

NUOVA **ANTOLOGIA**   
**MILITARE**  
RIVISTA INTERDISCIPLINARE DELLA SOCIETÀ ITALIANA DI STORIA MILITARE

N. 1  
2020

Fascicolo 4. Settembre 2020

**Storia militare contemporanea**



*Società Italiana di Storia Militare*

Direttore scientifico Virgilio Ilari  
Vicedirettore scientifico Giovanni Brizzi  
Direttore responsabile Gregory Claude Alegi  
Redazione Viviana Castelli

*Consiglio Scientifico.* Presidente: Massimo De Leonardis.

*Membri stranieri:* Christopher Bassford, Floribert Baudet, Stathis Birthacac, Jeremy Martin Black, Loretana de Libero, Magdalena de Pazzis Pi Corrales, Gregory Hanlon, John Hattendorf, Yann Le Bohec, Aleksei Nikolaevič Lobin, Prof. Armando Marques Guedes, Prof. Dennis Showalter (†). *Membri italiani:* Livio Antonielli, Antonello Folco Biagini, Aldino Bondesan, Franco Cardini, Piero Cimbolli Spagnesi, Piero del Negro, Giuseppe De Vergottini, Carlo Galli, Roberta Ivaldi, Nicola Labanca, Luigi Loreto, Gian Enrico Rusconi, Carla Sodini, Donato Tamblé,

*Comitato consultivo sulle scienze militari e gli studi di strategia, intelligence e geopolitica:* Lucio Caracciolo, Flavio Carbone, Basilio Di Martino, Antulio Joseph Echevarria II, Carlo Jean, Gianfranco Linzi, Edward N. Luttwak, Matteo Paesano, Ferdinando Sanfelice di Monteforte.

*Consulenti di aree scientifiche interdisciplinari:* Donato Tamblé (Archival Sciences), Piero Cimbolli Spagnesi (Architecture and Engineering), Immacolata Eramo (Philology of Military Treatises), Simonetta Conti (Historical Geo-Cartography), Lucio Caracciolo (Geopolitics), Jeremy Martin Black (Global Military History), Elisabetta Fiocchi Malaspina (History of International Law of War), Gianfranco Linzi (Intelligence), Elena Franchi (Memory Studies and Anthropology of Conflicts), Virgilio Ilari (Military Bibliography), Luigi Loreto (Military Historiography), Basilio Di Martino (Military Technology and Air Studies), John Brewster Hattendorf (Naval History and Maritime Studies), Elina Gugliuzzo (Public History), Vincenzo Lavenia (War and Religion), Angela Teja (War and Sport), Stefano Pisu (War Cinema), Giuseppe Della Torre (War Economics).

### *Nuova Antologia Militare*

Rivista interdisciplinare della Società Italiana di Storia Militare  
Periodico telematico open-access annuale ([www.nam-sism.org](http://www.nam-sism.org))  
Registrazione del Tribunale Ordinario di Roma n. 06 del 30 Gennaio 2020



Direzione, Via Bosco degli Arvali 24, 00148 Roma  
Contatti: [direzione@nam-sigm.org](mailto:direzione@nam-sigm.org) ; [virgilio.ilari@gmail.com](mailto:virgilio.ilari@gmail.com)

© 2020 Società Italiana di Storia Militare  
([www.societaitalianastoriamilitare@org](http://www.societaitalianastoriamilitare@org))

Grafica: Nadir Media Srl - Via Giuseppe Veronese, 22 - 00146 Roma  
[info@nadirmedia.it](mailto:info@nadirmedia.it)

Gruppo Editoriale Tab Srl - Lungotevere degli Anguillara, 11 - 00153 Roma  
[www.tabedizioni.it](http://www.tabedizioni.it)

ISSN: 2704-9795

ISBN Fascicolo 4: 978-88-9295-021-4

NUOVA **ANTOLOGIA**   
**MILITARE**  
RIVISTA INTERDISCIPLINARE DELLA SOCIETÀ ITALIANA DI STORIA MILITARE

N. 1  
2020

Fascicolo 4

**Storia Militare Contemporanea**



*Società Italiana di Storia Militare*



Elmetto francese Adrian mod. 1916. Casque de Marcel Hébrard  
(Bibliothèque de Bordeaux, 1)

Immagine della Collezione Europeaana 1914-18, posta sul portale di Europeaana  
e donata in pubblico dominio sotto licenza CC BY-SA 3.0

---

# German Corps and Army Commanders of 1914

## A Prosopographical Study

by MARTIN SAMUELS<sup>1</sup>

An army is what its officers make it, and in the Prussian army the officers take their profession seriously. It may be doubted whether there is in the world any body of men so entirely single-minded in their devotion to duty. [...] It is necessary that the higher commands should be attained only by such officers as unite distinguished abilities and military education with corresponding qualities of character and with bodily activity

Spenser WILKINSON (1913)<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** In 1914, the German Army was widely considered the world's most powerful and professional armed force. Its plan of operations for the opening stages of the war was breath-taking in its scale and ambition, though perhaps doomed to failure for precisely those reasons. Much has been written about Moltke and the 'demi-gods' of the General Staff, yet almost nothing has been published about the officers who led that vast force into battle: the army and corps commanders. Just one of these fifty-one generals have been the subject of a biography in English. This is in stark contrast to, for example, the British Expeditionary Force. Drawing on the statistical techniques developed by Daniel Hughes in his analysis of Prussian generals from 1871 to 1914, *The King's Finest*, this article presents a collective examination of the backgrounds and careers of those commanders, bringing out how they varied from the traditional stereotypes.

**KEYWORDS.** GERMAN ARMY, KAISERHEER, FIRST WORLD WAR, GENERALCY

- 
- 1 Independent Academic, UK. The author acknowledges the support and guidance received from Bruce Gudmundsson, although the article does not necessarily reflect his views and any errors are, as always, entirely my own.
  - 2 Spenser WILKINSON, *The Brain of an Army: A Popular Account of the German General Staff*, new edn (London: Constable, 1913), pp. 97-100.

August 1914, mobilisation quadrupled the size of the German Army from a peacetime strength of eight hundred thousand officers and men,<sup>3</sup> to a wartime footing of three million, eight hundred thousand, of whom two million were assigned to the Field Army.<sup>4</sup> The number of infantry regiments doubled from 218 to 435, artillery from 102 regiments to the equivalent of 162, and cavalry from 110 regiments to 146.<sup>5</sup> This mass of units was gathered into 92 infantry divisions and 11 cavalry divisions.<sup>6</sup> The world had never seen its like.

