal of executive power as substantial control over Irish affairs was given back to a new Chief Secretary, Hamar Greenwood, in April 1920. French again urged the introduction of martial law in Ireland and the use of Ulster Volunteers as peacekeepers in Southern Ireland. Wilson and Macready expected French to be sacked in the spring of 1920. Wilson wrote: *"Poor little man he is so weak and pliable and then has such inconsequential gusts of illogical passion".*

French had supported the use of armoured cars and aircraft in Ireland. By June 1920 the military situation had escalated considerably and French suggested that they should be permitted to strafe and bomb freely into areas from which civilians had been removed.
French resigned as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on 30 April 1921 and was replaced by Lord Edmund Talbot, a Catholic.

French retired from the British Army in April 1921 and was elevated to the Earldom of Ypres in June 1922.

Drumdoe was looted early in 1923, for which French received an apology and a promise of an armed guard for the place from Governor-General T. M. Healy. Despite a gift of £50,000 in 1916, and receiving Field Marshal's half pay, owning two properties in Ireland which he could not use left French again short of money, although he did not improve matters by staying often at the Hôtel de Crillon in Paris. He left £8,450 (net total) in his will.

French lived at 94 Lancaster Gate, London, which provided a useful base for his amorous activities, on which he often embarked together with a wealthy American friend, George Moore. In August 1923 Lord Beauchamp offered him the honorary post of Captain of Deal Castle, which gave him a home in Britain once again.

Death

French died from bladder cancer at Deal Castle on 22 May 1925. On 25 May, his body was taken by motor hearse to London for cremation at Golders Green Crematorium. The ashes remained overnight in the Guards' Chapel, Wellington Barracks, until the funeral service at Westminster Abbey in the evening of 26 May. After the service, the ashes were escorted by a military procession to Victoria Station.
The procedure of burying ashes in an urn was still unfamiliar at the time, and it was transported in a coffin during the funeral ceremonies. An estimated 7,000 people filed past the coffin during the first two hours it lay in state. Haig, Robertson, Hamilton and Smith-Dorrien were pall bearers at the funeral at Westminster Abbey – the first of a Major First World War leader. The

ashes were buried in a private service in the graveyard of St. Mary the Virgin Church at Ripple, Kent, five days after his death.

Field Marshal Sir William Robertson

Field Marshal Sir William Robert Robertson, 1st Baronet, GCB GCMG GCVO DSO (29 January 1860 – 12 February 1933) was a British Army officer who served as Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) – the professional head of the British Army – from 1916 to 1918 during the First World War.

Robertson was born in Welbourn, Lincolnshire, to Thomas Charles Robertson, a tailor and postmaster, and Ann Dexter Robertson (née Beet). He was educated at the local church school and later earned 6d a week as a pupil-teacher. After leaving school in 1873, he became a garden boy in the village rectory, then in 1875 a footman in the Countess of Cardigan's household at Deene Park.

He began his military career in November 1877 by enlisting for twelve years as a trooper in the 16th (The Queen's) Lancers. As he was three months short of the official minimum age of eighteen, at the behest of the recruiting sergeant he declared his age as eighteen years and two months, these extra five months becoming his "official" age throughout his time in the Army. His mother wrote to him:
You know you are the Great Hope of the Family...if you do not like Service you can do something else...there are plenty of things Steady Young Men can do when they can write and read as you can...(the Army) is a refuge for all idle people...I shall name it to no one for I am ashamed to think of it...I would rather bury you than see you in a red coat.
On his first night in the Army, he was so horrified by the rowdiness of the barrack room that he contemplated deserting, only to find that his civilian clothes had been stolen by another deserter.

As a young soldier, Robertson was noted for his prowess at running and for his voracious reading of military history. He won company first prizes for sword, lance and shooting. Among the Lieutenants under whom he served were future Lieutenant General "Jimmy" Babington and "Freddy" Blair, who would later be Robertson's Military Secretary at Eastern Command in 1918. He was promoted to lance-corporal in February 1879 and corporal in April 1879. As a corporal, he was imprisoned for three weeks with his head shaven when a soldier under arrest, whom he was escorting, escaped near Waterloo Station. Later, whilst serving in Ireland, he once kept soldiers under arrest handcuffed for a twelve-hour train journey rather than risk a repetition of the event.
He was promoted to lance-sergeant in May 1881 and sergeant in January 1882. He obtained a first-class certificate of education in 1883, while serving in Ireland. Robertson was promoted to troop sergeant Major in March 1885 to fill a vacancy, as his predecessor had been demoted for making a botch of the regimental accounts and later committed suicide.

Junior officer

Encouraged by his officers and the clergyman of his old parish, he passed an examination for an officer's commission and was posted as a second Lieutenant in the 3rd Dragoon Guards on 27 June 1888. Robertson later recorded that it would have been impossible to live as a cavalry subaltern in Britain, where £300 a year was needed in addition to the £120 official salary (approximately £30,000 and £12,000 at 2010 prices) to keep up the required lifestyle; he was reluctant to leave the cavalry, but his regiment was deployed to India, where pay was

higher and expenses lower than in the UK. Robertson's father made his uniforms and he economised on Mess Bills by drinking water and not smoking with meals, as pipes, which beside a few cheroots were all he could afford, were not allowed in the Mess. He supplemented his income by studying with native tutors, qualifying as an interpreter—for which officers received cash grants—in Urdu, Hindi, Persian, Pashto and Punjabi.

Promoted to Lieutenant on 1 March 1891, he saw his first active service in 1891, distinguishing himself as Railway Transport Officer for the expedition to Kohat. He was appointed an attaché in the Intelligence Branch of the Quartermaster-General's Department at Simla on 5 June 1892. There he became a protégé of Sir Henry Brackenbury, the new Military Member of the Viceroy's Council (equivalent to War Minister for India), who was keen to beef up the intelligence branch of the Indian army, including mapping the Northwest Frontier. Robertson spent a year writing a detailed Gazetteer and Military Report on Afghanistan. After five years in India, he was granted his first long leave in 1893, only to find that his mother had died before he reached home.

In June 1894 he undertook a three-month journey via Gilgit and mountainous north Kashmir, crossing the Darkot Pass at over 4,700 metres (15,430 ft) to reach the Pamirs Plateau at the foot of the Himalayas, returning to India in August by a westerly route via Chilas and Khagan. On the journey he learned Gurkhali, later qualifying in this, his sixth Indian language.

He was promoted to Captain on 3 April 1895. He took part in the Chitral Expeditionas Brigade Intelligence Officer. He was described by Lieutenant General Sir Robert Low, the Expedition Commander, as a *"very active and intelligent officer of exceptional promise"*. After the relief of Chitral and installation of Shuja-ul-Mulk as Mehtar, Robertson was engaged in pacification and reconnaissance duties, but was wounded when attacked by his two guides on a narrow mountain path during a reconnaissance. One guide was armed with a shotgun and fired at Robertson but missed. The other guide attacked him with Robertson's own sword (which he had been carrying, as Robertson had dysentery) but Robertson punched him to the ground then drove off both attackers with his revolver; one was wounded and later captured and executed. The incident was reported and illustrated in the Daily Graphic and Robertson was awarded the DSO, which was, he later claimed, *"then a rather rare decoration"*.

Robertson then applied to attend Staff College, Camberley. Unlike most applicants, he could not afford to take extended leave from his job to attend a crammer, and had he failed he would have been too old to apply again, so he rose between 4 and 5 am each day to study mathematics, German, and French with the assistance of his wife. He later qualified as an interpreter in French. He just missed a place, but was given a nominated place on the recommendation of Sir George White (Commander-in-Chief, India). In 1897, accompanied by his wife and baby son, he became the first former ranker to go there.

Under George Henderson he absorbed the principles, derived from Jomini, Clausewitz, and Edward Hamley's Operations of War (1866), of concentration of physical and moral force and the destruction of the main enemy army. He passed out second from Staff College in December 1898 and was then seconded for service in the Intelligence Department at the War Office on 1 April 1899. As a staff Captain he was the junior of two officers in the Colonial (later renamed Imperial) section.

With the start of the Second Boer War, Robertson was appointed as Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General to Frederick Roberts, 1st Earl Roberts, the British Commander-in-Chief South Africa,

on 15 January 1900. He was present at the Battle of Paardeberg (17–26 February 1900), the Battle of Poplar Grove (7 March 1900) and other battles in March and May. Robertson was promoted to Major on 10 March 1900 and was mentioned in despatches on 2 April 1901. He returned to the War Office in October 1900 and on 29 November 1900 was promoted brevet Lieutenant Colonel for his services in South Africa. On 1 October 1901 he was appointed Assistant Quartermaster-General, responsible for the Foreign Military Intelligence section, on the recommendation of the Intelligence expert General Sir Henry Brackenbury, and worked closely with William Nicholson (then Director of Military Operations). Although Robertson was later to be a staunch advocate of Britain's concentration of effort on the Western Front, in March 1902 (before the Entente Cordiale) he wrote a paper recommending that, in the event of Belgian neutrality being violated, Britain should concentrate on naval warfare and deploy no more troops to Belgium than was needed to "afford ocular proof of our share in the war". His suggestion did not meet with approval at the highest political level.

Robertson was promoted to brevet Colonel on 29 November 1903. Having been one of the oldest Lieutenants in the army, he was now one of the youngest Colonels, heading a staff of nine officers. In the later words of a contemporary, Robertson *"became rated as a superman, and only key appointments were considered good enough for him".*

Robertson was made Assistant Director of Military Operations under James Grierson and appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) on 30 June 1905. In spring 1905, during the First Moroccan Crisis, Grierson and Robertson conducted a war game based on a German march through Belgium. They were persuaded that early and strong British intervention was necessary to slow the German advance and avoid French defeat. In 1906 they toured the Charleroi-to-Namur area. In 1906 Robertson also toured the Balkans, where he was impressed by the size of the mountains, a factor which was later to influence his scepticism about the Salonika front during the First World War.
When that job expired in January 1907, Robertson, without a post, was placed on half-pay: his salary dropped from £800 to £300, causing him severe financial difficulty. He earned money by translating German and Austro-Hungarian military manuals into English, again assisted by his wife. He became Assistant Quartermaster-General at Headquarters Aldershot Command on 21 May 1907 and then was promoted to temporary Brigadier and served as a Brigadier General staff (BGGS) at Headquarters Aldershot Command on 29 November 1907, taking over from Brigadier Archibald Murray, who he would later succeed as CIGS. He had hoped for command of a brigade. In 1909 he reconnoitred the likely route of a German invasion – Belgium, the Meuse and Luxembourg – with Smith-Dorrien and Rawlinson.

During Henry Wilson's tenure as Commandant at Staff College, Camberley (1906–1910), Robertson lectured on Belgium, the Canadian frontier and the Balkans. Robertson's patron Nicholson, now Chief of the Imperial General Staff, appointed him Commandant at Staff College, effective 1 August 1910. However, Nicholson had initially (according to Wilson) opposed Robertson *"because of want of breeding",* while Wilson also opposed Robertson's appointment, perhaps feeling that Robertson's lack of private means did not suit him for a position which required entertaining. Robertson wrote to his friend Godley of a *"pestilential circle"* in top appointments which left *"no chance for the ordinary man".* On 28 July 1910, shortly before taking up his new position, Robertson visited Camberley with Kitchener, who criticised Wilson. Relations between Wilson and Robertson deteriorated thereafter, beginning a rivalry which was to feature throughout the Great War.

Robertson was a practical lecturer at Camberley whose teaching included withdrawals as well as advances. Edmonds, who had been Robertson's classmate in the 1890s, said he was a better lecturer than even Henderson. He taught officers that they *"were at the Staff College to learn Staff Duties and to qualify for Staff Captain, not to talk irresponsible trash"* about *"subjects of policy or strategy"*. These and a number of similar recollections, written up after the Great War, may exaggerate the differences in style between Robertson and Wilson.

He was appointed a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order on 16 July 1910 and promoted to Major General on 26 December 1910. He was advanced to Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order on 26 September 1913; on being knighted he mistakenly rose and shook the King's hand instead of kissing it as required by protocol. The King was privately amused and the two soon formed a good relationship. He was appointed director of military training at the War Office on 9 October 1913, taking over from Brigadier David Henderson.

With the Cabinet apparently contemplating some kind of military action against the Ulster Volunteers, on the evening of 18 March, Robertson was told that it was his responsibility to draw up deployment plans. After Hubert Gough and other officers had threatened to resign in the Curragh incident, Robertson also supported Wilson in trying in vain to persuade French (CIGS) to warn the government that the Army would not move against Ulster. The affair led to hatred between senior officers and Liberal politicians. Robertson contemplated resigning but emerged without any blot on his reputation.

Robertson was expected to remain Director of Military Training on the outbreak of the First World War, or to become chief staff officer to the Home Defence Forces. Instead, he replaced Murray as Quartermaster General of the British Expeditionary Force (under Field Marshal French) from 5 August 1914.

Robertson was concerned that the BEF was concentrating too far forward, and discussed a potential retreat as early as 22 August (the day before the Battle of Mons). He arranged supply dumps and contingency plans to draw supply from the Atlantic rather than the Belgian coast, all of which proved invaluable during the retreat from Mons. He became known as "Old Any-Complaints?" as this was his usual question when checking on troops at mealtimes. In Dan Todman's view, the excellent performance of BEF logistics in August 1914 contrasted favourably with the *"almost farcical"* performance of the BEF General Staff.
Robertson "felt deeply" the loss of his close friend Colonel Freddy Kerr, who was killed by a shell while serving as chief of staff to 2nd Division.

Robertson was then promoted (over the head of Wilson who was already Sub Chief of Staff) to Chief of Staff (CGS) of the BEF from 25 January 1915. Robertson had told Wilson that he did not want the promotion as he *"could not manage Johnnie, who was sure to come to grief and carry him along with him"*. Robertson later wrote that he had hesitated to accept the job, despite the higher pay and position, as he knew he was not French's first choice, but had put his duty first. He refused to have Wilson remain as Sub Chief. French was soon impressed by Robertson's *"sense and soundness"* as CGS. Wilson continued to advise French closely whereas Robertson took his meals in a separate mess. Robertson preferred this, and in common with many other senior BEF officers his relations with French deteriorated badly in 1915.
Robertson improved the functioning of the staff at GHQ by separating Staff Duties and Intelligence out from Operations into separate sections, each headed by a Brigadier-General reporting to himself. Robertson was advanced to Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath on 18 February 1915.

Robertson consistently urged strong commitment to the Western Front. He thought the naval attempt to force the Dardanelles "a ridiculous farce". Robertson told Hankey on 1 June that Sir John French was *"always wanting to do reckless and impossible things"* and made similar remarks to Kitchener in July. He advised on 25 June 1915 against retreat to the Channel Ports, an option contemplated by the Cabinet after the defensive losses at Second Ypres, arguing that it would leave the British *"helpless spectators"* in France's defeat. In "Notes on the Machinery of the Government for the Conduct of the War" on 30 June 1915 he argued that the government should state its war aims, in this case the liberation of Belgium and the destruction of German militarism, and then let the professionals achieve them.

