

Korosten: Mykola Shchors's Last Battle

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The town of Korosten is located seventy-five kilometres north of the city of Zhytomyr in the Volhynia region of Ukraine. An important railway hub, it was especially valuable during the military struggle from 1917 to 1921: the side controlling it had a significant advantage in transporting men and equipment. Not surprisingly, many major and minor engagements were fought for Korosten.¹

One of the larger contests for control of Korosten occurred from 30 August to 3 September 1919 between the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, commanded by Mykola Shchors, and the Second Corps of the Ukrainian Galician Army (UHA), commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Bizanz. The Second Corps and Ievhen Konovalts's Sich Riflemen served to screen the left flank of the Kyiv offensive by the two Ukrainian national armies in the summer of 1919. A part of Bizanz's task was to capture Korosten to protect the national forces from Bolshevik attack from the north.² On the other side, Shchors's division was ordered to hold the town at all costs, since Korosten kept open the last railroad link between Right-Bank Ukraine and the Bolshevik base in Russia. Control of the town was crucial to the survival of three encircled Soviet divisions fighting their way north from the vicinity of Odesa to link up with the

1. O. S. Chornobryvtseva, ed., *Zhytomyrska oblast*, unnumbered vol. in *Istoriia mist i sil Ukrainiskoi RSR*, ed. P. T. Tronko, 26 vols. (Kyiv: Instytut istorii AN URSS, 1973), 308–14.

2. Mykhailo Kapustiansky, *Pokhid ukrainskykh armii na Kyiv-Odesu: Voienno-istorychna studiia*, 2d ed., (Munich: S. Sliusarchuk, 1946), 2: 142–4.

main body of Soviet forces in the vicinity of Korosten.³ Shchors was killed on 30 August, the first day of battle, but his division managed to hold Korosten.

Besides the leading figures at Korosten, such as Bizanz and Shchors, the battle deserves the attention of historians in its own right. It had a major impact not only on the outcome of the Ukrainian offensive on Kyiv but also on Ukrainian military prospects in general. Moreover, Korosten was one of the few set-piece battles in 1919 involving large brigade-sized units: typical of the time in Ukraine were smaller engagements. Hence, it offers the historian an opportunity to examine the tactical performance of both sides in large-scale operations. The fact that the opposing forces were battle-tested and led by experienced commanders makes the case all the more interesting.

The Second Corps was not the only force in the battle that consisted of Ukrainians. Much of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division was Ukrainian as well. Many of its regiments had been organized in September 1918 on Russian territory out of partisan bands from Chernihiv, Kyiv, and Cherkasy gubernias by the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine to fight Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky's German-supported government.⁴ The Russian Bolsheviks encouraged their organization secretly, for the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk prohibited direct hostilities between the Russian-based Red Army and the German troops in Ukraine.⁵ In November 1918, as part of the First Soviet Ukrainian Division, these units took part in the Bolshevik invasion of Ukraine and proved to be the best troops in the Soviet campaign against the Army of the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR Army).

Until recently, the inaccessibility of Soviet archives and fragmentary recollections made it difficult to form a comprehensive picture of the Battle of Korosten. As the surviving participants died off, facts were replaced with the Soviet myth about Shchors.⁶ Neither Oleksander

3. I[van] N. Dubovy, *Moi spohady pro Shchorsa* (Kyiv: Derzhavne viiskove vydavnytstvo "Na Varti," 1935), 28–9.

4. Oleksander Fesenko, "Iak tvoryvsia mif pro 'ukrainskoho Chapaieva,'" *Literaturna Ukraina*, 17 August 1988; Semen I. Aralov, *Lenin vel nas k pobede: Vospominaniia* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury, 1962), 147–9.

5. Aralov, *Lenin vel nas*, 148.

6. Fesenko, "Iak tvoryvsia mif."

Dovzhenko's epic film about Shchors nor the mass of Soviet literary and musical works in his memory gives a historical picture of the battle.⁷

There is little documentation from the other side, because practically all of the original records of the UHA have been lost. Its brigades were ordered to destroy their archives before surrendering to the Poles near Vinnytsia in May 1920.⁸ Fortunately, the diary of the High Command of the UHA survived.⁹ However, it is only a summary of orders and situation reports, which no longer exist, and rarely gives detailed information below brigade level.

The battle attracted interest in 1988 when Ukrainian and Russian journalists began to revisit the circumstances of Shchors's death. Drawing on both published and unpublished memoirs, as well as interviews with old Bolsheviks who had worked with Shchors in 1919, a number of writers have suggested that Shchors did not die from enemy fire but from an assassin's bullet pursuant to orders from commissars at higher army headquarters.¹⁰

Thanks to greater access to Red Army archives, it is possible to reconstruct the battle and to explain why the Soviets won. This is my primary focus here. However, it is difficult to separate the purely military events from the murky circumstances of Shchors's death. Was he eliminated by his own side during the battle? Although no documentary proof has surfaced to date, circumstantial evidence suggests that he was. I devote a section to examining this evidence.

Prelude

By 15 August 1919 the joint offensive of the UHA and the UNR Army had pushed the Twelfth Soviet Army north of Proskuriv (today Khmelnytskyi) and Vinnytsia. Meanwhile, on the Left Bank the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Soviet Armies were withdrawing north from

7. George O. Liber, "Dovzhenko, Stalin and the (Re)creation of *Shchors*," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 21, nos. 3–4 (1997): 271–86.

8. Dmytro Mykytiuk, introduction to *Ukrainska Halytska Armia*, ed. Myron Dolnytsky, 4 vols. (Winnipeg: Dmytro Mykytiuk, 1958), 1: 8.

9. *Dennyk Nachalnoi Komandy Ukrainskoi Halytskoi Armii* (New York: "Chervona Kalyna" Ukrainian Publications Cooperative, 1974). Hereafter *Dennyk NKUHA*.

10. Ivan Tsiupa, "Taiemnytsia smerti Nachdyva Shchorsa," *Kyiv*, 1988, no. 11: 114; Iulii Safanov and Fedir Tereshchenko, "Pid chervonym stiahom ishov," *Robitnycha hazeta*, 8 August–13 August 1989; and Nikolai Zenkovich, "Pulia iz livorverta," *Selskaia molodezh*, 1992, no. 1: 52.

Kharkiv and Poltava towards Orel before the advancing General Anton Denikin's Volunteer Army. At the same time the Polish Army was content with limited anti-Soviet operations in Volhynia from Rivne and Dubno towards Olevsk and Korets, while it consolidated its lines along the Zbruch River following the expulsion of the UHA from Galicia.

The most experienced combat force opposing the joint Ukrainian national armies was the previously mentioned First Soviet Ukrainian Division. Besides steadily losing men because of casualties and desertion in the face of the numerically superior Ukrainian national forces, the division was suffering from internal turmoil as a result of pressure from Moscow to reorganize. Through May 1919 it belonged to the Ukrainian Front, which was formally subject to the Workers' and Peasants' government of the Ukrainian SSR in Kharkiv, but was directed, in fact, by the Soviet High Command in Moscow. When General Denikin's offensive began to gather momentum, the Russian Bolsheviks decided that it was time to incorporate the disparate military formations of the Baltic, Belarusian, and Ukrainian Communist parties into one Red Army under the control of the All-Russian Commissar of War, Leon Trotsky.¹¹ At the same time, Trotsky was very dissatisfied with the slow response of both the party and the Soviet military leaders in Ukraine to his orders to reallocate men and *matériel* from the Ukrainian Front to other fronts he considered more important at the time.¹² As a result, Volodymyr Antonov-Ovsienko, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Soviet forces, and Iukhym Shchadenko, the principal member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Ukrainian Front, were dismissed. On 4 June 1919 the First Soviet Ukrainian Division was incorporated into the newly formed Twelfth Soviet Army under the command of Nikolai G. Semenov.¹³ Furthermore, Semen I. Aralov, one of Trotsky's lieutenants, was sent from Moscow to sit on the Revolutionary Military Council at

11. Decree of the All-Russian Central Committee on the Union of the Soviet Republics of Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus against World Imperialism, 1 June 1919, in *Borba protiv denikinshchiny i petliurovshchiny na Ukraine, mai 1919 g. –fevral 1920 g.*, vol. 2 of *Grazhdanskaia voina na Ukraine*, ed. S. M. Korolivsky (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1967), no. 127, 110–11. Hereafter *GVnU*.

12. Telegram from Trotsky to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, 1 May 1919, *The Trotsky Papers, 1917–1919*, ed. Jan M. Meijer (The Hague: Mouton, 1964), no. 200, 1: 389–93.

13. Order of the Russian Revolutionary Military Council, signed by Trotsky, Vatsetis, and Aralov, 4 June 1919, *GVnU*, no. 138, 2: 122.

the army's headquarters, in effect replacing Shchadenko.¹⁴ Then on 15 June 1919 Semenov ordered the First Soviet Ukrainian Division to disband and to transfer its regiments to the weak and inexperienced Forty-fourth Soviet Division.¹⁵ However, the proposed reorganization was difficult to implement while the division was engaged in combat operations.

These organizational changes greatly affected the authority of Shchors, the young commander of the First Soviet Ukrainian Division. Previously the commander of the Bohun Regiment, he had recently been appointed commander of the division at the age of only twenty-four.¹⁶ He more than justified the appointment by defeating the UNR Army's counteroffensive against Kyiv and Berdychiv in late March and early April 1919. Nevertheless, after losing his Ukrainian party mentors in June 1919, Shchors came under increasing scrutiny and criticism from his new Russian party superiors, who preferred to have their own man in his place. After all, he was a newcomer to Communist ranks who had volunteered his services only in July 1918, after supporting the left Socialist Revolutionaries.¹⁷ Furthermore, by the end of the First World War he had been merely a junior lieutenant at the Romanian front.¹⁸ Since his successes had occurred before Semenov and Aralov had an opportunity to observe him in action, Shchors was considered too inexperienced for his post, and his military talents went unnoticed when the division began to experience reverses. Semenov and Aralov frowned on Shchors's administrative reforms in the division, which did not conform to the uniform standard prescribed by the Soviet High Command in Moscow. His regiments were much larger than the norm in the official organizational table. Similarly, his officer school for experienced men from the ranks belonged far above the divisional level. Although such innovations raised the combat effectiveness of the division, they went

14. Telegram from Trotsky to Skliansky, 7 June 1919, *The Trotsky Papers*, no. 296, 1: 542–3; and Zenkovich, "Pulia iz livorverta," 56.