To give these vast forces the coherence and direction required for the bold operations they were to undertake, they were grouped under 39 corps: 25 from the standing army, 14 activated upon mobilisation.<sup>7</sup> The cavalry divisions were allocated to four *Höheren Kavallerie-Kommandeure* (HKK – Senior Cavalry Commanders), though their tiny staffs and minimal support troops meant these were not considered ‘corps’ as such.<sup>8</sup> In turn, these higher formations were distributed between eight *Armee-Oberkommandos* (AOK – Army High Commands).<sup>9</sup>

In 1909, the former Chief of the General Staff, Alfred von Schlieffen, had suggested modern armies would be controlled from far behind the frontline: ‘in a comfortable chair before a wide table, the modern Alexander has before him the entire battlefield on a map. From there, he telephones [his subordinates with] stirring words.’<sup>10</sup> In 1914, however, the scale and complexity of

3 Kaiserliches Statistisches Amt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich*, 35<sup>th</sup> edn (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1914), p. 343.

4 Edgar Graf von MATUSCHKA, ‘Organisationsgeschichte des Heeres 1890 bis 1918’, in *Deutsche Militärgeschichte in sechs Bänden, 1648-1939*, vol. 5, ed. by Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Munich: Bernard & Graefe, 1983), pp. 157-282 (p. 218).

5 David B. NASH, *Imperial German Army Handbook, 1914-1918* (London: Allan, 1980), pp. 39 and 51-54.

6 Hermann CRON, *Imperial German Army, 1914-18: Organisation, Structure, Orders-of-Battle*, trans. by C. F. COLTON (Solihull: Helion, 2002), pp. 101 & 104.

7 CRON, *Imperial German Army*, p. 88.

8 MATUSCHKA, ‘Organisationsgeschichte’, p. 229.

9 NASH, *Handbook*, p. 28.

10 Generalfeldmarshall Graf Alfred von SCHLIEFFEN, ‘Der Krieg in der Gegenwart’ (1909), in Generalfeldmarshall Graf Alfred von Schlieffen, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Mittler, 1913), pp. 11-22 (pp. 15-16). See also *Alfred von Schlieffen’s Military Writings*, ed. and trans. by Robert T. FOLEY (London: Cass, 2003), p. 199.

the campaign meant the senior field commanders enjoyed considerable operational freedom. It was largely their decisions, rather than those of Schlieffen's successor, Helmuth von Moltke, the Younger, at the *Oberste Heeresleitung* (OHL – Supreme Army Command), which determined the course of events.

Who were the 51 men (Appendix) standing at the summit of what was perhaps the most professionally-respected field army in the world? Much has been written about the 'demi-gods' of the Great General Staff in Berlin,<sup>11</sup> and about Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff,<sup>12</sup> who were to dominate the army (and the country) from 1916 onwards though neither held senior command at the time of mobilisation. Yet, despite their key roles in the vast battles of August and September 1914, only one (Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria) has been the subject of a substantive biography,<sup>13</sup> whether in English or German. Nor has there been any significant study of them as a group. By contrast, most senior commanders in the (far smaller) British Expeditionary Force of 1914 have found a biographer.<sup>14</sup> Although several wrote autobiographies,<sup>15</sup> accounts of the operations in which they were

11 For example, Walter GÖRLITZ, *The German General Staff: Its History and Structure, 1657-1945* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1953), Colonel Trevor N. DUPUY, *A Genius for War: The German Army and the General Staff, 1807-1945* (London: Macdonald, 1977), Arden BUCHOLZ, *Moltke, Schlieffen, and Prussian War Planning* (New York, NY: Berg, 1991), and also Corelli BARNETT *The Swordbearers: Supreme Command in the First World War* (London: Cassell, 2000), pp. 3-98.

12 For example, D.J. GOODSPEED, *Ludendorff: Soldier – Dictator – Revolutionary* (London: Hart-Davis, 1966), Roger PARKINSON, *Tormented Warrior: Ludendorff and the Supreme Command* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1978), Robert B. ASPREY, *The German High Command at War: Hindenburg and Ludendorff and the First World War* (Sphere, 1994), Franz UHLE-WETTLER, *Erich Ludendorff in seiner Zeit* (Berg: Vowinckel, 1995), Dennis E. SHOWALTER and William J. ASTORE, *Hindenburg: Icon of German Militarism* (Potomac, 2004), and John LEE, *The Warlords: Hindenburg and Ludendorff* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005).

13 Jonathan BOFF, *Haig's Enemy: Crown Prince Rupprecht and Germany's War on the Western Front* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2018).

14 Robin NEILLANDS, *The Great War Generals on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (London: Magpie, 2004) typifies this imbalance, focusing on fifteen British generals, four Frenchmen, and an American, with four German commanders 'since it seemed impossible to ignore' them, p. 10.

15 For example, WILHELM, *The Memoirs of the Crown Prince of Germany* (London: Butterworth, 1922), and Generaloberst von EINEM, *Erinnerungen eines Soldaten, 1853-1933* (Leipzig: Koehler, 1933).

involved,<sup>16</sup> or published extracts from their letters and diaries,<sup>17</sup> this is no substitute for the dispassionate rigour of a biography.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to begin to address this gap in the literature. It inevitably builds on Daniel Hughes' seminal *The King's Finest*,<sup>18</sup> a prosopographical study of the nearly two and a half thousand men who served in the rank of *Generalmajor* (brigadier-general) or above in the Prussian Army between 1871 and 1914. Published more than thirty years ago this remains the principal work on the subject. Prosopography may be defined as 'the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives'.<sup>19</sup> Although all the Prussian officers considered here were included within Hughes' study (the separate Bavarian and Saxon armies were beyond his scope), they were swallowed within the far larger numbers he dealt with. The aim of this article is to bring out the characteristics of this particular cohort more clearly, allowing them to be considered as a group, and compared and contrasted with that wider population.

### *1 Sources and Approach*

Details of the generals were extracted from three main sources. The key reference was the annual *Rang- und Quartier-Liste* (Rank and Quartering Lists), published by official order, which gave details of the unit and location of every officer.<sup>20</sup> A supplement, the *Dienstalterslisten der Generale und*

---

16 For example, Generaloberst Alexander von KLUCK, *The March on Paris and the Battle of the Marne, 1914* (London: Arnold, 1920), and General der Infanterie Hermann von FRANÇOIS, *Tannenberg: Das Cannae de Weltkrieges* (Berlin: Deutscher Jägerbund, 1926).

17 For example, KRONPRINZ RUPPRECHT VON BAYERN, *In Treue fest: Mein Kriegstagebuch* (Munich: Deutscher National, 1929), and General von der MARWITZ, *Weltkriegsbriefe* (Berlin: Steiniger, 1940).

18 Daniel J. HUGHES, *The King's Finest: A Social and Bureaucratic Profile of Prussia's General Officers, 1871-1914* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1987).

19 L. STONE, quoted in Dr Katharine S. B. KEATS-ROHAN, *Prosopography for Beginners: A Tutorial* [http://prosopography.history.ox.ac.uk/tutorial/tutorial\\_1.htm](http://prosopography.history.ox.ac.uk/tutorial/tutorial_1.htm) [accessed 17 July 2017].