The King had a "long talk" with Robertson on 1 July and was left convinced that French should be removed as Commander-in-Chief of the BEF. Attending a council of war in London in early July 1915, Robertson was asked at the end if he had any comments—he produced a map and delivered a 45-minute lecture. His presentation made a strong impression compared to the indecisiveness of the politicians.

Robertson wrote to Kiggell (20 June 1915) that *"these Germans are dug in up to the neck, or concreted"* in *"one vast fortress".* Tactically, he urged *"slow attrition, by a slow and gradual advance on our part".* He also advocated surprise, and realistic objectives to prevent attacking infantry outrunning their artillery cover and ragged lines becoming vulnerable to German counterattack. Maurice, who drafted many of Robertson's memos, had advised him that such attacks were best carried out in places where the Germans were, for political or strategic reasons, reluctant to retreat so were bound to take heavy losses. Robertson initially opposed the mooted Loos offensive, recommending a more limited attack by Second Army to seize Messines-Wyndeschete ridge, and telling Sidney Clive it would be "throwing away thousands of lives in knocking our heads against a brick wall". Robertson also advised that Russia, then being driven out of Poland, might make peace without a wholehearted British commitment.

Robertson complained to Wilson that French "chopped & changed every day & was quite hopeless"; Wilson noted that relations between French and Robertson were breaking down, and suspected (correctly) that Robertson was blackening French's reputation by sending home documents which French had refused to read or sign. He wrote a memo to French (3 or 5 August) arguing that the volunteer New Armies should be committed to the Western Front, an idea to which Kitchener was only reluctantly coming round. French refused to read it, explaining that he was *"fully acquainted with the situation",* so Robertson sent it to the King's adviser Wigram anyway.

Robertson was made a Grand Officer of the French Legion of Honour on 10 September 1915 and acted as Commander-in-Chief BEF when French was sick in September.
Robertson later wrote in his memoirs that he was not close to Kitchener. With Asquith's Coalition Government in danger of breaking up over conscription (which Robertson supported), he blamed Kitchener for the excessive influence which civilians like Churchill and Haldane had come to exert over strategy, allowing ad hoc campaigns to develop in Sinai, Mesopotamia and Salonika, and not asking the General staff to study the feasibility of any of these campaigns. Robertson had urged the King's adviser Stamfordham that a stronger General staff was needed in London, otherwise "disaster" would ensue. By October 1915 Robertson had come to support greater coordination of plans with the French and was in increasingly close touch with Charles Callwell, who had been recalled from retirement to become Director of Military Operations.

When the King toured the front (24 October) Haig told him that Robertson should go home and become CIGS, while Robertson told the King (27 October 1915) that Haig should replace French. He was promoted to substantive Lieutenant General on 28 October 1915. Robertson clinched his claim as the future CIGS with a lengthy paper (actually written by Maurice, dated 8 November) arguing that all British efforts must be directed at the defeat of Germany.

French, finally forced to "resign" early in December 1915, recommended Robertson as his successor and Kitchener told Esher (4 December) that the government intended to appoint Robertson commander-in-chief, although to Esher's disappointment "dear old R" was not appointed. Robertson was willing to relinquish his claim if the job went to Haig, his senior and a front-line commander since the start of the war. Haig's inarticulacy may have made him an unappealing choice as CIGS.

Kitchener and Asquith were agreed that Robertson should become CIGS, but Robertson refused to do this if Kitchener *"continued to be his own CIGS",* although given Kitchener's great prestige he wanted him not to resign but to be sidelined to an advisory role. Asquith asked the men to negotiate an agreement, which they did over the exchange of several draft documents at the Hotel de Crillon in Paris. Kitchener agreed that Robertson alone should present strategic advice to the Cabinet, with Kitchener responsible for recruiting and supplying the army, and that the secretary of state should sign orders jointly with the CIGS. Robertson succeeded Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Murray as CIGS on 23 December, with a promotion to the temporary rank of General and with Major General Robert Whigham as his deputy CIGS, as well as an Order in Council formalising Kitchener's and Robertson's relative positions in January 1916.

Robertson assumed his duties on 23 December 1915. He brought with him three able men from GHQ: Whigham (Robertson's Deputy), Maurice (Operations) and MacDonogh (Intelligence). Their replacements, especially Kiggell (the new CGS BEF), and Charteris (BEF Intelligence) were much less able than their predecessors, a fact which probably affected BEF performance over the next two years.

Although Robertson's advice to abandon the Salonika bridgehead had been overruled at the Allied Chantilly Conference (6–8 December 1915), his first act as CIGS was to insist on the evacuation of the Cape Helles bridgehead, which the Royal Navy had wanted to retain as a base. On his first day as CIGS Robertson also demanded a defensive policy in Mesopotamia, with reinforcements drawn only from India – this was agreed on 29 February 1916, over the objections of Balfour and Lloyd George. Robertson also insisted that Mesopotamian operations be brought under his control. Townshend, besieged in Kut, was not initially thought to be in danger, but eventually surrendered in April 1916 after three failed relief attempts.

Another early act as CIGS (27 December 1915) was to press Kitchener for an extra 18 divisions for the BEF. Conscription of bachelors – for which Robertson lobbied – was enacted in early 1916.
Robertson was a strong supporter of BEF commander Douglas Haig and was committed to a Western Front strategy focusing on Germany and was against what he saw as peripheral operations on other fronts.

Having seen politicians like Lloyd George and Churchill run rings around Kitchener, Robertson's policy was to present his advice and keep on repeating it, refusing to enter into debate. However, Robertson reduced the government's freedom of action by cultivating the

press, much of which argued that the professional leadership of Haig and Robertson was preferable to civilian interference which had led to disasters like Gallipoli and Kut. He was particularly close to H. A. Gwynne and Charles Repington, who worked for the Northcliffe Press until it ceased to support the Generals late in 1917. Robertson communicated by secret letters and "R" telegrams to Generals in the field, including Milne, whom he discouraged from offensive operations at Salonika, and Maude who may have *"consciously or unconsciously"* ignored his secret orders not to attempt to take Baghdad.

In a 12 February 1916 paper Robertson urged that the Allies offer a separate peace to Turkey, or else offer Turkish territory to Bulgaria to encourage Bulgaria to make peace. In reply, Grey pointed out that Britain needed her continental allies more than they needed her, and Britain could not risk them making a compromise peace which left Germany stronger on the continent.

Robertson told the War Committee (22 February 1916) that the French desire to transfer more troops to Salonika showed a weakening in their resolve for trench warfare. He scorned the idea that it would bring Greece into the war on the Allied side, and at a late March 1916 conference argued with Briand (French Prime Minister) and Joffre, who thumped the table and shouted that Robertson was "un homme terrible".

The War Committee had only agreed with some reluctance to make preparations for the Western Front Offensive agreed at Chantilly, which Haig and Joffre agreed (14 February) should be on the Somme. For three months, against a backdrop of Russia planning to attack earlier than agreed, Italy reluctant to attack at all and the scaling-down of the planned French commitment because of Battle of Verdun, Robertson continued to urge the politicians to agree to the offensive. He increasingly believed that France was becoming exhausted and that Britain would carry an ever-greater burden. After Robertson promised that Haig *"would not make a fool of himself",* the War Committee finally agreed (7 April).

Robertson lobbied hard with politicians and the press for the extension of conscription. When the Cabinet finally authorised the Somme Offensive, Robertson had the Army Council make a statement in favour of conscripting married men. In the face of protests from Bonar Law that the government might break up, to be followed by a general election and conscription brought in by martial law, Robertson refused to compromise and encouraged Geoffrey Dawson, editor of The Times, to make his stance public.

Prelude to the Somme

Robertson was contemptuous of the House Grey Memorandum and of President Woodrow Wilson's offer to mediate in May 1916. The plan was stopped when the entire Army Council, including Kitchener and Robertson, threatened to resign.

At first Robertson tried to limit information to the War Committee only to a summary of news, most of which had already appeared in the newspapers – this was stopped by Hankey and Lloyd George when it was discovered that Robertson had moved troops from Egypt and Britain to France with little reference to the War Committee. In late May Haig and Robertson also angered ministers by challenging their right to inquire into the shipping of animal fodder to France. Robertson told ministers that *"Haig had no idea of any attempt to break through the German lines. It would only be a move to (rescue) the French"*, although he was probably not aware of Haig's insistence, overruling Rawlinson's earlier plan, on bombarding deeper into the German defences in the hope of breaking through and *"fighting the enemy in the open".*

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Robertson was promoted to permanent General on 3 June 1916. At an Anglo-French conference at 10 Downing Street Robertson finally succeeded in blocking a major offensive from Salonika. Robertson lobbied hard but in vain to prevent Lloyd George, who made no secret of his desire to use his control over military appointments to influence strategy, from succeeding Kitchener as Secretary of State for War. Although Robertson retained the special powers he had been granted in December 1915, and Lord Derby, an ally of the soldiers, was appointed Under-Secretary, Robertson still wrote to Kiggell *"That d----d fellow L.G. is coming here, I fear. I shall have an awful time".*

The Somme

Robertson had been clear that it would take more than one battle to defeat Germany, but like many British Generals he overestimated the chances of success on the Somme. Robertson also wrote to Kiggell (Chief of Staff BEF) stressing that *"the road to success lies through deliberation".* He recommended *"concentration and not dispersion of artillery fire"* and *"the thing is to advance along a wide front, step by step to very limited and moderate objectives, and to forbid going beyond those objectives until all have been reached by the troops engaged".* Kiggell conceded that there had been problems with infantry-artillery coordination, but seemed more concerned with the slowness of progress. Possibly (in David Woodward's view) worried at Kiggell's response, Robertson wrote to Rawlinson, GOC Fourth Army, on 26 July urging him not to let the Germans *"beat you in having the better man-power policy"* and urging *"common-sense, careful methods, and not to be too hide-bound by the books we used to study before the war".*

Henry Wilson recorded rumours that Robertson was angling for Haig's job in July, although there is no clear evidence that this was so. Robertson complained that Haig's daily telegrams to him contained little more information than the daily press releases. F. E. Smith (1 August) circulated a paper by his friend Winston Churchill criticising the high losses and negligible gains of the Somme. Churchill argued that this would leave Germany freer to win victories elsewhere. Robertson issued a strong rebuttal the same day, arguing that Britain's losses were small compared to what France had suffered in previous years, that Germany had had to quadruple the number of her divisions on the Somme sector and that this had taken pressure off Verdun and contributed to the success of Russian and Italian offensives.

After the Churchill memorandum Robertson wrote to Haig accusing the War Committee (a Cabinet committee which discussed strategy in 1916) of being *"ignorant"* and putting too much emphasis on *"gaining ground"* rather than putting *"pressure"* on the Germans; Travers argues that he was *"cunning(ly)"* using the War Committee as *"a stalking horse"* and obliquely urging Haig to adopt more cautious tactics. With Allied offensives apparently making progress on all fronts in August, Robertson hoped that Germany might sue for peace at any time and urged the government to pay more attention to drawing up war aims, lest Britain get a raw deal in the face of collusion between France and Russia. Prompted by Asquith, Robertson submitted a memorandum on war aims (31 August). He wanted Germany preserved as a Major power as a block to Russian influence, possibly gaining Austria to compensate for the loss of her colonies, Alsace-Lorraine and her North Sea and Baltic ports.

Robertson correctly guessed that the Bulgarian declaration of war on Romania (1 September) indicated that they had been promised German aid. While Lloyd George, who wanted Greece to be brought into the war on the Allied side, if necessary, by a naval bombardment, was visiting the Western Front Robertson persuaded the War Committee that Romania was best helped by renewed attacks on the Somme.

Robertson had told Monro, the new Commander-in-Chief India, to *"keep up a good show"* (1 August 1916) in Mesopotamia but wanted to retreat from Kut to Amara rather than make any further attempt to take Baghdad; this was overruled by Curzon and Chamberlain.
Lloyd George criticised Haig to Foch on a visit to the Western Front in September, and proposed sending Robertson on a mission to persuade Russia to make the maximum possible effort. With Royal backing, Robertson refused to go, later writing to Haig that it had been an excuse for Lloyd George to *"become top dog"* and *"have his wicked way"*. Lloyd George continued to demand that aid be sent to help Romania, eventually demanding that 8 British divisions be sent to Salonika. This was logistically impossible, but to Robertson's anger the War Committee instructed him to consult Joffre. Derby dissuaded him from resigning the next day, but instead he wrote a long letter to Lloyd George complaining that Lloyd George was offering strategic advice contrary to his own and seeking the advice of a foreign General, and threatening to resign. Lloyd George had to give his *"word of honour"* to Asquith that he had complete confidence in Haig and Robertson and thought them irreplaceable. However, he wrote to Robertson wanting to know how their differences had been leaked to the press and asserting his right to express his opinions about strategy. The Army Council went on record forbidding unauthorised press contacts, although that did nothing to stop War Office leaks.

The Somme ends
At the inter-Allied conference at Boulogne (20 October) Asquith supported Robertson in opposing Major offensives at Salonika. Robertson wrote to Repington *"If I were not in my present position I daresay I could find half a dozen different ways of rapidly winning this war"*. He advised Hankey that further high casualties would be needed to defeat Germany's reserves.

The War Committee met (3 November 1916) without Robertson, so Lloyd George could, in Hankey's words *"air his views freely unhampered by the presence of that old dragon Robertson"*. He complained that the Allies had not achieved any definite success, that the Germans had recovered the initiative, had conquered most of Romania, had increased her forces in the East and still had 4 million men in reserve. Asquith backed him and the committee's conclusion, which was neither printed nor circulated, was that *"The offensive on the Somme, if continued next year, was not likely to lead to decisive results, and that the losses might make too heavy a drain on our resources having regard to the results to be anticipated"*. It was agreed to consider offensives in other theatres. The ministers again (7 November) discussed, after Robertson had left the room, the plan to send Robertson to a conference in Russia and a further inter-Allied conference to upstage the forthcoming conference of Generals at Chantilly. Robertson rejected the idea as *"the Kitchener dodge"* and refused to go.

Robertson wanted industrial conscription, national service for men up the age of 55, and 900,000 new army recruits, similar to the new German Hindenburg Programme. He was concerned at the Asquith Coalition's lack of firm leadership, once likening the Cabinet to "a committee of lunatics", and although he avoided taking sides in party politics, he urged the creation of a small War Committee which would simply give orders to the departmental ministers, and was concerned (letter to Hankey, 9 November) that ministers might be tempted to make peace or to reduce Britain's Western Front commitment. Robertson gave an abusive response to the Lansdowne Memorandum (13 November 1916) (calling those who wanted to make peace *"cranks, cowards and philosophers"*).
Robertson successfully lobbied Joffre and at the Chantilly Conference (15–16 November 1916) Joffre and Robertson (in Haig's view) *"crushed"* Lloyd George's proposal to send greater resources to Salonika.

