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The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire in First War World

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Abstract: This paper primarily deals with the military cooperation between the Monarchy and Turkey, highlighting the fate of the forces involved in the siege of the Dardanelles, and the personages of the locally famous artillerymen
This research is done on gained information of the Hungarian gunners of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy during the First World War: participants defending the Dardanelles and the Sinai Peninsula.
I have looked the accessible information up in Hungarian and from Archiv Vienna, Austria.
During the First World War, from the fall of 1914, when the Turkish Empire declared a war on Russia, who had attacked Ottoman ports in the Black Sea without any declaration of war, then England and France also entered into war against the Turks, the political alliance between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire was created, which was also their common fate, until the end of the war. First the German Empire, and later, from 1915, Bulgaria also participated in the alliance.

Keywords: *Ottoman Empire; First World War; Dardanelles; Hungarian gunners.*

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Introduction

During the First World War, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy became allies with the Ottoman Empire after the latter joined the war. Thus mutual military assistance started between the two countries.

The Turkish troops fought in Galicia, in the occupation of Romania, and the Turkish military units appeared in Serbia as well. The Monarchy sent artillery with equipment and soldiers in order to protect the Dardanelles as well as to the Palestinian Front.

At Dardanelles, approx. 150 Hungarian soldiers died a heroic death, unfortunately we do not know where they were buried, this is still being investigated. In the 1935 edition of the Hungarian artillery, I found the names of those artillerymen that were successfully registered. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939)

This is the list that I am planning to publish within the framework of my study.

Many of our soldiers too served in Galicia with their Turkish brothers, regarding artillery and other support. These facts aren't as well-known neither in Hungary nor in Turkey.

It is of great importance for us to have proper knowledge of these historical facts and to further continue our research.

Overview of the Literature

Source of the research mainly contain the Hungarian book "Magyar Tüzér" (Hungarian artillery), published in Hungary and issued in 1939, and contains a separate chapter devoted to the Austro-Hungarian artillerymen who fought at the Dardanelles, as well as the Monarchy forces who fought under the Djemal Pasha. As a primary source, I also used the materials of the Austrian State Archives, including the memoirs of Major General Kress Von Kressenstein, the Austrian archives of Commander Knight Knut Gustav, Austrian-language books about the Turkish joint battles and their work. In addition to combat units, the Monarchy also sent camp hospitals, rehabilitation facilities for the wounded, trainers, military advisors, telephone and telegraph officers, and post-service soldiers, doctors, trucks, fuel, military and medical equipment, etc. The assistance arrived to the Dardanelles, Istanbul, Izmir, Mosul, Damascus, Jerusalem and the Palestinian Front. I find it important to mention those whose names have descended to posterity, because by setting a good example they strengthened the Turkish-Hungarian friendship. Unfortunately, in my research I could not

find the names of every Hungarian participant. The Monarchy's military assistance was reciprocated by Turkey, when it deployed its troops in Galicia and in the campaign against Romania. Those Turkish soldiers who fought on the Galician front, and died of heroic deaths in Budapest hospitals due to either illness or injury, are buried in the cemetery of Kozma Street, in Budapest. Unfortunately, there is no monument in Turkey, that preserved the memories of the heroism of the Hungarian soldiers.

Austrian-Hungarian empire military supports

Our Austro-Hungarian artillery joined the siege of Canakkale to provide help, and fought together with them in Palestine, Asia Minor, Galicia, the Balkans and the Italian fronts. We have only registered the survivors and don't have much data on the heroic dead. We have yet to find more.(Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939: 339-349)[1]