20 For example, KRIEGSMINISTERIUM, *Rangliste der Kgl. Preußischen Armee u. d. XIII. (Kgl. Württemberg.) Armeekorps für 1914. Mit den Dienstalterslisten der Generale und der Stabsoffiziere und einem Anhang enthaltend das Reichsmilitärgericht, die*



*Stabsoffiziere* (Seniority Lists of Generals and Staff Officers), set out seniority dates for every officer at the rank of major and above, though with many omissions.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the annual *Wer Ist's?* (Who's Who?) biographical details on many leading figures, including most of the generals in our sample.<sup>22</sup> Finally, the *Gothaisches Genealogisches Taschenbücher* (Gotha Genealogical Pocketbooks), which listed the noble houses of Germany, grouped by their antiquity, gave brief summaries for key individuals.<sup>23</sup> Much of this material has already been collated and may be found online at *The Prussian Machine*<sup>24</sup> and the *Lexikon der deutschen Generale*.<sup>25</sup> Both sites provide brief biographies of most senior German generals from the First World War. Wherever practical, the details presented by these sites were cross-referenced against the primary sources. This makes it possible to build up a picture of the background and career progression of each of the 51 generals at the centre of this article.

Hughes began his monograph with an examination of the social, geographic and education background of the generals, before moving onto their military careers, to which he devoted less than half his text. Although this article adopts a similar structure, the emphasis here is on the officers' experience once commissioned.

The analysis begins with an exploration of the generals' connection with nobility, before moving to consider which part of the country they were born in, the occupational background of their parents, and their education prior to joining the army. Having considered the generals as representatives of German society, the article examines them as officers, charting their rise through the ranks, noting the duration of service before they reached milestone ranks and

---

*Marine-Infanterie, die Kaiserlichen Schutztruppen, die Gendarmerie-Brigade in Elsass-Lothringen. Nach dem Stande vom 6. Mai 1914* (Berlin: Mittler, 1914).

21 For example, Major G.W., *Vollständige Dienstaltersliste (Anciennetätsliste) der Offiziere der königlich Preußischen Armee, des XIII. (königl. Württemb.) Armeekorps* (Burg: Kopper, 1914).

22 *Wer Ist's?*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, ed. by Hermann A. L. DEGENER (Leipzig: Degener, 1908).

23 For example, *Gothaisches Genealogisches Taschenbuch der Uradeligen Häuser. Der in Deutschland eingeborene Adel (Uradel)*, 15<sup>th</sup> edn (Gotha: Perthes, 1914).

24 *The Prussian Machine, Deutsche Generalität* <[http://prussianmachine.com/page\\_4.htm](http://prussianmachine.com/page_4.htm)> [accessed 23 July 2017].

25 Reinhard MONTAG, *Lexikon der deutschen Generale* <<http://lexikon-deutsche generale.de/>> [accessed 23 July 2017].

their age at the time of key promotions. This is followed by a parallel examination of their unit commands. Next, consideration is given to the division of their service between staff roles and time with the troops. Finally, their military careers following the outbreak of war are reviewed. This is briefly compared with the position in the French Army, to give a sense of relative performance.

Throughout, the intention is to identify those factors that unite and divide the generals, noting common threads in their background and experience, as well as highlighting those factors that distinguished sub-groups or individuals within the sample. In addition, the aim is to reveal those characteristics that differentiated them from their peers.

In terms of sub-groups, the generals may be distinguished in three main ways. First, the three royal generals (Wilhelm, the German Crown Prince, Rupprecht, the Bavarian Crown Prince, and Albrecht, Duke of Wurttemberg) merit consideration as a separate group, as even the most cursory examination of their careers shows they followed a very different path from the others. Second, they can be divided into four groups with respect to the size or type of formation commanded in 1914: army, corps, reserve corps, or cavalry command. Third, they can be separated between the 42 officers from the Prussian Army (including the Wurttemberg Army, whose independence was nominal) and the nine officers from the genuinely separate Bavarian and Saxon armies. The similarities and differences between these groups form a key theme of the analysis.

The small size of the sample means a single exceptional individual can have an impact on the averages and ranges calculated. This is all the more the case for the sub-groups, some of which include only a handful of officers. Care is therefore necessary to avoid drawing conclusions beyond what the evidence can sustain, yet evaluation of the data can offer useful insights.

## *2 Social Background*

### *Nobility*

Hughes suggested nobility forms ‘a logical beginning point for an examination of the origins and background of Prussia’s general officers.’<sup>26</sup> It there-

---

<sup>26</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 11.

fore provides the starting position for this article.

Every one of the generals was a noble. However, in considering the question of nobility, it is important to recognise that, although German usage shared some features with that followed in Britain (the system of nobility most likely to be familiar to anglophone readers), it also differed in key ways. These may deceive the unwary, who may be tempted to equate the two.

The first difference is hereditary nobility in Germany extended further down the social scale, encompassing not only the peerage but also those considered in Britain to be part of the gentry, which comprised knights and baronets (effectively hereditary knighthoods). A German with the nobiliary particle 'von' should therefore be equated in rank (though not necessarily status) with a British 'Sir' (a knight), rather than a 'Lord' (a baron). Second, whereas nobility in the British system generally followed the line of primogeniture, in Germany it was passed down by all members of the male line. As such, whereas there were perhaps five hundred male members of the British peerage in 1914 (peers and the sons of peers), the *Gotha* listed all the families included in the various categories of nobility, totalling some seven thousand houses.<sup>27</sup> This is comparable to the thirty-five thousand individuals (male and female) listed from households of the rank of knight or above in Burke's *Peerage and Baronetage*.<sup>28</sup> Third, the status of a noble in Germany was far more dependent upon the antiquity of its award than on the rank of the title, in contrast to the position in Britain, where Burke listed more than sixty classes of precedence.

Although German corps and army commander of 1914 was a noble, they may be divided into five categories, based on their precedence. First, the royal generals: Wilhelm, Rupprecht, and Albrecht. They were followed (though not always in their own estimation) by those who were *Uradel* (titles granted before 1400). Third came those who were *Briefadel* (granted since 1400).<sup>29</sup> Last were those personally awarded their title, who may be subdivided between those ennobled before they became generals (*Generalmajor*) and those enno-

27 *Verzeichnis sämtlicher Geschlechter die im Gothaischen Hofkalender und in den Genealogischen Taschenbüchern enthalten sind*, in *Gotha* (1914).

28 Bernard BURKE, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Peerage and Baronetage*, 76<sup>th</sup> edn (London: Harrison, 1914), pp. xv-cxcv.

29 HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 17.

bled later in their military career.