15. Order of the Twelfth Soviet Army Regarding the Formation of the Forty-fourth Soviet Rifle Division, 15 June 1919, *GVnU*, no. 174, 2: 150–1.

16. Order of the First Soviet Ukrainian Division, 11 March 1919, *GVnU*, no. 763, vol. 1, bk. 1, 670–1.

17. Fesenko, "Iak tvoryvsia mif."

18. O. I. Bozhko and I. O. Molodchukova, "Novi dokumenty TsDAZhR URSR pro zhyttia i diialnist M. O. Shchorsa," *Arkhivy Ukrainy*, 1985, no. 5: 44.

against the grain of Trotsky's initiative to construct a uniform military machine from a patchwork of irregular volunteer formations.¹⁹ Internal reports from Twelfth Soviet Army headquarters began labeling Shchors a partisan and accusing him of insubordination and resistance to the regularization of the Red Army.²⁰ His former First Bohun Regiment, reputedly the backbone of the division, became the subject of negative reports regarding morale, discipline, and combat effectiveness.²¹ Still, his popularity with the division's rank and file prevented Semenov and Aralov from relieving him of command. Matters were complicated further by Moscow's repeated orders to send the First Soviet Ukrainian Division to the Southern Front against the Volunteer Army.²² This spurred Shchors to take great risks in order to destroy the UNR Army quickly and free his division for action against the Whites. As a result, between 21 and 23 July he was defeated by the Sich Riflemen near the town of Smotrych.²³ When the UHA crossed the Zbruch River in late July to join forces with the UNR Army, Shchors's already precarious situation became even more difficult: he lost the initiative and went on the defensive. As his prestige and authority declined, he found himself in effective command of only the First Brigade of his division. The Second and Third Brigades were attached to the Forty-fourth Soviet Division under the command of Ivan N. Dubovy and sent north to meet the Polish forces advancing towards Korets and Olevsk.²⁴ Except for a minor

19. Iefim Shchadenko, "Iz zapisok o Nikolae Shchorse," *Sovetskaia Ukraina*, 1958, no. 5: 145–7; and Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: A History of the Russian Revolution*. (New York: Viking Penguin, 1997), 590–4.

20. Bulletin of the Ukrainian War Commissar, Telegram no. 4358, 29 July 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2, list 1, file 175, (unnumbered document).

21. Report on the Combat Effectiveness of the Twelfth Soviet Army, 16–31 July 1919, Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv [hereafter TsDAVO], fund 2, list 1, file 148, (unnumbered document); and Bulletin of the Ukrainian War Commissar, Telegram nos. 4751, 4760, and 4764, 6 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2, list 1, file 175, (unnumbered document).

22. Bozhko and Molodchikova, "Novi dokumenty," 45.

23. Marko Bezruchko, "Vid Proskurova do Chortoryi," part 2 in *Korpus Sichovykh Striltsiv. Voienno-istorychni narys*, ed. Oles Babii et al. (Chicago: The Jubilee Committee for the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Sich Riflemen, 1969), 351–2.

24. Telegram from Dubovy to the Twelfth Soviet Army, 2 August 1919, Rosiiskii gosudarstvennii voennii arkhiv [hereafter RGVA], fond 197, list 3, file 134, fol. 90; Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 9 August 1919 at 12:00 hours, RGVA, fond 1417, list 1, file 163, fols. 160–399 (unnumbered document).

counteroffensive at Starokonstantyniv on 10 August, Shchors's forces were rolled back by the Ukrainian national armies. Zhytomyr was abandoned by the Soviets on 20 August 1919 and the brigades of the Second Corps of the UHA entered the city later in the day.²⁵

The capture of Zhytomyr completed the initial phase of the joint Kyiv offensive of the two Ukrainian national armies. The First Corps of the UHA was first to approach the city. Its Fifth and Sixth Brigades captured Berdychiv on 19 August, and were perfectly situated to continue their advance north to Zhytomyr, less than thirty kilometres away.²⁶ However, the Galician High Command insisted that Zhytomyr be assigned to the Second Corps, although it was located further west at Polonne and its troops were not as fresh as the First Corps'. The Galicians wanted to keep the First Corps in reserve in support of the Third Galician Corps and the Zaporozhian Group of the UNR Army, advancing eastward on Kyiv (see map 1). Although the two armies agreed to form a joint staff headed by Symon Petliura to direct the offensive, the UHA's larger size and superior organization had to be respected when disagreements arose. The Galicians dismissed the advice of UNR staff officers, who urged that the First Corps continue its momentum towards Zhytomyr.²⁷ By the end of August this decision would have fateful consequences.

The Second Corps halted in Zhytomyr to rest. Despite orders from the joint staff to seize Korosten on 21 August and again on 26 August, the corps did not begin operations until 28 August.²⁸ Shchors took advantage of the eight-day respite after Zhytomyr's fall. Assuming the task of reorganizing the Soviet formations north of Zhytomyr, he drafted a plan to merge the remnants of his tired First Soviet Ukrainian Division with Dubovy's Forty-fourth Soviet Division. For once, his superiors at the Twelfth Army headquarters could not interfere. First of all, Semenov had ordered the two divisions to combine as early as 15 June. Secondly, the Twelfth Soviet Army was preoccupied with the collapsing front around Kyiv, the advancing Ukrainian national armies from the west, and the Volunteer Army from the southeast. Dubovy could not have been happy with Shchors's intrusion into his sphere but quietly accepted Shchors's

25. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 32.

26. *Ibid.*, 31–2.

27. Kapustiansky, *Pokhid*, 2: 146–7.

28. Kapustiansky, *Pokhid*, 2: 167; and *Dennyk NKUHA*, 37.

plan of reorganization.²⁹ Thus, accompanied by his chief of staff, Serhii V. Kasser, Shchors replaced Dubovy as commander of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division.³⁰ Dubovy stayed on as his nominal assistant. By the time the Second Corps reached Korosten on 30 August, Shchors had transformed the town with its flat terrain, riverine barriers, and net of rail lines into a formidable position.

The Opposing Forces

Shchors placed the four regiments of his First Bohun Brigade at the southern approaches to Korosten. The First, Second, and Third Bohun Regiments and the Nizhen Regiment numbered some 2,600 bayonets and fifty-eight machine guns.³¹ Shchors also had the divisional officer school of approximately 300 men in reserve.³² The brigade was supported by artillery of twenty light guns and two heavy howitzers and two armoured trains with two guns each.³³ A cavalry brigade consisting of the First Soviet Cavalry Regiment and the Special Cavalry Unit, numbering approximately 500 riders with fourteen machine guns, was also at his disposal.³⁴ The flat terrain around Korosten was largely covered with forest; hence, the cavalry would have to fight mostly dismounted.

The First Soviet Ukrainian Division's Second and Third Brigades were located in the vicinity of Novohrad-Volynskiy, some seventy-five kilometres southwest of Korosten. Numbering 3,800 infantry, eighty-five machine guns, and eighteen light guns, these troops were preoccupied

29. Zenkovich, "Pulia iz livorverta," 57.а

30. A. A. Novoselsky, "Novye dokumenty o Shchorse," in *Materialy po istorii SSSR: Dokumenty po istorii sovetskogo obshchestva*, ed. A. A. Novoselsky (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1955), 170–1.

31. Situation Report of the Twelfth Soviet Army, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 104, list 1, file 4, fol. 138; Novoselsky, "Novye dokumenty," 173; and Situation Reports of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 23 August–2 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 22 and 28.

32. Novoselsky, "Novye dokumenty," 173–4; and Shchadenko, "Iz zapisok," 141.

33. Novoselsky, "Novye dokumenty," 133; Report of the Ukrainian Front, 1 June 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2, list 1, file 148, 102–3; and Intelligence Report of the General Quartermaster's Staff, Volunteer Army, 10 September 1919 (O.S.), Wrangel Military Collection [hereafter WMC], Hoover Institution Library, box 39, file 20, fols. 162–3.

34. Situation Reports of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 26 August–2 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 23, 27, and 31; Report of the Ukrainian Front, 1 June 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2, list 1, file 148, fols. 102–3; Report of the Inspector of Cavalry for the Twelfth Soviet Army, 28 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 3, file 24, fol. 630.

with the Sich Riflemen advancing from the south and the Poles from the west.³⁵ Shchors could not redirect these units towards Korosten.

The Galicians finally appeared on the outskirts of Korosten in the evening of 29 August. An advance guard of two battalions from the Thirteenth Galician Regiment and two battalions from the Sixth Galician Regiment entered the villages of Lisivshchyna and Ivanivka eight kilometres south of the Soviet lines. They were supported by two batteries of artillery. Also two battalions of the Fifth Regiment and a cavalry detachment advanced in a wide flanking maneuver to the west of the Zhytomyr-Korosten railroad towards the town of Ushomyr, a key position on the Soviet right flank.³⁶

The entire group was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Bizanz, a career officer of the former Austro-Hungarian Army.³⁷ On 27 August he had been ordered by Colonel Arnold Wolf, the commander of the Second Corps, to seize Korosten. Although a part of his task force had set out by train from Zhytomyr on the morning of 28 August, it did not reach its objective until the following evening. The railroad bridge at Novyi Bobryk had been destroyed and the Galicians had to march seven additional kilometres to reach their staging area. Furthermore, the march was slowed down by the hot weather and the soft, sandy condition of the local roads. The artillery found it especially hard to maneuver in such conditions.³⁸

On 29 August Bizanz appeared at Korosten with 1,200 men and seven light guns, content to perform a reconnaissance in force. In need he could call on reinforcements: besides his own Seventh Brigade, consisting of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Galician Regiments, he had temporary command over the Third and Fourth Brigades, consisting of

35. Situation Reports of Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 27 August–2 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 4, 8, and 10; and Novoselsky, "Novye dokumenty," 173.

36. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 41–3.

37. Born in 1890 in Velykyi Liubin near Lviv into a German military family, Bizanz volunteered to serve in the UHA shortly after the outbreak of the Ukrainian-Polish War. He distinguished himself as the commander of the Seventh Galician Brigade in operations against the Poles and the Bolsheviks. In the Second World War he helped organize the Division Galizien (Volodymyr Kubijovyč, ed., *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 1: 237.

38. Petro Myhovyč, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi na Velykii Ukraini," *Litopys Chervonoï Kalyny* 4 (1938): 5–8.

the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Galician Regiments. In all, he could muster thirteen infantry battalions numbering approximately 3,400 men, supported by 100 machine guns, seventeen light artillery pieces, and six heavy guns.³⁹ His cavalry support was limited to just a few companies.

30 August

Bizanz began the contest for Korosten by ordering probing attacks on the morning of 30 August. The Thirteenth Galician Regiment was ordered to seize Mohylno, and the Sixth Galician Regiment to take Kholosno.⁴⁰

Mohylno is a village on the north bank of the Uzh River where it is joined by its tributaries the Mohylianka and Slavuta. Although the waters of these rivers are low in August, their deep riverbeds are a significant obstacle to advancing infantry, especially under artillery and machine-gun fire. Mohylno is a natural defensive position. Unlike most of the surrounding terrain, the ground near the rivers is clear of forest and provides no cover for the attacker. Mohylno would give the Galicians a foothold on the north bank of the Uzh and easy access to the rail yards of Korosten to the north (see map 2).

Kholosno is a small village eight kilometres southeast of Mohylno on the south bank of the Slavuta. It offers a convenient jumping-off point for an assault on Biloshytsia, a larger village on the north bank of the Slavuta, which lies on the Zhytomyr-Korosten rail line. Control of the railroad bridge at Biloshytsia would enable the Second Corps to outflank Mohylno as far as the Uzh with its armoured trains.

The main assault began after 10:00.⁴¹ The Thirteenth Regiment assaulted the strong points at Mohylno and Biloshytsia with only one of its battalions; the other was redirected to Shershni on the eastern edge of the battlefield in order to screen the corps' right flank from Soviet attack

39. Organizational Table of the Second Corps [hereafter TO 2d Corps], 6 October 1919, WMC, box 38, file 7, fol. 227; Intelligence Report Regarding Galician Army for the High Command of the Volunteer Army, 1 October 1919 (O.S.), WMC, box 38, file 6, fols. 198–206; Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Brygadi," 5–8; idem, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 16–17 (1921): 12, and 18 (1921): 4; Intelligence Report of the Western Front, 15 September 1919, *GVnU*, no. 396, 2: 351; translation of captured operational order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 2 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fols. 9–9v; Intelligence report of Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 17 September 1919, RGVA, fond 1417, list 1, file 168, fol. 98.

40. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 44.

41. Situation Reports of Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 30 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 22–3.

from the towns of Meleni and Chepovychi.⁴² Only one company probed towards Mohylno, a second infiltrated towards Biloshytsia, and a third screened the battalion's left flank from the marauding riders of the First Cavalry Regiment, based at Ushomyr.⁴³ The attacks did not get very far because artillery barrages from an armoured train and light and heavy batteries forced the Galician infantry to seek cover.⁴⁴ The attack on Mohylno was blocked by the Uzh River and channeled by barbed wire into the fields of fire covering the approaches to the bridge. The entire attack was supported by only four guns from a battery of the Seventh Galician Artillery Regiment under the command of Captain Stefan Kohut. He could assign only two guns to support the attack on Mohylno and two guns to support the probe on Biloshytsia.⁴⁵ The Galicians were clearly outgunned in this sector and, understandably, were reluctant to close with the enemy.

The two battalions from the Sixth Regiment made much better progress on the eastern side of the front. One battalion advanced from Ivanivka and on second attempt took the village of Zlobych.⁴⁶ It captured a number of prisoners from the Nizhen Regiment, which recently had morale and discipline problems.⁴⁷ The other battalion advanced toward Kholosno against stiffer opposition from a battalion of the Third Bohun Regiment.⁴⁸ The town changed hands twice by mid-afternoon, and the Galicians were on the verge of retaking it again.⁴⁹

42. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 41–3.

43. Captured Operational Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fols. 10–10v.

44. Situation Reports of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 30 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 22–3; and *Dennyk NKUHA*, 41.

45. Myhovyich, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 18 (1921): 2; Pavlo Babiak, "Artylieriia rishyla," *Ukrainske kozatsvo* 3–4 (1980): 34.

46. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 41; Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 30 August 1919 at 22:00, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fol. 23.

47. Captured Operational Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fols. 10–10v; Kazymyr F. Kviatsek, "Lehendarnyi heroi," *Kommunist*, 9 March 1935; Pavel I. Pozniak, *Legendarnyi nachdiv: O N. A. Shchorse* (Moscow: Izdatelstvo politichnoi literatury, 1984), 99, 104–105, 107; and Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 30 August 1919 at 22:00, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fol. 23.

48. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 2 September 1919 at 13:30, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fol. 30; Kviatsek, "Lehendarnyi heroi," 3.

49. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 41.

At this moment of imminent success the fortunes of the Sixth Regiment abruptly changed. Shchors ordered his officer school to plug the gap created by the retreating Nizhen Regiment.⁵⁰ The Galicians in front of Kholosno and Biloshytsia were hit by an artillery barrage and then counterattacked by dense lines of Red infantry from Biloshytsia.⁵¹ Shchors's counterattack could not have come at a worse time for the Galicians. Bizanz had committed all four battalions at his disposal and had no reserves. The Second Corps beat a hasty retreat. In some parts of the battlefield the retreat turned into a rout. The Galician infantry to the west of Kholosno retreated south towards Ivanivka. However, the sudden counterattack caught a number of Galicians in Kholosno at close quarters with the enemy. The soldiers of the Third Battalion of the First Bohun Regiment, Shchors's old regiment, were in a vengeful mood: just before their commander, Kazymyr F. Kviatek, ordered the counterattack, they had learned that Shchors had been killed while visiting the forward lines at Biloshytsia. The furious attackers took no prisoners; they abused and then killed the wounded.⁵² Lieutenant Levytsky, a company commander in the Third Battalion of the Sixth Regiment, was rallying his men when he was struck down by a bullet. He was captured and savagely tortured before he died: a cross was burned on his chest and strips of skin and flesh were torn from his legs.⁵³ The fleeing Galicians were pursued all the way to Ivanivka.

50. Kviatek, "Lehendarnyi heroi," 3.

51. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 41.

52. Kviatek, "Lehendarnyi heroi," 3. Kviatek, a railroad worker from Warsaw, Poland, joined the Polish Socialist Party in 1904. He was imprisoned by the tsar's *Okhrana* for subversive activity during the Revolution of 1905 and exiled to Siberia for twelve years. Winning his freedom in the revolution, he joined the Red Guard and gained extensive combat experience against Ukrainian national forces during 1919 (I. F. Kuras, ed., *Velykyi zhovten i Hromadianska viina na Ukraini: Entsyklopedychnyi dovidnyk* [Kyiv: Holovna redaktsia Ukrainskoi radianskoi entsyklopedii, 1987], 244). Kviatek was familiar with the terrain south of Korosten. In March and April 1919 he commanded the First Bohun Regiment in operations against Petliura's forces in this area (Pozniak, *Legendarnyi nachdiv*, 107. See also N. S. Cherushev, *Komandarm Dubovoi* [Kyiv: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury Ukrainy, 1986], 107).

53. M. Kosivsky, "Marsh 3-oho Harmatnoho Stanyslavivskoho Polku," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 15 (1921): 24–5; "Storinky do Zhalibnoi Knyhy," in *Ukrainska Halyska Armiia*, (Winnipeg: Dmytro Mykytiuk, 1968), 4: 114.

31 August

By the morning of 31 August, two battalions of the Fifth Galician Regiment reached the southern approaches to Ushomyr. They were supported by three light guns from Captain Volodymyr Zubrytsky's battery of the Third Artillery Regiment.⁵⁴ Taking the high ground to the east of the town, the Galicians caught the defenders of the First Soviet Cavalry Regiment in a crossfire: a company of the Thirteenth Regiment fired from the northeast, while the Fifth Regiment and the artillery fired from the southeast.⁵⁵ Effective overhead supporting fire enabled the assaulting infantry from the Second Battalion of the Fifth Regiment to advance to and through Ushomyr. The Red cavalry were not driven from the town until 15:00.⁵⁶ Some fled north to the village of Vyhov; others withdrew west towards Puhachivka.⁵⁷ Besides the Fifth Regiment's fighting spirit, an important factor in the capture of Ushomyr was the fact that the town was beyond the effective range of the Soviet artillery at Mohylno. The capture of Ushomyr saw some of the bloodiest fighting of the battle for Korosten.⁵⁸ By the end of the day the Second Battalion of the Fifth Regiment was reduced to only 120 riflemen and would no longer be a factor in subsequent offensive operations.⁵⁹ At the same time, the First Soviet Cavalry Regiment suffered heavy casualties in its stubborn defense of the town.⁶⁰

To exploit the momentum generated by the capture of Ushomyr, the Fifth Regiment's First Battalion, under Captain Zenon K. Cherevko,

54. Captured Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 10–10v; OT 2d Corps, 6 October 1919, WMC, box 38, file 7, fol. 227.

55. Captured Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 10–10v.

56. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 43; and Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 31 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 24 and 31.

57. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 31 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 24, and 31; Captured Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 9–9v.

