

Estonians

Your 2-i-C	Lt-Col Eigo, +1
1 st Battalion:	Mjr Eller, 0
1 st Company – 4 bases	Cpt Abrams, Storm, +1
2 nd Company – 4 bases	Cpt Uritam, 0
3 rd Company – 4 bases	Cpt Jabotinsky, 0
4 th Company – 3 bases	Lt Reiman, Specialist, 0
1 st MG Platoon – 1 base	
3 rd Battalion:	Mjr Palvadre, 0
9 th Company – 3 bases	Cpt Vende, Storm, +1
10 th Company – 3 bases	Cpt Jaakson, 0
11 th Company – 2 bases	Cpt Laurits, +1
12 th Company – 2 bases	Lt Raudsepp, Storm, +1
3 rd MG Platoon – 1 base	
MG Company – 2 bases	Lt Kivi, Mob, -1
Foot Scouts Detachment – 2 bases	Cpt Jacobson, Engineer, -1
Horse Scouts Detachment – 1 base	Lt Puskar, 0
Tallinn Independent Squadron (attached cavalry) – 3 bases	Mjr Snellman, 0
Attached artillery	Cpt Kalm, Skirmisher, 0
3 rd Battery, 3 rd Arty Rgt – 1 x 6" Schneider howitzer base (heavy gun)	
4 th Battery, 3 rd Arty Rgt – 1 x British 18 pounder base (field gun)	

The Freikorps

Your 2-i-C	Hptm von Borcke, Storm, 0
Baden Assault Battalion:	Rittm von Rhaden, Clever, +2
1 st Infantry Company – 4 bases	Hptm Koch, 0
2 nd Infantry Company – 4 bases	Mjr Muller, Skirmisher, 0
3 rd Infantry Company – 4 bases	Hptm Wrangel, Specialist, +1
MG Company – 3 bases	(Olt Gudeghast, Clever, +1)
Signals Platoon	
Battery – 2 heavy howitzer bases	(Olt Cranz, 0)
Michael Detachment:	Olt Manteuffel, Storm, +1
1 st Infantry Company – 3 bases	Hptm Lieberman, 0
2 nd Infantry Company – 3 bases	Mjr Tassen, Specialist, +1
3 rd Infantry Company – 3 bases	Lt Kiewitz, 0
MG Platoon – 1 base	
Squadron – 4 bases	Kpt Büchner, 0
Mortar Platoon – 2 bases	(Hptm Petersdorf, Specialist, 0)
Battery – 2 field gun bases	(Mjr Ullmer, +1)
2 Iron Division armoured cars – 1 model	(Obstlt Stromberg, Engineer, +2)

(Ranks are Leutnant, Oberleutnant, Hauptmann, Rittmeister (cavalry), Kapitänleutnant (naval), Major, Oberstleutnant – these ranks though reflect their WWI status, and have no bearing on the command structure. Those officers in brackets are positions not normally represented in Red Actions! They will not normally command their unit in action.)

Initial Estonian Orders

At Rauna town: 1st Battalion and the artillery, personnel sleeping in the buildings etc.

Along Rauna river south of Rauna town: patrolled by the horse scouts. They stay on the river's east side. Patrols to start at 0130 after bivouac in Rauna town.

Along Pskov highway: Patrolled by Tallinn squadron. They stay north of road and only go east on road up to 15 km. Patrols to start at dawn.

North of Rauna: 2nd Battalion ,along defensive line until meet Latvians. Bivouac in houses along defensive line.

The foot scouts, after sleeping in Rauna town, are to scout west towards Cesis on the road leading past the estate.

I forgot to tell you where the MG company bivouacked. They also were in Rauna with the reserve.

Initial Freikorps Orders

This is a bit long-winded, but it I think it covers most of the bases. I hope this preparation means that additional orders can be few & succinct.

JA -The T-junction of the Panslavas Road where it joins the Baltvilks-Rauna Road.

SB -Southern Bridge over R. Rauna on Krastins Road

NB -Northern Bridge over R. Rauna on Smurgis-Bormanis Road

CB -Cimzas Bridge

FD -Ford over R. Rauna on Rauna-Cesis Road

RB -Bridge in rear over R. Arunite on Rauna-Cesis Road

Main LOC:

LOC to go through Sperins, which will be the designated fall back position if we suffer a major reverse. A brief message to this effect, confirmation that we will assault Rauna and the position of my HQ is to be telephoned back to HQ at Cesis, (if we are that organised) the cipher of the day/week will be used, no other information needs be sent.

Overnight Billets & Main Formations:

My HQ will be in Baltvilks

The Baden column will billet in Baltvilks

The Michael Column will billet in Panslavas.

Armoured Cars will billet in Baltvilks

Maj Tassen will command a diversionary column formed from 1/2 Cav Sqn, the Mortars & as well as his own 2nd Coy & billet in Parenzis.

Airplanes & Radios

Are wonderful and unreliable toys.

Additional Scouting, Signalling & Marking Out

This evening before it gets too dark some of the Cavalry under Tassen will (a dozen good men with a reliable officer) conduct a preliminary recce across the towards Briunieks-Mierins-Krastins. Their objective being to gather information on enemy in the area & not to engage them, they will report back to Tassen at Parenzis before 4:00am tomorrow. Tassen should send their report back to me too!

Also tonight and early tomorrow (sorry lads you are camping out) the remainder of the cavalry will establish a North-South picket line approximately half way between our concentrations in Baltvilks-Panslavas-Parenzis villages and the enemy line from Biekis-Smurgis-Baizkalna, they will scout the Biekis, Smurgis, Baizkalna line for enemy positions.

Tonight a senior cavalry NCO, 3 troopers (and a few good binoculars/telescopes) and 2 or 3 men from the signalling platoon with one of their heliographs and some red flares will go to Gravelis and act as look outs for enemy moves on my N flank. I expect them to occupy the tallest building in that place for their OP! They should let off a red flare if enemy in coy strength (or more) that are moving towards Baltvilks reach their position (or a place nearer to Baltvilks as they are).

The Armoured Cars will move towards the Rear bridge to be in place at dawn, they will for now observe and protect our rear AND GO NOWHERE TILL TOLD TO. They should find a spot where they can command the approach from the N and not be seen by enemy coming from that direction. A dozen men from the signalling platoon will accompany them, and they will set up a heliograph and at dawn tomorrow establish contact with the signallers at Gravelis and phone communication with my HQ and the forward OP and with the rear MG position near Sperins.

Starting at dawn the rest of the signals platoon will run a phone line from Baltvilks towards JA (as far as they safely can without making it obvious to the enemy that something is afoot in this sector). They will establish a forward artillery OP at the end of the line and they will also run phones to each of our MG posts, the ones nearer Baltvilks being the priority, then relax!

Before it gets dark tonight the Michael Column commander will establish and MARK OUT the best and most direct path from Panslavas to the rear of Baltvilks This will be the Michael Columns line of retreat if needed. All his officers must be clearly briefed about the path & shown examples of the markers, probably wooden stakes with bright cloth tied to them, I will have him court-martialled if things go wrong and it turns out the sub-commanders didn't know where they should retire!

I will conduct a personal recce through JA towards Baizkalna Park in the hour after dawn, I will look closely at the ford too.

Unless the enemy has started an infantry assault earlier a final briefing for me, Rhaden, Mateuffel, Cranz & Buchner will be held in my HQ in Baltvilks tomorrow at 5:00am.

All below is subject to change if the scouting reports tell me something I don't like!

Map

Attached Map shows the general idea.

Offensive Plan & Concept

Starting at 4:00am Tassen will lead his column round the south flank and start making a lot of noise. That is why he has the mortars! His aim is to deflect attention from the main attack, which in the finest traditions of the Landeswher is likely to be a frontal assault on a defended position! I have selected Tassen for this important job in the absence of any better information. If he is a dullard, is headstrong or one of the other Michael Coy leaders or the Cavalry Squadron leader is a better man for the job then I would expect to have selected the more suitable man (and his unit) to command the column in his stead! If Tassen gets into trouble he will have to use his initiative to retire on Baltvilks-Sperins-Cesis as the situation dictates. On the other hand if he sees, say, an opportunity to seize Rauna he will have to judge whether that is practicable.

Mark, I am trying to get another player on board to make the occasional decision for Tassen. Not every turn, just the important decisions. That way I can't blame your umpiring if Tassen lets me down and cocks it up. I will let you know how I get on, if I don't succeed then you will have to arbitrate on his behalf for me, as I shouldn't be able to co-ordinate separated columns.

It is my intent that the rest of the troops will attack in the area NE of Rauna and seize (or at least deny the enemy use of) the river crossings. Should all go well the next phase is to cross the river & take Cimsas, if I do that then I feel I will have achieved my objective.

The initial attack will only be as far as Smurgis-Baizkalna Park (one step at a time). The attack below will commence upon a yellow flare fired from our lines, it is not expected to start till 6:30am. The men will move into the forward positions on the defensive line at dawn then rest and eat a hearty breakfast.

Note there are more MG posts than MGs, the rear one at RB will not be occupied unless we retreat.

In the first stage the Baden 1st Coy will attack Smurgis directly up the road from Baltvilks, the 2nd Coy will attack Baizkalna Park from the west, going through the wood. 3rd Coy will be in reserve with Artillery on the defensive perimeter astride the Baltvilks-Rauna Road. MGs will remain in their defensive positions for now.

Michael MG, & 3rd Coy will wait in reserve in Panslavas. The 1st Coy and Artillery will move to JA & guard the S flank of assault on Park as well as prevent any enemy movement from Rauna towards Baltvilks The artillery should conserve their ammo till I allocate a good target.

The 1/2 cavalry sqn on picket duty will start to withdraw at 5:00am into the defensive perimeter and concentrate immediately E of Baltvilks (if not forced back earlier). N.B. Remember to tell the Bttn & Coy Commanders this, I don't want them shot at by our own men! I expect I will have another job for them after they have had breakfast.

Defensive Plan & Concept

Call me cautious if you will, but I shall make contingency plans for a holding action if the enemy is stronger than expected and prove able to counter attack successfully. I hope they cannot, but I would be failing in my duty if I didn't consider the possibility (add serious look). A retreat to the defensive perimeter will only take place if specifically ordered.

The defensive perimeter will be roughly in the shape of a semi-circle centered on Baltvilks Baltvilks & Panslavas will be fortified, the work will be done by 3rd Coy in each case & these Coys will be designated as 2nd line/reserve, i.e. They will be allowed to rest early tomorrow for as long as practical.

Particular attention will be placed on establishing M/G positions to cover all approaches from the N, E and S and a position will be established to deny the enemy access to the wood that lies between Baltvilks & Panslavas,

I have marked on the map where I think my positions would be, but the lie of the land should be reced first and I will adjust them if I receive any information that makes me think my choices are poor. I want the best possible communications and lines of sight within the perimeter.

Initial Reply to Estonians

It is 0500 and it's been pretty quiet overnight. There are enemy patrols and movements across the whole front, though nothing over platoon size.

You don't have a 2nd Battalion, only a 3rd! Anyway – they are currently stretching from Biekis (9th Co), Smurgis (10th Co and MGs) and across the river from Rauna (11th and 12th Co). They report seeing a handful of enemy infantry in the Gravelis area and some patrolling cavalry in front of Biekis.

The Tallinn Squadron report small enemy cavalry patrols near the main Pskov bridge.

The Horse scouts report small enemy movements across the river around Panslavas, but nothing important.

At 0300 your foot scouts started to cross the river at the ford and move west. Scarcely had they left the river valley however when the enemy grouped a small cavalry body in front of them. Unwilling to be caught in the open by Uhlans, even by 30 men, they fell

back. That Uhlan platoon remains on the road halfway between Panslavas and Baizkalna, preventing forward movement. There have been a handful of enemy infantry also seen heading to that area, now in the farm buildings where the Panslavas road meets the main road. The scouts were able to get into the Baizkalna estate area briefly (they were not visible to the enemy cavalry due to the height in the way). Locals told them that enemy cavalry were visiting the estate regularly but no substantial bodies of troops were yet seen. They have pulled back from the estate and now they line the cliff just north of the road.

Initial reply to Freikorps

This is a general report on the events of the night and early morning.

Overall the billeting went well and the troops were able to eat and rest properly (except the cavalry who were sent out early on your orders).

It is 0500 hours. You are in your HQ at Baltvilks with vonvon Borcke, von Rhaden, Mateuffel, Cranz & Büchner.

At 0445 von der Goltz in Cesis phoned. He is pleased that you intend to assault Rauna on time and advises that the LOC running back through Sperins is ideal.

At 0430 a report came through from Major Tassen. The cavalry patrols sent out late last night and early this morning reported the same thing: enemy cavalry patrols in the Krastins area and others can be seen on the ridge between Briunieks and Mierins as well. Nothing to the west of the river. Judging by the number and size of the patrols seen, there must be at least an enemy squadron in the area. Tassen now commands half the Michael Uhlan squadron, the Michael mortars and his 2nd Company. (This can be referred to collectively as the Tassen column.) He left Parenzis at 0400 and expects to open fire soon after 0500. [Note: Major Tassen is an experienced and solid soldier, ideally suited to independent command. I'm happy to have someone else play Tassen.]

Kapitan Büchner reports at your meeting that he personally commands the remainder of the cavalry, currently patrolling the gap between you and the enemy. (We'll call them the Büchner Uhlans.) During the night the enemy held firm to the Biekis–Smurgis–Rauna line, all of which definitely were occupied in company strength or more. At 0300, however, small amounts of enemy infantry started to advance over the ford (FD) and scout the area west of the town. He formed his nearest platoon into a solid body and advanced aggressively. This caused the enemy infantry to temporarily scamper back to the river line. Uncertain of his relative strength, he was unprepared to advance further and the platoon sits at JA. Since then the enemy has moved forward a platoon to the Baizkalna estate area – but withdrew them before Tassen could collect sufficient men to threaten them. [Note he has no direct line of sight to the land due east of Baizkalna, as the park and height block him. He learnt of the Estonian advance via pickets that check out the estate every hour.] His men are stretched very thin by the need to protect the observation point at JA. Although scheduled to retire now, he will concentrate all his men at JA until relieved. Although they will not be able to rest, they should be able to eat there at least.

The signallers struggled to find a decent set up at Gravelis, as there they have no good lines of sight back to friends. In the end they placed a couple of men overlooking the

bridge with a heliograph and have set up a radio in a farm a kilometre closer to you up the road. They are in direct contact with your HQ now. They report no enemy movements, though there definitely are people in Muris.

The Armoured Cars are hidden in the trees at the Rear bridge.

The forward observation post (JA) is currently in the farm near the T intersection and in phone communication with HQ and the MGs. From there it has excellent view of Rauna town, but not of the river below. It would need to move forward a couple of hundred metres to have any view of the crossing but it is concerned however by the ease at which either position could be infiltrated by enemy coming up the stream bed. [As noted above, currently the Büchner Uhlans have a full platoon guarding them.]

Your recce of the JA observation post earlier in the day showed that the river line is extremely hard to observe properly from your side – either it is wooded or shielded by cliffs. From Rauna the enemy have an excellent view of crossings to the north, but poor to the south because of the trees. The ford (FD) is easy going.

Manteuffel reports that the line of retirement from Panslavas is pretty obvious and the officers have been fully briefed on the line of retirement. He also had his men pace out a few discreet range markers for his artillery.

The defensive line shown has good lines of sight and is strong. MG pits have been dug just below Panslavas, at the far eastern tip of the forest just to the north of Panslavas and along the ridge just east of Baltvilks

As I understand your orders, Tassen will start his diversion now.