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The Somme ended on 18 November. There was already divergence between MacDonogh and Charteris as to the likelihood of German collapse. Robertson shocked ministers by forecasting that the war would not end until summer 1918. On 21 November, Asquith again met ministers without Robertson present, and they agreed they could not order him to go to Russia. His influence was already beginning to wane. In the event departure, originally scheduled for November, was delayed until January and Wilson was sent in Robertson's place. At the second Chantilly Conference it had been agreed that Britain would in future take a greater share of the war on the Western Front. Asquith had written to Robertson of the War Committee's unanimous approval of the desirability of capturing or rendering inoperable the submarine and destroyer bases at Ostend and Zeebrugge. Haig and Robertson had obtained Joffre's approval for a British Flanders Offensive, after wearing-out attacks by Britain and France.

Lloyd George becomes prime minister

During the December political crisis Robertson advised Lloyd George to form a three-man War Council, which would probably include the Foreign Secretary but not the First Lord of the Admiralty or the Secretary of State for War. He was suspected of briefing the press against Asquith, and had to assure the Palace that this was not so. Robertson warned the first meeting of the new five-man War Cabinet against the danger of *"sideshows"*. By contrast Hankey advised sending aid to Italy and offensives in Palestine – Lloyd George used this as the blueprint of future strategy discussions.

With Murray's support, in the autumn of 1916 Robertson had resisted attempts to send as many as 4,000 men to Rabegh to help the nascent Arab Revolt, stressing that logistical support would bring the total up to 16,000 men, enough to prevent Murray's advance on El Arish. Robertson accused the ministers of *"attaching as much importance to a few scallywags in Arabia as I imagine they did to the German attack on Ypres two years ago",* but for the first time ministers contemplated overruling him. Encouraged by hope that the Russians might advance to Mosul, removing any Turkish threat to Mesopotamia, Robertson authorised Maude to attack in December 1916.

January conferences

Robertson was appointed Aide-de-Camp General to the King on 15 January 1917 and was advanced to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath on 24 January 1917.

Following a fractious Anglo-French conference in London (26–28 December) the War Cabinet gave Lloyd George authority to "conclude any arrangement" at the forthcoming Rome conference. At the Rome Conference (5–6 January 1917) Lloyd George, advised by Hankey, proposed sending heavy guns to Italy with a view to defeating Austria-Hungary, possibly to be balanced by a transfer of Italian troops to Salonika. Robertson stressed that this was contrary to agreed policy and hinted that he might resign. Cadorna stressed the logistical difficulty of accepting the heavy guns, even when Lloyd George removed the precondition that they be returned to the Western Front by May. Robertson wrote to Lloyd George explicitly threatening to resign if he acted on Briand's impassioned plea to send more divisions to Salonika.

A further Conference followed in London (15–16 January 1917). Cadorna was also once again talking of being able to win a Major victory if reinforced by 300 heavy guns or 8 British divisions – Robertson predictably opposed this.

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Calais

Haig wanted to delay his attack until May to coincide with Italian and Russian attacks, but was told by the government to take over French line as requested, to be ready no later than 1 April, and not cause delays. Robertson was worried about the new French Commander-in-Chief Nivelle forcing the British to attack before the ground dried. Haig demanded a meeting between British and French ministers to resolve matters, although Robertson urged him to resolve them in a face-to-face meeting with Nivelle.

Robertson later claimed that he attended the Calais Conference thinking it would be solely about railways, but this is probably untrue. Robertson was at the War Cabinet (20 February) which insisted on a conference to draw up a formal agreement about *"the operations of 1917".* Neither Robertson nor Derby were invited to the War Cabinet on 24 February, at which ministers felt that the French had shown themselves to be more skilful than the British, while politically Britain had to give wholehearted support to what would probably be the last Major French effort of the war. Hankey also told Stamfordham that on the train to Calais Lloyd George had informed Robertson and Maurice that he had the authority of the War Cabinet *"to decide specifically between Generals Haig & Nivelle"*, although the subordination of Haig to Nivelle had not been specifically discussed.

At Calais (26–7 February), after the railway experts had been sent away, at Lloyd George's request Nivelle produced rules governing the relations between the British and French armies. Nivelle was to exercise, through British staff at GQG, operational command of British forces, with Haig left in control only of discipline (which could not legally be placed in foreign hands) and forbidden to make direct contact with London. Haig, Spears later wrote, *"had become a cipher, and (his) units were to be dispersed at the will of the French command... until (his) massed thousands had become mere khaki pawns scattered among the sky-blue pawns"*

The plans were brought to Robertson, who feeling unwell had dined with Maurice in his room, at around 9pm. In Spears' famous account Robertson's face *"went the colour of mahogany ... his eyebrows slanted outwards like a forest of bayonets held at the charge – in fact he showed every sign of having a fit".* Haig and Robertson visited Lloyd George – one of Robertson's objections was that the agreement could not be binding on Dominion troops – who told them that he had the authority of the War Cabinet and that, although Nivelle's demands were *"excessive",* they must have a scheme agreed by 8am. The next morning, after Nivelle had claimed he had not personally drawn up the scheme, Robertson *"ramped up and down the room, talking about the horrible idea of putting 'the wonderful army' under a Frenchman, swearing he would never serve under one".* Hankey drew up a compromise rather than see Haig and Robertson resign, with Haig still under Nivelle's orders but with tactical control of British forces and right of appeal to the War Cabinet.

Eroding the agreement

Robertson wrote to Haig that Lloyd George was *"an awful liar"* for claiming that the French had originated the proposal, and that he lacked the "honesty & truth" to remain Prime Minister. Haig claimed that with the BEF spread more thinly by having recently taken over line to the south, German forces might be used to attack at Ypres and cut him off from the Channel Ports. The French assumed Haig was inventing this threat.

Robertson continued to lobby the War Cabinet of the folly of leaving the British Army under French control, passing on Haig's demand that he keep control of the British reserves, and advising that intelligence reports suggested preparations for large-scale German troop movements in Eastern Belgium. With War Cabinet opinion having turned against Lloyd

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George – who was also rebuked by the King – Robertson also then submitted a memorandum stating that the Calais Agreement was not to be a permanent arrangement, along with a *"personal statement"* so critical of Lloyd George that he refused to have it included in the minutes.
The King and Esher also urged Haig and Robertson to come to an agreement with the government.
At another conference in London (12–13 March) Lloyd George expressed the government's full support for Haig and stressed that the BEF must not be *"mixed up with the French Army",* and Haig and Nivelle met with Robertson and Lyautey to settle their differences. The status quo ante, by which British forces were allies rather than subordinates of the French, but Haig was expected to defer to French wishes as far as possible, was essentially restored.

Nivelle Offensive
Robertson was sceptical of suggestions that Russia's war effort would be reinvigorated by the Fall of the Tsar, and recommended that Britain keep up the pressure on Germany by attacking on the Western Front. He thought the US, which had declared war on Germany, would do little to help win the war. Robertson prepared another General Staff appraisal stressing how the Allied position had deteriorated since the previous summer, and again recommending diplomatic efforts to detach Germany's allies. The day after the Nivelle Offensive began, Robertson circulated another paper warning that Nivelle would be sacked if he failed and urging the end of the Calais Agreement.

Robertson was awarded the French Croix de Guerre on 21 April 1917 and appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus from Italy on 26 May 1917.

Robertson tried to control William Raine Marshall (Maude's replacement as C-in-C Mesopotamia) by handpicking his staff. Smuts was sent to Egypt to confer with Allenby and Marshall and prepare for major efforts in that theatre. Before his departure, alienated by Robertson's cooking of the figures, he urged Robertson's removal. Allenby told Smuts of Robertson's private instructions that there was no merit in any further advance and worked with Smuts to draw up plans for further advances in Palestine.

Wilson wanted Robertson reduced *"from the position of a Master to that of a servant".* Robertson thought Wilson's SWC Joint Note 12, which predicted that neither side could win a decisive victory on the Western Front in 1918, and that decisive results could be had against Turkey, *"d-----d rot in General"* and promised Haig he would *"stick to (his) guns and clear out if (he was) overruled".* Robertson opposed attacks on Turkey, siding openly with Clemenceau against Lloyd George. Although Robertson apologised for doing so, the Prime Minister was angry and told Wilson afterwards that he would have to get rid of Robertson. Robertson's request to be on the Executive Board controlling the planned Allied General Reserve was overruled.

Robertson called the Executive War Board the *"Versailles Soviet"* and claimed to the King's adviser Lord Stamfordham that having *"practically, two CIGSs"* would lead to *"destruction of confidence among the troops".* He also briefed Gwynne against the proposals, writing that *"the little man" was "all out for (his) blood"* and *"to see that the fine British Army is not placed at the mercy of irresponsible people – & some of them foreigners at that".*

Robertson was finally forced out in February 1918 over his refusal to agree that the British representative at the Supreme War Council at Versailles should be Deputy CIGS and a member

of the Army Council (giving him the right to issue orders to the BEF). He distrusted the dual chain of command set up by the War Cabinet, and he wanted civilians to stay out of military decision-making. Lloyd George offered Robertson a choice of remaining as CIGS in London with reduced powers or accepting the Versailles job. Robertson's position was that either the CIGS should himself be the Versailles delegate or else the Versailles representative should be clearly subordinate to the CIGS. There was talk of the government falling, and Lloyd George attempted to have Robertson swap jobs with Plumer, then commanding British troops in Italy Plumer refused.

Haig was summoned to London to be consulted. Haig, whose relations with Robertson had been deteriorating since at least the Boulogne Conference of September 1917, told Robertson it was his duty to go to Versailles or anywhere else the government wanted, and advised the King to insist on Robertson going to Versailles. Derby withdrew his resignation. Four days of argument, 11 February 1918 through to 14 February 1918, ensued between Robertson and the War Cabinet. The King thought it would be *"a national calamity"* if Robertson was removed but when told of this Lloyd George told Stamfordham that *"he did not share the King's extremely favourable opinion"* of Robertson and that the government would resign if the King attempted to block Robertson's removal. Curzon and Balfour were sympathetic to Robertson's position, but he lost Balfour's sympathy at a Cabinet meeting on 14 February where he made clear his dislike of Wilson. He had told Stamfordham that he would serve at Versailles under Plumer as CIGS, but not under Wilson "his Junior".
As part of Lloyd George's power struggle with Robertson and his press supporters, on 16 February the prominent journalists Gwynne and Repington appeared at Bow Street Magistrates' Court charged with having contravened DORA Regulation 18 by printing articles discussing the conflict between Versailles and the War Office, Lloyd George's plans to concentrate efforts against Turkey, and the failure to keep the Army up to strength. Robertson's wife was in the crowd, as were his colleagues Macdonogh and Maurice. Repington later claimed that Robertson had told him that he could no more afford to be seen with him than either of them *"could afford to be seen walking down Regent Street with a whore"*.

After a fortnight of argument Robertson's "resignation" was announced. Lloyd George, possibly aware that Robertson was dependent on his army pay, suggested he be given command of an Army in France, but Haig said he *"was quite unfitted to command troops"*. Wilson and Robertson had a very brief handover meeting at the War Office, at which Robertson (by Wilson's account) was *"grumpy and ungracious & said he had nothing to say – and indeed said nothing"*. Wilson later recalled that he *"walked out without handing me over anything in particular"*.

After CIGS: the Maurice Affair
Robertson was appointed General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Command in February 1918.
After the German "Michael" Offensive, the press blamed Lloyd George for starving the army of men, while the Star called for Robertson to be appointed Secretary of State for War. The Star later blamed the Versailles machinery for forcing a depleted Fifth Army to take over more front, while the Globe and Morning Post called for Robertson's restoration as CIGS. Lloyd George was amenable to Haig's suggestion that Robertson be appointed Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the BEF. Repington in the Morning Post called this suggestion *"a pretext for getting him out of the way of the imbeciles"* in London and called for Lloyd George's removal as Prime Minister.

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On 29 April Robertson met with his former assistant Major General Maurice to discuss concerns that Lloyd George had misled the House of Commons on 9 April about the weakness of the BEF prior to the German "Michael" Offensive. Robertson suggested that he write to Henry Wilson and then, if necessary to the press. Maurice composed his letter on 2 May but did not yet send it. Robertson wrote to him on 4 May, writing that not too much credence should be given to imminent predictions of Lloyd George's downfall, that Maurice should take especial care to get his facts exactly right, and adding: *"You are contemplating a great thing – to your undying credit".*

The Maurice letter, a blatant breach of King's Regulations, appeared in several newspapers on 7 May. Maurice denied that it was a military conspiracy to overthrow a civilian government, and claimed *"it ha(d) been seen by no soldier"* (omitting to mention that Robertson had encouraged him). Lloyd George later claimed in his memoirs that Robertson had been aiming to topple the government and become a military dictator like Hindenburg. However, although journalists like Gwynne and Maxse sometimes dropped such hints, there is no evidence that this was Robertson's intention. Robertson thought Lloyd George would survive the crisis, although he may have hoped to be restored as CIGS. Lloyd George survived the Maurice Debate (9 May).

Robertson was promoted to General Officer Commanding-in-Chief for Home Forces in June 1918. He visited each regional command, and took a special interest in the air defence of London.
Robertson became Commander-in-Chief of the British Army of the Rhine in April 1919. At a tennis-party at his house in Cologne, the young Captain Montgomery persuaded him to add his name to the list of officers selected for Staff College, which would be his only hope of achieving high command.

Robertson was appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George in the King's Birthday Honours in June 1919. He was not invited to the peace celebration on 19 July 1919. He was thanked by Parliament, granted £10,000 (the capital was held in trust and only the income made available) and created a Baronet of Welbourn in Lincolnshire on 29 December 1919.

After the War he was awarded the Belgian War Cross, the Grand Cross of the Serbian Order of the White Eagle (with Swords) and the American Distinguished Service Medal. This was as well as being appointed to the Chinese Order of Chia-Ho (1st Class), being given the Grand Cross of the Order of the Crown of Italy, being appointed to the Russian Order of Alexander Nevsky and receiving the Japanese Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun.

Troop reductions meant that the Rhine Command was being downgraded to a Lieutenant General's command, so in July 1919 Churchill offered Robertson the Irish Command, often a last posting for distinguished Generals nearing retirement. Although the level of violence in Ireland in 1919 was not yet as high as it would be in 1920–21, there were concerns that Robertson lacked the subtlety for the job. In October the CIGS Henry Wilson warned Churchill that the planned introduction of Irish Home Rule would lead to unrest, and asked him to consult the Prime Minister, perhaps in the knowledge that Lloyd George disliked Robertson. Lloyd George suggested that Robertson be appointed Commander-in-Chief, India, but this job was already earmarked for Rawlinson. Lloyd George preferred Macready for the Irish job, as he had experience of peacekeeping duties in South Wales and Belfast as well as having served as Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police in London. Churchill again told the Prime Minister

in February 1920 that he wanted Robertson, then protested that he had been overruled. He promoted Robertson to Field Marshal "as a consolation prize" on 29 March 1920, making him the only man ever to rise in the British army from private to Field Marshal. Wilson thought the promotion as *"very disgusting"*.