58. S[tefan] Matskevych, "3-ii Harmatnyi Polk," in *Ukrainska Halytska Armiia*, ed. Myron Dolnytsky (Winnipeg: Dmytro Mykytiuk, 1958), 1: 187.

59. Captured order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 9–9v.

60. Bohdan Hnatevych, "Obiednani Ukrainski Armii," in *Istoriia ukrainskoho viiska*, ed. Ivan Krypiakievych, 2d ed. (Winnipeg: Ivan Tyktor, 1953), 560.

crossed the bridge on the Uzh River at Ushomyr and rushed towards Mohylno. A large battalion of over 300 men and ten machine guns, it tried to attack the town from the southwest where the Uzh was no longer an obstacle.⁶¹ It was stopped by concentrated artillery fire and the firm resistance of the First Bohun Regiment.⁶² The Galicians had to be content with the capture of the hamlet of Rudnia Mohylianska, two kilometres southwest of Mohylno.⁶³ Because of the hilly terrain around the hamlet, the battalion's new position afforded some cover from enemy artillery. Nonetheless, the battalion was physically and psychologically spent and would not be ready for action until 2 September.

With his left flank secured by Ushomyr, Bizanz began planning a coordinated attack for the following day. His Fourteenth Regiment reached the front, and its three battalions, totaling 600 men, reinforced the Thirteenth and Sixth Regiments at Biloshytsia and Kholosno.⁶⁴ He also expected the Fourth Brigade's Eighth Regiment to arrive the following morning. Bizanz ordered the Eighth Regiment to attack along the right flank of the front from Shershni towards the villages of Sobolivka and Khotynivka.⁶⁵

Late in the afternoon Bizanz received a telephone call from Captain Hans Koch, adjutant to Colonel Alfred Shamanek, the chief-of-staff of the UHA. Koch informed him that the day before, elements of the UHA and the Zaporozhians had driven the Bolsheviks from the Ukrainian capital. However, by morning the White forces had crossed an unguarded bridge from the Left Bank and used a ruse to take control of the city. The Ukrainian forces, confused and disorganized, retreated to the west. Shamanek wanted to know whether the Second Corps could advance on Kyiv from Korosten by railroad. Bizanz explained that the corps was fully engaged against a substantial force and still lacked access to the Korosten-Kyiv rail line.⁶⁶ The news that the Kyiv offensive had failed

61. OT 2d Corps, 6 October 1919, WMC, box 38, file 7, fol. 227.

62. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 31 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 24, 27, and 31.

63. Captured Order of the Fourth Brigade, 2 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 9–9v.

64. Myhovich, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 5; idem, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 16–17 (1921): 12.

65. Captured order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 10–10v.

66. Volodymyr Lasovsky, *General Tarnavsky* (Lviv: Tovarystvo Chervonoï Kalyny,

would have a serious psychological effect on the Second Corps in the days ahead.

That morning the Sich Riflemen at Novohrad-Volynskyi received orders from the joint staff of the Ukrainian armies to assist the Second Corps in its assault on Korosten. In the evening of 31 August the First Division and one regiment of the Second Division attacked the left flank of the Second Soviet Brigade at Sokoliv and routed the Fifth Tarashcha Regiment.⁶⁷ Kalinin, the commander of the Second Soviet Brigade, threw his Fourth Tarashcha Regiment against the Sich Riflemen.⁶⁸ The fighting continued through the night. With the Second Soviet Brigade preoccupied to the southwest, the Second Corps was free to move on Korosten without fear for its left flank and rear.

1 September

In the morning 1,800 Galician infantrymen prepared for a frontal assault on Korosten. Their eight battalions were arrayed in checkerboard pattern, extending along a twelve-kilometre front from Mohylno on the left to Zlobych on the right. There were four battalions in the front line and four a kilometre or so to the rear.⁶⁹ By this arrangement, Bizanz hoped to avoid the result of 30 August, when he was caught without ready reserves to respond to a Soviet counterattack. Moreover, during the night Bizanz had augmented his meager artillery with three batteries, bringing the gun total to sixteen. However, he could not bring up six heavy guns and two armoured trains in support of the attack because the engineering units from the UHA and the UNR Army had failed to repair the bridge at Novyi Bobryk.⁷⁰

At the same time the Fourth Brigade's Eighth Regiment arrived at Shershni and moved forward towards the village of Sobolivka and the town of Meleni. It was supported by a battery of three light guns from the Second Artillery Regiment of the Sich Riflemen, temporarily attached to the brigade, and a mounted machine gun company of eighty-five riders

1935), 153.

67. Bezruchko, "Vid Proskurova do Chortoryi," 367–8.

68. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 31 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 24–7.

69. Captured order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 10–10v; and Myhovich, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytals* 16–17 (1921): 14.

70. Myhovich, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 5–6.

and eight machine guns under the command of Second Lieutenant Saul “Saltso” Rottenberg. The company’s machine guns were mounted on one-horse chaises.⁷¹ This gave it significant firepower and mobility.

The battalions assaulting Biloshytsia and Kholosno soon began to experience difficulties. The battalion of the Thirteenth Regiment directed at Mohylno barely advanced when it was forced to take cover by artillery fire from Mohylno.⁷² Similarly, the First Battalion of the Fourteenth Regiment only reached a small rise 500 metres south of the Slavuta when artillery fire from Biloshytsia and an armoured train forced it to seek cover. Further east, a battalion of the Sixth Regiment took and moved past Kholosno, only to be counterattacked in its left flank by a detachment of the Third Bohun Regiment, which had infiltrated unobserved by a small streambed running south from the Slavuta. The defenders had the advantage of observing the entire front from a bell tower in Biloshytsia.⁷³

Two companies of the Second Battalion of the Fourteenth Regiment counterattacked the Soviets in Kholosno and, supported by an artillery battery from the Third Artillery Regiment, drove them back across the Slavuta. Captain Andrii Oleksyn, the commander of the Fourteenth Regiment, called for fire support to restart the First Battalion’s stalled attack on Biloshytsia. Captain Kohut responded, bringing forward and unlimbering two guns under shelling from Biloshytsia and an armoured train. A machine-gun platoon joined the First Battalion to provide overhead fire support from a small rise in front of Biloshytsia. But before the Galicians completed the preparations, a detachment of the First Bohun Regiment infiltrated down another southerly stream from the Slavuta and surprised Kohut’s gunners, who limbered their guns and scampered to safety. Their sudden departure and the unexpected appearance of the Soviets caused the First Battalion to run. The Second Battalion restored the situation by a quick envelopment of the Soviet right flank at Kholosno, coordinated with the Third Battalion’s frontal assault, but Biloshytsia seemed as elusive as ever.⁷⁴

71. Volodymyr Mykhailiv, “Saltso Rotenberg,” *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 2 (1921): 6–7; and Stefan Haiduchok, “Kinna skorostrilna sotnia,” *Litopys Chervonoi Kalyny* 2 (1930): 16.

72. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, fol. 28; and Myhovich, “Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi,” 5.

73. Myhovich, “Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi,” 6.

74. Myhovich, “Zhytomyr-Korosten,” *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 18 (1921): 3.

While the Seventh Brigade was stymied in front of Biloshytsia, the Sixth Regiment again made progress at Zlobych.⁷⁵ As on 30 August, the Nizhen Regiment was pushed back toward Domoloch. However, this time it was routed completely, never to return to the battlefield.⁷⁶ The Sixth Regiment not only captured Zlobych but also won a foothold in Domoloch.⁷⁷ Late that night, a company of the Eighth Regiment also captured the town of Meleni after enduring a vicious counterattack out of Chepovychi by the Second Bohun Regiment. The Galicians suffered heavy casualties and lost a machine gun.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, the Eighth Regiment's First Battalion, together with Rottenberg's machine-gun cavalry, pushed a battalion of the Second Bohun Regiment out of Sobolivka, but the issue there was still unresolved by nightfall.⁷⁹

Bizanz realized that the suppressive fire on the Soviet positions at Mohylno and Biloshytsia was insufficient. His own batteries were kept off balance by Soviet counterfire and maneuvered with difficulty on the sandy roads. More importantly, his infantry advanced only so long as the officers led from the front. Whenever a company commander became a casualty, the attack would stall. Hence, Bizanz asked the High Command of the UHA for help from the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen (USS) of the elite First Brigade. Originally with the Second Corps, they had been detached recently and placed in strategic reserve at Kamianets-Podilskyi.⁸⁰ The First Brigade included battalions of the former Austro-Hungarian army that were trained in infiltration tactics based on a soldier's initiative rather than waiting for orders.⁸¹ But the First Brigade was on its way south to fight the Soviet battle group advancing north from the vicinity of Odesa.

75. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 2 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, fol. 28.

76. Situation Report of the Twelfth Soviet Army, 4 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 6, file 16, fol. 16.

77. Captured Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fol. 10–10v.

78. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 2 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, fol. 30.

79. Captured Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, fol. 10–10v.

80. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 44.

81. Volodymyr Kalyna, *Kurin smerty USS* (Lviv: Ivan Tyktor, 1936), 46–7; and Bohdan Hnatevych, ed., *Ukrainski Sichovi Striltsi 1914–1920* (Lviv: Iuvileinyi komitet, 1935), 75–7.