Hughes analysed the noble status of the individuals promoted *Generalmajor*, presenting the results in bands of eleven years. The officers in our sample were all promoted during the last two of these bands, 1893-1903 and 1904-1914: 27 in the first band and 24 in the second. The numbers in each of these groups are shown in Table 1.<sup>30</sup>

*Table 1: Status of Nobility*

<i>Status of Nobility</i>	<i>1914 Generals 1893-1903</i>		<i>All Promotions to Generalmajor</i>	
			<i>1904-1914</i>	
Royal / <i>Uradel</i>	23	45%	33.4%	25.1%
<i>Briefadel</i>	13	25%	25.6%	25.6%
Personal Award ( <i>before Generalmajor</i> )	3	6%	3.4%	3.8%
Personal Award ( <i>after Generalmajor</i> )	12	24%	5.3%	3.0%
Non-Noble	0	0%	27.7%	39.2%

Two things stand out from this comparison. First, the senior field commanders in 1914 were dramatically more likely to come from a royal / *Uradel* family than would be expected from their proportion of the generality as a whole, whereas generals with a *Briefadel* were almost exactly as likely to reach the peaks of the officer corps as their overall proportion would suggest. Second, there was a clear connection between rank and personal ennoblement, with only three officers ennobled before they became generals (Mackensen, Gündell, and Frommel – all after promotion to *Oberstleutnant*), and only one of the remainder (Deimling) was ennobled prior to promotion to *Generalleutnant*.

In short, while able commoners could reach the very summit of the army (Kluck, commander of First Army, was ennobled three years after appointment to command a corps), at which point they were effectively guaranteed a

<sup>30</sup> Hughes' figures do not sum to 100% as he gave a further category of nobles where he was unable to identify the date of the family's ennoblement. HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p.12.

noble title, possession of an ancient title was clearly a huge advantage for an ambitious officer.

Nonetheless, Hughes noted that, of his sample from the whole period 1871-1914, of those whose highest rank was *General der Infanterie* (etc.), 50.9% were *Uradel* and only 6.6% personal creations,<sup>31</sup> whereas the figures for the 1914 field commanders were 45% and 30%. Notwithstanding the clear preference for *Uradel* backgrounds, able commoners were therefore dramatically more likely to be appointed to the most senior field posts than their presence in the upper ranks might suggest. Given the obstacles in their way, this must surely indicate the commoners were promoted on the basis of exceptional personal ability. The implication is that the army was in the midst of a growing tension between different paradigms, between family and aristocracy on the one hand and personal ability on the other, with the balance shifting steadily in favour of the latter.

#### *Geography of Birth*

A second way the generals, and wider German society, were divided was by geography – whereabouts in the sprawling German Empire they were born (though even the youngest of the non-royal generals was born before the Empire was proclaimed in 1871). The non-royal generals fall into five groups, based on their place of birth:

- The historic heart of Prussia, defined for these purposes as the area held following the Treaty of Tilsit in 1807, around Berlin and stretching east;
- The areas acquired by the kingdom in 1815, comprising Posen and parts of Pomerania and Saxony in the east, and the Rhinish provinces and Westphalia in the west;
- The territories gained following the 1864 war against Denmark and the 1866 war against Austria and her western German allies;
- The independent states joining the Empire after 1871; and
- Bavaria and Saxony, which retained armies separate from the Prussian Army.

Hughes applied a slightly different categorisation, which broadly merged

---

31 HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 20.

the second and third groups identified above. Again, the data from his analysis refers to those officers promoted to *Generalmajor* during the period 1893-1903 and 1904-1914. Since the percentages barely differed between these two decades, Table 2 uses rounded averages. In addition, in order to enable comparison with Hughes' analysis, which only covered the Prussian Army, an additional column has been included that excludes the Bavarian and Saxon officers:<sup>32</sup>

Table 2: *Region of Birth*

<i>Region</i>	<i>1914 Generals</i>			<i>All Promotions to Generalmajor 1893-1914</i>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage (All)</i>	<i>Percentage (Prussian Army)</i>	<i>Prussian Army</i>
Old Prussia (1807)	20	39%	48%	55%
Prussia from 1815	6	12%	14%	28%
Prussia from 1866	3	6%	7%	
German Empire	13	25%	31%	9%
Bavaria & Saxony	9	18%		

The table shows clearly that men from the states that joined the German Empire in 1871 were very considerably over-represented amongst the senior field commanders of 1914, even if only Prussian generals are considered. This is still more apparent when the whole picture is assessed, taking account of the formations deployed by Bavaria and Saxony. Indeed, almost exactly half the generals were not Prussian at birth, and many never considered themselves such. Indeed, their states had fought against Prussia in the war of 1866,

<sup>32</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 25. Figures do not sum to 100% as generals listed as 'Other German' or 'Foreign' are excluded.

and Hausen had personally done so, seeing active service in the Saxon Army. Again, it seems clear ability was becoming more important than social background in determining officers' chances of reaching the most senior operational commands in Germany's armies.

#### *Father's Occupation*

Hughes noted the Prussian officer corps regarded itself as a distinct class, which had to be protected from 'the intrusion of undesirable elements'. A central factor in eligibility for this exclusive club was the aspirant officer's place in society, as determined by his father's occupation.<sup>33</sup>

Whereas Hughes sub-divided his analysis of officers' fathers' occupations under more than a dozen headings, the smaller numbers in the 1914 sample mean that a more limited approach is required here.<sup>34</sup> This groups the officers into four categories: landowner (including royal), officer, civil servant, and 'other'. These can be mapped onto Hughes' sub-categories. Again, the from Hughes' last two eleven-year blocks are used, with an average of the two, as the figures did not change significantly. The resulting figure are shown in Table 3:

*Table 3: Fathers' Occupations*

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>1914 Generals</i>		<i>All Promotions to Generalmajor 1893-1914</i>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Landowner (inc royal)	6	12%	12%
Officer	22	45%	43%
Civil Servant	14	29%	34%
Other	7	14%	11%

It may be seen the distribution of the generals of 1914 was very similar to their peers at the point of promotion to *Generalmajor*. As a consequence, it would appear that, while the occupation of his father may have been vital to

<sup>33</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 39.

<sup>34</sup> The occupations of the fathers of two 1914 generals could not be determined.

the ability of a young man to secure entry into the officer corps, and perhaps to reach the generalcy, there was no subsequent (dis-)advantage.

Note must be made of Mudra, whose father was a master carpenter (*Zimmermeister*). It may be no coincidence he served most of his career in the *Pionier* (combat engineer) service, with his first command outside that arm being 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in 1907, after 37 years of service. Other armies of the time also found the specialist technical arms provided a career route for officers from lower social origins.