On returning to the UK, Robertson received no official welcome at Victoria Station and later recorded that *"having secured a broken-down taxi I drove to my residence in Eccleston Square; and thereupon joined the long list of unemployed officers on half-pay"*.

Later life

Robertson was Colonel of the 2nd Dragoons (Royal Scots Greys) from 9 March 1916 and Colonel of the 3rd/6th Dragoon Guards from 31 December 1925. He became Colonel of the Royal Horse Guards in 1928;this made him Gold Stick and a member of the Royal Household. He was advanced to Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order in 1931.
On retirement Robertson's life savings had been a mere £600 (just over £20,000 at 2014 prices). He became chairman of the Brewers' Trustees and a director of British Dyestuffs Corporation as well as President of the British Legion. He became a director of the British Palestine Corporation and of the London General Omnibus Company - forty years later he was still remembered for his efforts on behalf of the men's welfare. Despite having made gifts to members of his family, on his death he left a modest fortune of £49,000 (almost £3,000,000 at 2014 prices).

Although not a pacifist, in his later years Robertson often spoke out against the cost – both financial and human – of war. His interests were fishing, shooting and golf. Early in 1933 he told Edmonds that his chief regret was that he had never had a command in the field. He died from a thrombosis on 12 February 1933, aged 73. Mount Robertson in the Canadian Rockies and Sir William Robertson High School in his birth village, Welbourn, were named after him. He was buried at Brookwood Cemetery.

Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude

Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude KCB CMG DSO (24 June 1864 – 18 November 1917) was a British Army officer. He is known for his operations in the Mesopotamian campaign during the First World War and for conquering Baghdad in 1917.

Maude was born in Gibraltar, the youngest son of General Sir Frederick Francis Maude, who had been awarded the Victoria Cross in 1855 during the Crimean War, and of Catherine Mary, née Bisshopp, daughter of Very Reverend Sir George Bisshopp, 9th Baronet, Dean of Lismore. The Maude family claimed descent from Eustace de Montaut, who came over to England during the Norman Conquest.

Maude attended St Michael's School, Aldis House, Slough, and Eton College, where he was elected to Pop. After attending a crammer, he entered the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He graduated in 1883 and was commissioned into the Coldstream Guards in February 1884.
Maude first saw active service in Egypt from March to September 1885, where he was awarded the Egyptian Medal and the Khedive's Egyptian Star. In March 1888 he was appointed an adjutant. While attending the Staff College, Camberley from 1895 to 1896, he was promoted to Captain on 28 August 1895.

He was promoted again, this time to Major, on 5 February 1899, and next saw service during the Second Boer War, where he served from January 1900 to March 1901; and for which he

was mentioned in dispatches (10 September 1901), was appointed a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) and received the Queen's South Africa Medal.

In May 1901, he was appointed military secretary to the Earl of Minto, Governor-General of Canada, in which capacity he accompanied the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary) on their Royal Tour of Canada in September and October 1901. During this trip Maude joined the Duke of York and Lord Minto on a duck hunt at Delta Marsh, Manitoba, and for his services administering the tour he was appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) in October 1901. He served on the staff of the Governor-General until Lord Minto stepped down in 1904, when he returned to Britain to become second-in-command at the Coldstream Guards. He then joined the General staff, was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in June 1907 and Colonel in July 1911, by which time he was serving at the War Office in London as an assistant director.

In World War I, Maude first served in France. He was a staff officer with III Corps when, in October 1914, he was promoted to the temporary rank of Brigadier and given command of the 14th Infantry Brigade, part of the 5th Division, in place of Brigadier Stuart Peter Rolt. He was wounded in April 1915 and returned home to recover.

He returned to France in May and, in June, he was promoted to Major General and transferred to command the 33rd Division, a Kitchener's Army formation which was then still in training in Britain.

Dardanelles
In mid-August, however, Maude was instead given charge of the 13th (Western) Division in Suvla. The 13th suffered heavy casualties retreating from Suvla and landing and later evacuating from Helles before being shifted to Mesopotamia in March 1916. He was the last man evacuated from Suvla Bay.

Mesopotamia
Maude arrived to catch the end of the British failure at the Siege of Kut where he was promoted to temporary Lieutenant General, replacing Lieutenant General G. F. Gorringe as commander of the newly dubbed Tigris Corps (III Indian Army Corps) in July 1916. Despite being instructed to do no more than hold the existing line, Maude set about to re-organising and re-supplying his mixed British and Indian forces. He was made commander of all Allied forces in Mesopotamia in late July 1916, replacing Sir Percy Lake.

Further advances in Mesopotamia were ordered (18 September 1916) by politicians such as Curzon and Chamberlain and against the wishes of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) General "Wully" Robertson. Basil Liddell Hart later argued that Maude clearly *"consciously or unconsciously"* ignored his secret orders from Robertson not to attempt to take Baghdad. Robertson changed his mind when it seemed that the Russians might advance to Mosul, removing any Turkish threat to Mesopotamia, and authorised Maude to attack in December 1916.

Given reinforcements and more equipment, Maude directed his force in a steady series of victories. Advancing up the Tigris and winning the battles of Mohammed Abdul Hassan, Hai and Dahra in January 1917, recapturing Kut in February 1917, he took Baghdad on 11 March 1917, shortly after his rank of Lieutenant General had been made permanent, *"in recognition of his distinguished service in the field as Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in Mesopotamia".*

(He issued the Proclamation of Baghdad on 19 March.) From Baghdad, he launched the Samarrah Offensive and extended his operations to the Euphrates and Diyala rivers.

After a lull over the summer, in November 1917, whilst his forces were engaged at Ramadiand Tikrit, Maude contracted cholera (which some sources claim to have been caught from drinking unboiled milk) and died in the same house as German Field Marshal von der Goltz nineteen months earlier. Lieutenant General W. R. Marshall succeeded him.

His body was buried in Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery. His initial grave and marker was replaced by a more elaborate structure and then enclosed in a small mausoleum structure on the walls of which is mounted the standard Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. The epitaph on his CWGC gravestone reads: *"'I am the resurrection and the life'. He fought a good fight. He kept the faith".* In March 1918 parliament agreed to a request from the King that he grant the sum of £25,000 to his widow.

Field Marshal Viscount Allenby

Field Marshal Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby, 1st Viscount Allenby GCB GCMG GCVO KStJ (23 April 1861 - 14 May 1936) was a senior British Army officer and Imperial Governor. He fought in the Second Boer War and also in World War I, in which he led the British Empire' Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) during the Sinai and Palestine Campaign against the Ottoman Empire in the conquest of Palestine.

The British succeeded in capturing Beersheba, Jaffa, and Jerusalem from October to December 1917. His forces occupied the Jordan Valley during the summer of 1918, then went on to capture northern Palestine and defeat the Ottoman Yildirim Army Group's Eighth Army at the Battle of Megiddo, forcing the Fourth and Seventh Army to retreat towards Damascus. Subsequently, the EEF Pursuit by Desert Mounted Corps captured Damascus and advanced into northern Syria.

During this pursuit, he commanded T. E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia"), whose campaign with Faisal's Arab Sherifial Forces assisted the EEF's capture of Ottoman Empire territory and fought the Battle of Aleppo, five days before the Armistice of Mudros ended the campaign on 30 October 1918. He continued to serve in the region as High Commissioner in Egypt from 1919 until 1925, a position that meant he effectively ruled Egypt during this period.

Allenby was born on 23 April 1861, the son of Hynman Allenby and Catherine Anne Allenby (née Cane) and was educated at Haileybury College. His father owned 2,000 acres (810 ha) in Norfolk and Felixstowe House, at Felixstowe, then a fishing village. This was a summer home until the family settled there permanently after Hynman Allenby's death in 1878.
Allenby had no great desire to be a soldier, and tried to enter the Indian Civil Service but failed the entry exam. He sat the exam for the Royal Military College, Sandhurst in 1880 and was commissioned as a subaltern, with the rank of Lieutenant, in the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons on 10 May 1882. He joined his regiment in South Africa later that year, taking part in the Bechuanaland Expedition of 1884–85. After serving at the cavalry depot in Canterbury, he was promoted to Captain on 10 January 1888 and then returned to South Africa.

Allenby returned to Britain in 1890 and he sat – and failed – the entry exam for the Staff College at Camberley. Not deterred, he sat the exam again the next year and passed. Captain Douglas Haig of the 7th Hussars also entered the college at the same time, thus beginning a rivalry between the two that ran until the First World War. Allenby was more

popular with fellow officers, even being made Master of the Draghounds in preference to Haig who was the better rider; Allenby had already developed a passion for polo. Their contemporary James Edward Edmonds later claimed that the staff at the Staff College thought Allenby dull and stupid but were impressed by a speech that he gave to the Farmers' Dinner, which had in fact been written for him by Edmonds and another.

He was promoted to Major on 19 May 1897 and was posted to the 3rd Cavalry Brigade, then serving in Ireland, as the brigade Major in March 1898.

Following the outbreak of the Second Boer War in October 1899, Allenby returned to his regiment, and the Inniskillings embarked at Queenstown and landed at Cape Town, South Africa, later that year. He took part in the actions at Colesberg on 11 January 1900, Klip Drift on 15 February 1900 and Dronfield Ridge on 16 February 1900, and was mentioned in dispatches by the commander-in-chief, Lord Roberts on 31 March 1900.

Allenby, by now a Major, was appointed to command the squadron of New South Wales Lancers, who were camped beside the Australian Light Horse outside Bloemfontein. Both men and horses suffered from the continuous rain and men with cases of enteric fever were taken away every day. Allenby soon established himself as a strict disciplinarian, according to A. B. Paterson even imposing a curfew on the officers' mess.

Allenby participated in the actions at Zand River on 10 May 1900, Kalkheuval Pass on 3 June 1900, Barberton on 12 September 1900 and Tevreden on 16 October 1900 when the Boer General Jan Smuts was defeated. He was promoted to local Lieutenant Colonel on 1 January 1901, and to local Colonel on 29 April 1901. In a despatch dated 23 June 1902, Lord Kitchener, Commander-in-Chief during the latter part of the war, described him as *"a popular and capable Cavalry Brigadier"*. For his services during the war, he was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in the South Africa honours list published on 26 June 1902, and he received the actual decoration of CB from King Edward VII during an investiture at Buckingham Palace on 24 October 1902.

Allenby returned to Britain in 1902 and became commanding officer of the 5th Royal Irish Lancers in Colchester with the substantive rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 2 August 1902, and the brevet rank of Colonel from 22 August 1902. He was promoted to the substantive rank of Colonel and to the temporary rank of Brigadier on 19 October 1905. He assumed command of the 4th Cavalry Brigade in 1906. He was promoted to the rank of Major General on 10 September 1909 and was appointed Inspector-General of Cavalry in 1910 due to his extensive cavalry experience. He was nicknamed "The Bull" due to an increasing tendency for sudden bellowing outbursts of explosive rage directed at his subordinates, combined with his powerful physical frame. Allenby stood 6 ft 2 in (1.88 m) with a barrel chest and his very bad temper made "The Bull" a figure who inspired much consternation among those who had to work under him.

During the First World War, Allenby initially served on the Western Front. At the outbreak of war in August 1914, a British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was sent to France, under the command of Field Marshal Sir John French. It consisted of four infantry divisions (the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th, with the 4th and 6th being held in Britain) and one cavalry division, the latter commanded by Allenby. The cavalry division first saw action in semi-chaotic circumstances covering the retreat after the Battle of Mons opposing the German Army's invasion of France. One of Allenby's subordinates claimed at the time: *"He cannot explain verbally, with any*

lucidity at all, what his plans are". When a headquarters officer asked why Brigadier General Hubert Gough's cavalry brigade was miles from where it was supposed to be, he received the reply: *"He told me he was getting as far away from the Bull as possible. It was a most scandalous affair, and he was in an almost open rebellion against Allenby at the time".* The division distinguished itself under Allenby's direction in the subsequent fighting, with minimal resources at its disposal, at the First Battle of Ypres.

Allenby was promoted to temporary Lieutenant General on 10 October 1914. As the BEF was expanded in size to two armies, he was rewarded by being made commander of the Cavalry Corps. On 6 May 1915, Allenby voluntarily left the Cavalry Arm to take up command of V Corps which was engaged at that moment in severe fighting at the Second Battle of Ypres. Commanding a corps seemed to make Allenby's bad temper even worse where anything from a split infinitive in a staff paper to discovering a corpse in the field without the tin helmet that Allenby ordered his men to wear sent Allenby off into a rage. The V Corps was victorious in defeating the German assault but incurred controversially heavy losses in the process through Allenby's tactical policy of continual counterattacks at the German attacking force. In September 1915, V Corps attempted a diversion of German strength to facilitate the concurrent British offensive at Loos. They executed a minor attack in the Hooge Sector in the Ypres Salient under Allenby's direction, which once again incurred substantial losses to its units involved in the affair.

In October 1915, Allenby was promoted to the temporary rank of General to lead the Third Army of the BEF, being made Lieutenant General (substantive rank) on 1 January 1916. In the mid-summer of 1916, he was the army commander in support of the launch of the Battle of the Somme, with responsibility for the abortive assault by Third Army troops on the trench fortress of the Gommecourt salient, which failed with severe casualties to the units under his command in the operation. By this time in 1916, Archibald Wavell, who was one of Allenby's staff officers and supporters, wrote that Allenby's temper seemed to *"confirm the legend that 'the Bull' was merely a bad-tempered, obstinate hot-head, a 'thud-and-blunder' General".* Allenby harboured doubts about the leadership of the commander of the BEF, General Sir Douglas Haig, who had replaced Field Marshal French as commander-in-chief (C-in-C) of the BEF in December 1915, (and with whom Allenby had clashed at the Staff College some twenty years earlier) but refused to allow any of his officers to say anything critical about Haig. However, despite Allenby's rages and obsession with applying the rules in a way that often seemed petty, Allenby's staff officers found an intellectually curious General who was interested in finding new ways of breaking the stalemate. J. F. C. Fuller called Allenby *"a man I grew to like and respect",* a man who always asked his staff if they had any new ideas about how to win the war. Allenby had wider interests than many other British Generals, reading books on every conceivable subject from botany to poetry and was noted for his critical intellect. An officer who had dinner with Allenby at his headquarters in a French château recalled:
His keen grey-blue eyes, under heavy brows, search the face while he probes the mind with sharp, almost staccato questions about everything under the sun except what is expected. He cannot suffer fools gladly and demands an unequivocal affirmative or negative to every query he makes. He has a habit of asking questions on the most abstruse subjects, and an unpleasant knack of catching out anyone who gives an evasive answer for the sake of politeness.

Many of Allenby's officers believed that he was incapable of any emotion except rage, but he was in fact a loving father and husband who was intensely concerned about his only child, Michael, who was serving at the front. Before Allenby went to bed every night, Allenby would

enter the office of the officer who took the daily casualty returns, ask *"Have you any news of my little boy today?"* and after the officer replied *"No news sir",* Allenby would then go to bed a reassured man.