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05:00 – 05:20

Freikorps Orders at 05:00

We left Parenzis at 0400 on 22nd in the following order of march:

ON ROAD: all the 2nd company except 1 platoon

then the mortars

then the last platoon

OFF ROAD on both flanks but within 1 km: The half squadron of Uhlans.

Contact orders: The enemy is believed to be on and behind the southern bridge. The leading infantry will engage him with fire to chase him away from the bridge. If their fire is not enough, the mortars will join in.

When he has been chased away the cavalry will cross and secure the immediate area, then the infantry & mortars will follow.

The column will then continue along the main road, ready to shoot down any enemy encountered. Search the village of Krastins and regroup (take refreshment). Then continue with infantry and mortars on the main road to Rauna, while cavalry clear the villages of Briunieks and Mierins. Do not attempt to enter Rauna unless it is empty or already occupied by friendly troops.

A call is to be made to Cesis urgently requesting artillery ammunition & getting an ETA and inventory for the next supply column I can expect. Gott in Himmel I should have done that much earlier!

Kapitan Büchner is to be praised for his initiative. Manteuffel will see to it that he is soon relieved by a platoon of the 1 Coy Michael. He will ensure that the 1Coy M are carefully deployed, particularly in view of the perceived threat of infiltration from the river.

Once relieved Kapitan Büchner is to take his men to the N end of my line and patrol between the right flank of 1 Coy Baden & Gravelis. He is to give the men & himself as much rest as possible in the circumstances, without neglecting his duty to alert me of any threatening moves on my N flank.

Manteuffel shall send a resourceful young officer a marksman and 2 privates to look along the riverline from a vantage-point south of Rauna. They should start somewhere near where the E-W stream that runs just N of Briunieks flows into the river and creep carefully North, they should take care not to be seen by enemy on the far (E) bank. The objective will be to see if there are any enemy concentrations on either bank opposite 1Coy Michael's position. If the officer judges it worthwhile he may consider discomfiting the enemy by having the marksman pick off any high-ranking officer seen in vicinity. This isn't a suicide mission, it will be better to get back with information than to walk into an enemy ambush, but if they don't return within 2 hours, I'd guess that is what's happened.

I am concerned about the quality of information from Gravelis. My 2-in-C will phone the N Op and ascertain if the "people in Muris" are military or civilian. He will make it clear that Büchner is coming to take over and that a clear report is to be immediately available to him and that everything had better be in order!

As the position on my N flank is uncertain, I will not commit to an attack at 6:30, further starting the assault by a flare signal is too risky. As telephones are fairly well advanced I will instead use these (or runners if they fail) to confirm the start time. I think it would be in any case wise to delay the attack until some time after we hear Tassen's rumpus, after all I want to give the enemy time to move his men out of position and S of the river to combat his largely illusory threat. I will explain to v Manteuffel that he is to be ready on my command, no time is fixed, however I shall probably give him ½ hr after I order the assault for any last minute preparations & hitches.

The 1 Coy Baden will send one of his platoons to protect his left flank. (behind the little stream), the MGs in position behind him will be moved forward to this location and the MGs at Baltvilks will move up to occupy the position they just vacated. The remaining radio is to be sent forward to this point.

The whole of my front line (left-to-right, 1 Coy Baden+MGs, 2 Coy Baden, 1 Coy Michael+Bat) is to keep quiet and out of sight for now. This I hope will enable their attack to be a surprise.

Cranz is to triangulate an accurate range for his Howitzers to the slight rises either side of the Baizkalna Park buildings, in case the enemy appears there in strength.

After this meeting I will personally tour our lines, starting at the 3Coy Baden in 2line and moving forward to the N end of Baden 1 Coy and working my way to the S end of the 1 Coy Michael. Von Rhaden will accompany me while I inspect his men. I will meet von Manteuffel when I reach the extreme left of his 1 Coy. I will not unfurl my standard, nor will the column commanders, as I wish not to alert the enemy. I will be looking to see that the men are well concealed, yet have good lines of fire if the enemy should come at them. I will not go as far as Panslavas, after I have seen 1 Coy Michael I will return to my HQ.

The Iron Brigade mechanics & M/C courier should see if there is any fuel suitable for the A/C's to be had in Baltvilks or Sperins. However they are to be sure to pay for any requisitions, it is important that they do not alienate our local support, if in doubt make a note of where the fuel is so it could be fetched in an emergency. This is not an excuse to spend the morning chatting up the local talent; they are to spend no more than 1 hr at each village and shall return to the AC's immediately if they hear sustained MG or rifle fire from anywhere.

The commander of the signals platoon (Lt?) is to go to the A/C's and co-ordinate communications and repairs from there. Phone lines are to be run up to 1 Coy Baden and 2 Coy Baden.

Estonian Orders at 05:00

I order the 3rd Battalion to form up at Smurgis.

The 1st Battalion, the MG company, and the artillery to form up in the center of Rauna. The guns to 'hide' out of Geran LOS behind buildings if possible.

My Calculations up to 05:20

2d6 = 3, so no rye for the Tassen column to hide in.

2d6 = 5, so the dip for the Estonian cavalry to hide in is not large and mainly behind small hillock.

2d6 = 6, so Snellman with cavalry does not act aggressively.

2d6 = 8, so Tassen estimates cavalry size well.

2d6=9 so Snellman overestimates size of Tassen column. 2d6 = 6, so does not recognise mortars as such, but does spot cart.

2d6 = 8 Tassen rifle fire carries only a couple of kms.

Responses to Freikorps at 05:20

The march to the bridge went without incident.

At the bridge the enemy had a cavalry platoon several hundred metres back, having obviously already spotted your advance down the road. Your Uhlans crossed under the cover of the infantry at 05:10, followed by the infantry and the mortars. All units are now in the open fields beyond the bridge at 05:20. I assume you fire a short fusillade to inform the rest of your army that you have made contact.

During this time the enemy platoon in front withdrew to the dip in the road approximately 500 metres from you. They were reinforced by several further platoons arriving down the two roads, until they reached almost 100 men (3 bases). A messenger also left the dip around 05:15, heading for Rauna.

Several enemy pickets watch you from the road (orange X on small attached map), but the main body is hidden from sight and could be anywhere along that stream line (fuzzy area). I assume that a section of Uhlans have ridden to your left to watch along the little gully there (grey X on map).

Note that neither your cavalry nor the Estonians are really sabre charging sorts, but that yours are marginally better man-for-man if it comes to a mounted fight. However, they are clearly outnumbered here and do not fancy charging off without support.

I assume your rifles are in line, with the mortars behind, but I am uncertain how you want the cavalry positioned.

05:10 HQ in Cesis reports that a truck with artillery ammunition should arrive within the hour.

05:15 JA reports that there is a short burst of rifle fire quite some distance south-ish. You do not hear it at Baltvilks

05:15 reports start to come in of considerable movement in Smurgis (from the Büchner cavalry and your pickets on Baltvilks hill).

05:20 Gravelis reports that there is now movement in Biekis. They have already explained that it is 2 km from Gravelis to Muris – way too far to tell if the people are uniformed or not. There seems to be far too much movement for the small number of houses in Muris though. They would guess it is a unit.

While this is going on:

-- Manteuffel sends off a messenger to dispatch a platoon to JA and relieve the cavalry. They should arrive by 05:30, all going well. They cannot help but be noticed by the enemy.

-- Likewise a scouting mission along the river line is being prepared. It will be difficult to get to the river at the suggested point without being spotted as a lot of open ground has to be covered. Manteuffel suggest that if they move to JA first they won't attract any other attention than the unit already there. Then they can move down the stream and nip quickly across to the river. Then they can work south checking for enemy.

-- the Baden 1 Coy is rearranged. A radio is on the way to the left flank position. A phone is being rigged for the main unit. You are coming to the end of your wire now.

-- Cranz orients his howitzers towards Baizkalna.

-- the AC support start looking for fuel. (The best bet is probably the Baizkalna estate, as the owner may well have either a motorcar or tractors.)

-- horses are brought forward for you and your staff. The round trip would appear to be about 4 km, which will take you 30-40 minutes (especially as you don't want to be too obvious). *You will be out of communication for some of that time naturally.*

Responses to Estonians at 05:20

At 05:05 a courier rides in to say that enemy are approaching up the Pskov highway.

05:10 there are increasing signs of action from the enemy from Panslavas north. Nothing major, but people moving about in small and medium sized groups.

05:15 there is a short burst of rifle fire from the south.

At 05:20 another messenger from Snellman (Tallinn Squadron) arrives. The enemy have crossed the highway bridge and deployed. They number 120 infantry, some sort of support unit with a cart and 50 cavalry. Snellman is currently watching them from cover and not engaging, but will have to withdraw if they advance. He will move back along the Pskov road for the moment. At the Mierins T-junction should he retire along the highway or towards Rauna?

As ordered, a messenger has headed off to Smurgis, waking the units of the 3rd Battalion as he goes. I presume they will march down the road to assemble.

The units in Rauna are now assembled and ready to go. They are lined up on the main

road: the field gun is at the base of the town at the junction above the ford, behind the stretch of town buildings. The howitzer is at the top end of town in the crook where the land folds back. The rest of the units are between them.

BTW, there are castle ruins somewhere round there. I think they must be where the land pokes out over the river above the town.

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05:20 – 05:40

Freikorps Orders at 05:20

I want my infantry to advance to the military crest in front of them, and then go to ground to fire at the enemy in the dip ahead. If accurate aimed mortar fire can possibly be brought to bear (depending on liaison between the infantry observers and the mortars), then it must be done!

Meanwhile the cavalry will go round both flanks of the enemy to scout and if possible catch any enemy fugitives, without getting into major fights.

The village of Krastins should be searched and cleared of enemy.

Then we will return to the original plan 'A'.

Baden 3 Coy HQ near Baltvilks about 5:45am

When the ammo arrives my 2-i-C is detailed to see it gets distributed to the artillery, the priority being Cranz. (Gott, I hope it isn't all mortar shells!). He is to borrow a competent man from Cranz's to ensure the right sort ammo goes to the right place. Mortar ammo can be stored in rear of Baltvilks for now.

Position of 1 Coy Michael, if my orders were unclear and they were deployed a bit further back than I would have liked, then fair enough, I suppose I can have them moved up a bit during my inspection if it seems necessary.

After my inspection rather than return to HQ immediately I will stop at Baden 3 Coy HQ, which I believe is on the ridge E of Baltvilks and offers a good view. From there I will observe my left flank. I am getting increasingly worried about the amount of enemy activity in the Muris-Biekis area, I thought the enemy were mainly in Rauna, but it now looks like that isn't so, maybe there are more than my original intelligence, I will hold back till I am more certain. I certainly don't want my LOC flanked from the left, however I will tough it out for now, no concrete threat has actually materialised and I think the Cavalry & AC's could delay an enemy advance from Muris for long enough to allow me to retire.

Bruckner is ordered to see if he can identify the uniforms of soldiers in the Muris-Biekis area, are they the Estonian 3rd Rgt or the broken Latvian 2nd Cesis Rgt or some other formation? If the enemy advance from the direction of Muris towards Gravelis-Baltvilks he should delay their progress as much as he can. Likewise if Maunteffel's men can see any of the enemy they should identify the uniforms they wear (are Latvian & Estonian uniforms distinct?).

Cranz is (sorry... counter-ordered :-}) to be ready to lay down a fire pattern to protect our first line against an assault from Smurgis-Biekis. To make quite sure he doesn't drop any shells on the Baden Infantry he is to send an observer forward to the Baden 1 Coy.

I am quite prepared to let the enemy attack from Biekis-Smurgis, I think they will get a bloody nose if they do, over fairly open ground under MG & Artillery fire, when they are broken I can send in my reserve (3rd Coy and the AC's) to rout them.

I don't like the sound of the AC support looking for fuel in the Park! Is that what was meant, or were you just indicating that their search is likely to be fruitless unless they search the Park? What are they thinking? I specifically said to look in the villages of Baltvilks & SparinSparins, not elsewhere.

Estonian Orders at 05:20

I send a message to the Tallinn squadron to retire towards Rauna when pushed by the enemy.

My Calculations up to 05:40

I assume Tassen sends a messenger to HQ, leaving at 05:15. 3 km by road and 1500m cross country to Panslavas takes him 20 minutes. Can't contact HQ from there as they are out touring. Will receive the news next turn.

2d6 = 6, so Freikorps estimate correctly Estonians in Smurgis. 2d6 = 12, so column out of Biekis is way overestimated. 2d6 = 3, so Freikorps do not see other column heading to Smurgis yet.

2d6 = 10, not good enough to find fuel in a Latvian village.

2d6 = 11, Estonians overestimate Büchner Uhlans. 2d6 = 8, so Palvadre better estimates.

Responses to Freikorps at 05:40

Your infantry advance to the crest, with the cavalry on either side. The enemy bug out immediately, heading towards Mierins

Your men search Krastins and the edge of the forest to its east and report them empty of enemy.

My positioning of the Michael 1 Coy was based on them trying to remain out of sight, which they can largely do by staying at the farms. To move them forward would definitely alert the enemy to them.

From 05:20 to 05:40 you tour the Baden positions, starting from the north. During that time you have a good view of the Smurgis to Muris road. At 05:30 it becomes clear that a company sized unit is forming up in Smurgis (just south of the crossroads). By my calculations, that places them just over a kilometre from the Baden 1 Coy down the road and a bit further from 2 Coy.

At 05:35 a small column of enemy infantry leaves Biekis heading towards Smurgis. A large company at the least.

During this time, the Büchner Uhlans ride up the road from JA, cross the crest by Baltvilks and then head north (being thus out of sight of the enemy and you), off to Muris to see what it contains. (Incidentally, there is no method of visually distinguishing Latvians from Estonians without getting close enough to see their collar tags but he might find a peasant to interrogate or hear a shouted order).

I'm assuming that you wished to remain with a direct view of Smurgis and that you therefore haven't ridden over to the Michael positions. Manteuffel goes off to ensure everything is OK.

The Baden 3rd Coy position does indeed have an excellent view and makes an ideal base for you.

The AC support are searching Sparins and Baltvilks for fuel as ordered. (The note about the Baizkalna estate was from me, indicating that 1920 Latvian peasants didn't have much need for motor fuel but that nobles might have a car.)

Responses to Estonians at 05:40

There are increasing signs of activity on the German side – officers and messengers can be seen on the hill facing Rauna, especially the portion in front of Baltvilks. The only troop movements however are a small unit of infantry from the Panslavas area which head down the road and enter the farm just south of the T-junction between the Panslavas road and the main road west. A squadron of cavalry which has been patrolling between that farm and Baizkalna assembles at 05:25 and rides up the main road, crossing the crest over to Baltvilks (so are now lost from sight).

A messenger from Major Palvadre (3rd Bat) in Smurgis indicates that he thinks there is an enemy company about a kilometre west of Smurgis lying low and another one facing Baizkalna. Small units have also been seen moving down to Gravelis, but they are only scouting parties or similar. He expects his battalion be assembled and ready for action by 06:00 at the very latest.

05:40 A messenger from the Horse Scouts says that the enemy are advancing on Krastins. They number a company of foot, and a couple of platoons of cavalry. The Tallinn Squadron is retiring in front of them towards Mierins.

Just for your information the foot scouts are still lining the cliffs above the ford.

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05:40 – 06:00

Freikorps Orders at 05:40

Yes - keep on to Mierins in the same formation as before - infantry in the middle, with mortars behind & cavalry on the flanks. Be ready to hit the dirt if the enemy stands to fight with a good field of fire in front of him.

