

Battle of Orël, 10-27 October 1919

White Order of Battle

My primary source of the units involved in the Battle of Orel is I. I. Sukhov's article in Сержант (Seargent) Magazine #5 and Volkov. Note that the Soviets referred to this battle as the Orël-Kromy Operation.

Volunteer Army

Commander: Lieutenant-General V. Z. May-Maevskiy

Chief of Staff: Lieutenant-General N. P. Efimov

1st Army Corps

Commander: Lieutenant-General A. P. Kutepov

Chief of Staff: Major-General E. I. Dostavalov

1st Infantry Division

Commander: Major-General N. S. Timanovskiy

Chief of Staff: Colonel A. G. Bittenbinder

1st (Markov) Brigade

Commander: Major-General A. N. Tret'yakov

1st Officer General Markov Infantry Regiment – Colonel A. N. Bleysh – 882 bayonets, 20 MGs

2nd Officer General Markov Infantry Regiment – Colonel A. A. Morozov¹ – 1,174 bayonets, 24 MGs

3rd Officer General Markov Infantry Regiment – Colonel A. S. Naumov – 618 bayonets, 24 MGs

The 3rd Markov Regiment was newly formed. The Black Sea Cavalry supported the brigade as independent squadrons.

2nd (Kornilov) Brigade

Commander: Colonel I. V. Skoblin

1st Shock General Kornilov Regiment – Colonel M. A. Peshnya – 945 bayonets, 26 MGs

2nd Shock General Kornilov Regiment – Captain Ya. A. Pashkevich – 1,150 bayonets, 30 MGs

3rd Shock General Kornilov Regiment – Cossack Captain N. V. Mileev – 1,279 bayonets, 17 MGs

There were mounted components in the Kornilov Regiments, around 200 sabres each.

1st Artillery Brigade – 14 light guns, 11 howitzers

Commander: Colonel P. N. Mashin

1st light *Divizion* – Colonel B. Ivanov

2nd light *Divizion* – Colonel A. A. Mikhaylov

3rd light *Divizion* – Colonel Yu. N. Ropponet

4th howitzer *Divizion* – Colonel G. V. Ayvazov

Reserve Battalion of the 1st Division – Colonel Konovalov – 1,122 bayonets, 7 MGs

1st (General Markov) Engineer Company – Colonel Grabengel'm – 563 men

Black Sea Horse Regiment – Colonel E. S. Glavche

¹ Was succeeded on 13 October by Captain D. V. Obrastsov.



Attached from the 9th Infantry Division

1st Partisan General Alekseev Infantry Regiment – Staff-Captain P. G. Buzun – about 1,000 bayonets

2nd Partisan General Alekseev Infantry Regiment – Colonel Prince A. A. Gagarin

Composite Rifle Regiment – Colonel G. K. Gravitsky

The 2nd General Alekseev Regiment was recently formed. The Composite Rifle Regiment was in the rear, fighting Makhno.

The strength of this division declined rapidly during the fighting around Orël and Kromy. The strengths above are quite a lot lower than the peak numbers of the start of the battle – the Kornilov Brigade had started with over 6,000 bayonets.

This division was within weeks split into the Kornilov and Markov Divisions (the 1st, 2nd and 4th Artillery Divisions went to the Markov and the 3rd to the Kornilov).

3rd Infantry Division

Commander: Major-General V. K. Vitkovskiy

Chief of Staff: Colonel F. E. Bredov

1st (Drozdovskiy) Brigade

Commander: Major-General K. A. Kel'ner

1st Officer General Drozdovskiy Rifle Regiment – Colonel V. A. Rummel' – 1,352 bayonets, 45 MGs

2nd Officer General Drozdovskiy Rifle Regiment – Colonel A. V. Turkul – 1,309 bayonets, 55 MGs

At some time in October, Colonel A. V. Turkul' took over the 1st Regiment, to be replaced by Colonel V. G. Kharzhevskiy. The infantry regiments likely had unrecorded cavalry components or there were dispersed squadrons of a cavalry unit operating with them.