In early 1917, Allenby was ordered by Haig, now a Field Marshal, to start preparations for a major offensive around the city of Arras. During his planning Allenby insisted upon putting into practice many of the ideas that his staff officers had offered. Allenby rejected the normal week-long bombardment of the German trenches before making an assault, instead planning on a 48-hour bombardment before the assault went ahead. In addition, Allenby had made careful plans to control traffic in the rear to prevent traffic jams that would block his logistics, a second echelon behind the first echelon that would only be sent in to exploit successes, tunnels to bring up new divisions behind the German lines while avoiding German fire and finally new weapons like tanks and aircraft were to play prominent roles in the offensive. In March 1917, the Germans pulled back to the Hindenburg Line, which led Allenby to argue that the planned offensive in the Arras sector in April should be changed, a request Haig refused. Despite refusing Allenby's request for more time to change his plans, Haig informed him that the entire responsibility for the failure of the Arras offensive would rest with him. As the Zero Hour for the offensive at 5:30 am on 9 April 1917 approached, Allenby was thus unusually worried as he knew his entire career was in the balance.

At first, the Arras offensive went well with the Third Army breaking through the German lines and advancing three-and-a-half miles in one day. In a letter to his wife on 10 April 1917, Allenby wrote: *"I had a very big success yesterday. I won all along the line; killed a host of Boche and took over 7,500 prisoners...We have, at last, brought off what I been working on all winter. My staff has been splendid".* There were weeks of heavy fighting during the Third Army's offensive at the Battle of Arras in the spring of the 1917, where an initial breakthrough had deteriorated into trench-fighting positional warfare—once more with heavy casualties to 3rd Army's units involved. Allenby lost the confidence of the BEF's commander, Haig. He was promoted to full General on 3 June 1917, but he was replaced at the head of the Third Army by Lieutenant General Sir Julian Byng on 9 June 1917 and returned to England.

The British War Cabinet was divided in debate in May 1917 over the allocation of British resources between the Western Front and other fronts, with Allied victory over Germany far from certain. Curzon and Hankey recommended that Britain seize ground in the Middle East. Lloyd George also wanted more effort on other fronts. Previously, leaders had been concerned that taking over Palestine would divide it and leave it for other countries to take, but repeated losses to the Turkish Army and the stalled Western Front changed their minds.

Lloyd George wanted a commander *"of the dashing type"* to replace Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Murray in command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF). Jan Smuts refused the command (late May) unless promised resources for a decisive victory. Lloyd George appointed Allenby to the role, although it was not decided immediately whether he would be authorised to launch a major offensive. Allenby believed his new assignment to be a joke, because he still believed that the war would be decided on the Western Front.

Although many of the War Cabinet wanted more efforts on the Palestine Front, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), General Sir William Robertson, believed that Western Front commitments did not justify a serious attempt to capture Jerusalem (Third Ypres was in progress from 31 July until November), and throughout 1917 he put pressure on Allenby to

demand unrealistically large reinforcements to discourage the politicians from authorising Middle East offensives.

Allenby arrived on 27 June 1917. On 31 July 1917, he received a telegram from his wife saying that Michael Allenby had been killed in action, leading to Allenby's breaking down in tears in public while he recited a poem by Rupert Brooke. Afterwards, Allenby kept his grief to himself and his wife, and instead threw himself into his work with icy determination, working very long hours without a break. Wavell recalled: *"He went on with his work and asked no sympathy. Only those who stood close to him knew how heavy the blow had been, how nearly it had broken him, and what courage it had taken to withstand it".* Allenby assessed the Turkish Army's fighting force that he was facing to be 46,000 rifles and 2,800 sabres, and estimated that he could take Jerusalem with 7 infantry and 3 cavalry divisions. He did not feel that there was a sufficient military case to do so, and felt that he would need reinforcements to advance further. Allenby understood the problems posed by logistics in the desert and spent much time working to ensure his soldiers would be well supplied at all times, especially with water. The logistics of getting water to the soldiers and through the desert is thought to be the biggest challenge and accomplishment Allenby made in the Middle East campaign. Allenby also saw the importance of good medical treatment and insisted that proper medical facilities be created to treat all of the diseases common to the Middle East like ophthalmia and enteric fever. Allenby was eventually ordered to attack the Turks in southern Palestine, but the extent of his advance was not yet to be decided, advice which Robertson repeated in "secret and personal" notes (1 and 10 August).

Allenby quickly won the respect of his troops by making frequent visits to the EEF's front-line units, in a marked change from the leadership style of his predecessor Murray, who had commanded primarily from Cairo. Allenby moved the EEF's GHQ from the Egyptian capital city to Rafah, nearer to the front lines at Gaza, and re-organized the disparate forces of the EEF into a three primary corps order of battle: XX, XXI, and the Desert Mounted Corps. He also approved the utilisation of Arabic irregular forces which were operating at that time to the Turkish Army's open left flank in the Arabian interior, under the direction of a young British Army intelligence officer named T.E.Lawrence. He sanctioned £200,000 a month for Lawrence to facilitate his work amongst the tribes involved.

In early October 1917, Robertson asked Allenby to state his extra troop requirements to advance from the Gaza–Beersheba line (30 miles wide) to the Jaffa–Jerusalem line (50 miles wide), urging him to take no chances in estimating the threat of a German-reinforced threat. Allenby's estimate was that he would need 13 extra divisions (an impossible demand even if Haig's forces went on the defensive on the Western Front) and that he might face 18 Turkish and 2 German divisions. Yet, in private letters, Allenby and Robertson agreed that sufficient British Empire troops were already in place to take and hold Jerusalem.

Having reorganised his regular forces, Allenby won the Third Battle of Gaza (31 October – 7 November 1917) by surprising the defenders with an attack at Beersheba. The first step in capturing Beersheba was to send out false radio messages prompting the Turkish forces to think Britain was going to attack Gaza. After that, an intelligence officer, by the name of Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, rode right up to the Turkish line, barely evading capture. In the fray, he dropped a bloodstained bag, smeared with horse blood, with fake military plans in it. The plans falsely described how the British force was on its way to capture Gaza. Additional radio messages threatening Meinertzhagen made up the Turkish Army's mind: the British Army was going to attack Gaza. Instead, they went through with the capture of Beersheba. *"The Turks at*

Beersheba were undoubtedly taken completely by surprise, a surprise from which the dash of London troops and Yeomanry, finely supported by their artillery, never gave them time to recover. The charge of the Australian Light Horse completed their defeat" – Allenby. His force captured the water supply there, and was able to push onward through the desert. His force pushed northwards towards Jerusalem. *"Favoured by a continuance of fine weather, preparation for a fresh advance against the Turkish positions... of Jerusalem proceeded rapidly"* – Allenby. The Ottomans were beaten at Junction Station (10–14 November), and retreated out of Jerusalem, which was on 9 December 1917. During the Palestine campaign, Allenby entered a bacteriological laboratory near Ludd, where he saw some charts on the wall. When he asked about their meanings, he was told that they were of the seasonal incidence of malignant malaria in the Plain of Sharon, then he replied:
"I think it is the reason why Richard Coeur de Lion never got to Jerusalem. His army was nearly destroyed by fever, and I find that he came down the coast in September when malignant malaria was at its height".

Allenby received Christian, Jewish and Muslim community leaders in Jerusalem and worked with them to ensure that religious sites of all three faiths were respected. Allenby sent his Indian Muslim soldiers to guard Islamic religious sites, feeling that this was the best way of reaching out to the Muslim population of Jerusalem.

Allenby dismounted and entered the city on foot through the Jaffa Gate, together with his officers, in deliberate contrast to the perceived arrogance of the Kaiser's entry into Jerusalem on horseback in 1898, which had not been well received by the local citizens. He did this out of respect for the status of Jerusalem as the Holy City important to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (see his proclamation of martial law above). The people of Jerusalem saw Allenby's entrance on foot as a sign of his modesty. He subsequently stated in his official report:
"...I entered the city officially at noon, 11 December, with a few of my staff, the commanders of the French and Italian detachments, the heads of the political missions, and the Military Attaches of France, Italy, and America... The procession was all afoot, and at Jaffa gate I was received by the guards representing England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, India, France and Italy. The population received me well..."

The British press printed cartoons of Richard Coeur de Lion – who had himself failed to capture Jerusalem – looking down on the city from the heavens with the caption reading, "The last Crusade. My dream comes true!" The crusade imagery was used to describe the campaign by the British press and later by the British Ministry of Information. There were reports that on entering the city Allenby had remarked *"only now have the crusades ended."* However, mindful of the Pan-Islamic propaganda of the Ottomans who had proclaimed a jihad against the Allies in 1914, Allenby himself discouraged the use of the crusader imagery, banned his press officers from using the terms crusade and crusader in their press releases and always went out of his way to insist that he was fighting merely the Ottoman Empire, not Islam. Allenby stated that *"The importance of Jerusalem lay in its strategic importance, there was no religious impulse in this campaign".*

In May 1918, Allenby publicly met with Chaim Weizmann and the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem in Jerusalem. Asked again after the fall of Jerusalem, Allenby wrote that he could complete the conquest of Palestine with his existing forces, but would need 16–18 divisions, on top of the 8–10 he already had, for a further advance of 250 miles to the Damascus–Beirut Line and then to Aleppo to cut Turkish communications to Mesopotamia (where by early 1918,

50,000 Turks were tying down a British Empire ration strength of over 400,000, of whom almost half were non-combatants, and 117,471 were British troops).

Smuts was sent to Egypt to confer with Allenby and Marshall (C-in-C Mesopotamia), with Robertson's clash with the government now moving to its final stages, and the new Supreme War Council at Versailles drawing up plans for more efforts in the Middle East. Allenby told Smuts of Robertson's private instructions (sent by hand of Walter Kirke, appointed by Robertson as Smuts' adviser) that there was no merit in any further advance. Allenby worked with Smuts to draw up plans to reach Haifa by June and Damascus by the autumn, reinforced by 3 divisions from Mesopotamia. The speed of the advance was limited by the need to lay fresh rail track. This met with War Cabinet approval (6 March 1918).

The German Spring offensive on the Western Front meant that Allenby was without reinforcements after his forces failed to capture Amman in March and April 1918. He halted the offensive in the spring of 1918 and had to send 60,000 men to the Western Front, although the Dominion Prime Ministers in the Imperial War Cabinet continued to demand a strong commitment to the Middle East in case Germany could not be beaten.

New troops from the British Empire (specifically Australia, New Zealand, India, and South Africa) led to the resumption of operations in August 1918. Following an extended series of deceptive moves, the Ottoman line was broken at the Battle of Megiddo (19–21 September 1918), and the Allied cavalry passed through and blocked the Turkish retreat. The EEF then advanced at an impressive rate, as high as 60 miles in 55 hours for cavalry, and infantry slogging 20 miles a day and encountering minimal resistance. Damascus fell on 1 October, Homs on 16 October, and Aleppo on 25 October. With the threat of Asia Minor being invaded, the Ottoman Empire capitulated on 30 October 1918 with the signing of the Armistice of Mudros.

Allenby was made a Field Marshal on 31 July 1919, and created Viscount Allenby, of Megiddo and of Felixstowe in the County of Suffolk, on 7 October. His appointment in 1919 as Special High Commissioner of Egypt came as the country was being disrupted by demonstrations against British rule. It had been under Martial Law since 1914 and several Egyptian leaders, including Saad Zaghlul, had been exiled to Malta.

These deportations had led to rioting across the country, with Cairo isolated. Allenby's first response was conciliatory.He persuaded the Colonial Office to allow Zaghlul and his delegation, from the Wafd, to travel to France. Their intention was to present the Egyptian case to the Paris Peace Conference but they received no official recognition and returned to Egypt in failure.
As a General, Allenby played a prominent role in helping Britain counter the 1919 Egyptian revolution. However, as High Commissioner of Egypt, Allenby favoured negotiations with Egypt. Soon after the 1919 uprising, the Milner Mission was initiated.

In early 1921 there were more riots and demonstrations that were blamed on Zaghlul. This time Allenby ordered that Zaghlul and five other leaders be deported to the Seychelles. Sixteen rioters were executed. The following year Allenby travelled to London with proposals which he insisted be implemented. They included the end of Martial Law, the drafting of an Egyptian Constitution and the return of Zaghlul. Progress was made: Egypt was granted limited self-government, and a draft constitution was published in October 1922 leading to the formation of a Zaghlul government in January 1924. The following November the commander of British

forces in Egypt and Sudan, Sir Lee Stack, was assassinated in Cairo. Allenby's response was draconian and included a humiliating £500,000 fine to be paid by the Egyptian Government. In May 1925, Allenby resigned and returned to England.

Retirement
Allenby was appointed Honorary Colonel of the Cinque Ports Fortress Royal Engineers on 12 September 1925 and made Captain of Deal Castle.
Murray and Allenby were invited to give lectures at Aldershot in 1931 about the Palestine campaign. Exchanging letters beforehand, Murray asked whether it had been worth risking the Western Front (in the autumn of 1917) to transfer troops to Palestine. Allenby avoided that question, but commented that in 1917 and into the spring of 1918 it had been far from clear that the Allies were going to win the war. The Armistice between Russia and the Central Powers of December 1917 had effectively taken Russia out of the war, but the Americans, who had entered the war in April 1917, were not yet present in strength. France and Italy were weakened and might have been persuaded to make peace, perhaps by Germany giving up Belgium or Alsace-Lorraine, or Austria-Hungary giving up the Trentino. In those circumstances, the Central Powers were likely to be left in control of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, and it had been sensible for Britain to grab some land in the Middle East to block Germany's route to India. Allenby's views mirrored those of the War Cabinet at the time.
Allenby went to Patagonia for a last fishing trip, aged 74, to see if the salmon really were as large as those in the River Tay.
Death
He died suddenly from a ruptured cerebral aneurysm on 14 May 1936 at his house in Kensington, London, at the age of 75 years. His body was cremated, and his ashes were buried in Westminster Abbey.

Family
In 1897, Allenby married Miss Adelaide Chapman (d.1942), the daughter of a Wiltshire landowner. Their only child, Lieutenant Horace Michael Hynman Allenby, MC (1898–1917), was killed in action at Koksijde in Flanders whilst serving with the Royal Horse Artillery. The personal inscription on his gravestone reads: "HOW SHALL I DECK MY SONG FOR THE LARGE SWEET SOUL THAT HAS GONE AND WHAT SHALL MY PERFUME BE FOR THE GRAVE OF HIM I LOVE". This is a quotation from "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" by American poet Walt Whitman.

On Allenby's death, leaving no direct issue, his peerage and seat in the House of Lords passed by a special remainder to his nephew Dudley Allenby, son of Captain Frederick Allenby, who became the 2nd Viscount.

Lieutenant General Sir William Marshall

Lieutenant General Sir William Raine Marshall GCMG KCB KCSI
(October 1865 – 29 May 1939) was a British Army officer who in November 1917 succeeded Sir Stanley Maude (upon the latter's death from cholera) as commander-in-chief of the British forces in Mesopotamia. He kept that position until the end of the First World War.