The Dardanelles Campaign, also known as the Battle of Canakkale (or Gallipoli Campaign), started 103 years ago today. The Dardanelles provided entry into the Marmara Sea from the direction of the Mediterranean Sea (Aegean Sea). The capital of the Ottoman Empire stood there, and this route was the link to the Russian Empire and the other Member States of the Antant. The occupation of the strait would have definitely knocked out Turkey, who was on the Central Powers' side, and according to Churchill's plans it would have created a new front in the Balkans. The strait's strongholds were one of its most important strengths. Mines were planted in the strait and Turkish warships blocked the way, including the two German ones that the German Empire gifted to the Ottoman Empire with its crew. This compensated for the two modern warships that remained in the British ports, which were already paid for and built, yet the English have not handed over even before the Turks entered the war. In the second half of the 18th century an emigrated Hungarian-born Baron called Ferenc Tóth made plans for strengthening the fortifications. He was in Ottoman service, as well as a French citizen working in Constantinople as a diplomat. The allies of the Ottomans realized the dangers of the siege and sent them modern weapons, including long-range cannons, as well as consultants, war material, and military aid. In the next section I would like to commemorate the aid of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. In mid-August of 1915, two artillery batteries arrived, one was a 15cm heavy howitzer battery and the other was a 24cm battery.

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The 24cm battery was placed at Kodja Djemen Daghon, the 15cm one at Djank Bahir, facing Ali Burnu. Then, Antant's final and most desperate counter-attacks took place. Thanks to the batteries, Kospoli did not fall. We lost 155 of our soldiers in the Battle of Canakkale. The Monarchy's 24-cm mortar battery arrived at Anafort on November 15, 1915. There were many pure-blooded Hungarian men both in the officer corps and in the crew. They took part in the fights that occured around the Dardanelles, then were moved to Smirne (Izmir), then to Romania. But in 1917 they were back on Turkish soil, where they were divided so that two mortars and two long-barrelled 10.5cm cannons went to Gallipoli while two mortars were placed on Mount Carmel in a firing position. In 1918, all the batteries were ordered back to Kalkija and after the breakthrough of October 27, they were placed on trains and returned to Europe.

15cm heavy howitzer battery: They arrived with the 24cm ones, they participated in Djank Bahir at the siege of the Dardanelles, and after the retreat of the Antant were summoned to Seddul Bahr. In 1916 they were taken to defend Smyrna, where their two cannons took part in capturing Kosten Island. On June 12, 1917 they were back at the Dardanelles again, at Kum Burnu, where they destroyed the Tenedosi Radio Station.

10 cm mountain (later camp) howitzer division: Its crew were completely Hungarians. Most of the officers were Hungarians too. The division consisted of a 6/2 mountain howitzer artillery from Kassa and a 4/1 mountain howitzer artillery from Budapest. After Suez, the cannons were reassembled into howitzer cannons. On June 7, 1916, they were stationed at Ghassan. They travelled to Jerusalem, the Dead Sea and the Jordan River too. The battery of Budapest fell into the depths at Beth Hassan. The remaining ones arrived home through Aleppo.

Long-range camp artillery: It consisted of two cannons. They arrived to Kospol on January 27, 1917 then were taken to the Palestinian Front. After the fall, the crew was captured.

Mountain-gun battalion: They arrived to the battles near the Jordan River in the Fall of 1917. They took part in the fighting with their four cannons. Three officers were Hungarians, and the entire crew were pure Hungarians. The guns were handed over to the Turks after the fall, and the crew were taken to internment camps, later to captivity.

Lines of trucks: Departed to Turkey on April 1916, in four columns/lines. The crew was predominantly Hungarian, 100 people were captured after the collapse.

Healthcare: At the beginning of 1918 there were 5 reservation hospitals, 2 camp hospitals, 1 Red Cross Hospital, 1 infirmary, 2 infirmary

hospitals, 3 ambulances, 1 holiday station, 16 military homes, 1 health department using trucks, a material storage, and a Disinfection Group in Turkey. Those who did not get captured were handed over to the Kemal pasha-led army.