Aim is to clear Mierins and then Briunieks

I will await developments for the next hour, keep observing the enemy moves & hoping for some sign that Tassen has caused the enemy to react.

My main question is, are the enemy in Smurgis readying an attack on my line or are they continuing to move their men towards Rauna & the South?

Ensure von Manteuffel, von Rhaden & von Borcke understand that we are waiting.

Estonian Orders at 05:40

Yet another low message traffic 20 minutes from Estonian HQ. I must be having breakfast or something :)

Lt Col Eigo, the 2iC is to proceed to the foot scouts to direct their activities. Foot scouts to try and infiltrate to the Baizkalna Estate.

My Calculations up to 06:00

2d6 = 4 = crappy result from attempt to find haystack, so burn farm, more smoke than

fire. 2d6 = 3 Manteuffel does not spot Estonian cavalry 2d6 = 5 and doesn't recognise Tassen either.

2d6 = 5 Ammo truck doesn't arrive.

Responses to Freikorps at 06:00

You head up the Pskov Highway towards Mierins, with cavalry scouts out in front (especially checking the forest to the south for ambushes). The enemy cavalry continue to fall back, and at the Mierins T intersection, start heading north. No other enemy is seen.

A platoon of Uhlans rides on to Mierins while the infantry trudge up the road. The cavalry report the village is empty and nothing can be seen for a long way east or south.

You set fire to a farm as a indication to HQ of your location (you couldn't find a suitable haystack, unfortunately). Worse, just then the wind changes direction and proceeds to blow smoke over you, obscuring visibility.

By 06:00 your infantry is at the T-intersection and just heading towards Briunieks. The enemy cavalry is between Briunieks and the stream just to the east.

You will be in Briunieks by 06:15 at least. From there the road goes down quite a steep dip into a tree-lined gully. You could go round it to the east, but that might allow enemy to get between you and home, so I assume you will "assault" the gully, just in case.

05:45 another company of enemy infantry move into the Smurgis area, this time coming from the Rauna road. They and the units currently there (three companies total?) then deploy facing you in the Smurgis area but make no movement forward other than to briefly send a few scouts out 500m in front.

05:45 a phone call comes from Panslavas with a report from Tassen: "Time 05:15. I have a single squadron of enemy cavalry in front of me, which I should be able to brush aside. No sign of other troops. I expect to occupy Krastins by 05:45 at the latest. Will move from there towards Rauna via Mierins."

05:55 there is a cloud of smoke building near the Mierins T intersection.

06:00 alerted by the smoke, Manteuffel reports that he can see troops moving along the road that runs along the hill crest towards Briunieks from Mierins. Can't make them out for number or nationality (the smoke is impeding visibility).

At no time is there any indication of substantial movement in Rauna, though JA report some individuals moving about. They also report a few cavalrymen patrolling just south of the town, of no more than platoon size.

The Büchner cavalry are now on the road to Gravelis, just crossing the stream.

Responses to Estonians at 06:00

05:55 A cloud of smoke is building in the Mierins area.

05:55 You see the Foot Scouts enter the Baizkalna area. They will be at the main buildings in 15 minutes or so. They moved north up the river before heading west so as to remain unseen behind the hill at Baizkalna.

06:00 The Horse Scouts report that the enemy in Krastins has moved up to the Briunieks-Mierins road and has turned north. The Tallinn Squadron continues to fall back in front without seriously threatening them.

06:00 Palvadre reports that his Battalion is assembled at Smurgis. No signs of significant enemy movement.

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06:00 – 06:20

Freikorps Orders at 06:00

Yes - let us 'assault the gulley'

I like the smoke signals. I also like the concentration of 3 enemy companies into one village, if I had plenty of shells I would let rip! I will need to do something to pin the Latvian/Estonians soon or they will be able to waltz off.

Where is my ammo resupply? Von Borcke is to phone Cesis HQ and make sure they have sent the truck I was promised. He should send the Iron Brigade motorcycle courier back down the road to look for the it. If he finds it he is to see that it moves up immediately, if he discovers that it has broken down then he is to get that information back to Baltvilks HQ ASAP!

The Michael MG platoon shall be moved up to the rear of the left flank of 1st Coy Michael (i.e. about 200 to 300yds West of JA) into a position where they will be able enfilade any attack from Smurgis towards Baltvilks, should it get through my first line.

Otherwise, I will continue to wait. in hope that the enemy attacks my line or weakens his front so I can attack him.

As soon as he has had his look at Muris, Bruckner is ordered to return and patrol my left flank between 1st Coy Baden & Gravelis.

Estonian Orders at 06:00

I would like to send a staff officer down to the Tallinn squadron to observe and report back on what's going on.

I look at that smoke near Mierins. Dust from hordes of Germans or did someone torch a farm? What do my staff think?

The Howitzer section is to come and join the field guns in the south part of the town. A staff officer and a team to act as observers are to start laying out telephone wire from the battery to the south until they see and can call in fire on advancing Balts.

My Calculations up to 06:20

2d6 = 6, ammo will be arriving shortly

2d6 = 4, there is no suitable cover for the Michael MGs in front of the forest.

2d6 = 9 River expedition report

2d6 = 10 Farm at south of Rauna reasonable OP

2d6 = 9 Estonians recognise smoke

2d6 = 5 JA struggle to recognise artillery in Rauna

Responses to Freikorps at 06:20

You move through Briunieks and the rifles deploy into line beyond it. The Uhlans are on the right, in case the enemy cavalry attempt something on that flank (and because they are no good in trees anyway). The mortars head left to deploy in a farm a few hundred metres SW of the Y intersection. That will enable them to cover both the advance and the cavalry.

The enemy cavalry squadron observes this from 500m to your north. It is clear that there are some patrols of enemy cavalry across the gully from you, but no indication of any large units.

A message comes through from Cesis that the ammo truck has left the town and should be arriving soon.

The Michael MGs start moving. If they place themselves in the eastern-most point of the forest between Panslavas and Baltvilks, they enfilade the Baden 2 Coy position beautifully, while remaining in cover. They would need to get all the way round to northernmost point to cover Baden 1 Coy. They could move out to the 200-300 yards from JA and start digging an emplacement, but that would make them highly visible. It would also place them within rifle range of the small forest NNW of JA. (NB: I will “back time” your decision on this).

The Büchner cavalry are deploying into a skirmish line in front of Muris.

06:15 The OP in JA report activity at the southern end of Rauna – horses and carts?? The officer you sent to check the river line south of Rauna reports (from JA) that it is clear of enemy up to the join in the rivers, apart from a cavalry platoon patrolling on the eastern side.

06:20 You can see Tassen’s men deploying in front of Briunieks. The enemy cavalry is approx 500m to his north. The mood of the men is greatly improved by the news of Tassen advancing on the other side of the river.

There are no other indications of enemy movement. In particular, Smurgis is dead quiet.

Responses to Estonians at 06:20

It looks like smoke from a burning farm to your south, not dust. There is no indication that the enemy have more forces there than previously advised.

An officer rides off to check out the Tallinn Squadron.

Captain Kalm (artillery) starts to set up an OP in the farm just west of the T intersection just south of Rauna. From there they can see across to Briunieks, which is where the enemy is at present. Sadly there is no ideal position: if the enemy descend into the gully north of Briunieks they will be out of view until they ascend up the other side. If they

crawl around by the river, they will be completely hidden (although it will take them a long time). Any position further forward could be rushed from the gully. Any position further east will struggle to see them if they move around by the river.

Meanwhile your guns deploy in the SE end of Rauna.

The Foot Scouts indicate “all clear” from Baizkalna.

The enemy is still quiet. A platoon sized unit leaves Panslavas and enters the wood just north.



06:20 – 06:40

Freikorps Orders at 06:20

Please make sure that my mortars are not put out of range of support from my other troops. From your description they seem to be a bit out on a limb.

1) At 0620 I will send a trusted cavalryman with the following letter to Major Bockelmann:- <<I have captured Briuniaks and am about to make a very loud noise from the south of Rauna. - Tassens at 0620 hrs.>>

2) Once we have crossed the gully in front of us (assuming that we do) then I will order the mortars to unleash a mighty bombardment on Rauna. I will be disappointed if each piece cannot get 15 rounds into the air at the same time. Use up all their ammunition and then they must withdraw escorted by the cavalry. They should get more ammunition from wherever it can be found - Baltviks? This will leave the infantry holding a line South of Rauna. They are not to advance unless friendly forces are identified in front of them.

If they are attacked, they are to retire tactically, using fire and movement, under my own personal supervision.

(2nd) Message to Bruckner (changing my earlier order), if you find Muris has been left unguarded then dig in there & deny the enemy use of the road heading North. (i.e. their line of communications)

Message to Tassen, congratulations on your actions. Keep stirring it up. Take Rauna if it has been left empty, if not, get your men in good positions on the hills near the town and make sure your mortars command the town & the ford to the West of it. I will send you some more ammo, (briefing says we started with only 30mins supply) as soon as I have resupply.

Otherwise I continue to wait for that ammo and keep a careful look out for signs of something happening from Smurgis.

Manteuffel, send that young officer to have another look along the river, this time he is to creep as near to the Ford & Rauna as he can get.

Estonian Orders at 06:20

No new orders from my side. Still awaiting developments and reports.

My Calculations up to 06:40

2d6 = 8 for ammo.

Foot scouts have crossed Baizkalna park

2d6 for aggressiveness of Estonian cavalry with the arrival of the staff officer. They will test out the Freikorps cavalry, but take no risks.

2d6 = 5 trouble viewing Tassen's movements.

Four rifle shots of Latvians at advancing Uhlans without any big results. 2d6 = 9 for hearing range. 2d6 = 5 for quality of Estonian location.

Responses to Freikorps at 06:40

Your infantry descend the gulley in line and occupy the crossing point, meeting no opposition.

With the infantry now out of the way, the Estonian cavalry have advanced towards your Uhlans. They appear to be shaping to charge. The Uhlans moved to face them. (See attached map)

With this development the mortars have put going forward on hold. They have deployed in a farm, marked with the "support" position (they really do not like deploying in the open around enemy cavalry!). They intend to open fire now and drive off the threat to the out-numbered Uhlans.

From there the intention is to move the mortars to the second marked position to bombard Rauna town. Since you can't see the major part of the town anyway from any reachable location, you might as well fire from a sheltered spot to prevent return fire, and the "support" position is slightly too far away. (Or one or both sections could continue to shell the enemy cavalry for a while.)

Tassens is advancing still, and most of his men have disappeared from view into the wooded gulley south of Rauna. There is cavalry movement just north of Briunieks, but it is hard to make out what is happening.

The Büchner cavalry move towards Muris, then several hundred yards out they halt, then retire. You appear to hear rifle shots during this time from that direction.

06:35 a couple of trucks can be seen heading through Sparins. Presumably your ammo resupply. What is the priority of unloading the ammo and how do you intend to get it to Tassen? The truck can drive to Tassen's current position via JA, the track to Panславas and the Pskov highway – that will take only 30 minutes, but can't start until after the gun ammunition is unloaded and will present a stunningly obvious target. Otherwise the mortar shells will have to be transferred to horse cart, which will travel much slower but will be far less obvious.

The armoured car people can take a bit of the truck fuel – they found nothing in Sparins or Baltivilks.

Manteuffel sends off another scouting party from JA to check the river by Rauna town.

Von Borcke (2-i-C) returns from checking out the Gravelis positions, and reports that everything is under control from that direction.

The enemy remains entirely still.

Your staff remind you that HQ will phone soon to ask about forward progress. General von der Goltz will expect a general attack to have been launched by now.

Responses to Estonians at 06:40

06:30 – 06:35 You hear faint scattered rifle shots. Placement is difficult – ENE?

06:40 The artillery OP south of Rauna report that the enemy infantry at Briunieks has descended into the gully about 1 km south of central Rauna. The Tallinn Squadron have advanced to just north of Briunieks, heading towards the enemy Uhlans approx 500m to their west.

No other indications of enemy movement.

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06:40 – 07:00

Freikorps Orders at 06:40

OK: call back our cavalry to protect the mortars, and alert both the mortars & the infantry to fire on the enemy cavalry. Once they have been defeated, continue to bring the mortars up to their more advanced site to bombard Rauna.

Finally the ammo, how long can we sustain a bombardment for now?

Von Borcke is in charge of overseeing efficient resupply. He is to see Cranz gets resupply first, then Ullmer, then Tassens, thereafter the MG's and the frontline infantry are the priority..

A cart is to be dispatched from Baltviks to resupply Tassens, via the marked retreat route to Panslavas then Parenzis, Krastins. A couple of mounted scouts should be sent with them so they don't easily fall victim to enemy patrols.

Cranz is to target the enemy companies deployed in front of Smurgis, his fwd observer saw them deploy so I'm expecting accurate & deadly fire. He should commence fire as soon as he can.

I will phone Goltz personally, from Cranz's position, as soon as the bombardment starts (and he can hear it in the background) & assure the General that the enemy are taking one hell of a beating. I will be evasive and confident but promise nothing. Then I will move up to the MG post on the left of 1 Coy Baden and observe the results of the artillery fire for myself.

Bruckner, is to fall back out of sight of Muris, and then try and work his way unseen to the bridge on the Muris-Zarini (i.e. the next place N, on the overview map) road, capture it and dig in on the N side of the major branch of Rauna River. His job is then to hold the bridge for as long as possible, thus causing the enemy much difficulty and loss if he retreats that way.

Manteuffel is to probe the area between Rauna & Baizkalna Park with skirmishers, lets find out where the enemy are and see if they can be blasted with our field guns.

Estonian Orders at 06:40

Palvadre (3Bn) to advance and harrass enemy units reported to west and southwest of Smurgis.

Capt Abrams and his 1/1st to join up with the artillery spotters and advance south until in sight of enemy column reported leaving Brunieks.

I contact Army HQ and report being probed and having contact with a Battalion sized enemy force seen so far.

My Calculations up to 07:00

Mortars get no direct hits, but the Estonians fail a serious result.

JA scouting party

2d6 for Bockelmann seeing Tassen.

2d6 = 6 for Estonians on hearing Cranz's artillery.

Responses to Freikorps at 07:00

The mortars open up at 06:45. Although ineffective, the enemy cavalry immediately halt and start to turn. A few minutes later, just as they are riding out of range, however, a shell lands directly in their ranks. They are obviously shaken by this and retire in great disorder. The Uhlans follow up, but do not attempt to go away from mortar range.

06:50 Message from Böckelman - "Congratulations on your actions. Keep stirring it up. Take Rauna if it has been left empty, if not, get your men in good positions on the hills near the town and make sure your mortars command the town & the ford to the West of it. I will send you some more ammo, as soon as I have resupply."

06:50 – 07:00 You hear artillery open fire from west of you. This would appear to be consistent with the projected attack by the rest of your forces, scheduled for 06:30.

06:55 You spot an enemy infantry company heading towards you from Rauna, about 120 men strong (so larger than your rifle company). They are currently in the dip in the road about 500m from the gulley base, so out of view.

The mortars had started to get ready to leave the farm to advance, but stopped when they spotted the enemy infantry heading towards you from Rauna. If they go down into the gulley they will be unable to see properly to fire and risk having enemy appear inside their minimum range.

Your infantry are still lining the gulley.

The following options suggest themselves to me:

Plan A is that you remain in cover in the gulley, but bring up the mortars slightly so that they overlook it and can fire in co-ordination with the rifles.

Plan B is that you advance out of the gulley onto the higher ground and the mortars attempt to fire over you from their current position.