Instead of the USS, Bizanz was promised two battalions of the Ninth Brigade from the First Corps, which were recuperating at Berdychiv, but they would not be expected for several days.⁸²

2 September

By the morning of 2 September, the bridge at Novyi Bobryk was repaired and Bizanz pulled up six heavy guns and two armoured trains.⁸³ At last he had an advantage in artillery. He decided to encircle Korosten from both flanks—the Fifth Regiment was to make another attempt at Mohylno from the west while the Eighth Regiment attacked Korosten from the east along the Korosten-Kyiv rail line by way of Khotynivka. The Sixth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Regiments, exhausted by their exertions the previous day, were to feint an attack on Biloshytsia to divert the attention of the Soviets from their flanks.⁸⁴ To pursue this plan the Fifth Regiment was reinforced with a newly arrived battalion of the Seventh Regiment, consisting of 220 riflemen and ten machine guns. Bizanz appointed Major Bohuslav Shashkevych, the commander of the Fourth Brigade, temporary commander of the combat group that was to seize Mohylno. According to Shashkevych's plan, the main assault on Mohylno was to begin from Rudnia Mohylianska and move northeast through the natural channel formed by the banks of the Mohylianka, a tributary of the Uzh. The assault would be carried out by the fresh battalion from the Seventh Regiment and one company from the First Battalion of the Fifth Regiment. The remaining companies of the Fifth Regiment were to isolate the battlefield from enemy counterattacks from Krasnopil in the north and Puhachivka in the west. Captain Zubrytsky's battery of three guns was to provide suppressive fire from Rudnia Mohylianska, while the heavy batteries at Veselukhy fired to the west and north of Mohylno to isolate the town from reserves.⁸⁵

While Bizanz continued to pursue the capture of Korosten, a number of officers in the Second Corps were losing their enthusiasm for the operation. Captain Petro Hazdaika, the commanding officer of the

82. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 44.

83. Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 6; idem, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 16–17 (1921): 4.

84. Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 6.

85. Captured Orders of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 1 September–2 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 2, file 281, fols. 9–10v.

Seventh Regiment, opposed the attack from the start because he believed that the flat terrain would lead to unacceptably high casualties. Unable to persuade Bizanz to break off the attack, he began to lobby friends at the Second Corps headquarters against further operations. A hero of the Ukrainian-Polish War, Hazdaika was highly respected by the officers in the UHA.⁸⁶ His arguments found support not only at the Second Corps but also at the highest levels. After losing Kyiv on 31 August, the Galician military hierarchy became very cautious about personnel and equipment losses. Consequently, in the evening of 2 September the Second Corps received a directive from the Galician High Command not to force the issue at Korosten.⁸⁷ This was contrary to the standing orders of 21 and 26 August from the joint staff of the Ukrainian armies.⁸⁸

Furthermore, morale among the Galician rank and file was falling. The rate of typhus infection accelerated during the operation.⁸⁹ Healthy soldiers accompanying their sick comrades to the rear reduced the number of troops at the front.⁹⁰ Moreover, the officers and enlisted men realized that the Kyiv offensive had failed. There was no longer any urgent need to take Korosten.⁹¹

Nevertheless, operations continued. The Galician armoured trains, the *Halychyna* and the *Zaporozhets*, moved up and exchanged artillery fire with their Soviet counterpart at Biloshytsia. Because of the damaged bridge on the Slavuta, they could not advance any further. The heavy artillery at Veselukhy also dueled the Soviet artillery but lost some of its horses in the process.⁹² The suppressive fire at the First Bohun Regiment in Mohylno was just too weak; hence, the Galician infantry advanced only to within 500 metres of the Soviet lines. Furthermore, the encircling

86. Stefan Haiduchok, "Sotnyk Petro Hazdaika," *Litopys Chervonoi Kalyny* 4 (1932): 17–18.

87. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 45.

88. Kapustiansky, *Pokhid*, vol. 2, 167; *Dennyk NKUHA*, 35.

89. Stefan Haiduchok, "Slidom sanitarnoi sluzhby v 4-ii Zolochivskii Brygadi," *Litopys Chervonoi Kalyny* 3 (1930): 17–18.

90. Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 6.

91. Antin Divnych, "V Zhytomyri: Nacherk iz pobutu UHA v 1919 r.," *Kalendar-Almanakh Chervonoi Kalyny na 1923-ii rik* (Lviv: Tovarystvo Chervonoi Kalyny, 1922), 104–5.

92. Myhovych, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 18 (1921): 5.

attack along the right flank of the front advanced only as far as Khotynivka, which fell to the First Battalion of the Eighth Regiment and Rottenberg's machine-gun cavalry at 16:00.⁹³

There was discord in the Soviet chain of command as well. Although Dubovy was next in line to command the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, he was not making the operational decisions. The situation reports for 2 September authored by P. Volkov, the chief of the operations section, were addressed to Serhii V. Kasser, not Dubovy, as the commanding officer of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division. Moreover, Volkov started to refer to himself as chief-of-staff, which was Kasser's official position.⁹⁴ In fact, Dubovy was relieved of command on 10 September, pending an investigation into Shchors's death by a commission from the Twelfth Army headquarters.⁹⁵

Even so, the staff of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division set in motion a plan to trap the Second Corps between the troops defending Korosten in the north and a force attacking from the southwest. By 2 September the Soviets realized that they were facing only three brigades, not the larger force they originally expected.⁹⁶ It was only the passivity in Soviet leadership after Shchors's death and Bizanz's rapid pace of operations that had concealed the true strength of the Galician forces. Now the Forty-fourth Soviet Division could finally free the Second Brigade of the First Soviet Ukrainian Division at Novohrad-Volynskyi for operations in the north. On 1 September this brigade pushed the Sich Riflemen out of Sokoliv and withdrew from combat.⁹⁷ The Third Brigade of the First Soviet Ukrainian Division, which had faced the inactive Polish forces west of Korets, took its place in the line.⁹⁸ Now

93. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 45.

94. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 1 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fol. 28.

95. Tsiupa, "Taiemnytsia smerti Nachdyva Shchorsa," 118–19; Dubovy was returned to the command of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division on 24 October 1919, after being cleared by the commission of any wrongdoing (S. S. Khromov, ed., *Grazhdanskaia voina i voiennaia interventsia v SSSR: Entsiklopediia* (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1983), 557.

96. Transcript of telephone conversation between Dubovy and Voroshilov, 27 August 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 3, file 986, fols. 1–20; and Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 6.

97. Situation Reports of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 31 August–1 September 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 24–7.

98. Situation Reports of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 1–2 September 1919,

the Fourth and Fifth Tarashcha Regiments of the Second Soviet Brigade were on their way north by rail and could hit the rear of the Galician left flank at Ushomyr.⁹⁹

3 September

In spite of instructions not to force the issue at Korosten, Bizanz insisted on carrying out the previous day's plan. This time, the six heavy guns were relocated north of Ushomyr, along the banks of the Uzh, to escape the counterfire from Biloshytsia.¹⁰⁰ A battalion of the Seventh Regiment was entrenched within 500 metres west of Mohylno and in position to assault the Soviet lines. The First Battalion of the Eighth Regiment was poised at Khotynivka, east of Korosten (see map 3).

At sunrise the Galician heavy batteries directed a five-minute barrage north and west of Mohylno. Then the battalion of the Seventh Regiment advanced half-heartedly towards the western defenses of the town. The attack was repulsed by artillery, rifle, and machine-gun fire.¹⁰¹ Captain Hazdaika's lack of enthusiasm cannot be discounted as a factor in the failed assault.¹⁰² Moreover, the fire of the Galician heavy batteries was not very effective. Soviet reconnaissance had monitored their relocation from Veselukhy during the night and, as soon as they began their barrage, the Red artillery knew where to direct its fire. Kviatek, the commander of the First Bohun Regiment, had anticipated the Galician attack on Mohylno and had ordered reserve companies at Krasnopil to be ready for a counterstroke. Shortly after the Seventh Regiment broke off the attack, Soviet infantry advanced from Krasnopil to encircle the left flank of the Galicians attacking Mohylno,¹⁰³ but it was slowed down by fire from two companies of the Fifth Regiment that were situated south of Krasnopil for such an eventuality.¹⁰⁴ This enabled the Fifth and Seventh

TsDAVO, fond 2579, list 1, file 51, fols. 29–30.

99. N. S. Cherushev, *Komandarm Dubovoi* (Kyiv: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury Ukrainy, 1986), 108–10; and Situation Report of the Twelfth Soviet Army, 4 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 6, file 16, fol. 16.

100. Myhovych, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 18 (1921): 5.

101. Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 6; Stefan Haiduchok, "Z mynulykh dniv," *Litopys Chervonoii Kalyny* 6 (1935): 11.

102. Haiduchok, "Sotnyk Petro Hazdaika," 17–18.

103. Myhovych, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 18 (1921): 5; *Dennyk NKUHA*, 46; and Kviatek, "Lehendarnyi heroi."

104. Captured Order of the Fourth Galician Brigade, 2 September 1919, RGVA, fond

Regiments to extricate themselves from Rudnia Mohylianska and to retreat southeast towards Ushomyr.¹⁰⁵ Suddenly, cavalry patrols to the west of Ushomyr issued a warning that Soviet reinforcements were threatening the Galician rear from the direction of Puhachivka. A Tarashcha Regiment had arrived finally by forced march from the railroad station in Bondarivka.¹⁰⁶ The alarm caused confusion among some of the Galician units in the rear.

To relieve the pressure on his left at Ushomyr, Bizanz ordered the Eighth Regiment to attack Korosten from the east at any cost. Captain Pavlo Ivaniv, the commander of the First Battalion of the Eighth Regiment, hurled his three companies in repeated attacks from Khotynivka towards Korosten. But the intense fire of the Soviet artillery and armoured trains turned back every attack. This maneuver caused the Soviets to hesitate on the other side of the battlefield at Ushomyr, enabling the Galician left flank to break out of the encirclement and retreat over the Uzh River to the east side of the Zhytomyr-Korosten rail line. There it could withdraw under the cover of armoured trains. Ivaniv discontinued the attacks only after he received confirmation that the other brigades of the Second Corps were withdrawing safely south. In order to screen his own retreat, Ivaniv ordered Rottenberg to attack the Soviet positions with his machine-gun cavalry. After tactfully questioning Ivaniv about the prospects of such an attack and being admonished to follow orders, Rottenberg led his company in an audacious charge that eluded the fire of the two armoured trains and reached the outlying buildings on the eastern edge of Korosten. Unlimbering its eight machine guns, Rottenberg's company laid down such an effective rate of fire that part of the Second Bohun Regiment left its position and reinforcements had to be brought up by rail. Ivaniv's battalion and its artillery made good their escape. Eventually, Rottenberg's company had to retreat in the face of the Soviet reinforcements and the converging fire of the armoured trains. It suffered three killed and many wounded. Rottenberg was evacuated in a chaise with a bullet lodged in the back of his throat and his teeth and jaw smashed.¹⁰⁷

197, list 1, file 281, fol. 9–9v.

105. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 46.

106. Cherushev, *Komandarm Dubovoi*, 110; and *Dennyk NKUHA*, 46.

107. Mykhailiv, "Saltso Rotenberg," 6–7; and Haiduchok, "Kinna skorostriilna sotnia," 16.

By evening the Second Battalion of the Fourteenth Regiment left Lisivshchyna, screening the retreat of the Second Corps towards Zhytomyr.¹⁰⁸ The Second Corps' offensive on Korosten was over.

Aftermath

The joint staff of the Ukrainian national armies continued to insist on the capture of Korosten. The Sich Riflemen, supported by the Seventh Galician Brigade, made an effort to seize Korosten from the southwest on 11 September. Three of the brigade's battalions advanced as far north as Lisivshchyna and even took Zlobych for a brief period.¹⁰⁹ This effort had little prospect for success: the Sich Riflemen numbered less than 2,000 infantry and were exhausted.¹¹⁰ The UHA, demoralized by the failure of the Kyiv offensive and the growing typhus epidemic, was not keen on another attack on Korosten. The Forty-fourth Soviet Division at Korosten and north of Novohrad-Volynskyi had grown in strength since early September to almost 8,000 men.¹¹¹ On 13 September the division launched an offensive aimed at the undefended space separating the Second Corps north of Zhytomyr and the Sich Riflemen at Novohrad-Volynskyi¹¹² and forced both formations to retreat south.¹¹³

The failure to capture Korosten prior to 31 August had dire consequences for the Kyiv offensive of the Ukrainian armies. Had the Galician First Corps occupied Zhytomyr on 20 August and then continued on to Korosten without giving Shchors's First Soviet Ukrainian Division time to regroup, the railroad centre would likely have been in Galician hands days before the Whites took Kyiv.¹¹⁴ Galician troops would have been able to advance to Kyiv along the Korosten-Kyiv rail line to seize the

108. Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 6.

109. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 52–3; Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 13 September 1919, RGVA, fond 1417, list 1, file 163, fol. 397v.

110. Report of dislocation and Organizational Table of the Army of the UNR, 15 August 1919, TsDAVO, fond 1078, list 2, file 28, fol. 136; Intelligence Report of the Western Front, 17 September 1919, *GVnU*, no. 396, 2: 351.

111. Organizational Table of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 27 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 3, file 24, fol. 731.

112. Operational Order of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 12 September 1919, RGVA, fond 1489, list 1, file 51, fol. 22.

113. *Dennyk NKUHA*, 55–6.

114. Kapustiansky, *Pokhid*, 2: 167; Lev Shankovsky, *Ukrainska Halytska Armiia* (Toronto: Dmytro Mykytiuk, 1974), 216.

capital well before the Whites arrived. The Ukrainian national forces would have had time to secure the eastern approaches and to consolidate their hold on the city. Although it is impossible to be certain whether they would have been able to retain their hold, the setback at Korosten certainly decreased their chances of doing so.

The Second Corps' failure to capture Korosten also came back to haunt the Ukrainian national armies later in the month. On 17 September the Forty-fourth Soviet Division drove the Second Corps from Zhytomyr and re-established contact with the Southern Group of the Twelfth Soviet Army, advancing north from Odesa to escape encirclement.¹¹⁵ This group, consisting of the Forty-fifth, Forty-seventh, and Fifty-eighth Soviet Divisions, had punched its way through elements of both the UHA and the UNR Army.¹¹⁶ It reinforced Soviet forces at Zhytomyr by another 12,000 men, giving them local superiority against both Ukrainian and White forces in the region.¹¹⁷ Eventually, the Bolsheviks regained the initiative against both adversaries and defeated each in turn. Had the Galicians captured Korosten, the Southern Group would have had to fight through another seventy-five kilometres to escape encirclement—territory that the Ukrainian national armies could have defended more effectively.

Lastly, Korosten was the First Soviet Ukrainian Division's last success. Although the battle was fought under the formal command of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, the staff procedures, tactics, and style of leadership were characteristic of the First Soviet Ukrainian Division. By 8 September, however, substantive changes were evident. The famous Bohun and Tarashcha Regiments began to be called by their new numerical designations; for example, the 388th Soviet Regiment instead of the First Bohun Regiment.¹¹⁸ Although, as part of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division they kept their namesakes of Bohun and Tarashcha, they were no longer Ukrainian regiments. As the memory of this elite

115. Myhovysh, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 8; Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 17 September 1919, RGVA, fond 335, list 1, file 12, fol. 61.

116. Situation Report of the Southern Group of the Twelfth Soviet Army, 18 September 1919, RGVA, fond 335, list 1, file 1, fols. 49–50; Situation Report of the Southern Group of the Twelfth Soviet Army, 15 September 1919, RGVA, fond 335, list 1, file 12, fol. 55.

117. Order of the Fifty-eighth Soviet Division, 30 August 1919, RGVA, fond 1489, list 1, file 47, fols. 70–2; and *Istoriia 45-oi Volynskoi krasnoznamennoi strelkovoï divizii: Boevoi period* (Kyiv: Izdanie Politotdela 45-oi divizii, 1929), 1: 67.

118. Situation Report of the Forty-fourth Soviet Division, 8 September 1919, RGVA, fond 197, list 6, file 6, fol. 12.

Ukrainian Soviet division receded, the myth of Shchors and the Forty-fourth Soviet Division gained ascendancy in Soviet recollection of the Civil War.

Shchors's Death Revisited

Was Shchors killed by Galician or Soviet fire? To begin with, no one has yet discovered an official Soviet order to kill him. Nonetheless, the circumstantial evidence on hand supports the conclusion that Shchors was a victim of infighting.

The first accounts of Shchors's death were published in Soviet newspapers by Kviatsek and Dubovy in 1935, on the fortieth anniversary of his birth.¹¹⁹ Both claimed that they had witnessed Shchors's death and that he had been killed by an enemy machine-gun bullet that hit him from the front as he lay side-by-side with them at the front line.

This official version of Shchors's death was first questioned in the memoirs of Shchadenko, which were written in 1951, shortly before the author died, but were published only in 1958 in *Sovetskaia Ukraina*. In them Shchadenko insinuates that Shchors was killed on Aralov's orders.¹²⁰ Shchadenko had witnessed a number of altercations between Shchors and Aralov in the summer of 1919 over Shchors's operational and administrative decisions. In the author's opinion, Shchors had been blamed unfairly for failures at the front because of his resistance to Trotsky's reforms.¹²¹ However, Shchadenko did not witness Shchors's death on 30 August.

Ivan Tsiupa presented the first alternative account of Shchors's death in 1988. He summarized his interview with Serhii Petrenko-Petrykovsky, the commander of the Soviet cavalry brigade at the Battle of Korosten. Petrenko-Petrykovsky testified that Shchors died at the front near Biloshytsia from a pistol shot to the back of the head fired by Pavel Samuilovich Tanchil-Tanchilevich, a young inspector from the Twelfth Soviet Army headquarters, who was sent to Korosten by Aralov as his special emissary.¹²² Upon the interviewee's arrival at the Forty-fourth Soviet Division headquarters from Ushomyr after Shchors's death, an agitated Dubovy confided to him that Tanchil-Tanchilevich had lain to

119. Kviatsek, "Lehendarnyi heroi," 3; Dubovy, *Moi spohady pro Schorsa*, 29–31.

120. Shchadenko, "Iz zapysok o Nikolae Shchorse," 142–6.

121. *Ibid.*, 145–6.

122. Tsiupa, "Tajemnytsia smerti Nachdyva Shchorsa," 115.

the right rear of the three commanders when Shchors was shot, a fact confirmed by Kviatek.¹²³ Petrenko-Petrykovsky also said that when Shchors's body was delivered to the railroad car housing the Forty-fourth Soviet Division's staff, Dubovy made an awkward attempt to lighten the occasion with an anecdote: right after Shchors was shot, a soldier lying in the trench not far from Shchors was burned by a shell casing that landed on his head and cried out "what bastard just fired a pistol!" From all accounts the enemy was beyond the range of side arms. Moreover, that morning Tanchil-Tanchilevich had brandished a new nickel-plated pistol in front of the staff, and he left Korosten later that day, never to return.¹²⁴

Petrenko-Petrykovsky went on to say that Dubovy continued to behave in a peculiar way: he rejected requests to replace the hasty battle dressing on Shchors's head, ordered the body to be placed under guard and kept away from everyone, and sealed it in a zinc-lined coffin without permitting even Shchors's family to see it. The special funeral train that was to transport Shchors's body to his hometown of Snovsk (since renamed Shchors, near Chernihiv) was stopped at the Twelfth Soviet Army headquarters in Novozybkov and the coffin was transferred to a simple boxcar and transported to the Russian city of Samara, over one hundred kilometres away. There, it was interred at a Russian Orthodox cemetery.¹²⁵

Eventually, a steel cable factory was constructed at the site of the old cemetery. In 1949 Moscow ordered Shchors's remains to be exhumed. Apparently, foreign Communist veterans, some of whom had fought under Shchors, had inquired about his burial place. With the help of a former gravedigger, the body was found and identified thanks to its relatively good preservation in the zinc-lined coffin. Reportedly, an autopsy was performed and on 5 July 1949 a report was prepared. It concluded that Shchors had been killed by a small-calibre bullet fired from short range, which entered from beneath and behind the right ear and exited from the left forehead.¹²⁶ The entry and exit wounds confirm the reports of Tanchil-Tanchilevich's position to the right rear of Shchors at the time of the shooting. The autopsy report contradicts the official account that Shchors was struck by a machine-

123. Kviatek, "Lehendarnyi heroi," 3.

124. Tsiupa, "Taiemnytsia smerti Nachdyva Shchorsa," 116.

125. *Ibid.*

126. Zenkovich, "Pulia iz livorverta," 53–4. Extended portions of the autopsy report are cited in this article.

gun bullet from the front, but the current whereabouts of the autopsy report are unclear. Reportedly, it has been preserved in the collection of NKVD/KGB documents in the archives of the present Russian security service in Moscow. The Mykola Shchors Museum's repeated requests for a copy of the report have been denied.¹²⁷

Besides the forensic evidence, there is strong circumstantial evidence to support the thesis that Shchors was eliminated by his superiors. As for the motive of the murder, one cannot ignore the fact that in August 1919 Trotsky was pressing for a radical purge of the Twelfth Soviet Army commissars and military commanders.¹²⁸ Concurrently, he was reporting to Moscow that Aralov, exhausted and depressed at the deteriorating situation, was ineffective in implementing the new reforms in the Twelfth Soviet Army.¹²⁹ Aralov had to prove himself in Trotsky's eyes and the opportunity came when Shchors usurped command over both the First Soviet Ukrainian Division and the Forty-fourth Soviet Division.