At the end of the fights, the battalions were transferred to other Turkish fronts. The 15cm battalion was ordered to protect Smyrna (today Izmir), while the 24-cm battalion was led to the Sinai peninsula under the leadership of Jamaal Pasha. Their direct German commander was General Kress von Kressenstein. The Marno battalion from Kassa and the two battalions from Budapest were also summoned here, and later the 7,5 cm mountain battalion consisting of four cannons as well as the 10.5 cm long-range artillery were summoned here too. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939: 339-349)[2]

Hungarian Artillerymen

The following Hungarian artillerymen served together with Turkish soldiers (on Turkish fronts, Galicia and the Italian fronts):

Ambrus András, butcher and master butcher, born 1894, Budapest. On November 26, 1914, he joined to the 4th royal mountain artillery regiment. After his training he ends up on the Italian and later on the Serbian front, where he gets injured. After healing, he is taken to the Suez front and fights at Jerusalem and Damascus. He gets ill, comes back home, and the collapse occurs when he's home. His honour award, other than the Hungarian ones, is the Turkish Half Moon (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 2.)

Galántai (Gieszer) Ferenc, host/restaurateur, artilleryman, born 1887, Budapest. On the 1st of October, 1908, he entered the 12th camp artillery regiment in Budapest. In 1914, he started his combat activities on the Serbian front, then the Russian, Italian, and lastly on the Turkish front where the collapse reached him. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 41)

Gödör Miklós, saddler, corporal, born 1879, Dány. In 1914, joined the 4th howitzer regiment on the Russian Front. Is moved to Galicia to the Turkish battalions (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 44)

Growald Rezső, glosser/painter, born December 1881, Budapest. In 1899 he voluntarily entered the Navy, served for 2.5 years, and in 1900 participated in the fight against the Boxer Rebellion, therefore he received a

[2] Vitéz tiszabeői Hellenbronth Antal: The Hungarian Artilleryman (1939) Dr. Kemény Gyula: The Role of Hungarian Artillerymen in Palestine and át the Suez Canal.

bronze award for valour. In 1914 he is a tower artilleryman in the navy, and then was transferred to the 4th mountain artillery regiment. In March 1916, he is transferred to the 4th howitzer regiment, from there to the Suez front for nearly 3 years of service. Then he is wounded, got malaria, and was discharged in 1918 November 13. His Turkish Honor Award: Silver Half Moon with a Ribbon. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 45)

Hafer Emil, electrician, born 1899, Budapest. In 1917 joined the 5th heavy artillery. After his training, he was moved to Asia Minor to a Turkish battalion. He participated in the Battles of Haifa, Nazareth and Damascus. He gets wounded, and after healing participates in the retreats at Istanbul. His honor awards include the Turkish Half Moon. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p.48)

Hegyi János, master sergeant of the royal Hungarian police, Corporal, born 1894, Verseg. On October 26, 1914 he joins the 10th royal artillery regiment in Budapest. After training, he is sent to the Russian battlefield, gets wounded and after healing is sent to the Palestinian Front. Here he carries out surveillance and intelligence services. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 50)

Hochstetter Gottfried, First Lieutenant, from Budapest. In October 1914 he joins the 4th royal mountain artillery regiment, he then finished his studies to become an officer, and later ends up in Tirol, a battlefield in Italy. In September 1915 he participates in the second Serbian offensive, in March 1916 he becomes a battalion commander of the Palestinian Front, where he served until the collapse. His honor awards other than the Hungarian ones include the German Iron Cross, the Turkish Liak Order of Merit and the Turkish Half Moon. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 3, p. 22)

Horváth Ernő, Ganz factory worker, born 1893, Budapest. In October 26, 1913 he joined the 4th royal artillery regiment. After his training he ends up on the Russian, later the Italian, and then the Serbian fronts. He ends up on the Turkish front, where he was captured on October 23, 1918, and was released and returned home in 1920. He got the Turkish Half Moon honour award (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 54)

Jávorcsik István, miner, born 1899, Recsk. He joined the royal 6th Artillery regiment of Kassa, in Szepsi. After training, he served for a month at Dardanelles (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 58).

Keiner Ármin, private officer, artilleryman, born 1882, Nagykovácsi. On August 2, 1914 he joined the mountain artillery regiment. He fought on the Russian, then on the Italian front. In 1916 he and his battalion were sent to the Turkish army, where between 1916-18 he fought on the Palestinian front. In addition to the Hungarian honour awards, he received the German

Military Merit Medal and the Turkish Half Moon (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p.64).

dr. Kovács Tibor, born 1895. Lieutenant. 3. Artillery regiment. Türkey: Sirya, Palestina. German Military Merit Medal and the Turkish Half Moon (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 3, pp 27-28).