You have to go back to Panславas to phone General von der Goltz, as the phone line cannot be used both to observe for Cranz's guns and talk to HQ. In passing his position, von Borcke reports that the ammunition resupply is estimated as 30 minutes extra for all your guns (more if you are firing indirectly, as the rate of fire is lower). They are in the process of unloading it now.

You arrive at Baltvilks to a message from Tassen, phoned through from Panславas <<I have captured Briunieks and am about to make a very loud noise from the south of Rauna. - Tassen at 0620 hrs.>>

As your call gets through to Cesis, at 06:50, Cranz's howitzers open fire. You talk briefly with von der Goltz and then ride towards Baden 1 Coy. You are just crossing the hill ridge now and can see that the enemy is now advancing towards your positions. There are two companies in front and another one or two behind them. Your artillery appears to be making life difficult for the left-most (i.e. northern) enemy company.

The attached photo represents your view as you cross the ridge. The Estonian units are

marked in orange. (The red and yellow markers are to help with scale, each section representing 100m. The buildings represent farms, and can provide cover for a company or MG platoon. I will add crops soon, but didn't have time yet.)

You can see that Baden 1 Coy is facing the approaching enemy. Although it is not obvious on the picture, they are in a small dip and do not have direct line of sight with the advancing enemy. The MGs with 1 Coy are not visible to you, they would also have to advance slightly to fire. The OP is hiding in a crop field, not actually visible.

B2 Coy are to the south – in the farm, of course, not behind it as shown. About 300 metres SW behind them is a windmill that covers the slopes below nicely and which should contain the 2nd MG platoon (though obviously you can't see them either). Baden 3 Coy and the remaining Baden MG platoon are in reserve on the Baltvilks-Rauna road behind the hill crest.

I assume you wish to use the radio with the B1 MGs to communicate via Baltvilks. This will cause some brief delays as messages are transferred across to the phone system. Where do you want your staff to go? As far as you know, Von Borcke is overseeing supply with Cranz's howitzers on the back slope of the Baltvilks hill. Manteuffel is in Panslavas with his battalion organising the scouting of Baizkalna etc. Von Rhaden is watching the approaching enemy from the hill crest with his 3rd Company.

Responses to Estonians at 07:00

06:45 a runner from Eigo, with the Foot Scouts, reports that the entire Baizkalna area is clear of enemy.

06:50 – 07:00 a battery or so of enemy artillery opens fire from the west. You cannot determine the target.

06:50 a couple of platoons of enemy infantry leave a farm in the Panslavas area and start moving NE. They are currently a few hundred metres from the main Cesis-Rauna road. There is also considerable movement in the Panslavas area itself.

06:55 The OP south of Rauna reports that the Tallinn Squadron was targeted by enemy mortars and have withdrawn in some disorder, followed at some distance by the enemy Uhlans. Should they attempt to locate and fire the howitzers at the mortars? Or target the Uhlans?

1st Company left Rauna at 06:50 on the road south to intercept the approaching enemy.

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07:00 – 07:20

Freikorps Orders at 07:00

It is my intention to keep my infantry lining the slope at 'A', so they have a field of fire over the reverse slope towards 'B'. They should NOT be at 'B', because that is the crest-line and not the reverse slope. The mortars should fire on the enemy as soon as he appears at 'B' - and then keep on at him with unobserved fire into the gully on the North side of 'B'. No need to send an observer forward.

I notice from the photo that my men & the enemy appear to be formed up in rather close

formation. Is that right for the period? I thought that a company of 80-100 men would occupy a frontage of around 300 m, not 100 m, otherwise they are likely to be sorely tested by enemy fire, even from small arms. Whatever the case I seem to have made my line a little open because I misjudged the scale, I think you need to add a note in future campaigns about Coy frontage in offensive & defensive postures (its probably in those rules I didn't read).

I think you will find that during my earlier inspection I would have made sure that Baden 1 Coy and the attached MG's were in a position to open fire on any attack from Smurgis at effective range and not be ill placed in a dip, heavens above that's why I did the inspection to check my troops were well positioned in accordance with my stated intention to let the enemy attack through a hail of fire! :-).

Anyway, whatever, they are to move up and open up on the enemy attack ASAP or sooner.

von Rhaden should go to his 1 Coy and decide for how long they can hold their ground, if they cannot hold, he is to give the order when it is time for them to fall back on the 2nd line.

2nd Coy should open fire on the enemy attack as soon as it comes into effective range. The MG on the hill will give supporting fire to the 1 & 2 Coy infantry.

I will join 3rd Coy Baden. The 3rd Coy Baden should be in my defensive line, not behind a slope, I definitely ordered that!

The Iron Brigade AC's are ordered to move up to the Y junction in Baltviks there they shall await the order to counter attack.

The Howitzers should continue to pound the enemy attack until it gets too close to my infantry to continue.

Will the Michael MG be in any position to enfilade this attack at any stage?

As you can tell I'm a bit confused about your interpretation of my orders, I thought I was in a sensible defensive formation awaiting the enemy attack, now when it comes the men all seem to be waiting behind slopes & not in pits with good fields of fire?

Estonian Orders at 07:00

I tell the OP to try and target the enemy mortars. Also, they are to advance with Abrams company for a better view.

My Calculations up to 07:20

JA scouting party check

Abrams company fail Serious test as a result of mortar fire on second attempt to cross the ridge. Will no longer advance.

Responses to Freikorps at 07:20

Twice the enemy infantry try to cross the crest-line in front of you (07:05 and 07:15), and twice they retire back behind it under the pressure of mortar and rifle fire.

While this is happening the enemy obviously spots the mortars' position. Shells immediately start to straddle the farm they are in, coming extremely close. Their mortar fire becomes quite erratic.

The enemy cavalry retires to behind a small crest approx 500m ENE of where the road crosses the gully. The occasional scout can be seen on the crest, watching you. Your Uhlans move to the eastern end of the gully to cover them (and still comfortably within the mortars' range).

The artillery fire from your NW continues during this period. You can see a friendly company advancing northeastwards a couple of kilometres to your west.

General Stuff

When under sustained fire your men will adopt a looser formation, but in the meantime the close formation allows much greater control by the officers. In any case, they will never adopt the really spread out formations of WWI – they won't face anything like the same fire-power but they will risk being caught in the open by enemy cavalry. (I generally keep the figures together even when technically spread out as it is the same for both sides and makes unit identification a lot easier.)

I suspect you have indeed erred on the scale, but spreading out is not the solution – the reverse is more true. You could not possibly hope to cover a 5+ km front with the troops you have in any case. Instead it pays to keep them close, so at least they mutually support. That this leaves enormous holes in the line is basically inevitable (and was a feature of the war).

The positions of the Baden company are based on the instruction you gave: “The whole of my front line is to keep quiet and out of sight for now. This I hope will enable their attack to be a surprise.” That is not consistent with spreading them out on the open on the side of a hill facing the enemy!

So I had you place Baden 1 Coy in a small dip (not a gulley, just a fold) from which they can move up in 30 seconds into firing positions towards Smurgis. (But I have to tell you that there is a dip there because I have no way of modelling it on the table and you might want to take advantage of it later.) Baden 2 Coy are in a farm area, taking advantage of its cover. Baden 3 Coy are just behind the crest of the main hill, overlooking the whole area but allowing them to rest in cover after their work of the night before. The MGs with Baden 1 were the only unit not in perfect position to cover the advancing attack because they were positioned to cover the north as well – it took them a couple of minutes to relocate.

Events

It turns out that the position of the Baden battalion units was entirely irrelevant as they never got a shot in! Thanks to truly wonderful artillery fire, the northernmost front enemy unit was driven back in extreme disorder (rout?) and has retired steadily to the rear for the last 15 minutes and then the southernmost got similar treatment from 07:10 and has just retired to be in the Baizkalna park. Your artillerymen are to be commended! (You had some great dice/cards for this btw, artillery fire would not normally be quite so lethal.)

I have taken the picture from last move and added the movements of the enemy units. The front two retired (through Smurgis and into the park) and the rear unit(s) occupied the front two farms to replace the retiring/fleeing ones.

Meanwhile you can see that a company from the Michael battalion (1 Coy presumably) has advanced down from Panslavas, picking up the platoon in JA, and is now in the forest just south of Baizkalna park.

The following information catches up with you, as reported by the OP at JA: << At 06:45 friendly mortars south of Rauna opened fire on advancing enemy cavalry driving them off. At 06:50 enemy infantry left Rauna heading for friendly troops.>>

You can see scattered mortar/artillery fire in front of Tassen's position from 07:10 onwards and various units (though you can't distinguish them much at that distance). I have included a map (truly crappy, to reflect your distant view). The orange unit is obviously enemy and has twice failed to cross the hill south of it, where it was targeted by mortars (small red and white puffs) and rifle fire. Two other small units are marked in pink, of unknown type. Neither are currently moving. There are presently scattered splashes from mortar/artillery shells around a farm south of the gulley (red and white puffs). You can presume Tassen's main body is in the gulley, since you have not seen it leave.

The following information catches up with you, as radioed via Gravelis: << Enemy in Muris in some strength. Do not have sufficient forces to close with them to determine their nationality. No indication that they are moving out of the village. Büchner at 07:00 >>

07:20 The scouting party along the river from JA report that they found no enemy along the river edge, nor at the ford. Rauna itself is clearly full of enemy however.

Responses to Estonians at 07:20

At 07:05 a message from Palvadre reports that he is under howitzer fire from behind the large hill to his west. (You hear that the fire lasts for the whole 20 minutes of this move, with a small pause around 07:10).

Your staff officer with the Tallinn squadron returns. That unit attempted to engage the enemy cavalry (which it outnumbers) while the enemy infantry could not intervene (being in a wooded gulley) but were driven back by mortar fire. The Tallinners have now completely lost their nerve and cannot be relied on for aggressive action, although actually losses were small. They will continue to track the enemy, preventing him from sneaking anyone to the east of the town.

At 07:15 a message from the south Rauna OP. The Abrams company has been twice repulsed from crossing into the gulley south of the town by combined rifle and mortar fire. They are now in a dip just south of the town, out of sight of the enemy. This did however allow the enemy mortars' position to be located and the howitzer has just established the correct range and will now blast them. (You heard the ranging shots).

07:15 the enemy unit coming down from Panslavas entered the forest south of Baizkalna park. It was joined by the platoon sized unit that had previously been seen to enter the farm 500m SE of that forest.

At 07:20 a panicky message from Palvadre's staff report that the attack has crumbled under heavy howitzer fire and that battalion has retired back to the Smurgis farms. They never reached rifle range of the enemy positions in front. It is not looking good in Smurgis.

07:20 – 07:40

Freikorps Orders at 07:20

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OK, it looks like I need to spend a little time reorganising my formation.

1 Coy Baden are to remain in place. 2nd Coy Baden shall deploy, at the double, to the immediate right of 1 Coy Baden. 3rd Coy Baden shall deploy in rear of 1st & 2nd Coy. All the Baden column MG's will be brought up to provide close support to their infantry. They will advance and attack the Smurgis farms on my word.

I & von Rhaden will move to the fwd artillery OP near 1 Coy Baden.

The howitzers should continue a slow fire on the farms now occupied by the enemy 2nd line. How long can they now continue firing?

The Iron Brigade shall wait in reserve, their M/C courier should join me.

von Borcke shall phone urgent requests to Cesis for more ammo, he should make the case to the QM that I am meeting unexpected resistance and that need more ammo to ensure my success. He should then make a personal inspection of the far N of my position & report back, he should make a point of sending someone to find out how Bruckner has got on.

The Michael 3 Coy + MG's and shall move up to JA and protect their Artillery. If 1 coy skirmishers identify the location of enemy in or about the park he is to get his artillery up to shell them.

I may be wrong but it looks Tassen has done his job and the enemy have launched a large attack on him. Send word to Manteuffel, can he identify the 'pink' units are they Tassen's men or the enemy?

Its high time to unleash my real attack (if only I had deployed more sensibly, ho hum).

Estonian Orders at 07:20

Yikes!,

I order Lt Col Eigo to direct 3rd Battalion. The 3rd is to retreat ENE along road until they reach the forest edge and then take up defensive positions.

Same message direct to 3rd Batt Palvadre so that they can start the retreat without waiting for Eigo to arrive.

Interim question concerning which "forest edge" we are talking about above.

Actually, I wanted Eigo to go to Smurgis, join up with the 3rd Battalion, and then retreat ENE until reach the forest.

The forest SW of Cimzas.

My Calculations up to 07:40

Germans throw good dice for attempts at northmost Smurgis farm (11 for direct hit). Consequently the troops in that farm run across to the forest for cover (with the fatigue that is associated with that).

2d4 = 4, so JA cannot distinguish the various units in the vicinity of Tassen – assume mostly out of sight.

Eigo uses the gully east of Baizkalna park to get to the forest without being seen. Thanks to the extreme disorder this is quite slow. Expect them to make it into positions along the stream by 08:00.

The foot scouts seen the M3 Coy at 07:30 and start to pull out. They catch up to the 3rd Battalion quite quickly but will occupy the Rauna suburb across the river.

The Estonian howitzers miss the mortars in the farm.

2d6 = 6 for Abrams estimates.

Responses to Freikorps at 07:40

The enemy shelling of the farm continues for 5 minutes and stops about 07:25. About this time the shelling across the river also stops.

Your mortars have not been harmed by the light bombardment, although somewhat shaken. To avoid the shelling, they retired to the small dip by the river to their west and then advanced north up to the crest just behind the left flank of the infantry. From there they can fire on any advancing troops, as before.

However the enemy do not reappear in front of you during this time. A couple of (brave) scouts report that they are settling in around a farm at the extreme northern end of Rauna and that the 500 m in front of you is clear.

The enemy cavalry are also not threatening at the moment.

At 07:38, with no immediate threats present, the mortars commence their scheduled attack on Rauna. Their aim being to get as many shells into the town as possible in a short time, before whoever is there has time to flee or take cover.

Your howitzers have at least an hour's supply left. They start to range in on the farms at Smurgis, and once again are quite accurate, but stop when the enemy evacuate the area (see below).

The extra mortar ammunition is now loaded onto a cart and is on the way to Tassen.

You'll get no more ammo out of HQ in Cesis. They are busy trying to track down the columns to your north and supply them as their first priority. Things aren't going too well, truth be told, on the other fronts. General von der Goltz's staff stress the absolute need for you to break the opposition in front of you this morning.

07:25 The Estonian companies in Smurgis leave the farms they are occupying, running across to the Park for cover in a most unmilitary manner. You have now lost sight of all enemy

07:30 The Michael 1 Coy leave the forest south of Baizkalna park – signalling the “all clear, no enemy” field sign as they do – and five minutes later enter the park grounds.

07:35 JA telephone that they cannot distinguish the various units near Tassen as they are mostly staying put and out of sight.

07:40 you see Michael 3 Coy reach JA with the artillery.

07:40 The Baden Btn is lined up as instructed, ready to advance. I will “back-time” the advance to 07:30 (when it becomes obvious that the Estonians are leaving Smurgis) if you want, though this will leave some of the MGs to the rear of the rifle units.

You are accompanied by von Rhaden and the motorcycle. Manteuffel indicates he is at JA. Von Borcke is still with the artillery and ammunition trucks.

Responses to Estonians at 07:40

07:20-07:25 your howitzers shell the farm containing the mortars (allegedly). The enemy seem to have left so they stop. About this time the enemy shelling Smurgis to the west also ceases.

07:25 Abrams sends a runner to say that he has established that the Balts have a company at least in the gulley south of Rauna, supported by a couple of sections of mortars (2 bases) and a small amount of cavalry. With the enemy in cover and supported, he cannot force them from their position – his attempts being extremely unsuccessful – and he will now take up a defensive position.