### *Education and Enlistment*

Having considered the generals' backgrounds, in terms of their nobility, geographical origins and social status as determined by their fathers' occupations, it is necessary to consider them as young men, seeking to obtain a commission. A key factor here was their level of education. However, this might have a somewhat perverse (to modern eyes) effect on their military prospects: *too much* education could have negative consequences. Hughes noted that, given the weight placed by the army on age at promotion, time in grade, and relative seniority within regard to their peers in each rank, securing a commission at an early age gave a distinct advantage. When considering all of the men who served as generals during the period up to 1914, Hughes found most were commissioned by age 19 or 20. He suggested joining the army at a later age 'jeopardized' a young man's military career prospects. This discouraged prospective officers from staying on at a *Gymnasium* (equivalent to a British grammar school) to study for the *Abitur* (university entrance qualification, equivalent to current-day British A-levels), let alone attendance at a university.<sup>35</sup>

Looking at the generals who led the German Army in 1914, their average age on becoming a *Leutnant* was 19.3 years (Table 4):

---

35 HUGHES, *King's Finest*, pp. 64-65.



*Table 4: Age When Commissioned Leutnant*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Oldest</i>	<i>Youngest</i>
All	19.3	23.9	10.0
Royal	15.0	17.7	10.0
All (except Royal)	19.5	23.9	17.0
Army (except Royal)	19.0	20.2	17.6
Active Corps	19.4	21.3	17.4
Reserve Corps	18.9	20.8	17.0
Cavalry HKK	20.4	22.8	18.8
Bavarian Corps	22.1	23.9	20.9

It is apparent there was limited variation amongst the sub-groups, with the exception of the royal generals (much younger), and the Bavarian generals (older). It is possible the slightly higher average age of the cavalry commanders may be explained by the longer time required to become proficient in the skills of horsemanship:<sup>36</sup> those within the sample who originally joined the cavalry (several of whom were infantry corps commanders in 1914) were 0.6 years older when commissioned than was the average for all non-royal officers.

Of the royal officers, Rupprecht and Albrecht were 17 when commissioned. Nine of the 49 non-royal generals were also commissioned before the age of 18, indicating the two royals were young, but not exceptionally so. Wilhelm was truly different, being commissioned at the tender age of just 10 years old. This appointment was more ceremonial and traditional than real, however, and Wilhelm did not join his regiment until 6 May 1900, his eighteenth birthday.<sup>37</sup>

By contrast, the Bavarian corps commanders were all in their early twenties when commissioned. All had completed secondary schooling at a *Gymnasium*, while Fasbender had spent a year at university. In comparison to the Prussians, therefore, they were somewhat better educated: of the 40

<sup>36</sup> Conscripts in the cavalry served for three years, compared to two years in the other service arms.

<sup>37</sup> WILHELM, *Memoirs*, p. 38.

non-royal Prussian and Saxon generals in the sample whose education could be identified, only Mackensen had attended university and a further 15 had attended a *Gymnasium*, of whom 5 had attained the *Abitur*. Table 5 shows how they compared with their peers at the point of promotion to *Generalmajor*.<sup>38</sup>

Table 5: Education

<i>Highest Schooling</i>	<i>1914 Prussian / Saxon Generals</i>		<i>1893-1914</i>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Cadet School	21	52%	48%
<i>Gymnasium</i> / University	16	40%	16%
Private	0	-	35%
Other	3	8%	1%

It is clear that, once they had achieved the rank of *Generalmajor*, officers who had attended a *Gymnasium* were at a great advantage compared to those who had been educated privately, being twice as likely to reach senior field command than their proportion of the whole generalcy. An indication of how the Prussian Army began to appreciate the benefits of a more solid educational foundation was that, from 1900, newly-commissioned officers with the *Abitur* had their seniority backdated by up to two years.<sup>39</sup>

### 3 Progression Through the Ranks

Once a young man had secured his commission, he began the long process of climbing the many ranks of the hierarchy, hoping in due course to become a senior field commander. It is therefore necessary to examine the progression of the men in our sample, as they reached field rank, were promoted into the generalcy, and then beyond.

#### *Reaching Field Rank*

The first significant milestone in an officer's career was the achievement of field rank (*Stabsoffizier*), upon promotion to *Major*. Table 6 sets out the analysis for age.

<sup>38</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 63.

<sup>39</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 65.

Table 6: Age When Promoted to Major

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Oldest</i>	<i>Youngest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	38.5	44.7	25.4	19.3
Royal	26.5	27.1	25.4	1.7
All (except Royal)	39.3	44.7	34.3	10.4
Army (except Royal)	37.9	41.5	34.3	7.2
Active Corps	39.3	43.9	35.5	8.4
Reserve Corps	38.5	39.8	36.5	3.3
Cavalry HKK	41.3	44.7	38.4	6.3
Bavarian Corps	41.9	43.4	40.8	2.6

The royal officers continued to be younger than the others, and indeed the age difference grew sharply, from four years to almost thirteen. For the non-royal officers, however, the pattern for the average age at which they were promoted *Major* was broadly similar to that for when they were commissioned: those serving in the cavalry were 0.8 years older, while the Bavarians were 2.6 years older. What stands out as different from the previous analysis of average ages is that the five non-royal officers who would command armies in 1914 were by this stage 1.4 years younger than the future corps commanders: even at this comparatively early stage in their careers, the future army commanders were starting to pull ahead of their peers, securing earlier promotion even under a system where this was largely based on seniority.

Averages, however, may hide as much as they reveal. Consideration of the range of ages at promotion to *Major* shows a ten-year gap between the youngest and oldest officers. Even within the select group of officers who would reach high command, differences were already apparent.

The position becomes clearer when length of service is considered, rather than just age, as this strips out differences in the age when officers were commissioned. Table 7 provides details of length of service to when the future generals reached field rank.

*Table 7: Length of Service When Promoted to Major*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	19.3	23.6	9.4	14.2
Royal	11.5	15.4	9.4	6.0
All (except Royal)	19.8	23.6	16.7	6.9
Army (except Royal)	18.9	21.4	16.7	4.7
Active Corps	19.9	23.6	17.2	6.4
Reserve Corps	19.6	20.7	18.1	2.6
Cavalry HKK	20.9	21.9	19.7	2.2
Bavarian Corps	19.7	20.4	18.3	2.1

This analysis shows significant consistency in the average duration of service between all of the non-royal groups, though with the future army commanders edging ahead. Looking at the cohort in terms of arm of service, although the future HKK commanders were falling behind by about a year, there was minimal difference in the duration of service between officers in the infantry and the cavalry. This was true also between Guards and Line officers.

Given the considerable similarity in the pace of promotion experienced by the non-royal officers, the scale of the accelerated promotion enjoyed by the three royal officers is particularly clear. Each of them served little more than half as long as the non-royal subalterns before securing field rank, especially if Wilhelm's service is taken from when he joined his regiment aged 18, rather than when formally commissioned.