Marshall was born in the village of Stranton, near Hartlepool, County Durham. He was the younger son of a solicitor, William Marshall, and his wife, Elizabeth Raine.
He first went to Repton School and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He received a commission as a Lieutenant into the Sherwood Foresters in January 1886, after which he served

on the Malakand expedition, on the North West Frontier and on the Tirah expedition before fighting in the Second Boer War. He was promoted to Captain in January 1893.

He served in the war, receiving a promotion in January 1901 to the local rank of Major while in command of a battalion of mounted infantry. Following the end of the war, in late May 1902, Marshall received a brevet promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in the South African Honours list published on 26 June 1902.

He was promoted in January 1903 from supernumerary Captain and brevet Lieutenant Colonel to Captain, and to brevet Colonel in June 1908.

In January 1911 he was appointed as an assistant commandant of the School of Instruction for Mounted Infantry at Longmoor, Hampshire. He was promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant Colonel in February 1912, when he became commanding officer (CO) of the 1st Battalion, Sherwood Foresters.

First World War

Still in this post upon the outbreak of the First World War in the summer of 1914, Marshall served on the Western Front during 1914–15. He was then promoted to the temporary wartime rank of Brigadier in February 1915 and assigned to command the 87th Infantry Brigade-*"I am more proud of having commanded this brigade than of any higher command to which I succeeded during the war",* he later described, the 29th Division, which he led in the ill-fated expedition to Gallipoli, during which he received a promotion to Major General in June 1915. On 25 April that year he was wounded during the "X" Beach landings, having received a slight flesh wound in the leg above the knee.

A series of divisional commands followed: 42nd, 29th, and 53rd, before he was posted to Salonika with the 27th Division, and then, promoted to temporary Lieutenant General in September 1916, with III (Indian) Corps on the Mesopotamian Front. It was while commanding III Corps that Marshall participated in the capture of Kut-al-Amara in February 1917, and in the capture of Baghdad the following month.

With Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Maude's death as commander-in-chief from cholera (most probably from contaminated milk), the hugely popular commander was replaced by the careful and meticulous Marshall, appointed by General Sir William Robertson, the chief of the Imperial General staff at the War Office in London, the latter determined to scale back operations in Mesopotamia. It was in this capacity that Marshall accepted the surrender of the Ottoman army at Mosul on 30 October 1918, with the signing of the armistice of Mudros.
His decision to seize Ottoman territory around Mosul after the ceasefire is controversial, the Official History makes no mention of this action.

His post-war career saw him promoted to substantive Lieutenant General in January 1919 and took him back to India, commanding the Southern Army from November 1920 and remaining there until November 1923; he retired the following year.

Marshall was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath in 1916. He was knighted three times – as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (1917), Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India (1918) and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George (1919). He served as Colonel of the Sherwood Foresters from August 1930, upon the death of General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, until 1935.

He died at Le Grand Hôtel, Bagnoles-de-l'Orne, France, at the age of 73. He was survived by his wife, Emma Cundell, whom he married in 1902.

General Sir Arthur Curie

General Sir Arthur William Currie, GCMG KCB (5 December 1875– 30 November 1933) was a senior officer of the Canadian Army who fought during World War I. He had the unique distinction of starting his military career on the very bottom rung as a pre-war militia gunner before rising through the ranks to become the first Canadian commander of the Canadian Corps. Currie's success was based on his ability to rapidly adapt brigade tactics to the exigencies of trench warfare, using set piece operations and bite-and-hold tactics. He is generally considered to be among the most capable commanders of the Western Front, and one of the finest commanders in Canadian military history.

Arthur Currie was born on 5 December 1875 to William Garner Curry and Jane Patterson on their farm near the hamlet of Napperton, Ontario, just west of Strathroy. He was the third in a family of eight children and grew up on the homestead of his paternal grandparents, John Corrigan and Jane Garner Currie's grandparents had emigrated from Ireland in 1838 to escape religious strife, and upon their arrival in Canada they had converted from Catholicism and Anglicanism to Methodism, changing the family name from Corrigan to Curry. Arthur Currie modified the spelling of his surname from Curry to Currie in 1897.

Currie was educated in local common schools and at the Strathroy District Collegiate Institute, where he proved to be a good student especially interested in literature. He had plans to pursue a professional career in law or medicine; however, the death of his father when Arthur was fifteen made this impossible due to his limited financial means. Currie instead pursued teacher training, but he was unable to secure a job and returned to high school to complete an honours certificate in order to gain university entrance. In May 1894, mere months before his final exams, Currie quarrelled with one of his teachers, and subsequently left high school to seek his fortune in British Columbia, hoping to take advantage of the financial boom resulting from the construction of the transcontinental railway. However, Currie found no prospects outside of teaching, so he qualified as a teacher in British Columbia and took a teaching position on the Saanich Peninsula north of Victoria, British Columbia. In 1896 Currie moved to Victoria, taking a position at Boy's Central School and later Victoria High School.

Currie began his military career in 1897 as a part-time soldier in the Canadian militia while making his living as a teacher and later as an insurance salesman and real estate speculator. Currie rose quickly through the ranks: commissioned as an officer in 1900, promoted to Captain in 1901, then Major in 1906 and became an artillery regimental commander in 1909. In 1913 Currie accepted the command of the newly created 50th Regiment Gordon Highlanders of Canada. Finding himself in debt following a real estate crash in Victoria, Currie embezzled ten thousand dollars earmarked for regimental uniforms into his personal accounts to pay off his debts. When the First World War broke out Canadian Minister of Militia Sam Hughes appointed Currie as commander of the 2nd Canadian Brigade. Following the Second Battle of Ypres Currie was promoted to Major General and commander of the 1st Canadian Division. Following the Battle of Vimy Ridge, Canadian Corps commander Julian Byng was promoted to General and Currie, the 1st Canadian Division commander, was promoted to Lieutenant General and assumed command of the Canadian Corps. Upon returning to Canada, Currie was promoted to General and was made Inspector General of the Canadian Army. Although he had

only a high school diploma, Currie became the principal and vice-chancellor of McGill University in 1920, holding this post until his death in 1933.

On 6 May 1897 Currie joined the Canadian Militia as a part-time gunner for the 5th (British Columbia) Field Artillery Regiment. Currie achieved the rank of corporal in 1900 and was soon after offered an officer's commission, which would give him a much higher status in the social circles of Victoria. A military commission was however an expensive proposition. Officers were expected to provide their own set of tailored uniforms and to donate their pay to the officer's mess. Currie was discouraged by his financial prospects as a teacher; and as a result, in February 1900, he left teaching and took a position as an insurance salesman with Matson & Coles, a local insurance firm. On 14 August 1901 Currie married Lucy Chaworth-Musters, who had been raised by Currie's aunt and uncle in British Columbia after being abandoned by her British military officer father following the death of her mother in childbirth.

Currie took on his role as militia officer seriously. He attended every available course offered by the British Army Contingent at Work Point Barracks in Esquimalt, often ordered military text books from London and was found on the shooting range every Saturday. He was a keen marksman and was elected president of the British Columbia Rifle Association in 1905. Currie was promoted to Captain in November 1901, and then to Major in 1906. By September 1909, he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, commanding the 5th Regiment. Apart from his interest in the militia, Currie was also an active Freemason, rising to the position of deputy grandmaster of the Victoria District of Freemasonry in 1907. He also served two years as president of the Young Men's Liberal Association of Victoria, and several times was suggested as a candidate for the provincial legislature.

In addition to his military career, Currie continued to be active in business. He was appointed head of Matson Insurance Firm in 1904 when Sam Matson, who had many business interests beyond his insurance firm, decided to concentrate his energy on publishing the Daily Colonist. With a land speculation boom in Victoria in full swing, Currie and a Victoria businessman, R. A. Power, formed Currie & Power in 1908. Currie invested heavily in the real estate market. The firm was a success until 1912 when property prices began to decline. In 1913 Currie's financial situation deteriorated rapidly as the value of his real estate holdings decreased and he became financially over-extended. In August, Currie's five-year term as commander of the 5th Regiment came to a close and he faced a forced retirement from the Canadian Militia at the age of 38. At this critical juncture, he was approached to take command of a new militia regiment.

Following the Canadian federal election of 1911, Minister of Militia and Defence Sam Hughes had ordered a rapid expansion of the national force. The large number of Scottish citizens of Victoria appealed for the formation of a Highland regiment in Victoria to augment the 88th Regiment Victoria Fusiliers, which had been formed in 1912. On 15 August 1913 the government authorized the formation of the 50th Regiment Gordon Highlanders of Canada. The originally designated commanding officer for the new regiment failed to qualify for the post and Currie was approached as a logical replacement. Currie initially turned down the idea, likely recognizing that the cost of the new Highland uniforms and mess bills would only add to his financial problems. His subordinate and friend, Major Garnet Hughes, Sam Hughes' son, was responsible for persuading Currie to reconsider and accept the position. Currie attended the Militia Staff Course conducted by Major Louis Lipsett, future commander of the 3rd Canadian Division, and qualified in March 1914.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Currie was desperate to avoid personal bankruptcy, which would have resulted in a loss in social standing and forced him to resign his commission. On 31 July 1914, Currie received CA$10,833.34 (equivalent to $283,653 in 2023) from the Militia Department with which to purchase new uniforms. Instead of using the funds to pay contractor Moore, Taggart and Co for the regimental uniforms, Currie embezzled the funds to pay off his personal debts. The 50th Regiment's honorary Colonel, William Coy, had promised to underwrite the regiment with $35,000, and Currie planned to use the funds to pay the uniform contractor. Unfortunately for Currie, Coy did not follow through with his financial commitment to the regiment, leaving Currie's accounting sleight-of-hand potentially exposed.
When World War I broke out and Canada found itself at war on 4 August 1914, Currie was offered command of Military District No. 11 – British Columbia. When he turned this down, he was then offered command of the 2nd Infantry Brigade of the Canadian Expeditionary Force's 1st Canadian Division. Currie considered turning down this offer as well so he could attempt to solve his financial woes. He once again changed his mind at the urging of Garnet Hughes. Currie's promotion to Brigadier-General was confirmed on 29 September 1914, and he took command of the 2nd Brigade at the Valcartier Camp in Quebec. When the 50th Regiment's acting commanding officer, Major Cecil Roberts, wrote to him inquiring as to the status of the uniform grant, Currie ignored the correspondence and sailed overseas with his brigade in October 1914.

The 1st Canadian Division spent the winter of 1914–15 training in England, and were sent to France in February 1915. After a period of indoctrination in the realities of trench warfare, they took control of a section of trench in the Ypres Salient on 17 April 1915. Only five days later, the Germans used poison gas for the first time on the Western Front. French colonial troops on the Canadians' left flank broke, leaving a 7-kilometre (4.3 mi) long hole in the Allied line. In the chaos that followed, Currie proved his worth as a leader by assessing the situation, and coolly issuing commands from his brigade headquarters even as it was gassed and then destroyed by fire. Currie cobbled together a fluid defence and counterattacked. At one point, he personally went back to the rear to try to convince two regiments of British reinforcements to move forward. After several days of fierce fighting, Allied counterattacks re-established a stable defensive line, denying the Germans a breakthrough.

Currie's leadership during the Second Battle of Ypres was a source of dispute by British historian James Edward Edmonds, who argued that Currie and his 2nd Canadian Brigade performed poorly at Ypres. Currie, supported by the Canadian official historian Colonel Archer Fortescue Duguid, waged a vigorous defence, charging that Edmonds was seeking to diminish the Canadian contribution to the Second Battle of Ypres. Edmonds wrongly accused Currie of ordering his men to retreat on 24 April 1915 because of the chaos caused by the chlorine gas and fierce attacks of the German infantry; Currie and Duguid said it was Brigadier-General Richard Turner, commanding the 3rd Canadian Brigade on Currie's left, who had ordered a retreat without orders, leaving Currie with an exposed left flank. Canadian historian Timothy Travers also argued that Edmonds was very unfair to Currie since the 1st Canadian Division occupied a position that would have been difficult to defend even under normal conditions, without considering the effects of the first mass use of poison gas and the complete withdrawal of French forces on their left flank. Although acknowledging that Currie had made mistakes, Travers maintained that unlike the Algerians who fled, Currie's 2nd Brigade held its ground at Ypres, consequently losing 46% of its total strength either killed or wounded over two days of fighting.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Following the battle, Currie was promoted to Major General, and given command of the entire 1st Canadian Division. He was also appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) and a Commander of the Legion d'Honneur.

Although the Canadians did not take part in the infamous Anglo-French offensive on the Somme on 1 July 1916, they did eventually move into the line in the fall to aid the slow crawl forward. Currie proved himself to be the master of the set-piece assault, designed to take limited objectives and then hold on in the face of inevitable German counterattacks. It was at this time that Currie lost favour with former friends Sam and Garnet Hughes. Sam Hughes wanted Garnet promoted to command of a division, but Currie, having seen Garnet in action at the Second Battle of Ypres, believed Garnet to be an incompetent officer, and refused. Currie's reputation was on the rise, and Hughes did not have the necessary leverage to force Currie to comply.

By late 1916, the four Canadian divisions were in France, gathered together as the Canadian Corps under the command of Sir Julian Byng. The British High Command informed Byng that the Canadians would have a central role in the upcoming Battle of Arras by attacking Vimy Ridge, 8km (5.0 mi) northeast of Arras on the western edge of the Douai Plains. Byng ordered Currie to study the Battle of the Somme and advise what lessons could be taken and applied. Currie was also among a set of officers who attended a series of lectures hosted by the French Army regarding their experiences during the Battle of Verdun. Currie not only questioned senior French officers, but also sought out junior officers and asked the same questions, carefully noting the discrepancies between the senior officers' beliefs and the junior officers' experiences. On 20 January 1917 Currie began a series of well received lectures to Corps and divisional headquarters based on his research. In response to the Verdun visit, organizational changes were made to the platoon structure within the infantry battalions that would later become corps-wide changes. In his report, Currie evaluated not only the French tactics but also what the Canadians had done wrong in the fighting around Pozières in 1916. Currie summarized the primary factors behind successful French offensive operations as: *careful staff work, thorough artillery preparation and support, the element of surprise, and a high state of training in the infantry units detailed for the assault.*

Currie, in command of the 1st Canadian Division, was responsible for the broad southern sector of the Canadian Corps advance and expected to make the greatest advance in terms of distance. The attack was to begin at 5:30 am on Easter Monday, 9 April 1917. By the end of the first day, the 1st Canadian Division had captured all of its first line objectives and the left half of its second line. The next morning by 9:30 am, fresh troops had leap-frogged existing battalions to advance to the third objective line. To permit the troops time to consolidate the third line, the advance halted and the barrage remained stationary for ninety minutes while machine guns were brought forward. Shortly before 1:00 pm, the advance recommenced and, by 2:00 pm, the 1st Canadian Division secured their final objective.