07:30 You see the enemy unit that was in the forest south of Baizkalna Park leave it and at 07:35 enter the park.

07:20-07:40 An enemy infantry and artillery column leaves Panslavas and reaches the farm at the Y intersection (pretty much due west of you).

At 07:38 Upper Rauna comes under bombardment. Judging by the lightness of the shells and lack of noise of guns firing, it must be mortars. Immediately there is mayhem as the 2nd Company scatters for cover, being directly in the firing line. The commissariat troops (mostly camped out to the east of Rauna town, out of the way) also start to panic, as they are not used to this sort of thing, despite not actually being in much harm yet. The troops of 3 and 4 Coy are not affected.

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07:40 – 08:00

Freikorps Orders at 07:40

Very good. After the bombardment the mortars & most of the cavalry (except a few scouts & couriers who should stay with me) should retire to the rear to find ammo. The infantry should occupy Rauna if they can. I will go with them and if we capture the village I will send a note to Bockelsocks explaining the situation.

The Baden Battn, led by von Rhaden, shall advance to the Smurgis Farms and occupy the position, they will take all Craz's men and the Howitzers with them. von Rhaden is to be careful of enemy N of him as it is believed that some enemy still occupy Muris and possibly Biekis.

I will send the AC's forward to scout Muris-Biekis once von Rhaden secures Smurgis, but for now I will hold them out of sight. The AC commander should wait near the phone in Baltviks.

I shall move to the lookout position on the hill between Baltiviks & JA (which has a phone) with the M/C courier.

Michael 1 Coy are to proceed into the park & skirmish with enemy found there (I know they are there somewhere). Their objective is to occupy the enemies attention & reduce their effectiveness in mounting an attack on the Baden Bttn. If they get into trouble they shall fall back on 3 Coy JA.

von Borck has still to report on the situation at the far N of my position, remind him.

Estonian Orders at 07:40

'Upper Rauna', does that mean Northern Rauna? If so, then is this probably a different pair of mortars than the ones engaged to the south?

No, "upper" is the south, being on high ground while the rest of the town slopes down to

the river. The fire can be assumed to be from the mortars you already know about.

Note I don't wait my usual 5 minute delay to send orders but immediately shout out for the 1st Battalion to take cover and hide in Rauna's buildings. Preferably the stoutly built ones.

Can I see where the mortars are? Does it look like Cpt Kalm knows where they are? Are the Estonian guns vulnerable?

No other orders, tho.

My Calculations up to 08:00

Mortar fire on Abrams company ineffective. On town also.

Mortar ammunition at Panslavas.

Responses to Freikorps at 08:00

The mortars fire for another 10 minutes, expending their ammunition (except for a small quantity for self-defence if attacked later). They then start to make their way to the rear.

The cavalry hold their position for the moment, to allow the mortars a bit of a head start.

The infantry cannot afford to merely attack out of their current position, as they have enemy cavalry to their flank as well as rifles to their front. Therefore during this time they work their way west down the gully and then north down the main river. Their scouts on the hill above report no enemy movement, so this can be done largely in the open just on the edge of the cover, speeding it up considerably, but keeping the men hidden from enemy view. The company is now (08:00) by a farm just north of where the gully met the main river.

08:00 Baden Battalion is just approaching the western edge of the Smurgis farms now, with a few scouts out in front. (I had them move at half-way between march and tactical speed, to reflect the lack of opposition but the need to be ready at any time. The MGS, being behind could march happily, so have kept up with the riflemen fine.)

Cranz's howitzers limber up and set off. They are now coming up to the former Baden positions.

Do you want the Signals Platoon to collect the wire and telephone to the former Baden position?

There are no sounds of rifle fire anywhere during this time, but at 07:45 JA report that there are explosions from inside Rauna town. They also report an exodus of enemy carts heading eastwards from the town.

Von Borcke reported on the northern positions at 06:40. Since the Uhlans rode up and were shot at, there has been no sign of any enemy movement in Muris or Biekis. Büchner and his cavalry are now north of the river (they crossed at Irbutis) on their way to place themselves astride the Muris-North road. Obviously communication with them will be slow.

Responses to Estonians at 08:00

07:40-07:50 The enemy mortars fire at southern Rauna. Losses are very low as the mortars tend to explode on the solid roofs of the town. However the howitzer battery's

horses cannot take cover and have to be taken away to safety (the chance of actually damaging a gun are low, so the guns stay put). Likewise the commissariat folks empty the eastern edge of the town of all the wagons (taking particular care to get rid of the ammunition wagons!). Although not many men have been wounded, it will take quite some time to re-assemble them once the all clear is sounded.

You cannot identify the mortars location. They appear to be firing blind.

Do you want to rig up a phone connection to Eigo's new position?

Lt Reiman is currently trying to rig up a temporary river crossing north of Rauna so as to shorten the line of communication with the 3rd Battalion and allow a better line of retreat for the Foot Scouts (currently in the group of houses on the northern side due east of Baizkalna estate).

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08:00 – 08:20

Freikorps Orders at 08:00

Excellent! I believe that Rauna is practically ours.

I will personally go with the infantry to inspire them with my undoubted leadership qualities. I also want to stress upon them that whatever happens in Rauna, it is vital to send a report about it to Major Bockelsocks. If I fall in combat, someone else must send him a message. I am assuming, incidentally, that he will have heard our mortar bombardment for himself.

Also tell them that if at all possible, we want to capture the bridge just a few yards West of Rauna (ie the one marked CF on Richard's map, although it is not mentioned on his list of place code names. Is it in fact a bridge or a ford? Also on his map I can't find the code FD, which he describes as "Ford over R. Rauna on Rauna-Cestis Road". Please can you tell me where this ford is supposed to be, and also where is "Cestis"? Is it the same as "Cesis"?)

Richard's forward posts should have some idea of your activities, although mortars don't make quite the "splash" of heavy artillery. The enemy troop movements can't have been entirely unobserved either.

CF is Cesis Ford and is the crossing on the main road out of Rauna to the west heading towards Cesis (about 15 km due west of Rauna). (Richard's spelling of Latvian names leaves quite a lot to be desired!)

On the detailed map it shows that crossing blue over brown, not vice-versa as a ford -- but a very gentle one, passable to most vehicles with ease. It is 500m from the centre of Rauna btw, hardly a "few yards". You can't really hold both at the same time therefore.

Thanks for all your clarifications of Richard's map. 'Cesis' it is. But since 'CF' is not a bridge but a ford, I am no longer worried that the enemy might blow it up! Therefore I will not go near it in my probe into downtown Rauna.

I will move up to Smurgis with the Armoured Cars, my HQ from 8:00 will be at Smurgis. After informing HQ at Cesis that I have routed a btn of the enemy in Smurgis, von Borke and any other HQ staff are to join me.

Baden Btn to secure Smurgis area and send scouts out E, N & S to look for the enemy we have seen earlier. von Rhaden's staff is to examine enemy corpses or prisoners in Smurgis for identifiable uniform details & report to me. I suspect that either they have retired to Rauna or

sneaked unseen into the Wood between Smurgis & Cimzas. I would dearly love to fall upon the rear of enemy as they retire over the Cimzas Bridge, but I do not yet know for sure where they are, such is the superiority of kriegsspiel over figure wargames!

Michael Btn 1 Coy is to scout & search the Park & all its buildings. Michael Btn 3 Coy is to send scouts to the top of the hill SSE of the Park buildings.

Manteuffel is to report what they find, but if the hill is clear of enemy the Michael 3 Coy shall establish itself atop the hill. There they can set up a fwd artillery OP. If this move should it take place the Michael Artillery and MGs shall move up to a position on the hill from where they cover the town and Rauna - Baltviks Road. Manteuffel is to look closely at the roads leading from Rauna to Cimzas & see what is moving on it, he is also to clarify which road the carts he saw earlier were taking.

Signals detachment to gather up all assets E of Smurgis and reform at Baltviks.

I shall send a situation report to Bruckner, but he is now ordered to move South to Smurgis, on his way he shall test the defenses of Muris & Biekis.

Is there any word of Tassen and his activities?

Estonian Orders at 08:00

I send a staff officer w/ a squad to the artillery ammunition supply wagons. They are to stay just outside of the mortar fire zone, in cover, ready to return and resupply the guns when needed.

I thought there already was a phone connection 'tween the battery and the Capt Kalm. If another one is available, sure keeping in touch with Eigo and the 3rd Battalion would be good.

Message to Eigo "What is status of 3rd Battalion? Where are you now and where are you headed? When can 3rd Battalion be ready to attack? To Defend?"

Lt Reiman is to be promoted after this battle for his quick thinking.

My Calculations up to 08:20

2d6 = 10 Freikorps have presence of mind to cut wire at Smurgis and start stringing it to their rear. 2d6 = 7, so no-one thinks to ring Muris first to see what is happening there.

Mortar carts will be in Parenzis by 08:40, Tassen's will be at SB. By 9:10 they will meet at western edge of forest.

2d6 = 10, Tallinners overestimate number of men retiring.

2d6 = 7 for Eigo estimation.

Estonian horse scouts push back Uhlan scouts to follow up retiring Uhlans.

Responses to Freikorps at 08:20

The infantry have moved north a few hundred metres and then deployed ready to charge out – you need to give them a few minutes to sort themselves out after the trek through the gully and to allow your scouts to check out the vicinity of the flanks and rear. This main body remains hidden from sight (you hope).

Your mortars are moving steadily to the rear. They are now out of your sight, but must be close to reaching Krastins. The cavalry waited until 08:10 and then set off after the mortars. You have now basically lost all contact and sight with these units.

The land you are on at present does not allow for the use of cavalry scouts, and while you may be able to retire into the river's cover after a reverse, they cannot. You don't need

any cavalry for messengers anyway, as the quickest line of communication (not to mention safest) is to send a runner across the river. A couple of men have checked the far bank and confirmed that it is clear of enemy.

Do you want to attack the very southern end of Rauna, where the enemy infantry was last seen, or to aim further north, potentially getting in behind them?

(btw your suspicions are correct, FD = CF, and is 500 m west of Rauna).

There are no noises of combat for this period.

You arrive in Smurgis at 08:10 and the rest of your staff straggle in over the next 10 minutes, along with the armoured car. Cranz's artillery has just about made it. It will take quite some time to set up phone communication with the rear (sped up because you are stripping the local wire that runs Rauna-Muris) but the radio previously in the Baden position is now with you and will be operating soon (hopefully).

The Michael 1 Coy report that they have seen no enemy at all in the Baikalna park nor estate buildings. Manteuffel is going to set up his base in the estate buildings.

Von Rhaden reports that the area around Smurgis has been scouted and is so far signalled as clear of enemy. He has sent a party to see if they can see enemy in the woods leading to the Northern Bridge, though it is pretty hard to see troops determined to stay hidden in such terrain. His men report that all enemy casualties in the area are Estonians.

08:20 a message from JA reports that he can only see the southern end of Rauna, the rest being obscured by trees along the river or is in low ground. The carts were leaving by a minor road towards the east, but appear to have stopped now and are just sitting around doing very little it seems.

The new instructions to Büchner are radioed to Gravelis, and then a rider sets out. It will nonetheless be some time before Büchner gets the message (assuming he does get it).

No word from Tassen

Responses to Estonians at 08:20

No more mortar shells. In fact the entire battlefield is quiet.

08:05 two carts come down the hill from Panslavas, heading slowly for Parenzis.

08:05 the foot scouts report that they can see troops moving in the Smurgis area.

08:15 an enemy platoon in skirmish screen leaves the farm south of the Y intersection where the Panslavas road meets the main road to Cesis. By 08:20 they are at the small mound just NE of the Y intersection.

08:15 The foot scouts pass on a message from a runner from Eigo (note, this crosses your questions and is not in reply). He has positioned the 3rd Battalion along the stream east of Smurgis. The morale of the men is not great, but they should hold up to a frontal assault by the Balts, who currently (08:05) seem to have a battalion heading towards Smurgis. However, his position is vulnerable to being "turned" by troops coming from the direction of Baizkalna. If pushed out frontally, should he retire towards Cimzas or more southwards? If turned to the south, he will try to retire towards Cimzas.

08:20 the Tallinn Squadron reports that a company or so of infantry and a cart have left the gully area south of Rauna that they have been watching and headed towards Krastins. The enemy cavalry half-squadron have just retired to be with them. The horse scouts have set off to watch and report. Do you want the Tallinners to follow as well?

You have a couple of telephone receivers, one of which is now being sent to Eigo, but will take a while to get there.



08:20 – 08:40

Freikorps Orders at 08:20

We will go into the centre of Rauna in the hope of getting behind the enemy, whoever he is.

Where the devil are the enemy, are they hiding in those farmhouses between us & Rauna?

Michael 1 Coy is to occupy the Park buildings, but they should send a few scouts out to search the Park for enemy again, any prisoners taken should be sent to me.

Manteuffel should establish & Artillery OP on the hill SSE of the Park buildings, he will get the best view up there, so I expect him to go look at the enemy & Rauna and report to me. In particular, does he think the carts that left Rauna are military or civilian?

Michael 3 Coy shall send scouts towards the farmhouses dotted about to their right & front, the scouts mission is to find out if the enemy occupy any of them. (see attachment for path of scouts).

Baden 1 Coy with MG support shall take & search Biekis. Baden Howitzers, which remain in Smurgis, can be called upon to shell the village if resistance is met.

Baden 2 & 3 Coy, with Howitzers to hold Smurgis, 2 Coy shall send a few scouts to checkout the farmhouse to the SE of their position.

A/C's wait on main road in reserve, they should find a spot out of sight of possible enemy positions if possible.

Estonian Orders at 08:20

I sound the all clear for the troops in Rauna.

To Kalm: Can you target the carts approaching Parenzis? Can you target the troops exiting the gully south of Rauna?

To Eigo: Retreat due East (w/ 3rd Batt) if pressed or flanked.

To Jacobsen: Are the foot scouts in the buildings of the Baizkalna estate?

To Snellman: Follow retreating troops. Report their activities.

I report to Army CiC (telephone?): 3rd Regt holding off at least 2 enemy battalions with heavy artillery and mortar support.

My Calculations up to 08:40

Mortar carts not hit by fire.

2d6 = 10 so improvised crossing a success.

2d6 = 12 estimate by Abrams, waaay too large.

The message about Tassen to Bockelman is a bit early, so any response may need to be delayed.

Assume a message from Eigo about the armoured cars and artillery is delayed by the crisis in Rauna.

Responses to Freikorps at 08:40

Your men advance up the slope and head briskly towards the centre of Rauna. At 08:25 pickets on the heights at the southern end of the town spot you, but you blast them off. At 08:30 the enemy in the southern end of the town starts to deploy, but before they can have a shot you are over the height and heading for the middle of the town already.

From 08:20 to 08:30 there is the nearby sound of light artillery fire from the southern end of the town, but it is clearly not firing at you.

While on the heights you paused briefly to wave a flag to indicate your position to friends on the other side of the river. You were greeted by a friendly unit on a height a kilometre away to your NW.

Currently you are 100 metres from the western line of buildings that form the main street of the town. You hear a great deal of shouting in the town and you can see Estonians deploying ahead of you in the buildings and gardens. They may have time to get a fusillade in before you arrive but at the moment the firing is quite light. The unit at the southern end of the town is heading over the crest towards you, a couple of hundred metres from your right flank.

The attached map shows your line of attack, the pickets you cleared away (the x) and the relative positions of enemy units (size unknown).

From 08:20 to 08:30 there is light artillery fire from your SE.