It is in the variation within the groups, by contrast, that differences stand out. The gap between the longest and shortest durations of service amongst the officers who were to lead reserve corps, cavalry HKK, or Bavarian formations was in each case only a little more than two years, suggesting that, on the whole, these officers achieved promotion on the basis of seniority, but equally that acceleration of only a year or so in reaching the next rank could make a significant difference in an officer's future prospects. The gap in length of service within those who would command armies and those who would command active corps was, by contrast, much wider.

Amongst the future army commanders, Hausen stands out as having en-

joyed an exceptional pace of promotion in this early part of his career. Although he was not the earliest born officer in the sample, Hausen received his commission almost two years earlier than any them, in the summer of 1864. As a consequence, not only was he one of the 26 officers in the sample who served in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 (including all the non-royal army commanders and more than half of the Prussian infantry corps commanders), where he fought at St Privat and Sedan, but he was one of only four (the other three being the future army commanders Kluck, Karl von Bülow, and Prittwitz) who also served in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866: Hausen was present at the decisive battle of Königgrätz. Examination of his career shows the key factor in his rapid rise to field rank was that he was promoted to *Oberleutnant* after just two years as a *Leutnant*, whereas the average was almost eight years. This appears to have been a consequence of the war of 1866, in which, it should again be noted, his service in the Saxon Army meant he fought as an ally of the Austrians and hence *against* the Prussians. Although Hausen then served longer as a *Hauptmann* than any of the other future army commanders, that wartime promotion still meant he reached *Major* almost three years more quickly than the average.

That said, four of the other five non-royal future army commanders also enjoyed rapid promotion from *Leutnant* to *Oberleutnant*, again associated with wartime service (against France in 1870-71), while the two future active corps commanders with the shortest periods of service as *Leutnant* (Emmich and d'Elsa) also served in that war. Although by no means all the officers who took part in that campaign enjoyed accelerated promotion, there is therefore some evidence to suggest the old adage that the fastest way to get promoted is to be involved in a war applied here too.

By contrast, Quast needed 23.6 years of service before he achieved promotion to *Major*. This was due to his spending longer than all but one other officer in the sample as an *Oberleutnant* and then also being one of the longest serving officers as a *Hauptmann*. Yet, despite being only a month shy of his forty-fourth birthday when he finally reached the rank of *Major*, in September 1894, he was to lead an active corps into battle in 1914 – it may have taken him almost 24 years of service to secure his first three promotions, but he managed the next five in just 20 years.

The pace of promotion of these future leaders of the army needs to be compared with that experienced by more typical officers – those who might have a successful career, but who would never achieve the summit, or probably even the generalcy. Hughes noted promotion up to *Major* could be very slow, with officers on average requiring between twenty-two and twenty-six years of service from first becoming a *Leutnant*. Given that the army had a system of mandatory retirement for those who fell too far behind their contemporaries, creating the feared ‘*Majorsecke*’, the pace of promotion was a key driver for many men. Since three-quarters of vacancies each year were filled on the basis of seniority (time in rank), competition for the remaining places, allocated on merit, was intense.<sup>40</sup> As has been noted, Table 7 showed the average length of service for the (non-royal) generals of 1914 was 19.8 years, more than four years less than the average. Even Quast, who took the longest of all the 1914 generals to reach *Major*, nonetheless did so slightly quicker than the average for all officers. It is clear that, even as subalterns, these officers were marked out, being recognised as well above average and hence securing those precious slots reserved for those officers considered worthy of accelerated promotion.

#### *Appointment as a General*

After field rank, the next milestone in an officer’s career was appointment as a *Generalmajor*, thereby achieving membership of the generalcy.

As before, Table 8 sets out the analysis for age, while Table 9 provides details of duration of service.

---

40 HUGHES, *King’s Finest*, pp. 81-82.

Table 8: Age When Promoted to *Generalmajor*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Oldest</i>	<i>Youngest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	50.4	58.2	31.4	26.8
Royal	31.9	32.5	31.4	1.1
All (except Royal)	51.1	58.2	46.3	11.9
Army (except Royal)	49.7	53.6	46.3	7.3
Active Corps	51.4	56.6	47.3	9.3
Reserve Corps	50.6	52.8	49.1	3.7
Cavalry HKK	53.4	58.2	48.9	9.3
Bavarian Corps	50.9	52.3	50.1	2.2

Once again, the royal officers were dramatically younger than their less blue-blooded fellow officers. Wilhelm, aged just thirty-two in 1914, had not reached the rank of general by the time war broke out, but this was the age at which his two brother royals had done so – almost twenty years younger than the average for other officers in the sample, and almost fifteen years younger than the next youngest general, Hausen. Again, however, the average age at promotion to *Generalmajor* did not vary dramatically between the different sub-groups, though the future army commanders were once more a year or so younger and the future HKK commanders a couple of years older.

The differences within each sub-group, nonetheless, were significant. Among the future army commanders, Kluck stood out – at the age of 53.6, he was 2.4 years older than the next oldest (Karl von Bülow). By the time the future army commanders were becoming generals, in the late 1890s, service at a junior subaltern in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, some thirty years earlier, was clearly of limited consequence in terms of the pace at which further promotion was obtained: Kluck was one of the oldest of all the officers in the sample to be promoted to the rank of *Generalmajor*, Bülow (50.9) reached it at almost exactly the average for the whole sample, while Prittwitz (49.5) was somewhat younger. By contrast, Hausen (46.3), was the youngest of all the non-royal officers in the sample to reach that rank. Within the future HKK commanders, Hollen stands out, being the oldest (58.2) of all the officers in the sample to be promoted to this rank, and 3.3 years older than the next oldest, Richthofen (54.9). Although the spread within the future *Active* corps commanders was also wide, their distribution across the age range was fairly even.

Perhaps surprisingly, there was limited difference in the average age at promotion between officers from the different arms of service (cavalrymen were 0.6 years older, whereas artillerymen and pioneers were 0.6 years younger) or between Guards and Line officers (Guardsmen were 0.2 years *older* than the average, Line officers were on the average).

Again, it is interesting to compare these figures with those for the general-cy as a whole. Hughes showed that, for the whole period 1871-1914, the median age at which officers were promoted *Generalmajor* was 53.1. By contrast, officers who served in elite units or (especially) in the General Staff on average reached that rank at a younger age (52.3 and 50.8 respectively).<sup>41</sup> The average (mean) age for the non-royal generals of 1914 was 51.1, exactly two years younger than their peers, while the future army commanders were on average a year younger even than the median for General Staff generals.