When Byng was promoted to General in command of the British Third Army in June 1917, Currie was raised to the temporary rank of Lieutenant General on 9 June, and given command of the entire Canadian Corps. Currie was knighted by King George V and appointed Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (KCMG) in the King's Birthday Honours of 4 June 1917. As he was taking command of the Corps, word reached Currie that the Canadian cabinet had been informed of his embezzlement. To avoid news of the scandal from breaking, Currie borrowed money from two wealthy subordinates, David Watson and Victor Odlum, to finally pay back the money he had taken from the 50th Regiment.

The British First Army commander Lieutenant General Henry Horne ordered the Canadian Corps to relieve I Corps opposite the city of Lens on 10 July 1917, and directed Currie to develop a plan for capturing the city by the end of July 1917. The operation was intended to engage as many German formations as possible and to prevent them from reinforcing the Ypres sector during the Third Battle of Ypres. After examining the area, Currie instead proposed to take the high ground outside the city, marked on allied maps as Hill 70, hold the feature in the expectation of a German counterattack, and inflict casualties by preparing a zone of concentrated artillery and machine gun fire. Currie's plan was implemented successfully, and by the end of the battle, some 20,000 Germans had been killed or wounded at the cost of 9,000 Canadians. The operation was effective in preventing German formations from transferring local men and equipment to Ypres, and Haig believed that the Battle of Hill 70 was one of the finest minor operations of the war.

The Canadian Corps was then transferred from Lens to Ypres to take part in the Battle of Passchendaele. Currie was tasked with continuing the advance started by the now exhausted II Anzac Corps in order to ultimately capture Passchendaele village and gain favourable observation positions and drier winter positions. Currie submitted his provisional operational plan on 16 October and presented a plan with extensive resources made available in reserve. He estimated the attack would result in 16,000 casualties. Currie's preparations included reconnaissance, road construction and a massing of artillery and heavy machine guns. Rather than one mass assault, Currie designed a series of well-prepared, sharp attacks that allowed the Corps to take an objective and then hold it against the inevitable German counterattacks. By 30 October, the Canadians, aided by two British divisions, gained the outskirts of the village in a driving rainstorm, and then held on for five days against intense shelling and counter-attacks, often standing waist deep in mud as they fought. The Canadians' victory came at the cost of 15,654 casualties, including 4,028 killed. Currie's grim casualty prediction had been accurate.

By early 1918 the Canadian Corps was in a state of uncertainty. The Canadian government wanted to expand the Canadian Corps by forming a 5th Division but the BEF wanted the Canadian Corps reorganized to mirror British divisions. British command also intended to integrate American battalions into the depleted corps, which Currie predicted would be a disaster and would destroy the homogeneous structure of the corps. Currie was opposed to all those measures since he did not view them as being in the best interests of the corps.
Currie, with the aid of the Minister of Overseas Military Forces, prevailed against the structural changes. The Canadian Corps retained its original Canadian organizational structure and fought as a homogeneous formation for the entire Hundred Days Offensive.

On 21 March 1918 the Germans launched a major Spring Offensive hoping to force an armistice on their terms, but by the summer their forward momentum had been contained and the Allies prepared to counterattack. In August 1918, when Currie was ordered to move the corps 70 miles (110 km) south to Amiens, the Canadians took pains to camouflage their move. This included sending a radio unit and two battalions to Ypres as a diversion. With no preliminary artillery bombardment at Amiens to warn the Germans, the attack on 8 August was a success. The Canadians were withdrawn from the line, and moved to the Somme, where they participated in the attack on the Hindenburg Line at the Drocourt–Quéant Line on 2 September. The assault resulted in the Germans being overrun along a 7,000-yard (6,400 m) front Historian Denis Winter called the seizure of the Drocourt–Quéant line by the Canadian Corps the *"greatest single achievement"* of the British Expeditionary Force during the entire war, and

praised Currie for his ability to bring an "unprecedented" concentration of artillery and machine gun fire together with flexible infantry sections that were adjusted for the situation. The German Seventeenth Army then retreated behind the flooded Canal du Nord. Currie took three weeks to prepare perhaps his most audacious plan: he suggested the entire corps cross the drier section of the canal on a front of only 2,700 yards (2,500 m). On 27 September the entire corps moved across the canal as planned, and then through the German lines in a series of planned zig-zag manoeuvres designed to confuse the Germans. Exhausted and demoralized, the German army staged a controlled retreat over the next five weeks. On 10 November, in what was to be his most controversial decision, Currie, under orders to continue to advance, ordered elements of the corps to liberate Mons. On the morning of 11 November, as Currie received orders confirming there would be a general armistice at 11:00 am, the capture of Mons was completed.

In December 1918, Currie established the Canadian War Narrative Section to maintain a level of control as to how the Canadian contribution to the Hundred Days Offensive would be documented in print and presented to the public. Tim Cook argues that the Canadian War Narrative Section was an important step in not only recording and presenting the achievements of the Canadian Corps but also in restoring Currie's damaged reputation, which had been battered by Sam Hughes and his supporters in Parliament. Hughes frequently referred to Currie as a butcher.

Currie and family had moved to England in 1915. They returned to Canada following the war, arriving in Halifax on 17 August 1919. No band or crowd received the ship when it docked and, when Currie arrived at the Victoria Memorial Building to greet the 13th Canadian Parliament, he received a lukewarm reception.
Currie was appointed Inspector General of the Armed Forces and was then promoted to full General on 10 December, the highest-ranking position in the Canadian forces. Currie intended to use the position to reform the military. However, in the post-war period, military funding was cut and Currie encountered significant opposition from the military bureaucracy to organizational changes. Deeply unhappy, Currie retired from the military, and in May 1920 accepted the position of principal and vice-chancellor of McGill University in Montreal.

Currie had only a high school diploma, but on the recommendation of McGill's acting principal, Frank Dawson Adams, Currie was selected as principal and vice-chancellor of McGill University on the basis of his *"exceptional powers of organization and administration"* and his *"capacity for inspiration and leadership"* rather than academic prowess. Within months of Currie's appointment, he led a fund-raising campaign to revive the university, travelling from coast to coast in a personal appeal for support; the fundraising campaign raised CA$6.5 million, more than the original goal of CA$5 million. Currie made a name for himself as a premier university administrator. From 1925 to 1927 he served as president of the National Conference of Canadian Universities and was elected as a trustee of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 1927. Currie was also instrumental in saving the School for Graduate Nurses at Royal Victoria College from closure in the early 1930s. During Currie's time as McGill's Principal the university established the Faculty of Music, the School for Graduate Nurses, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, and doubled its income despite the difficulties brought on by the Great Depression. Currie was also President of the Last Post Fund from 1924 to 1932.

In June 1927, the city of Mons erected a plaque commemorating its liberation by the Canadian Corps nine years earlier. But, when this event was reported in Canadian newspapers, Currie's enemies took the opportunity to again question the necessity of the final day of fighting. A

front-page editorial published on 13 June 1927 by the Hughes-friendly Port Hope Evening Guide argued that Currie was either negligent or deliberate in wasting the lives of soldiers under his command in taking Mons on the final day of the war. The newspaper had only a small local circulation, and Currie's friends advised him against pursuing the matter. However, Currie was unwilling to let the matter go, and sued the newspaper for libel, seeking $50,000 ($863,000 today) in damages. The trial in April 1928 was front-page news across Canada. On the stand, Currie testified that he had been under orders from Allied Supreme Commander Ferdinand Foch to pursue German forces; to do otherwise would have been treason. Many of Currie's senior officers testified that Currie had urged them to advance with caution, avoiding unnecessary casualties. At the end of the trial, the jury returned a verdict after four hours, finding the newspaper guilty of libel but awarding Currie only $500 ($8,600 today) in damages, plus costs.

Although Currie was awarded only a small portion of the value sought, newspapers across Canada referred to the result as a victory for him. The trial helped to restore Currie's reputation; however, the stress took a toll on his health. Currie was subsequently elected Dominion president of the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League in 1928. However, he suffered a stroke the following year and his ill health obliged him to resign, whereupon he was bestowed with the honorary title of Grand President.

Death

Currie suffered another stroke on 5 November 1933 and died on 30 November at the age of 57 at Royal Victoria Hospital from bronchial complications brought on by pneumonia. His civilian and military funeral on 5 December was held in Montreal and was the largest to that point in Canadian history. The Times wrote of his funeral: *"It was, by common consent, the most impressive funeral ever seen at Montreal"* and Robert Borden believed the ceremony *"was perhaps more elaborate than at any state or military funeral in the history of Canada".* Approximately 150,000 people lined the streets to watch the procession and the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission broadcast the funeral over radio. Those attending the funeral included Lord Bessborough, at the time the Governor General of Canada, important Canadian politicians, foreign diplomats and representatives of McGill University. No less than 170 organizations sent floral tributes. The service was conducted by the Bishop of Montreal at Christ Church Cathedral and was followed by a graveside service presided over by Archdeacon (Hon. Colonel) John Almond, a wartime Director of the Canadian Chaplain Service for the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Eight General officers acted as pallbearers.

The funeral procession received a 17-gun salute. In London a memorial service was conducted in Westminster Abbey on the same day as the funeral in Montreal, which was filled to capacity. Memorial services were held elsewhere in Canada also. On 3 December, 7,000 persons attended a memorial service for Currie at Toronto's Arena Gardens. Currie was initially interred in a family plot at Mount Royal Cemetery in Montreal. However, three years after his death, Currie's remains were moved to a more prominent site surmounted by a cross of sacrifice.

Currie was survived by his wife, Lucy, and a son and daughter. Lucy was left in some financial difficulty following her husband's death when McGill decided it could not afford to continue paying her a portion of his salary. In 1935 the Canadian government finally recognized his service to Canada by granting $50,000 to his estate.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

General The Earl of Cavan

Field Marshal Frederick Rudolph Lambart, 10th Earl of Cavan (16 October 1865 -28 August 1946), known as Viscount Kilcoursie from 1887 until 1900, was a British Army officer who served as chief of the imperial General staff (CIGS), the professional head of the British Army, in the 1920s. After being commissioned into the Grenadier Guards in 1885, he served in the Second Boer War as a company commander, then served with distinction during the First World War as a brigade, divisional, corps, and army commander, and later advised the British government on the implementation of the Geddes report, which advocated a large reduction in defence expenditure; he presided over a Major reduction in the size of the British Army.

Born into an aristocratic family of Anglo-Irish descent, he was the son of the 9th Earl of Cavan and Mary Sneade Lambart (née Olive). He was educated at Eton College, Christ Church, Oxford, and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. As there were no vacancies at that time for his preferred regiment, the Coldstream Guards, so he was instead commissioned as a Lieutenant into the Grenadier Guards on 29 August 1885. He gained the courtesy title of Viscount Kilcoursie in 1887 when his father succeeded to the Earldom and was appointed aide-de-camp to Frederick Stanley, the Governor General of Canada, in 1891.

He was promoted to Captain on 16 October 1897, after he had been appointed regimental adjutant on 25 August 1897, a position he held until 17 March 1900. By then, the Grenadier Guards were involved in the Second Boer War in South Africa. He saw action as a company commander in the Battle of Biddulphsberg in May 1900, and, having succeeded to his father's titles on 14 July 1900, took part in operations against the Borsin 1901 and for which he was later mentioned in despatches. Following the end of the war in June 1902, which prompted him to write in his diary that it was *"not far removed from the happiest day of my life", he* left Cape Town on the SS Sicilia and returned to Southampton in late July.

After promotion to Major on 28 October 1902, he became second-in-command of the 2nd Battalion, Grenadier Guards in July 1905. He was promoted again to Lieutenant Colonel and appointed commanding officer(CO) of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards on 14 February 1908, taking over from Brevet Colonel Robert Scott-Kerr.

He was appointed a Member of the Royal Victorian Order Fourth Class on 29 June 1910, which was awarded personally to him by George V. He was promoted to Colonel on 4 October 1911, after four years as CO of his battalion, he was placed on the half-pay list. By now having *"come to the conclusion that his military career had run its course",* he retired from the army on 8 November 1913 and became Master of Foxhounds for the Hertfordshire Hunt. At that time, he lived at Wheathampstead House in Wheathampstead in his native Hertfordshire.

He was recalled at the start of the First World War and, after receiving a promotion to the temporary rank of Brigadier General on 22 August, took command of the 2nd London Brigade of the 1st London Division, a Territorial Force (TF) unit then stationed in the East End of London.

His stay with the brigade was destined to be short as he was appointed CO of the 4th (Guards) Brigade on 18 September after its commander, Brigadier General Robert Scott-Kerr, his predecessor as CO of the 1st Grenadiers several years earlier, was badly wounded.
Cavan, by now in France, went on to lead the brigade, which then formed part of the 2nd Division, at the First Battle of Ypres in October. Included as one of the four battalions under

his brigade's command was the 1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire Regiment, in which many of his old neighbours were serving. Appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath on 18 February 1915, he also led the brigade at the Battle of Festubertin May 1915.

At the still relatively young age of 49, Cavan was promoted to Major General and given command of the 50th (Northumbrian) Division on 29 June 1915; a mere six weeks later he was appointed the first General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Guards Division and, having been appointed Commander of the French Legion of Honour on 10 September 1915, he led his division at the Battle of Loos later that month. He was elected an Irish representative peer on 24 September 1915 and as such was one of the last to be so elected before the creation of the Irish Free State. In his role as GOC of the Guards Division he informed Major Winston Churchill of the latter's attachment to the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadiers, which formed part of his division, in November 1915.

The following January 1916, Cavan, *"his star in the ascendant",* was promoted to temporary Lieutenant General and was placed at the head of XIV Corps and took part in the Battle of the Somme that summer. He was made a Grand Officer of the Belgian Order of the Crown on 2 November 1916 and appointed a Knight of the Order of St Patrick on 18 November 1916.

Promoted to the substantive rank of Lieutenant General on 1 January 1917, he led his corps at the Battle of Passchendaele in the summer and autumn of 1917, during which *"XIV Corps achieved every objective it was given."* He was awarded the rank of Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour on 25 September 1917 and was redeployed with his corps to the Italian front in October 1917, after the Italians had suffered disastrously at the Battle of Caporetto. Advanced to Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath on 1 January 1918, Cavan was appointed Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) of the British Forces in Italy on 10 March 1918, after his predecessor, General Herbert Plumer, had been recalled to the Western Front after the Germans had launched their Spring offensive.

After reverses on the Western Front in March and April 1918, Prime Minister Lloyd George and the War Cabinet had been keen to remove Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig as C-in-C of the BEF, but had been unable to think of a suitable successor. In July Cavan was summoned to London, supposedly to discuss the Italian Front but in reality, as Cabinet Secretary Maurice Hankey put it, *"to 'vet' him with a view to his replacing Haig"* Hankey claimed to have dissuaded the Prime Minister by pointing to Cavan's lack of ideas as to how to defeat the Austro-Hungarians. Haig's victory at Amiens in August secured his position.