08:30 the B2 Coy scouts signal the “all clear, no enemy” from the farmhouse they are sent to scout. At 08:35 they also signal the same after checking the small clear dry valley just behind that farm that leads to the NE (but without actually going into the wooded section).

Just before 08:40 you hear rifle fire to your SE.

08:40 B1 Coy and MGs occupy Biekis without resistance.

08:40 a runner from Manteuffel reports that they have seen a friendly unit across the river attacking Rauna town from the west. (If true, this can only be Tassen, of course). Careful inspection from the B2 Coy farm does indeed show someone moving up on the western edge of Rauna (though at that range it is impossible to determine who).

Manteuffel’s message also reports that the open area immediately east of Baizkalna, up to the small suburb at the kink in the river is clear, but that there are enemy in and around the river about 500m downstream from the ford (CF). (Yes, he does mean “in”). He expects to occupy the hill to the SE of the estate (let’s call it “Estate hill”) with his artillery and 3rd Company by 09:00 at the very latest, hopefully before that. (Note: this runner crosses your requests, and is not in reply).

08:40 M1 Coy have combed the forest, without finding anything. Any lightly wounded were obviously dragged off by the Estonians and a couple of heavily wounded men in the park buildings are in no state to be questioned.

A note for further reference: From B2 Coy's present position you can see the farm directly to the SE on the road, and then the next one a few hundred metres down, although not the low ground in between them (though B2 scouts report that is clear). The buildings beyond that are hidden from view and are not farms, but town buildings (and hence are black on the map, not brown). The river area is hidden from view in its valley, but you can see across to the southern end of Rauna town, which is only 1,500 m away (basically from above the yellow contour marker).

Thus you can see the carts Manteuffel was talking about, now that you know to look. Most military carts for this era are just commandeered civilian ones (often with farmer as well), but some of the one visible look to have canvas tilts, which is indicative of military types. There is also movement towards the east again among them.

Responses to Estonians at 08:40

Your foot scouts are in the buildings 500m across the river from you. They had to leave the estate or risk being cut off by the enemy. The improvised crossing to them is almost finished. Note it is only a few planks, but it speeds up the crossing for messengers and MGs in particular.

From 08:20 to 08:30 the howitzers fire harassing fire at the carts, now at the hill crest near Parenzis, without apparent hits. They can no longer see the troops heading south of you, so that was not an option.

At 08:30 the enemy unit just across the river reaches the hill 1 km NW of Rauna. Then they go over it to the area east of Baizkalna and are lost from view. At 08:35 you see a small company of infantry and a battery leave the farm that they came from and head off after them – at least you would, were it not for the following item.

At 08:30 a frantic telephone call is received from Abrams -- an couple of enemy companies have snuck up via the river and are attacking the centre of Rauna from the west. He is deploying his company to attack them from the south. Your staff look out the windows, but can only see one company heading towards you – it will be only 100m away from the westernmost buildings by 08:40.

You immediately start shouting orders, so that by 08:40 the Uritam company is deploying immediately facing them and light rifle fire has started. The Jabotinsky company, in the northern end of the main street, is alerted and formed up. You evacuate your HQ, which is unsafe and move to be with the Jabotinsky men. Reiman's men are in the stream, building the crossing, but they are alerted as well. The MG platoon starts to set up in the building on the most southern building on the eastern side of the main road (they can't risk setting up on the western side). The artillery limber up and start to withdraw.

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08:40 – 09:00

Freikorps Orders at 08:40

Whoops! (Or should I say 'Donner und Blitzen'?). It seems that the only sane option in the immediate future is to charge straight forward, as fast as possible (= What the French call 'La fuite en avant'), with two purposes in mind:-

- a) To disperse the enemy ahead of us before he can consolidate his base of fire.
- b) To get away from the open ground and into cover before the enemy appearing on our right flank can interfere.

So, in short, I re-adjust my monocle firmly in my eye and shout, in my loudest 'leadership' voice
- CHAAARGE!!!

Manteuffel is to get all his men atop the estate hill ASAP and get his Artillery and M/G's unlimbered and firing at the suburb of Rauna on this side of the river and at the place in the river where the enemy were seen. He can send that bright young officer that did the scouting this morning, accompanied by a few men, to the ford to see if he can make contact with the troops that would appear to be von Tassen's.

After the unremitting caution it's time for a bit of boldness! I hope the enemy are not lurking in strength near Cimzas.

Von Rhaden's command followed by the Armoured Cars and accompanied by myself and staff will take the main road towards Cimzas bridge, I tell von Rhaden & von Borcke that my intention is to seize the road leading North from Ruena and thereby complete my original plan of cutting the enemy off from Valmiera. Once we get to the Cimzas bridge it will be decided whether the next step is to attack the baggage column (possibly with the Armoured Cars, that will be no fun for the carters!) or to deploy and advance upon Ruena.

von Borcke & some couriers will quickly ride to the estate hill for a short chat with Manteuffel. He will explain my plan and rapidly appraise the situation at the Western edge of Rauna. I particularly want to know if the enemy are trying to swim the river to escape? He is to rejoin von Rhaden's column as soon as possible afterwards.

Just a small point. Currently Baden Battalion is spread out. Do you want them to:

- a) regroup and head down the main road as a tight bunch
- b) head so as to congregate where the road enters the forest
- c) head so as to congregate on the bridge
- d) advance in parallel and cross independently (easy enough for the rifles, harder for the MGs)
- e) some other cunning plan?

Also, I assume the artillery will remain behind for the moment in support and only follow up on your orders.

They should form a closed up column of march along the road with its tail at the crossroads and its head towards the wood as detailed below.

Skirmisher screen 100yds either side of road

3 coy+MG+My HQ

Cranz

1 coy+MG+von Rhaden

(in a change of mind) A/C in the middle of the column

1 Coy+MG+von Borcke, when he rejoins

rear to be brought up by an infantry platoon not the MG limbers.

The column shall go through the wood in this formation, I will decide how they should redeploy when they have crossed to the East side of the river.

I also realise I didn't give Manteuffel any definite orders. I will send a messenger after von Borcke, the Michael Btn is to hold this side of the river and ensure our LOC via the southern Rauna-

Baltviks road is secure. They should allow the enemy to continue to cross the river (under fire of our artillery & MG's). When they stop crossing he should take and search the Rauna houses on his (W) side of the river, when they are clear he is to make ready for an assault across the ford. Hopefully Tassen's actions will make his job much easier. I also recommend that he accepts any surrender of the enemy trapped this side of the river, I'm sure he doesn't want to be known as the butcher of Rauna!

The firing of a yellow flare or flares(I may fire several to be sure he sees them) from the N side of Rauna is the signal to launch his attack across the ford and take the houses on the E side of the Rauna, although I don't exclude sending the start order by courier if time permits or by radio if we can get them working.

I will send a courier to Bruckner, informing him of our situation, telling him Beikis is clear but the situation at Muris is still for him to clarify, and ordering him to proceed past Smurgis to Cimzas, unless he believes there is enemy in sufficient strength in Muris for us to require a rearguard, in which case he shall ride past Muris to and take up a position in Biekis.

Signals detachment to move to Michael HQ and set up a radio, they shall also send a radio to Baden HQ (if they haven't already got one, I forget). I want radio comms established between the Michael & Baden Bttns ASAP.

So why didn't I send a radio with Tassen? I believe it would have been an unnecessary complication and slowed down the game too much.

The Cav lookouts at Gravelis should proceed to Smurgis look out for enemy movement.

Estonian Orders at 08:40

Mjr Eller (1st Batt CO) to direct MG company. All troops to take best cover where they are and engage enemy company (companies?) when they appear.

I guess I'm Polkovnik Kruus in this. Am I a +2 if I decide to get personally involved?

My Calculations up to 09:00

2d6 = 9. Manteuffel is both "storm" and 9, so decides to intervene in Tassen's favour independently of orders. He sends 3 Coy to the ford and brings up 1 Coy to guard the artillery which dashes to the top of the hill.

2d6 = 6, so Eigo message about AC and artillery gets through, but not next one about being under attack.

2d6 = 5, so Balts underestimate Eigo's men.

2d6 = 3 so messenger previously tracking Büchner takes till 08:40 to find him and order him south on Smurgis. 2d6 = 6, so Büchner advances without excessive caution or rashness and finds himself on the edge of Smurgis by 09:00. 2d6 = 8, so Latvians don't panic. 2d6 = 6, fire at him without great effect. 2d6 = 9, so Büchner reacts reasonably and falls back to where the road enters the forest north of Muris. The latest messenger can get to him there via Gravelis at just after 09:00.

Responses to Freikorps at 09:00

Well, it went well at the start!

You charged into the town before the enemy could loose of a decent shot, and forced them out of the line of building – but without doing enough damage to him to really matter.

Then things got nasty. You discovered that he had MGs positioned opposite you, that you dared not charge frontally and that yet another enemy company now appeared round the town to your north.

Even that wouldn't have been so bad – only odds of three to one – except that the enemy shooting was terrifically effective. Despite the cover of the buildings, they shot your men to breaking point by 08:50, while closing in around you to the rear from north and south. The fire was so heavy that it was extremely difficult for you to command your men and the obvious retreat was delayed too long.

Over the river the rest of your battalion was coming to your rescue. At 08:45 a set of MGs opened up from just above the ford, and then at 08:50 some artillery joined in. But it was too late – your men broke and ran for the river. Shrugging off the fire from the MGs and artillery, the enemy was able to close in on you, capturing a large number of your men, while the rest fled to the relative safety of the river. You personally were not captured and are currently wading across the river.

You start to deploy in the road column, the B3 Coy heading off down the road with the others falling in behind as you go.

08:40 Rifle fire commences to your SSE (ie Rauna direction). It builds in intensity until your own column comes under fire at 08:50 (see below) obscuring it.

You now have a radio at Gravelis, one with your column and one on the way to Manteuffel. You can't signal and move, so the radio will have to pause for 10 minutes to set up if you want to check if anything is being broadcast.

08:50 Manteuffel sends a message by horse, timed 08:40, to say that he thinks Tassen is in major trouble and that he has sent his men eastwards to intervene as much as possible, but without crossing the river. He intends to cover the ford area with MGs, 3 Coy and the artillery, to try to allow Tassen an unimpeded line of retreat. He will bring up his 1 Coy to cover the artillery.

At 08:50, the Baden column comes under MG and rifle fire from around where the road enters the forest (some 500m away, you have just passed the farm north of the road. In reaction, the lead company (3rd) deploys into line north of the road, their MGs head to the farm ahead, just south of the road. The armoured car comes to the front to spray the enemy and the howitzers deploy (at the northern farm). The remaining companies and MGs stay on the road, but stop advancing.

By 09:00 you are in a position to advance on the forest with the rifle company, if you want, supported by the armoured cars and the howitzers and the MGs in the farm. The enemy fire is not very heavy – you estimate a couple of companies, with a platoon of MGs, maximum.

08:55 onwards you can see (and hear) 1500m south of you, on the Estate hill, the firing of Manteuffel's artillery.

Responses to Estonians at 09:00

You lead the Jabotinsky around the northern end of the town at 08:45. Ahead you see that the Balts have forced their way into the town but that Abrams is closing from the north and that you almost have them surrounded.

At 08:45 MGs open up on the Jabotinsky company from across the river, but you shrug them off and continue to fire on, and close in on, the enemy in the town. Abrams does likewise.

At 08:50 the enemy break and run for the river. The Jabotinsky company gets to them first, capturing many and pursuing them down to the river's edge.

At 08:55 enemy artillery open fire on the Abrams company and Uritam company, who have reappeared back on the edge of the town, but with little effect.

At 09:00 you apprise the situation as it stands. The enemy company in the town appears to have been the only one, and is fleeing across the river completely defeated. The enemy now has MGs firing from a farm 400m west of the ford, backed up now with a rifle company, and has field artillery firing from the hill top some 600 m NW of the ford.

The Jabotinsky company is down by the river's edge, just south of the ford, collecting enemy prisoners. It is sheltered there from sight of the enemy by the trees (and anyway, they won't fire while their own men are prisoner). The Abrams company has headed towards the river's edge too, just south of Jabotinsky, as the trees shelter them from enemy MG and artillery fire there. The Uritam company is lining Rauna town edge, under artillery fire. Reiman is formed up just north of the town, facing the ford 500m to his SW. The MGs remain behind the town, as far as you know. You have no idea where your artillery have got to.

A messenger from the foot scouts finds you, now that the danger is past, to say that an enemy company is emerging from Baizkalna park and heading towards their position (as at 08:45) and also tells you about the artillery, MGs and riflemen across the river that you already know about.

A message from Eigo relates that the enemy in Smurgis has a heavy artillery battery (2 bases) and 2 armoured cars (1 base) there. He does not think he can hold out for long against a determined attack, although there is no sign of one yet (as at 08:20 – the messenger took a while to find you, what with all the panic in Rauna).

As for your question – of course you *think* that you are a +2 and should behave on that assumption. Whether you are, is something else entirely. In the circumstances of the attack on Rauna I have assumed that you would ostentatiously lead from the front, so as to show the men that you were not panicking (even if you were).

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09:00 – 09:20

Freikorps Orders at 09:00

Yes, well I was rather afraid of something like that. You can tell Herr Bockelsocks from me that in any diversionary operations it is the role of the 'diverting' force to (a) make a loud noise, (b) save his mortars from capture and (c) sacrifice his infantry to the ultimate extent, in order to make the diversion credible. I would respectfully suggest that I have achieved all three of these aims. Job done!

Tell him also that I think there's an enemy infantry battalion in Rauna, with some artillery, and that I wish his future operations every success.

Now please can you tell me where I am going and what my future role may be?

Good, the enemy have shown more of themselves, I wondered where exactly they all were! Now they are in front of my main strength and will have to face the consequences.

The Baden Btn will deploy at the 500yd range as follows:

In 1st line 3rd Coy+MG on left of road,A/C's on/astride Road,

1st Coy+MG on right of road 250yds back in 2nd line,

2nd Coy+ MG+My HQ on road+ Howitzers.

I will lay down fire from the front line for now, if the enemy fire from the woods withers my entire formation will advance on them. If it builds up then I will unlimber the howitzers and let them suffer for standing in my way! I want to draw them into a fire fight that they cannot hope to win.

The radio is to set up, I think we will be here for an hour at least while we pummel these woodsmen.

I want a small detail to keep look out from Biekis, although it was empty we have never ascertained what enemy was firing from Muris. I don't want an unpleasant surprise from my left rear!

I also am aware that the enemy could sneak up to our position using, as cover, the long thin strip of wood south of the road that my map shows, so some signalmen/observers are to go back through Smurgis and set-up in the NE corner of the Park so that they can warn me of any movement from S edge of the enemy held wood.

Damn where is my Cavalry, I made a mistake in sending Bruckner so far away!

Though I laud his wish to help Tassen, I am a bit disturbed at Manteuffel's reports. I do not want him to commit his men to a serious firefight regardless of Tassens troubles. Tassen understood the risks he was taking. I will leave on the spot decisions to Manteuffel, but I don't expect him to sustain many, if any, casualties to Michael 3rd Coy in helping Tassen. My note to him will inform him about what is happening here and tell him that I don't think we will be crossing the river anytime soon, so he is to remain in a defensive posture on the hill and await developments. Above all he should make sure he retains a reasonable reserve of artillery ammo, it will be needed later today!

Estonian Orders at 09:00

I leave my troops celebrating and sorting themselves out from their victory.

I'm going to return to HQ for messages.

And send another staff officer to find the artillery and the ammo carts for same.