*Table 9: Length of Service When Promoted Generalmajor*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	30.9	35.4	14.2	21.2
Royal	14.5	14.8	14.2	0.6
All (except Royal)	31.6	35.4	26.9	8.5
Army (except Royal)	30.6	33.3	28.6	4.7
Active Corps	32.0	35.3	29.0	6.3
Reserve Corps	31.6	33.9	29.6	4.3
Cavalry HKK	33.0	35.4	29.4	6.0
Bavarian Corps	28.7	29.4	26.9	2.5

Once again, the enormously accelerated promotion of the two royal princes stands out, both reaching *Generalmajor* with little more than half the duration of service of the next fastest promote, the Bavarian, Martini. Similarly, there was limited variation in the averages between the sub-groups, though the future army commanders were again promoted on average 2.0 years more quickly and the HKK commanders 1.4 years more slowly. The outstanding group, however, was the Bavarians, who served for shorter periods than their

<sup>41</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, pp. 106-107.



Prussian counterparts in all the ranks between *Major* and *Generalmajor*, especially the first of these.

Amongst the future army commanders, Hausen retained the advantage from his early promotion to *Oberleutnant*, though this was being eroded. The speed of his rise, however, was nearly matched by six Prussian, who all reached *Generalmajor* after fewer than 30 years of service. In all of the groups, except the future Reserve corps commanders, the range in duration of service was less than that in ages, again underlining the benefit in securing a commission, and hence starting to serve, as early as possible, so promotions came at a younger age.

As with the average age at promotion, there was limited difference in the average duration of service between officers from the different arms of service (though artillerymen and pioneers had served 0.7 years less). Perhaps unexpectedly, however, Guards officers needed to serve 1.0 years *longer* than the average.

Consideration only of the time required between promotion to *Major* and appointment as *Generalmajor* (Table 10) reveals much the same picture. Rupprecht and Albert fairly skipped through the ranks – Rupprecht serving three years as a *Major* and then promoted to *Generalmajor* after less than a year as an *Oberst*, omitting the rank of *Oberstleutnant* altogether, while Albrecht served for only two months as a *Major* before being promoted to *Oberstleutnant*.

*Table 10: Length of Service Since Major When Promoted to Generalmajor*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	11.5	13.7	4.3	9.4
Royal	4.8	5.4	4.3	1.1
All (except Royal)	11.8	13.7	8.6	5.1
Army (except Royal)	11.7	12.0	11.3	0.7
Active Corps	12.2	13.7	10.7	3.0
Reserve Corps	12.0	13.5	11.1	2.4
Cavalry HKK	12.1	13.5	9.1	4.4
Bavarian Corps	9.0	9.4	8.6	0.8

Apart from these two royal officers, the average duration of service varied very little between the sub-groups, other than the Bavarians, though again Guards officers were promoted slightly more slowly. The faster promotion of the Bavarians stands out strongly. In addition, comparison of Table 7 with Table 10 shows these officers had served as subalterns for much the same number of years as had their Prussian peers, indicating a significant difference in policy between the two armies with regard to promotion of field grade officers. There was also a clear increase in the pace of career progression once officers had reached field rank. Having, on average, required almost 20 years to climb the three steps from *Leutnant* to *Major*, the officers in the sample needed fewer than 12 years to make the next three steps, from *Major* to *Generalmajor*.

Looking at the individuals at the extremes, Quast reached the generalcy in just 10.7 years from becoming a *Major*, much more quickly than any of his corps commander peers, and more than six months faster than the next fastest promotee, Laffert. Both spent the whole of this period with the troops. The slowest promotee, Plüskow, took 13.7 years to achieve the same feat, yet he had been an ADC to the Kaiser and commanded his personal guard company, suggesting connections to the imperial court were not necessarily associated with more rapid promotion.

Among the future HKK commanders, Frommel stood out as having much more rapid promotion, but this was probably because he was Bavarian. His pace of promotion was typical of the officers of that army. The key factor in their accelerated rise was the much shorter period of service at the rank of *Major*, averaging just 4.1 years, compared to 5.5 years for the whole group. Although their service as *Oberstleutnant* and *Oberst*, at 2.3 years and 2.6 years respectively, was in both cases also shorter than their Prussian peers', this was only by about 6 months.

What this last reveals is that promotion to *Oberstleutnant* marked the key turning point in an officer's career. Prior to that, promotions were 5-6 years apart. After that, they came every 3-4 years. Again, it is possible to draw comparisons with the wider officer corps. Hughes noted the normal duration of service between promotion to *Major* and then to *Generalmajor* (or retire-

ment) was between ten and a half years and something over twelve years.<sup>42</sup> With the exception of the Bavarian officers, the generals of 1914 all served for periods similar to this, suggesting their accelerated promotion to *Major* was a central factor in their subsequent rise to the very summit of the army – once they had reached field rank, seniority became still more important. Here, their more rapid pace as subalterns gave them a key advantage, in that they were younger and hence had more years of service ahead of them, so could achieve higher rank before retirement intervened.

*Appointment as General der Infanterie / Kavallerie / Artillerie*

For most of the officers in the sample, the final milestone in their military progression prior to the outbreak of war in 1914 was appointment to command a corps, which was normally marked by promotion to the rank of *General der Infanterie / Kavallerie / Artillerie*.

Table 11 sets out the analysis for age, while Table 12 provides details of length of service, and Table 13 the time since appointment as *Generalmajor*. In all three tables, the four officers promoted to the rank after the beginning of September 1914 have been excluded.

*Table 11: Age When Promoted to General der Infanterie, etc.*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Oldest</i>	<i>Youngest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	57.5	65.1	36.9	28.2
Royal	38.8	40.7	36.9	3.8
All (except Royal)	58.4	65.1	54.4	10.7
Army (except Royal)	57.5	60.7	54.4	6.3
Active Corps	58.6	61.5	54.7	6.8
Reserve Corps	58.0	59.4	56.4	3.0
Cavalry HKK	61.1	65.1	55.9	9.2
Bavarian Corps	57.7	59.3	57.2	2.1

As might be expected, the two royal princes, Rupprecht and Albert, were again very significantly younger than their non-royal peers at the point they

<sup>42</sup> HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 82.

reached this rank, by almost 20 years. Beyond these two cases, the average age at promotion for the others in the sample did not vary significantly between the different cohorts, though the future army commanders were again just under a year younger than the average, matched by the Bavarians, and the others a little older (the figures for the future HKK include only a single Prussian officer, Marwitz, who at 58.1 was slightly younger than the average for that army). Again, however, the averages disguise a wide variation in the age at promotion within the groups, with Hausen and Einem, both (at little more than 54) being much the youngest of their peers, a year younger than the next youngest, Fabeck. Conversely, Quast and Zwehl were both over 63.