Körtvélyesi Sándor, cattle and pig dealer, born 1899, Nagykőrös. On the 10th of March 1917, he joined the 38th infantry regiment in Budapest. From there he got into the 32nd heavy artillery regiment and in June 1918 he was sent with a 40-men march column to the Greek-Turkish battlefield. He fought in Asia Minor and at the coastline of the Marmara Sea. The collapse happened when he was in Romania (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 64)

Körmendy Gergely, MÁV locksmith, born 1897, Budapest. In May 1915, he was recruited to the 6th castle artillery, from where he went to the Italian battlefield. His squad got named the howitzer regiment. On December 20, 1919 he was released from Italian captivity (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 76).

Krizsán János, butcher and master butcher, born 1895, Aszód. On May 15, 1915, he joined the 4th royal artillery regiment. He fought on the Italian fronts and in Montenegro. Finally he fought with the Turkish army in Palestine (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 78).

Lengyel János, employed in Budapest, born 1892, Dunakeszi. He fought on the Serb front, then in Galicia with the Turkish corps (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 82.)

Leopold Antal, car carrier, born 1894, Budapest. He fought on the Serbian front, then fought on the Italian front with the Turkish division (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 82).

Miklós János, warrant officer of the royal Hungarian police, born 1892, Tolnanémedi. On October 6, 1913, he joined the 4th camp howitzer regiment. During the war he re-joined. He fought in Galicia with the first Turkish camp howitzer regiment. On December 16, 1919, after discharging, he returned to police service (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 92).

Ney Ákos. In Pilis he was a Minister Counselor, a MÁV Director, and was born in 1881 in Budapest. First Lieutenant. He joined the Türkei Feldhaubnitz Batterie No 1 in August 1915. Later he served in the Ministry of Defense in Vienna. His task was to provide aid for the Turkish military (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 3, p. 41).

Oldal Mihály, Bank Officer, born 1899, Cegléd. On March 17, 1917 he joined the 4th mountain artillery regiment. After three months of

training, he serves at the 36th heavy artillery regiment in Constantinople until January 1918. He was later taken to Palestine where he fought in the 7th Viennese camp artillery regiment. On September 19, 1918, he became a captive of the English. He returned home in January 1920 (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 102).

Seres János, journalist, born 1892, New York. On October 1, 1913 he joins the military, and in 1914 he joins the 9th equestrian gunners. He attends a course in Vienna. He also serves in the Turkish corps in Galicia, and then on the Asian Turkish fronts. He received the Harba Jildisz, otherwise known as the Gallipoli Star (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 3, p. 40). Seres Ferenc, locksmith, chief artilleryman, born 1891, Budapest. In 1912, he joins the 4th camp howitzer battalion. He fights on Russian, Serbian and Italian fronts. In the spring of 1916, he was taken to Turkey. He was granted freedom right before the collapse, and the Revolution happens when he was at Arad. He received the Turkish Half Moon honor award and the German Iron Cross (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 119).

Schőnfeld Jakab, trader, chief artilleryman, born 1896, Budapest. On July 15, 1915 he joined the 12th royal artillery regiment. He ends up on the Russian front, where he fights with the Turkish regiments in Galicia in 1916 (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, pp 127-128).

Schwartz László, trader, born 1897, Kiskunfélegyháza. On the 15th of May, 1915, he joins the 38th royal Infantry Regiment, and then gets relocated to the 4th artillery. He fights on the Serbian and Italian fronts, then he is directed to Turkey, to Constantinople. He also goes to Palestine, where he was injured by a Shrapnel shell. He gets hospitalized with Malaria. He returns home in December 1918 (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, page 129)

Szórád Péter, farmer, born 1892, Lajosmizse. On August 22, 1914 he joined the 7th castle artillery. He fought on the Serbian and Italian fronts, he became ill, and after healing he was called twice to the small Asian-Turkish fronts. He got the Turkish Half Moon honor award. (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 137).