The reports by Aralov and the Political Section of the Revolutionary Military Council at the Twelfth Soviet Army headquarters in June and July 1919 complain about the partisan nature and "nationalist" leanings of Shchors and his lieutenants, as well as their insubordination to the Twelfth Army headquarters.¹³⁰ On 28 June Trotsky telegraphed order no. 124 to the Twelfth Soviet Army, demanding that the command elements of insubordinate units be purged!¹³¹ He sent a similar order to the Twelfth Soviet Army on 9 August, suggesting that "molten steel" be used against insubordinate commanders in the Ukrainian formations of the Red Army.¹³² In Aralov's published memoirs his contempt for Shchors is only thinly veiled.¹³³ In a later memoir, written in 1965 but never published, *Sorok lit nazad na Ukraini* (Forty Years ago in Ukraine)

127. Serhii Makhun, "Zahybel Mykoly Shchorsa — bilshe pytan, nizh vidpovidei," *Den*, 31 August 2001.

128. Telegram from Trotsky to Lenin, 6 August 1919, *The Trotsky Papers*, no. 348, 628–31.

129. Telegram from Trotsky to the Kremlin, 9 August 1919, *The Trotsky Papers*, no. 358, 647–50.

130. Bulletin of the Ukrainian War Commissar, nos. 112–13, 29 July 1919, TsDAVO, fond 2, list 1, file 175.

131. Iulii Safanov and Fedir Tereshchenko, "Pid chervonym stiahom ishov," *Robitnycha hazeta*, 8 August 1989.

132. Fesenko, "Iak tvoryvsia mif," 8.

133. Aralov, *Lenin vel nas*, 147–9.

Aralov confessed that “Shchors’s insubordination brought about his untimely death.”¹³⁴

Ivan Dubovy also belonged to the circle of conspirators who eliminated Shchors. In his memoirs Nikita Khrushchev says that he examined Dubovy’s handwritten confession, signed before Dubovy was executed during Stalin’s purges in 1938. Dubovy wrote that he shot Shchors near Biloshytsia to win back command of his division. However, Khrushchev believed that the confession was coerced and that Dubovy did not pull the trigger.¹³⁵ The confession is also at odds with the forensic evidence: Dubovy admits to firing into Shchors’s face. Moreover, he mentions a battle against the Whites, not the Galicians. Nonetheless, it is obvious that Dubovy was at least an accessory to the murder. He had an interest in Shchors’s death and went to great lengths to prevent any examination of the corpse.

While the leadership of the Twelfth Soviet Army tolerated and even welcomed Shchors’s initiative in organizing the defense of Korosten during the military crisis of late August 1919, his reassertion of command not only over the First Soviet Ukrainian Division but also over the Forty-fourth Soviet Division sealed his fate. Given Trotsky’s policy to purge insubordinate elements of the Red Army, Aralov had ample grounds to eliminate Shchors. Because of Shchors’s popularity this had to be done surreptitiously—by assassination.

It is interesting that two of Shchors’s brigade commanders, Vasyl N. Bozhenko and Tymofii V. Cherniak, died under suspicious circumstances within weeks of Shchors. Bozhenko, the former commander of the Tarashcha Regiment, was poisoned in late July 1919 in Dubno allegedly by a nationalist agent and died on 19 August.¹³⁶ Cherniak was shot in his railroad car in Sarny on 11 August supposedly by a group of disgruntled Galicians in his Third Soviet Novhorod-Siverskyi Brigade.¹³⁷ The commanders who led the Soviet Ukrainian forces to victory

134. Safanov and Tereshchenko, “Pid chervonym stiahom ishov,” *Robotnycha hazeta*, 13 August 1989.

135. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, trans. and ed. Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 88.

136. Vasili S. Shilo, “Nezabyvaemoe” in *Nas vdokhnovliata revoliutsiia: Vospominaniia veteranov Grazhdanskoi voiny* (Kyiv: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literatury Ukrainy, 1975), 107; and Makhun, “Zahybel Mykoly Shchorsa.”

137. Timofei S. Sergeichik, “Kombrig Novgorod-Severskoi,” in *Nas vdokhnovliata*

in early 1919—men like Shchors, Bozhenko, and Cherniak—were former junior or non-commissioned officers of the tsarist army who exploited the opportunities for advancement presented by the revolution. When Trotsky decided to replace them with specialists, mostly senior tsarist officers, Shchors and his lieutenants were too stubborn or naive to step down quietly and had to be removed.

Assessment of the Battle

Could the Second Corps have captured Korosten between 30 August and 3 September? Probably not. Given the natural obstacles of the Uzh and its tributaries and the net of rail lines exploited by the two Soviet armoured trains, Bizanz did not have enough troops to succeed. Because of the need to detach units for rear and flank security, he never had more than a battalion for attack at any crucial time and place. Furthermore, the Galicians did not have enough artillery. Korosten was a battle of position, rather than maneuver: superior suppressive fire at the point of attack was a precondition of success. The documents indicate that besides the twenty-three artillery pieces the Second Corps sent to Korosten, it had at least another sixteen in its inventory.¹³⁸ Some of them, however, were unusable—their barrels were worn out.¹³⁹ Also, ammunition was in short supply.¹⁴⁰ Lastly, the corps's Fourth Artillery Regiment was kept in reserve around Zhytomyr.

Perhaps, with the early participation of the First Brigade (USS) with its 2,000 men and sixteen guns,¹⁴¹ the Second Corps would have dislodged the Soviets from their defenses around Korosten. But this is debatable. A frontal assault against the crack First Bohun Regiment, positioned between Mohylno and Biloshytsia, would have been very costly. Even if the regiment were pushed out of Biloshytsia, the Soviets would have taken up a secondary defensive line north of the Uzh, and

revoliutsiia, 114–15.

138. OT 2d Corps, 6 October 1919, WMC, box 38, file 7, fol. 227.

139. Roman Frish, "Iz dniv slavy artylerii UHA: Storinky do istorii 6-oho Harmatnoho polku UHA," *Kalendar-Almanakh Chervonoi Kalyny na 1929-yi rik* (Lviv: Tovarystvo Chervonoi Kalyny, 1928): 146.

140. Kornii Kupchanko, "Armiina hrupa Henerala Kravsya v nastupi na Kyiv," *Kalendar-Almanakh Chervonoi Kalyny na 1923-ii rik* (Lviv: Tovarystvo Chervonoi Kalyny, 1922), 108.

141. Intelligence Assessment of the Galician Army for the High Command of the Volunteer Army, 1 October 1919 (O.S.), WMC, box 38, file 7, fol. 220.

Mohylno would have become the pivot on which the new front would have turned eastward. This explains why Bizanz was so obsessed with capturing Mohylno. Success there would have exposed the north bank of the Uzh right from the start. As for wide flanking maneuvers to the east, west, and north of Korosten, the Ukrainian armies did not have the large cavalry formations to undertake such operations.¹⁴²

The Galician company commanders exhibited courage and determination during the battle, urging their men forward as they began to lose heart. At least five officers were killed or wounded.¹⁴³ The Second Corps incurred some 200 casualties.¹⁴⁴ An almost equal number were disabled by typhus. Some units fought better than others. The Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Regiments fought hard and Rottenberg's cavalry exhibited dash and daring. On the other hand, the efforts the First Battalion of the Fourteenth Regiment at Biloshytsia and the battalion of the Seventh Regiment at Mohylno were half-hearted.

On the Soviet side, the armoured trains proved to be especially adept at taking advantage of the three converging rail lines to respond to Galician attacks. The First Bohun Regiment lived up to its reputation as an elite unit. Its battalions appeared at key points in critical moments and exhibited great flexibility and resilience. It could be argued that were it not for the First Bohun Regiment, the Second Corps may well have captured Korosten.

The records on Soviet casualties are still unavailable, but the Soviet casualty rate probably approached that of the Second Corps. A monument in Korosten indicates that the Bohun and the Tarashcha Regiments lost soldiers in the battle. We also know that the First Cavalry Regiment took heavy casualties at Ushomyr and all of the Soviet regiments came under Galician artillery, machine-gun, and rifle fire.