On the Italian front Cavan, who in late June was promoted to the temporary rank of General, led the Tenth Army which struck a decisive blow at the Battle of Vittorio Veneto, the action that sounded the final death knell of the Austro-Hungarian Army towards the close of the war. Following the end of the war the King of Italy awarded him the War Cross for Military Valor and made him a Commander, and subsequently a Grand Officer, of the Military Order of Savoy as well as appointing him a Grand Officer of the Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus. Cavan was also appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George for his contribution to operations in Italy, awarded the American Distinguished Service Medal and appointed to the Chinese Order of Wen-Hu (1st Class).

His first appointment after the war was when he became Lieutenant of the Tower of London on 22 March 1920. Appointed aide-de-camp General to the King on 1 October 1920, he succeeded General Lord Rawlinson as General Officer Commanding-in-chief (GOC-in-C)

of Aldershot Command on 2 November 1920 before being promoted to the substantive rank of General on 2 November 1921.

He was appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff on 19 February 1922. He may have been chosen as a steady man, the antithesis of his predecessor, General Sir Henry Wilson, whose relations with the government had deteriorated, and who was in Wilson's view more likely to agree to withdraw troops from Egypt and India. CIGS Cavan advised the Government on the implementation of the Geddes report, which advocated a large reduction in defence expenditure, and he officiated over a major reduction in the size of the British Army. Earl Cavan made a famous speech at the 'Royal Academy Banquet' to his equals in government and fellow peers and royalty. Advanced to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath in the New Year Honours 1926, he retired on 19 February 1926.

He was also Colonel of the Irish Guards from 23 May 1925 and Colonel of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment from 10 December 1928.

In May 1927, he accompanied the Duke and Duchess of York to Australia to open the Provisional Parliament House at Canberra, for which he was appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Civil Division of the Order of the British Empire on 8 July 1927. He became Captain of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms on 23 July 1929 and was promoted to Field Marshal on 31 October 1932. He also took part in the procession for the funeral of King George V in January 1936 and commanded the troops at the procession for the coronation of King George VI on 12 May 1937

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During the Second World War he served as Commanding Officer of the Hertfordshire Local Defence Volunteers. He died at the London Clinic in Devonshire Place on 28 August 1946.

He was buried in the family plot at the churchyard in Ayot St Lawrence, where a seven-foot-tall red granite cross is his headstone.
His is the churchyard's only burial registered as a Commonwealth war grave.

He married on 1 August 1893 to Caroline Inez Crawley (1870–1920), daughter of George Baden Crawley and Eliza Inez Hulbert, at Digswell Church in Digswell, Hertfordshire. She predeceased her husband; they had no children.
He married, for the second time, on 27 November 1922 to Lady Hester Joan Byng, daughter of Reverend Francis Byng, 5th Earl of Strafford and Emily Georgina Kerr, at St. Mark's Church in North Audley Street, Mayfair, London. His second wife was the niece of his army colleague Field Marshal Byng, who was a younger half-brother of the 5th Earl of Strafford. Hester, Countess of Cavan, was appointed a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1927. The couple had two daughters:

- Lady Elizabeth Mary Lambart (16 October 1924 – 8 December 2016), married in 1949 to Mark Frederic Kerr Longman, President of the Longman Group Ltd, had issue. She was in 1947 one of the eight bridesmaids in Princess Elizabeth's marriage to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten. Her granddaughter is Rose Cholmondeley, Marchioness of Cholmondeley.
- Lady Joanna Lambart

As he had no son, the 10th Earl was succeeded by his brother, Horace.

Some General Officers of the Great War: Painting by John Singer Sargent

Lieutenant General Sir Charles Dobell

Lieutenant General Sir Charles Macpherson Dobell, KCB CMG GCB (22 June 1869 - 17 October 1954) was a Canadian soldier who served with the Royal Welch Fusiliers of the British Army.

Charles Dobell was raised in the family home, the palatial Villa Beauvoir in Sillery, Quebec; his father had emigrated from Liverpool and become rich in the lumber trade. After preliminary education in Quebec, Dobell went to Charterhouse School in England in 1883 for two years Returning to Canada, he entered the Royal Military College, Kingston, in September 1886 as Cadet No. 221 and was placed in B Company. In 1890, Dobell graduated with Honours, his conduct being noted as 'Very Good'. He was marked 'Distinguished' in seven out of thirteen obligatory subjects, with the same mark in four voluntary subjects. He was Company Sergeant Major of his company and wore a proficiency badge for Artillery Practice with another for being top of his class in Equitation. He was awarded three 'subject' prizes, received the Lord Stanley prize, graduated fourth of his intake and was one of only four cadets recommended in 1890 for commissions in the British army

In August 1890, he was commissioned into 1st Bn. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers, then stationed in Lucknow but warned for duty on the North-West Frontier. The battalion arrived in Peshawar early in December 1890, by which time Dobell had joined and assumed command of F Company. Early in 1891, he accompanied the battalion on an expedition to punish recalcitrant tribes in the Black Mountains of Hazara: it was a short-lived but effective campaign that earned him his first campaign Medal.

Late in 1891, aged 22, he was ensign for the Regimental Colour at a parade in Peshawar. Just a few months before his death, aged 85, in July 1954, he was present as that same Colour was marched off parade for the last time, to be laid up in St David's Cathedral, Pembrokeshire, after seventy-four years' service. In so many ways, that Colour - now preserved in the Regimental Museum -characterises Dobell's loyal service to the Regiment that welcomed him in 1890.

Dobell remained with the 1st battalion for the next five years, living the life of a British subaltern stationed in northern India: he learned how to command men; he rode; he shot; he probably fished. He had been a member of Kingston's Gymnastics Class and had left the college marked as 'Distinguished' in Drills and Exercises; an accomplished horseman, he was clearly a very fit young officer. Having achieved a First Class mark in Gymnastics at Lucknow in June 1892, he returned to his battalion to become regimental gymnastics instructor in April 1893. Concurrently, he passed both lower and higher standard Hindustani and obtained qualifications in Transport and Musketry in 1894.

Promotion to lieutenant came in November 1892 and was accompanied by the duties of acting adjutant in May 1893; during the same period, he changed companies three times, thus obtaining wide experience of the men of his battalion. He also took leave, no doubt to go shooting, and caught his fair share of the illnesses associated with life in India. The battalion remained in northern India until embarking for Aden in October 1896. Dobell continued on to Malta to join the 2nd battalion and become its adjutant. No sooner had he settled into the appointment with his new battalion than a crisis emerged that set him on course for advancement.

Tipped for Stardom

Crete's Greek population had long resented Turkish rule. Early in 1897, this resentment became sectarian violence: the Cretans proclaimed union with Greece and rose in rebellion against the Turks; the Turks responded, bloodily. An international force from the 'Great Powers' was assembled and deployed to Crete to control the situation; as part of that force, 2nd Bn. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers disembarked at Candia early in April 1897. Working with allies attempting to separate warring factions, while also exercising objectivity and military discipline, has become commonplace for British soldiers in the post-1945 world but was relatively new in 1897. The senior officers of 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers were very good at it and three brevet promotions were awarded in recognition. One was to Dobell, who was to be made brevet major when promoted to captain: the promotion and thus the brevet happened almost immediately and simultaneously in 1899.

The crisis in Crete being resolved in 1898, the battalion embarked for Hong Kong and arrived in January 1899. War broke out in South Africa in October 1899 and Dobell began firing off telegrams asking for permission to join any unit, anywhere, on leave if necessary: anything to be involved. Eventually, his persistence (and his father's influence) triumphed and by late December 1899 he was attached to the staff of 2nd (Special Service) Bn., Royal Canadian Regiment. In February 1900, he was given command of 2nd Mounted Infantry battalion and exercised it with such success as to be mentioned in dispatches and created a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) in 1901.

In July 1900, long before his DSO was gazetted, he was recalled from South Africa to China to resume the adjutancy of the 2nd battalion, then engaged in suppressing the 'Boxer Rebellion'. Once again, Dobell served in an international force created by the 'Great Powers' for a peace-keeping role. Relinquishing the adjutancy late in 1900, he continued to serve in Peking until the final withdrawal of British forces from that city in 1901. In 1902, he passed the examination for entry to the Staff College, entering the College in January 1903. Thus, as a captain and brevet major, aged 33, with a DSO, three campaign medals and experience of both administration and field command, Dobell joined an elite cadre of future staff and general officers.

The Staff Officer

A photograph of the Staff College students in the intake of 1903, contained in one of Dobell's photograph albums, is an evocative image of a departed age. Sir Henry Rawlinson, later Field Marshal Lord Rawlinson, was the commandant; few officers are without campaign medals, many have DSOs and two have VCs; all are in their regiment's full dress uniform.

Leaving Staff College in 1904, Dobell was appointed temporary lieutenant-colonel to command 1st Bn. the Northern Nigeria Regiment, West African Frontier Force, in 1905. He commanded that unit in the Northern Nigeria campaign of 1906, being mentioned in dispatches twice and awarded the brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel, concomitant upon his being promoted major; he also added basic Hausa to his various linguistic skills.

Promoted substantive Major and thus brevet Lieutenant-Colonel in 1907, he returned to England to enter the War Office as General Staff Officer grade 3, to be promoted GSO2 in 1909, to be appointed ADC to King George V and brevet Colonel in 1910, to relinquish his War Office appointment in 1911 and to be promoted substantive Lieutenant-Colonel commanding 2nd Bn. The Bedfordshire Regiment in 1912, then stationed in South Africa. In time of peace, such rapid advancement was unusual and must reflect not only Dobell's innate talent but also his ambition, professionalism and connections. Command of 2nd Bedfordshires was short-lived: he was promoted substantive Colonel and temporary Brigadier-General in September 1913 and given the post of Inspector-General of the West African Frontier Force.

During his rapid rise in the Army in the decade 1904-14, he found time to marry, in March 1908: his wife was a widow with two daughters and would present him with a daughter, Judith, in South Africa in 1912. Earlier in 1908, he had saved one R.E. Ford from drowning in the lake at Stoke Park, Buckinghamshire, and received a Testimonial from the Royal Humane Society as a result: as with so many other papers relevant to his long career, this Testimonial is pasted into his scrapbook.
The outbreak of war in August 1914 found Dobell home on leave. Since it was evident that Germany's two West African colonies of Togoland and the Cameroons were vulnerable to attack, Dobell's advice was sought on how best to capture them.

Success in the Cameroons
Britain's principal targets were the colonies' wireless stations and the ports: the one able to report movements of British shipping in the Bights of Benin and Biafra to German surface raiders, the other able to shelter and re-provision the surface raiders. In addition, capture of the ports would enable a blockade to be established that ought to starve the colonies of Togoland and the Cameroons into submission, thus minimising the need for extensive land operations in an unfavourable terrain and climate. Thus Dobell advised, specifying that naval support of ground troops would be necessary.
Given command of British forces, and ultimately Allied forces, for the expedition, Dobell sailed with his staff for West Africa in S.S.Appam on 31st August 1914. By the time he arrived off the Cameroons port of Duala, on 25th September, events had overtaken planning and Togoland had already, effectively, fallen to British and French troops. Duala was briefly bombarded by H.M.S. Challenger and, increasingly encircled by British and French ground troops, surrendered, the German forces having already evacuated the port and retreated inland. However, although the coastal strip had been secured, a sizeable German presence remained in the interior. German tactics throughout the ensuing campaign reflected their strategy of holding ground and denying Allied forces overall victory in order to retain the colony as a bargaining tool for the end of the war.
German defence was stubborn and protracted: despite severe limitations in materièl and in Intelligence, its unity of purpose contrasted significantly with that of the Allies, all three of whom -British, French and Belgian - pursued their own nationally inspired aims and consequently failed effectively to work together. Dobell's experience, in Crete and in China, was unable to counteract that. The longer the campaign continued, the more attenuated through casualties the Allied forces became; there were limitations in the number and quality of reinforcements available. The campaign became one of attrition, largely fought by black infantry on both sides, until eventually German forces escaped into the neutral Spanish colony of Muni. Dobell could only direct the campaign to a limited extent, so diverse were the Allied forces engaged and so limited the communications, but his role in the eventual Allied victory, when it came in February 1916, was undeniably significant. It was recognised too: by the KCB and the Commander's Cross of the Légion d'Honneur in 1916, coming after the CMG in the New Year Honours of 1915 and promotion to major general in June 1915. By 1916, so stagnant had the campaign in France and Flanders become, any success of Allied arms had to be celebrated, rewarded and publicised and so it was for Dobell in West Africa.

The logic of taking a General fresh from success in a torpid campaign in tropical Africa and appointing him to command a desert-based force in the Middle East may escape those equipped with 20:20 hindsight but, in mid-1916, that is what the War Cabinet did with Dobell. His first role in that theatre was as Commander Western Frontier Force in June 1916. He was then appointed Commander of troops on the Suez Canal and Eastern Frontier Force in October 1916, following promotion to temporary Lieutenant-General in September. In that role, he and his

superior, Sir Archibald Murray, have been held responsible for the failure of the first two battles of Gaza in 1917. While not a wholly unfair judgment, it has been made in hindsight and with little appreciation of the circumstances, among which the evident chaos of the Middle Eastern Force's command structure, inadequate staff work and Intelligence and reasonable concerns about the Force's logistics, especially in relation to the wellbeing of its horses, loom large. The first two attacks on Gaza were certainly badly handled and the second disastrously bloody. However, small recognition has been given to the immense and successful preparation work executed by Dobell and Murray before their replacement by Chetwode (his Field Marshal's Baton sold in these rooms) and Allenby that led to the eventual capture of Gaza and then Palestine. That said, it was certainly not Dobell's finest hour: perhaps too much was expected of him by the politicians in London, always hungry for favourable headlines and expecting miracles.

Redemption in India

Despite the modern condemnation of Dobell for his part in the failure to take Gaza after two attempts in 1917, he cannot have been wholly damned in the opinion of the British War Cabinet since no sooner had he returned home than it sent him abroad again, this time to Command 2nd (Rawalpindi) Division in India. He remained there until 1920, serving during the 3rd Afghan War of 1919 and being mentioned in dispatches twice. Briefly officiating as G.O.C. Northern Command India in 1920, he returned home to go on half pay in that year and in 1923 retired as an honorary Lieutenant-General. In 1926, he was appointed Colonel of The Royal Welch Fusiliers and retained that post until 1938, being noted as a particularly active and attentive Colonel. Even after relinquishing the Colonelcy, he retained his links with the Regiment, throughout the Second World War and until a few months before his death.

His rise in the Edwardian decade was meteoric and it seems fair to say that his posting to West Africa in 1914, rather than to France and Flanders, was fortunate for him. If translation to Palestine in 1916 did not end well, he was but one General among many in that theatre for whom that was the case - and he did better, and lasted longer, than most. It is evident from his archive that he was liked and respected by his peers and his subordinates and deeply loyal to his Regiment. He achieved a great deal but, despite being among the youngest of the Field Marshals and Generals portrayed by Sargent, is now almost a forgotten figure, probably fairly ranked as being at the top of the second division of the 'Generals of The Great War'.