Vaschka Sándor, butcher, chief artilleryman, born 1892, Budapest. He joins military service on October 6, 1913, by joining the 4th artillery. He fights on the Serbian and Italian fronts and then gets injured. After healing, he goes to the Turkish front and that is when the collapse occurs (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 150).

Vidra Ferenc, state employee at MTAK, chief artilleryman, born 1889, Orbányosfa. In March 1917 he joined the 1st national artillery in

Budapest. After training, he was assigned to the Turkish battalion. He served on the Italian battlefield. On October 30, 1918, he fell into Italian captivity, and returned home in October 1919 (Vitéz tiszabeői Hellebronth Antal, 1939, part 4, p. 152).

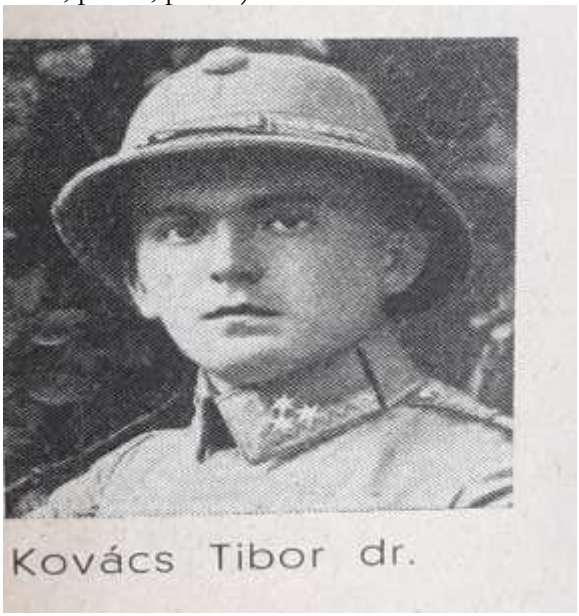


Photo: The Hungarian Artilleryman, 1939

Conclusion

The two countries had only been able to rely on each other before the Great War broke out since the economic, cultural and military relations were held in high regard. The Monarchy considered essential that the warships of Antant were unable to reach the Sea of Marmara and to threaten Istanbul as the Ottoman Empire would have missed out on battles. Having well-equipped and well-trained gunners as well as providing munitions the Monarchy was a considerable helper of the Ottomans.

Undoubtedly, their devoted endeavour contributed to the successful defence of the Dardanelles and the victory of the Ottoman Empire.

The joint battle strengthened the friendship of the two nations helping forget the medieval, hostile relationship. The First World War ended 100 years ago, and Hungary and Turkey ended up on the losers' side. Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory after the Treaty of Trianon, and the Antant Powers planned a similar fate for Turkey. However, under the leadership of Kemal Pasha, the Turkish people did not put up with this unjust and abusive form of peace, and with the war of independence they

achieved a change. Unfortunately, Hungary was not that lucky. Their shared positive past did not begin during the First World War, but with Kossuth's emigration to Turkey, which later became a decisive factor in Hungarian political discourse, and it without question, the Monarchy, including the Kingdom of Hungary, became the loyal ally of the Ottoman Empire. The Hungarians were already fully in solidarity with the Ottoman Empire in the Russian-Turkish War of 1877/78, and Ugron Gáspár also organized a Freikorps (Free corps) to assist the Turks, which is a little-known fact. Between the two world wars, the two countries did not forget the common fate of being Brothers in Arms, which was highlighted by the 1926, August 15 speech of Mohács, by governor Miklós Horthy, which was attended by the Turkish Ambassador of that time. The Governor stated that the past conflict and the painful defeat of Mohács must be forgotten, and we must establish the best possible relationship with Turkey. The relationship between the two countries has achieved a new base, as more things link the two countries, populations, than separates. It is the responsibility of both nations to remember and develop their common fate as Brothers in Arms, and at all times we must remember our heroes proudly.

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