In the final analysis, the UHA failed to take Korosten because of faulty intelligence. The Galicians underestimated the First Soviet

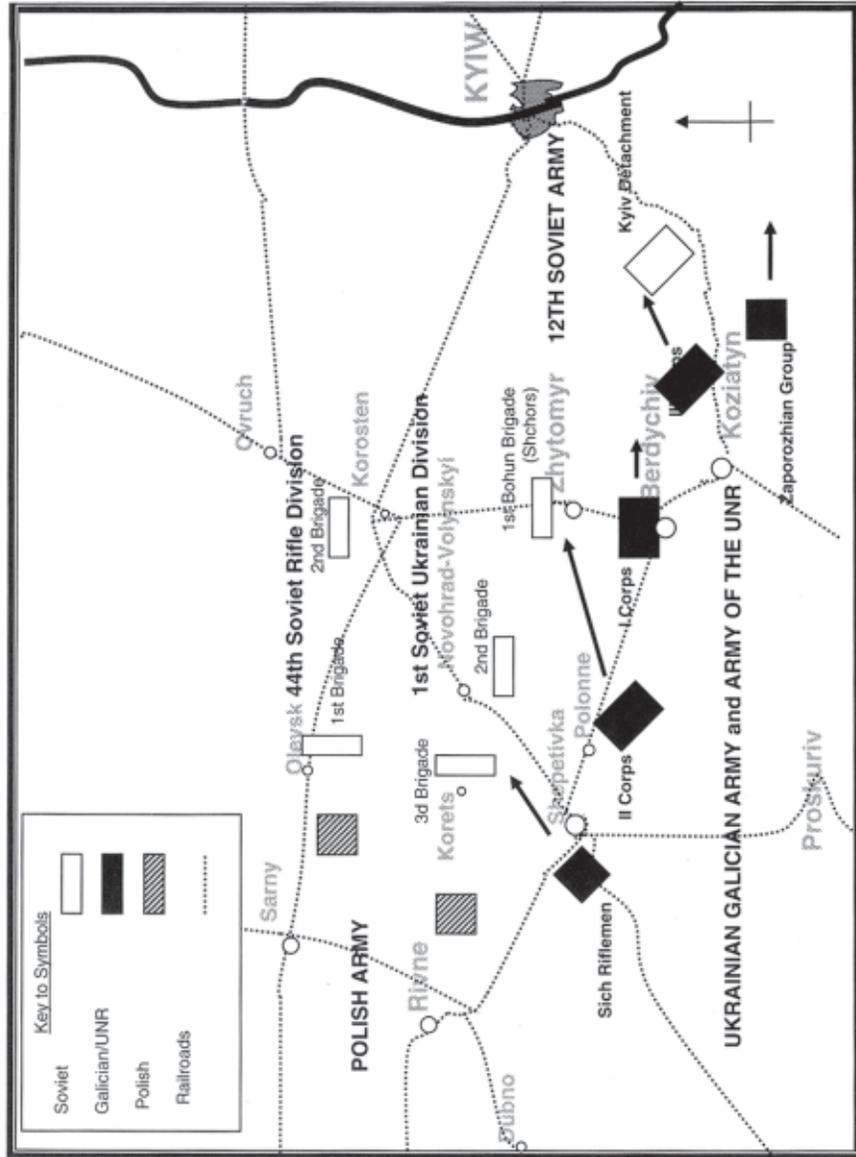
142. Shankovsky, *Ukrainska Halytska Armiia*, 286–8.

143. Myhovych, "Zhytomyr-Korosten," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 18 (1921): 2–3.; "Storinky do *Zhalibnoi Knyhy*," 121; Mykhailiv, "Saltso Rotenberg," 6; and Haiduchok, "Kinna skorostriilna sotnia," 16.

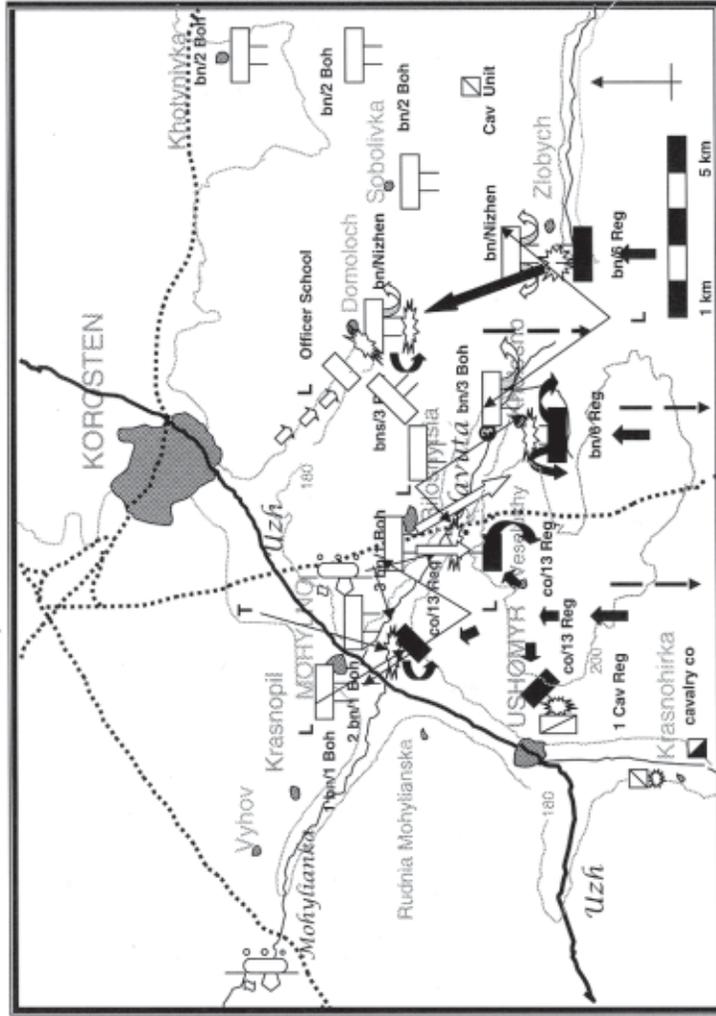
144. Divnych, "V Zhytomyri," 104; Haiduchok, "Slidom sanitarnoi sluzhby," 17–18; Antin Divnych, "Otaman Zakusylo," *Ukrainskyi skytalets* 17–18 (1921): 13; Myhovych, "Pry VII-ii Lvivskii Brygadi," 5–6; and Kohut, "Artylieriia rishyla," *Ukrainske kozatstvo* 3–4 (1980): 34.

Ukrainian Division and thought that the Second Corps would take the town by itself without the help of the First Corps. Then the Second Corps did not press its attack and gave the Soviets time to regroup. Therefore, one cannot underestimate Shchors's contribution to the battle. Although he was killed on the first day, the lion's share of the credit for the defense of Korosten is his. It was he who pulled together the tired and demoralized elements of the First Ukrainian Soviet Division, melded them with the less experienced Forty-fourth Soviet Division, and placed them at key sites around the town. Ironically, Shchors was eliminated by his own side in the battle that gave rise to his legend as a heroic commander.

Map 1: Situation on 19 August 1919



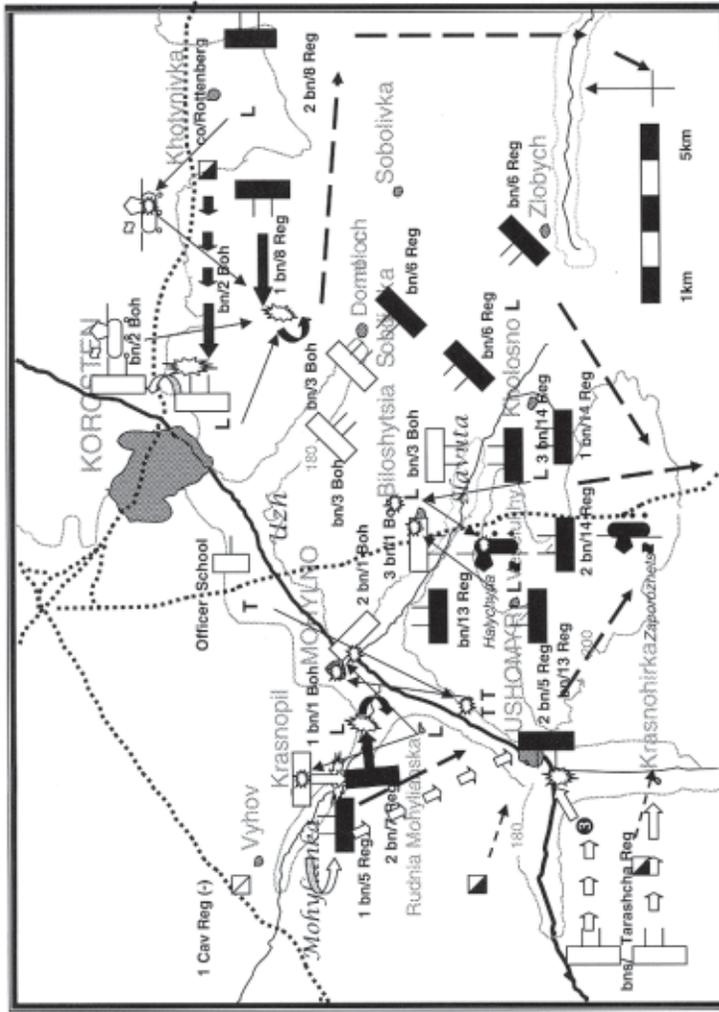
Map 2: Situation on 30 August 1919



Key to Symbols

- Railroads
 - Rivers
 - Soviet:
 - cavalry reg
 - Armoured trains
 - Galician:
 - company
 - cavalry co
 - Light artillery battery L
 - Heavy artillery battery T
 - Artillery fire
 - Advance to contact
 - Assault
 - Retreat
 - Repulse
 - Combat
- cav cavalry
 bn battalion
 reg regiment
 co company
 Boh Bohun Regiment
 div division

Map 3: Situation on 3 September 1919



Key to Symbols

- Railroads (dotted line)
- Rivers (wavy line)
- Soviet: (square with diagonal line)
- cavalry reg (square with diagonal line)
- Gallician: (solid black square)
- cavalry co (square with diagonal line)
- Light artillery battery L (circle with 'L')
- Heavy artillery battery T (circle with 'T')
- Armoured (circle with 'A')
- trains (train icon)
- Helichyha (helicopter icon)
- Artillery fire (arrow pointing right)
- Advance to contact (arrow with flag)
- Assault (arrow with flag)
- Retreat (arrow with flag)
- Reprise (curved arrow)
- Combat (starburst icon)
- Bohun Regiment (circle with 'B')
- reg (circle with 'R')
- cav (circle with 'C')
- bn (circle with 'B')
- co (circle with 'C')