2nd Brigade

Commander: unknown

3rd Officer General Drozdovskiy Rifle Regiment – Colonel V. S. Dron – 1,130 bayonets, 12 MGs

83rd Samurskiy Infantry Regiment – Colonel M. A. Zvyagin – 1,304 bayonets, 26 MGs

The 3rd Regiment had only just been formed.

3rd Artillery Brigade – 20 light guns, 6 howitzers

Commander: Colonel M. N. Polzikov

1st Light *Divizion* – Colonel V. A. Protasovich

2nd Light *Divizion* – Colonel A. A. Shein

3rd *Divizion* – Colonel P. A. Sokolov

4th Howitzer *Divizion* – Colonel A. K. Medvedev

3rd Reserve Artillery *Divizion*

Composite Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Brigade – 861 sabres, 10 MGs

Reserve Battalion of the Drozdovskiy Division – Colonel G. P. En'ko – 850 bayonets, 4 MGs

3rd General Drozdovskiy Engineering Company – Colonel Borodin – 228 men

As with the 1st Division, unit strengths fell rapidly during the battle. This was soon renamed the Drozdovskiy Division. At some point afterwards the Samurskiy Regiment went to the newly formed Alekseev Division.



9th Infantry Division

Recently formed out of the Alekseevtsy and the 13th Belozersk, 14th Olonetsk and Composite Rifle Regiments, expanded with a large number of POWs.

Half was attached the 1st Division, above, while the 13th and 14th Regiments were in the Forces of the Kiev Area, in the rear.

Corps Assets

1st Composite Regiment of the 31st Infantry Division – Colonel Emel'nitsky

2nd Composite Regiment of the 31st Infantry Division – Colonel Tkachev

2nd Independent Heavy Howitzer *Divizion* – Colonel B. A. Bek-Sofiev

3rd Independent Heavy Howitzer *Divizion* – Colonel B. B. de Pollini

Independent Heavy Tractor Gun *Divizion* – Colonel G. V. Sakhnovskiy

2nd Armored Train *Divizion* (attached to 1st ID)

Commander: Colonel K. F. Gromyko

"Officer" (light) – Colonel M. I. Lebedev

"General Kornilov" (light) – Captain Molchanov

"Ivan Kalita" (heavy) – Colonel A. A. Zelenetskiy

9th Armored Train *Divizion* (attached to 3rd ID)

"Drozdovets" (light) – Captain V. V. Ripke

"Thunder of Victory" (light) –

"Soldier" (heavy) – Colonel A. A. vov Tsigler

2nd Tank Detachment – 5 tanks

1st Armoured Car *Divizion*

"Kornilov"

"Glorious"

"Kubanets"

"General Drozdovski"

others under repair

1st Corps Engineer Company – 256 men

The slower moving parts of the Corps played little or no part in the battles. The tanks, in particular, were unable to keep pace with the fast moving operations. It seems unlikely the heavy guns fared much better.



1st Cavalry Division

Commander: Major-General I. I. Chekotovskiy

Chief of Staff –Colonel V. V. Kreyter

1st Brigade

Commander: Colonel I. G. Barbovich

1st Officer General Alekseev Horse Regiment – Colonel Saburov – 196 sabres, 16 MGs

10th Ingermanland Hussar Regiment – Captain M. I. Tikhonravov – 270 bayonets, 240 sabres

2nd Brigade

Composite Regiment of the 9th Cavalry Division – Colonel V. N. Vygran

– 622 bayonets, 230 sabres, 30 MGs

Composite Regiment of the 12th Cavalry Division – Colonel G. N. Psiol – 396 bayonets, 161 sabres

3rd Brigade

Commander: Colonel Samsonov

Composite Hussar Regiment – Colonel B. A. Gaevsky

Composite Lancer Regiment – Colonel G. P. Aprelev – 310 bayonets, 95 sabres, 6 MGs

3rd Horse Artillery *Divizion* – Colonel Prince S. I. Avalov

1st Independent Mountain Horse Battery – Captain Ermolov

Composite Battery of the Caucasian Independent Mountain Horse Artillery *Divizion*

This was part of Yuzefovich's 5th Cavalry Corps, much of which was operating much further west.

It appears that only the 1st Brigade was directly involved in the fighting around Orël.