My Calculations up to 09:20

Mortar carts meet 09:10

2d6 = 10, so Eigo elects for as stubborn a resistance as he can manage.

2d6 = 10, Eigo succeeds in fairly good obstruction of the road while defending.

Uhlans to north are in Biekis.

Responses to Freikorps at 09:20

The Tassen company fails to rally, and runs for the rear. Once out of range of the enemy it is collected together and packed off for Baltvilks, clearly unable to take further part in the battle today.

Unfortunately you attacked 20 minutes too early for the friendly units to be properly in place: such are the joys of kriegsspiel. You were always in trouble, outnumbered like that, but the artillery and MGs across the river should have been able to halt the company advancing from the north which would have allowed you to retire in some sort of order across the ford. Instead they threw lousy dice, while the Estonians threw fabulous dice to shoot you to breaking point very quickly.

When you ask “Now please can you tell me where I am going and what my future role may be?” are you looking to continue in this game? You could take over the command of Tassen’s superior (Manteuffel) if Richard wants. I can collect all the various orders to him, so that you can keep up with what has happened.

(I would have made the offer last move, but I had to wait until Richard could be told about the bad news of Tassen’s attack.)

Your Baden men deploy as instructed and a general fire-fight starts. After 10 minutes it becomes clear that a stalemate is ensuing – you have the stronger force but their cover allows them to overcome that to a certain extent and the longish range is helping them more than you. Consequently, your front two companies start to advance by bounds, covered by the MGs on their flanks in order to get to close range and really do some damage. Currently the 3rd Company is 250m from the woods and the 1st Company about 400m (since it started further back). The armoured cars are level with the 1st Company: at that range they have been able to suppress the enemy MGs, but it will need to take a (small) risk and get closer to do any real damage. The howitzers have fired a few ranging shots, prior to opening up at full volume.

Your staff assure you that a determined rush will secure the woods’ edge almost immediately – assuming that the enemy forces are only the two companies and MGs currently present. Otherwise, the current careful strategy will probably force the enemy out sooner or later. They enquire about your preferences for pursuit, in either case.

09:10 a message comes from Gravelis. The Büchner cavalry attempted to move through Muris from the north, but were again repulsed. The Gravelis station reports that your instructions to move around Muris and occupy Biekis have been sent to Büchner.

09:15 Manteuffel sends the sad news that the Tassen company was thrown out of Rauna in rout. The rest of the Michael men fired in support across the river, but it was not enough. It seems the town area is occupied by a full enemy battalion: Manteuffel can identify a company down by the river directly east of Baizkalna estate, two lining the river just south of the ford (but not attacking) and another in the town itself. He has his MGs and 3rd Coy on the steep slopes overlooking the ford in cover and his 1st Coy and artillery just behind the crest of Estate Hill. They are not advancing (as at 09:05). The enemy baggage made another run for it with Tassen’s attack, and is now strung out a kilometre or so east of Rauna.

Your pickets on either flank report no activity.

Responses to Estonians at 09:20

Your 1st Battalion sorts itself out, and starts to question the prisoners. Jabotinsky and Abrams are down lining the river just south of the ford. Uritam is in Rauna. Reiman has

moved his men to the northern end of Rauna, as his previous position down by the river was potentially open to artillery fire from the guns previously shooting at Uritam in Rauna. The scouts remain in the suburb over the river, feeling increasingly exposed.

Your artillery was located and stopped. It is currently a kilometre from Rauna, 500m from Bormanis (at the major T junction there). Strung out along that Bormanis road are all sorts of bits of the commissariat (the artillery is the westernmost part, because it did not flee during the mortar attack).

The enemy has a smallish company and MGs occupying farms 250m west of the ford. Though quite close, a frontal assault would be tricky as the ground in front is quite steep (marked with hatching to indicate “cliff” on the map). Also the enemy has a battery and another company on the big hill 500m NW of the ford, though these are currently not visible from your position.

There is a message at HQ from the Tallinn Squadron that the enemy cavalry and carts have drawn back over the Rauna river at the bridge on the Pskov highway.

09:15 Eigo is now in telephone contact (sort of) he reports that the enemy is about to assault his position and he doesn't think he will be able to hold. Currently they appear to be taking a careful approach, which means that he might be able to hold on for more than half an hour. Do you have a position that he should withdraw to?

09:20 A message from HQ!!!! Your orders remain as before. Expect no reinforcements. The battle is proceeding well on the other fronts.

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09:20 – 09:40

Freikorps Orders at 09:20

It's time to assault the enemy in the wood, using the Baden front line troops, 2 inf coys + MG's + AC's.

Assuming the assault is successful the enemy should be pursued across the river, with the AC's taking the road accompanied by a platoon of infantry. The 2nd line can follow-up as soon as the wood edge is secured. I want to get to the other side of the river with my column intact and get it across the enemy LOC, but I don't want to leave a body of the enemy milling around in the wood ready to pounce on my rear.

I haven't spoken to Paddy, he ought to take Manteuffel's role if he wants to? However I want Manteuffel to pin/fix the enemy in Rauna town and keep our LOC secure. At the moment the Baden column is on the offensive, the Michael column is on the defensive. If possible Manteuffel is to gather to him the remnants of Tassen's column, particularly the mortars & cavalry.

Bruckner is ordered to report about the nature and strength of the enemy in Muris.

Estonian Orders at 09:20

Have the prisoners continue being questioned.

I send an officer to find the MG company and the 1st Battalion's MG. They are to report to support Uritam when found.

I personally go to the artillery to lead them in support of the 3rd Battalion. Just before I go, I tell Eigo on the phone that I'm coming in support. To hold on.

Message to Capt Kalm to come lead his guns and abandon the OP.

My Calculations up to 09:40

2d6 = 3, so Büchner underestimates badly.

2d6 = 4, so Manteuffel underestimates artillery.

Mortars and Uhlans back at southern bridge.

2d6 = 10, prisoners give good info.

Responses to Freikorps at 09:40

You borrow a horse and make it to HQ (ENE of Smurgis). You can therefore discuss at leisure with Richard what happened and what you might do next.

The Baden assault appears to have been immediately successful, in no small part due to the howitzers. Losses in the assault are minimal.

Currently (09:40) the wood has been secured to the right and left of the road (by 1 and 3 Coy respectively) to a depth of 50 metres and “all clear” signalled. You may assume that small parties are searching out from there to determine if any enemy remains. The armoured cars have pursued down the road, tailed by a 3 Coy platoon, and you have lost sight of them (they can only have gone a couple of hundred metres though).

With the all clear, 2 Coy has advanced and is now 200m from the wood’s edge. The howitzers have limbered and are on the edge of the road 600m from the wood.

09:35 Manteuffel reports (by radio) that scouts have exchanged light fire with enemy in the houses due east of the Estate, but nothing serious. The enemy appears to be moving a small quantity of artillery (2 light guns?) northwards from where the Bormanis road meets the main ring road. It’s not clear whether they are heading for the bridge or Cimzas. Otherwise everything is quiet.

09:40 A rider from Büchner reports that he now occupied Biekis. Muris is occupied by a small amount of infantry only, so far as he was able to determine. A company at most, probably demoralised, possibly even rear elements rather than front-line troops. He is of the opinion that you have nothing to fear from them, and that he will be able to cut them down easily if they advance across the open.

The Tassen company is spent, and is retiring to the rear. It suffered very badly and will not be in a state to fight again today. Tassen however has borrowed a horse and appears at your HQ! (I offered Manteuffel to Paddy, but he didn’t seem very keen.)

Responses to Estonians at 09:40

Kalm and you ride off towards the guns. Then you move them northwards on the main road. They are now 500m from the Cimzas T junction, about 1,200 m from the bridge to Smurgis.

From 09:20 to 09:30 there are the sounds of increased rifle fire and artillery from Eigo’s position. Then it dies away, until the only sound is some scattered rifle fire from the scouts’ position.

No sign of enemy movement anywhere.

The prisoners have given the following information: they are part of the Michael Battalion. Also present in the Rauna area is the Baden battalion. Both 4 companies, but the Baden ones are larger. Each has an artillery battery attached. Only one cavalry squadron (Michael), but there are 2 armoured cars. Ammunition supply is low. Unfortunately no senior officer was captured, and the lower ranks do not know their command's intentions.



09:40 – 10:00

Freikorps Orders at 09:40

The Baden column is to press on through the wood with all assets. 3 Coy and armoured cars are to cross first, followed by the 2 Coy marching together with the howitzers & signallers. 1 Coy will tail out the column but they will spend their time searching the woods until it is possible for them to follow 2 Coy. I will accompany the leading elements as I want to get a clear idea of what faces me.

What reports of the identity of the enemy we just routed are coming to me, are they Estonians of the same formation (was that the 3rd Regt?) that routed first thing this morning, the 2nd Cesis Regt we routed yesterday or some other formation?

I seek von Rhaden's views about the enemy morale, it is evident that they break very easily under artillery fire. What does he think, will they all crumble in this way or have we just been lucky to come across the enemy we defeated & demolerised yesterday?

No change in stance for Manteuffel.

Has he any idea if Tassens mortars or Cavalry are in any way likely to be effective today, have they been lost or captured or are they missing till later.

He is also to get his artillery ranged in on the enemy E of the Estate and their route(s) should they turn around and redeploy facing the Cimzas bridge and my position after I have crossed the river. If he could command their attention by some movement of his own men, which doesn't leave our LOC exposed in any way, so much the better.

Some interim stuff.

Good idea to go forward with the lead elements -- it turns out that the road through the forest has been quite effectively blocked by felled trees a few hundred metres from the bridge.

The armoured cars can only pass with extreme difficulty and are reluctant to press on with their only line of retirement so poor.

The artillery will pass more easily around, but will still be slowed. They also have material in their follow up elements for clearing the trees (axes, saws etc) and the horses can then be used to pull the smaller pieces apart. It will take a good 20 minutes from when the material arrives until a path is cleared for the armoured cars however.

Searching the few dead so far would indicate that the units the Baden Battalion have faced are all Estonians from the 3rd Battalion of the 3rd Regiment -- that is the unit that you pushed back yesterday. There is no sign of any of the Latvians that you broke yesterday.

You cannot be certain that the withdrawal of the Estonians from the forest line was a

route: it might have been planned for all you know. However, they left some moderately wounded men behind, which suggests something rather precipitous.

The tabletop rules we are using (Red Actions!) differ somewhat from most sets in that shooting results are widely spread and a very common result is that the target is forced to retire, without any other effect. They can immediately return, but the time lost doing so is often fatal to a defensive line (this is effectively a means of representing suppression, and was what was happening to the Estonian MGs under pressure from the armoured cars).

Also, while morale degradation results to a unit can be recovered by rallying, this is only possible once in the move -- so a unit which gets hammered by three or four shooting results in a turn can easily break, even though each in turn is not significant and could be rallied from easily. This means that it pays to combine as much pressure on a unit at a time as possible so that the target's morale degrades past recovery before they can rally. Even the threat of this would normally be enough to make a unit retire.

Thus, while artillery (especially heavy artillery) *is* very effective, it is combined pressure which generally gets the best results. This is why I suggested that the infantry advance to close range -- the combined weight of rifle, MG and artillery fire is *much* more effective than exposure to each in turn.

In any case, the armies of this period do not have the staying power of WWI professional armies. Results were largely achieved through threat rather than the blood-baths of the Western Front. Even your men are no match for their mates of 1914-18 -- the lack of hospital facilities having much to do with this, and also the very real risk of being killed on capture. Units would withdraw once it became clear that their position was bad, rather than slug it out trying to take as many enemy down with them as possible.

Estonian Orders at 09:40

I'll leave Capt Kalm in charge of the artillery and report back to HQ after first stopping for a 'look see' at 3rd Battalion HQ.

Are all the guns operable? Crew ok? How much ammo do the guns have?

What casualties have 3rd Battalion sustained and in what companies?

My Calculations up to 10:00

2d6 = 3, so Böckelman can't hear very well for the trees.

Responses to Freikorps at 10:00

As reported earlier, the way is blocked for the armoured cars and artillery. I will "back time" your decision on this (your opponent can't see you anyway).

The Baden infantry press on. You hear no shots, nor any other indication that the enemy is nearby.

There is an occasional cannon shot, but with all the trees locating its direction is very difficult.

Responses to Estonians at 10:00

09:50 You intercept a messenger from Eigo exiting the forest ahead of you. He reports that the 3rd Battalion is in retirement eastwards. Morale in the men is very low (although

actual losses are slight) and Eigo does not think that they will take much more. Palvadre has been heavily wounded so Eigo has had to stay with the battalion. Contact has been lost with the enemy. Before they fled they felled trees across the road, which should slow down the enemy armoured cards.

09:55 The enemy cannons on the hill SE of the estate start to fire sporadically in the Rauna area. You also see a company heading down from that hill towards the cluster of houses and a fire fight starts with the scouts.

Kalm halts the guns just under 1,000m from the bridge, just east of the road in a small fold that protects him from fire from the west (you can see a small contour re-entrant in the map). The guns are fine, and the crews likewise. They have about 30 minutes supply. The resupply wagons are in Bormanis, or thereabouts.

At 10:00 you see the first infantry elements of Eigo's command exiting the woods at the bridge. They are asking you where they should go.



10:00 – 10:20

Freikorps Orders at 10:00

The AC's and a platoon of 3 Coy will wait at the roadblock, von Borcke & HQ will remain with them.

The artillery sappers are to move up with the 2 Coy and Howitzers and clear the roadblock ASAP and then press on with the AC's & their escort.

Meanwhile 1 and 3 Coy (less 1 plat), with their MG's, can push forward to the river line, myself & some couriers will accompany them.

Bruckner can (furtively) move back to a position in the farm houses E of Smurgis, but he should leave a few men in Biekis to give notice of any activity from Muris.

In general I want to:

- 1) Push on, clear the felled trees and get through the forest and across the river.
- 2) Get 1 & 3 Coy across the river & move up to take a look see myself.
- 3) Use 2 Coy to guard the A/C, Howitzers & Signallers stuck in the wood waiting for trees to be cleared.
- 4) Withdraw Bruckner a bit into Smurgis farmhouses, but leave a lookout on Muris based in Biekis.
- 5) Prepare Michael Artillery for firing on the 2 Coys E of Estate in support of Baden. (in anticipation of Baden advancing on them after they have got across the river).
- 6) Request concrete news of what happened to Tassen's mortars & cavalry?

Estonian Orders at 10:00

I order the 3rd battalion to form a defensive line along the Rauna river south of the bridge they are now crossing.

Then I report back to HQ to see what chaos has ensued in my absence :)

My Calculations up to 10:20

2d6 = 4, so clearing trees is slow.

Responses to Freikorps at 10:20

Your artillery men are busy chopping up and clearing the felled trees. In 20 minutes or so the armoured cars will be able to pass. The artillery will take some time after that, as the limbers will have to be reconfigured to drag the guns again. Baden 2 Coy is guarding the work at present, freeing the platoon of 3 Coy to return to its unit.

In the meantime, the enemy has stopped retiring and are now attempting to stop you crossing the river. Baden 3 Coy are lining the river's edge north of the bridge. They report that the bridge itself and the clear ground to the north is covered by enemy MGs positioned in the forest just by the bridge: and it might be quite bloody to cross. Baden 1 Coy is south of the bridge and skirmishing across the river with the enemy. There is no apparent increase in strength of the enemy.

Voh Rhaden suggests that he could attempt to turn the enemy to right and/or left, using the cover of the forest. Slow, but low risk, especially to the north. Or he could attempt to storm the bridge with the armoured cars leading a column of infantry. This would be much higher risk, but potentially you could get in behind the enemy and cut off his retreat. (Or some combination of the above.)

10:10 A message from Manteuffel timed 09:50 reports that:

- 1) the Tassen cavalry and mortars are still fine and have been told to hold the southern bridge area.
- 2) he will attempt to distract the enemy with troop movements, perhaps even an attack on the cluster of houses east of the Estate.
- 3) his artillery should be able to severely impede movement of the enemy from Rauna towards you (provided he is not attacked himself, since he estimates the enemy in Rauna outnumber him).

Responses to Estonians at 10:20

Eigo starts to form up his men south of the bridge, with the MGs covering the bridge itself. Skirmishing commences along his line.

There is not much happening in Rauna. The troops remain positioned as previously, with two companies along the river south of the ford and two plus MGs in the town itself.

Across the river the enemy company attacking the Foot Scouts appears to be uninterested in pressing the attack. They remain stationary several hundred metres from the buildings. The enemy artillery on the hill SE of the estate has been firing shells in short bursts all around the area north-east of Rauna: it would appear either that they are ranging various locations or just plain harassing you.

The Tallinn Squadron reports that the enemy is blocking the bridge on the Pskov Highway. They have mortars and some infantry/dismounted cavalry. It will not be possible for the Tallinners to dislodge them without support.

The Horse Scouts have resumed patrolling the area south of Rauna, down to the Briuieks ridge line (at which point the Tallinners take over).

Kalm remains deployed to fire at anyone crossing the river.

10:20 – 10:40

Freikorps Orders at 10:20

Damn...I hoped they wouldn't be that organised. :-)

Baden 3 Coy to scout out suitable, undefended, crossing point N of their position.

Baden 1 & 3 Coy to stay where they are (under cover of the wood) and pin the enemy, they are to get their MG's deployed.

Baden 2 Coy to leave the clearing work immediately and flank the enemy south of 1 Coy, then drive the enemy opposite 1 Coy to the north (i.e. into the open NE of the bridge and into the fire of my MG's, I hope).

AC's followed by Baden Howitzers to move near the bridge, but held back a hundred yards or so behind my 1st line, where they should make ready to breakout across the bridge when ordered.

Bruckner to leave Smurgis, but with lookout still in Beikis, and follow Baden into wood, there they will be directed, by Baden 3 Coy officers, to the crossing point they have identified N of their position, then they are to flank the enemy position and try and capture their MG's. I will await their arrival (near the road block) and speak briefly to Bruckner before his men cross.

Also by the roadblock I want the radio setup and in touch with the Michael Bttn radio.

Michael as they were, except Michael Artillery are to lay down some fire on the enemy infantry holding the river opposite the estate, as a diversion to make the enemy worry about the flank that isn't going to be attacked.

The Cavalry and Mortars of Tassens column are to be brought back to the Michael main body. If they are not being pursued by enemy then the Cavalry can leave the mortars, otherwise they should escort them. I also want to know from them a bit more about what happened, mainly to assess enemy strength, are there more enemy, how much enemy cavalry have they seen etc.

Estonian Orders at 10:20

I ask Mjr. Eller to lead the reg'l mg company to Eigo's assistance. Then Eller is to return to 1st battalion. They (the mgs) are to detour to the east to avoid enemy artillery fire.

The Talliners are to just observe and report from their position.

Kalm to hold fire until the armored cars appear at the bridge, or after the 3rd battalion runs to provide cover fire for them.

My Calculations up to 10:40

2d6 = 10, so Manteuffel has some gas.

2d6 = 9, so Manteuffel's artillery relatively easy to hear in woods.

2d6=6 for northern crossing, 2d6=5 for southern.

Foot scouts take two terror markers from the artillery.

Responses to Freikorps at 10:40

10:20 Baden 2 Coy set off to cross the river to the south of the bridge. They take a two flares: white means "crossing safely accomplished", red means "crossing aborted", both means "enemy retiring precipitously". They will initially leave their MGs behind at their crossing, to cover any retirement.

10:25 1 and 3 Coy MGs deployed, but being forced by the trees to the bottom of the river valley, they don't have great arcs of fire. They will only be able to target enemy retiring northwards, not eastwards. They will however be able to support any attempt to force the bridge.

10:30 A message from Manteuffel timed 10:00 reports that the enemy guns moving in your general direction have stopped and are now about 1 km SE of the northern bridge. They have occupied low ground, and he cannot target them other than indirectly with the few gas shells that he has. Otherwise nothing new to report.

10:35 You hear artillery open up. Thanks to the woods, direction and strength is difficult to determine but it would seem to be coming from Manteuffel's position.

10:40 An officer from Baden 3 Coy reports that they can cross the river, with difficulty, to their immediate north. They could get their MGs across, and position them so that they have excellent field of fire behind the enemy positions, but it will take at least 30 minutes and any forced retirement could involve leaving the MGs behind. There is no way that cavalry will be able to get their horses across anywhere near the current position. (Nor to the south either, for that matter.)

10:40 The armoured cars are through the block and waiting just short of the bridge. The artillery have pulled off the road to reset their gear. Büchner's cavalry are arriving: you should note that men and horses are pretty tired now, having barely slept and since then have been continually on the move, albeit not under fire much.

During this time the light fire-fight across the river continues, around 1 Coy mainly. The enemy are remaining very cautious, and basically they seem content to hamper any crossing.

The radio will arrive at your position fairly soon. Obviously messages out to the southern bridge are going to take quite some time.

Responses to Estonians at 10:40

10:30 Eigo reports, as at 10:20, that he is lining the river south of the bridge, but that he cannot cover the whole stretch properly and is extremely vulnerable to a turning to the north. He will post a flagbearer near his position to signal to you his state of affairs. Horizontal means "holding", 45° means "hard pressed", vertical means "retiring soon".

10:35 The enemy field battery SE of the estate opens fire on the Foot Scout's position.

10:40 The MG Company is on the road at the major T-junction near Bormanis, heading north (with the artillery across the river now firing at the foot scouts, they can afford to stay on the road, which is much quicker).

You can hear scattered rifle and MG fire from Eigo's position during this time. His signal flag is currently horizontal.

The enemy prisoners have given the following information: they are part of the Michael Battalion. Also present in the Rauna area is the Baden battalion. Both 4 companies, but the Baden ones are larger. Each has an artillery battery attached. Only one cavalry squadron (Michael), but there are 2 armoured cars. Ammunition supply is low. Unfortunately no senior officer was captured, and the lower ranks do not know their command's intentions.



10:40 – 11:00

Freikorps Orders at 10:40

This is the crucial phase, either my attack across the river succeeds or I don't envisage promotion.

N.B. I assume the enemy MG is just S of the bridge, I wasn't 100% sure. I don't want small tactical decisions to make here, either the plan works or I will have to regroup to the rear. If initially unsuccessful I will try, try, try again until my men can no longer attack.

Heeding Bruckner's warning about the tiredness of his men I decide to alter my plan a bit.

Bruckner's men are dismount and occupy the current 3 Coy positions, they are to protect the 3 Coy MG & provide fire support, meanwhile the MG shall lay heavy suppressing fire on the enemy MG in the wood until 3 Coy & AC's move across its arc of fire.

3 Coy are to get ready to storm across the river following the AC's.

1 Coy are to continue skirmishing ahead, but be ready to cross via the bridge, the 2nd Coy crossing point or any good place in their front. When 2 Coy goes in they must increase their fire to maximum rates.

2 Coy are to get ready to cross, von Rhaden is to put himself at/near the junction of 1 & 2 Coy.

When everybody in place, Rhaden to signal start (no flares, hand signals) and 2 Coy will assault across river and (hopefully be able to) press N.

Runners to be ready to pass message from 2 Coy or von Rhaden about 2 Coy progress (or lack of it).

On my order, within 10 mins of start of 2nd Coy assault, the AC's & 3 Coy are to storm across at bridge and get round the right rear of the enemy in the wood. I will do this even if 2 Coy get repulsed and if they do then they are to try again.

von Rhaden is to decide when & which way 1st Coy is to cross, dependant on his judgement, they have 3 ways, N over the bridge, straight ahead or following 2 Coy. They should get across as soon as their front is cleared.

This is basically an all out assault on the enemy in that wood, I want them outflanked/surrounded and destroyed. After which I will turn my attention to consolidating my position and maybe letting the AC's hunt out that enemy artillery.

If the enemy have reserves N of the bridge I hope the dismounted Cavalry & 3 Coy MG will hold them off, but god help 3 Coy if there are any.

Meanwhile pass message to Manteuffel not to use indirect fire N of Rauna, if we are successful he might hit our boys. Tell him to keep some artillery ammo in hand but continue distracting the enemy near Rauna & make sure he keeps me informed about all enemy moves he sees.

P.S. Has the enemy baggage gone?

Vorwärts!

Estonian Orders at 10:40

No new orders for 1045. They are all expected to hold their positions for now.

My Calculations up to 11:00

xx

Responses to Freikorps at 11:00

10:40 to 10:50 A bit of shuffling about puts the units in their new positions along the river.

At 10:50 you hear greatly increased fire from south of the road, presumably indicating the commencement of 2 Coy's crossing.

On this, the 1 and 3 Coy MGs start to lay down covering fire on the bridge area. It appears to be quite successful, and 3 Coy start to cross at 10:55 without your signal. Currently there is no-one opposing them, but the crossing is pretty slow.

Just before 11:00 a runner from von Rhaden reports that 2 Coy is across and meeting only limited resistance. 1 Coy have attempted one rush, but were forced back: they will try again soon.

The armoured cars are just now preparing to cross the bridge. Do you want them to take the risk of driving out straight away behind the forest area to get behind the enemy, or to not get out into the open until they have checked out what might be behind there?

In the meantime, the artillery in the forest are limbered up and ready for action again. The radio station has been moved to the road block area.

Manteuffel reports that the enemy in the houses have been forced out, and are retiring across the river. There is a small body of enemy infantry moving down the road towards your position, now near the junction of the road from Cimzas.

The enemy baggage is still at Bormanis.

Responses to Estonians at 11:00

10:45 The foot scouts start to withdraw from the houses across the river. They work back under cover towards the spot where the improvised crossing to Rauna was put in, and are just now starting to file across. The enemy artillery shell them during this, and their infantry facing the houses moves up to occupy them.

10:55 Eigo's flag goes to 45°

11:00 Eigo's flag goes to vertical. Individuals can be seen fleeing out the back of the forest area.

Your MG company is now at the T-junction from Cimzas.

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11:00 – 11:20

Freikorps Orders at 11:00

Yes, AC's just go for it and get behind the enemy as I said, I don't want lots of minute decisions, they are to surround and destroy the enemy in the wood and then take the farms behind the wood, forget caution. Its time to go for it, Besides if they don't get behind they might be sitting under enemy MG fire & I don't want that!

I shall personally go with 3 Coy and will lead any 2nd charge if they get repulsed.

If the AC's get fired at from the farms behind the wood, I might have expected that, so the inf Coy with them will have to assault the farmhouses with fire support from the AC's. I want the AC's in a position to shoot down the enemy when I force them back from the wood (with any luck they will surrender). If their are no enemy behind the wood then they will be taken in rear by the AC's and 3 Coy together.

Remember 1st Coy are to cross when their front clears, von Rhaden will decide how.

Please just resolve it! I want all my men across that river attempting to rout & destroy the enemy immediately in front.

Estonian Orders at 11:00

I chase after the MG company to personally direct it. Hopefully to stop the MG company from being caught up in the rout of the 3rd battalion.

My Calculations up to 11:20

3 Coy lose a base to a direct hit, but pass their tests.

Responses to Freikorps at 11:20

The armoured cars tear off down the road, and get in behind the enemy, spraying bullets everywhere. The lead one then promptly gets hit by enemy artillery, who were sitting waiting for it. The second car then chickens out and is chased back to the bridge by the enemy guns. (This is why I was asking so specifically! I knew they were in BIG trouble if they moved across the bridge, so I wanted to be absolutely sure.)

However, the previously orderly retreat of the Estonians is thrown into panic by the appearance of the cars in their rear, and your 1 Coy collect a whole bunch of prisoners as a result. You also capture the enemy MGs, which were abandoned by the bridge.

As your 2 Coy exit the far side of the woods they are targeted by enemy MGs sitting in a farm house not far to the east, causing them to fall back and reorganise. They cannot hope to cross the open into the MGs without support.

Meanwhile 3 Coy are also being shelled and suffering badly from accurate fire. Their nerve holds however, and they move NE so as to get under cover of the trees, from where they can still outflank the enemy and also threaten Cimzas Bridge. (You later find out that Hauptmann Wrangel, their commander, was badly injured by a shell fragment.)

So currently the enemy battalion is scuttling across the open towards the gap between Cimzas and Bormanis. As this is their third forced retirement for the day, I am ruling that they will not halt to fight again today, regardless of whether pursued or not. They are covered by artillery and MGs, which has halted your men, but only temporarily. Currently your men line the forest edge south and north of the bridge. As you bring up your MGs and heavy guns, and potentially bring Manteuffel's guns to bear as well, those covering troops will have to retire, and fairly soon at that. That will force the enemy in

Rauna to withdraw as well and your mission will be accomplished.

In the meantime, you would have to divert some of your forces to remove the pesky Latvians in Muris. (They would retire immediately, but you could hardly afford to have them remain in your rear.)

So I am going to stop the game now. The Freikorps have achieved their mission, which was to force back the Estonians to the east. Moreover, they have effectively ruined one enemy battalion as a fighting force, at least for a while, in doing so.

Actual losses are fairly even, as the destruction of Tassen's rifle unit is more than compensated by your recent capture of a company and some MGs by Baden 1 Coy. Both sides also lost a few men to artillery, but the armoured car's destruction is a real blow to the freikorps.

Soon after this you would receive a message from HQ to cease pursuit and prepare to withdraw during the evening. Although you have done well, historically the rest of your army has not and your position risks being cut off. So it was all for nothing really!

Responses to Estonians at 11:20

An armoured car emerges from the forest to get behind Eigo's men, but is promptly blown up by the artillery, who after all were expecting it. A second car immediately scuttles back to cover. However, the previously orderly retreat is thrown into panic by the appearance of the cars in their rear, and many of your men are captured by the bridge; plus the battalion MGs are abandoned.

The regimental MG company had set up in the farm by the T-junction, from there they forced back enemy south of the bridge who tried to pursue Eigo. As well as the cars, the artillery also shell an enemy company emerging north of the bridge, causing heavy losses – they retire NE, to threaten Cimzas Bridge.

So currently the Eigo battalion is scuttling across the open towards the gap between Cimzas and Bormanis. As this is their third forced retirement for the day (plus every unit has previously failed either a fear or serious test), I am ruling that they will not halt to fight again today, regardless of whether pursued or not. They are covered by your artillery and MGs, which has halted the pursuit for the moment.

Soon the enemy will bring up his MGs and artillery in the forest, forcing the covering troops to retire. That will make your position in Rauna untenable. The threat of the Latvians in Muris will act to slow pursuit however, since the enemy cannot just leave them to his rear.

So I am going to stop the game now. The Freikorps have achieved their aim, which was to force back the Estonians to the east.

Actual losses are fairly even, as your destruction of the unit that attacked Rauna does not fully compensate for your recent loss of a company and some MGs to the north. Both sides also lost a few men to artillery, but the armoured car's destruction is a real blow to the freikorps.

Soon after this the Landeswher would receive a message from HQ to cease pursuit and prepare to withdraw during the evening. Although doing well here, the rest of their army historically did not, and they risked being cut off to their rear.