Table 12: Length of Service When Promoted to *General der...*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	38.1	42.3	19.7	24.7
Royal	21.4	23.1	19.7	3.4
All (except Royal)	38.9	42.3	35.4	6.9
Army (except Royal)	38.4	40.3	36.8	3.5
Active Corps	39.4	42.0	36.7	5.3
Reserve Corps	39.1	41.4	37.3	4.1
Cavalry HKK	40.1	42.3	36.3	6.0
Bavarian Corps	36.1	36.4	35.4	1.0

As before, stripping out the ages of the commanders, to show just length of service, narrows some of the differences, while again highlighting the rapid promotion of the two royal princes and the Bavarian officers, with the averages for each of the groups varying by little more than a year (the future army commanders again having slightly less service and the cavalry commanders slightly more). Again, the variations within the various groups were wider, with Einem reaching the rank after just 36.7 years, whereas Schenck required 42.0 years – 5.3 years longer

*Table 13: Length of Service Since Generalmajor  
When Promoted to General der...*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	7.7	9.4	5.5	3.9
Royal	6.9	8.3	5.5	2.8
All (except Royal)	7.7	9.4	6.5	2.9
Army (except Royal)	7.8	8.2	7.1	1.1
Active Corps	7.8	9.2	7.0	2.2
Reserve Corps	8.0	9.4	7.2	2.2
Cavalry HKK	7.1	7.4	6.9	0.5
Bavarian Corps	6.9	7.0	6.5	0.5

Given that there were only two steps from *Generalmajor* to *General der...*, it is perhaps not surprising the variation between the pace at which officers progressed between them was limited, with the averages for the army, corps and reserve corps commanders varying by only months. Nonetheless, it is noticeable the Bavarians maintained their faster pace, now joined by the future HKK commanders. Of the two royal princes, Albrecht's rate of promotion now matched his non-royal counterparts', though Rupprecht continued his accelerated pace, being promoted a year faster than the next quickest promotee (Martini), who was also a Bavarian.

#### *4 Nature of Military Service*

Important though it undoubtedly was, however, rank was not the only key feature of an officer's career. To understand the generals who led the German field forces in 1914, it is also necessary to consider how they had spent their time in the forty years on average they had worn their uniforms. Consideration of their experience may be presented under two heading: the duration of their various field commands, and the proportion and nature of their service devoted to service away from the troops, in the variety of staff appointments open to officers.

*Duration of Commands*

Although there were numerous sizes of units an officer might expect to command during his rise through the ranks, for the purposes of this study, three are most relevant: regiment, division, and corps. Almost all the officers in the sample undertook these commands, even if they undertook extended staff service. Given that these commands were often associated with promotion, this section will not repeat the detailed exploration of age and duration of service presented earlier, but instead focuses on the duration these roles were held.

On average, the non-royal officers were aged 47.5, and had served for 28.2 years since being commissioned, when they first took command of a regiment, with the rank of *Oberstleutnant* or *Oberst*. There was very little variation in these ages and length of service between Guards and Line officers, or between infantrymen and artillerymen or pioneers, with all three groups falling within a span of about a year. Cavalrymen tended to be two and a half years younger, with some three years less service, but this may be because a cavalry regiment was in many respects equivalent to an infantry battalion, rather than an infantry regiment of three battalions. There was also very little variation between the different groups of officers in terms of commands held in 1914.

A few individuals stood out, whether as precocious youngsters or late developers. Among the future army commanders, Hausen was just 43.3 when he first secured command of a regiment, with the only two other officers to have reached that level at a younger age (Einem and Marwitz) being cavalrymen. By contrast, Kluck was fully 52.3, making him the second oldest (after Quast) of the generals to secure command of a regiment, yet he was still able to reach command of an army. The contrast with the royal officers remained striking: at 30.5, Rupprecht was the oldest of the three to reach this level, yet still had only half the length of service of his non-royal peers. Table 14 gives data for the duration officers held these commands.

Table 14: Duration of Command of a Regiment

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	2.9	6.8	0.8	6.0
Royal	2.0	3.0	0.9	2.1
All (except Royal)	2.9	6.8	0.8	6.0
Army (except Royal)	2.2	3.0	0.9	2.1
Active Corps	3.2	4.6	1.1	3.5
Reserve Corps	2.3	3.9	0.8	3.1
Cavalry HKK	5.1	6.8	1.1	5.7
Bavarian Corps	2.2	2.5	1.5	1.0

Officers from the infantry averaged 2.9 years in command of a regiment, whereas those from the cavalry remained for an average of 4.5 years, probably due to the absence of an equivalent step from infantry battalion to infantry regiment.

By contrast, looking within the various groups, it is clear there was considerable variation in the length of time officers commanded regiments. In every group, there were one or two who remained in post for only about a year, while others held their commands for much longer, with Laffert and Below with their regiments for 4.6 years. Nevertheless, of the 48 non-royal officers, only 11 commanded a regiment for less than two years. The norm was therefore for these commands to be held for at least two full training cycles, giving them a through grounding in command at that level.

A number of the officers never commanded brigades, so the next command to be considered is a division, associated with the rank of *Generalleutnant*. On average, the non-royal officers were aged 54.9 and had 35.4 years of service when they took up the direction of these formations. These averages were, again, very similar (varying only by a matter of months), whether officers came from Guards units or Line units, and which arm of service they started their career with, with the exception that cavalry officers were on average slightly older. Table 15 sets out the data for the duration for which they held these commands.

Table 15: Duration of Command of a Division

<i>Group</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Longest</i>	<i>Shortest</i>	<i>Difference</i>
All	3.3	5.8	0.9	4.9
Royal	3.8	5.4	2.2	3.2
All (except Royal)	3.2	5.8	0.9	4.9
Army (except Royal)	3.3	4.9	0.9	4.0
Active Corps	3.6	5.8	1.1	4.7
Reserve Corps	3.4	4.9	1.4	3.5
Cavalry HKK	2.5	4.9	1.0	3.9
Bavarian Corps	2.3	3.3	0.9	2.4

As with regimental command, although there was considerable similarity in the average durations for which officers from the different groups commanded divisions, there was wide variation within the groups. Again, a small number of men held these posts for very short periods indeed, with Karl von Bülow, Schenck, Richthofen, and Xylander all remaining for no more than a single year. They were, however, very obvious exceptions: almost all the generals of 1914 had spent more than two years in command of a division, with the average being over three years. It is of note that those individuals who paused only briefly in these posts were not the same as those who had been regimental commanders for unusually short periods. Even the royal princes were here not untypical of their colleagues, with Albrecht spending fully 5.4 years in command of 26<sup>th</sup> (Wurtemberg) Infantry Division, making him one of the longer-served divisional commanders, and Rupprecht leading 1<sup>st</sup> Bavarian Infantry Division for more than two years, just months less than the average for Bavarian generals.

The pinnacle of an officer's career was to assume command of a corps. As Hughes noted, the prestige of these posts was enormous: the *kommandierende Generale* enjoyed a status equal to the highest civilian post in the area of their corps, the *Ober-Präsidenten*, had the right of direct access to the Kaiser, and were responsible to the minister of war purely for administrative matters.<sup>43</sup> Many even of the senior commanders in 1914 had not reached these dizzy heights, with only two of the reserve corps commanders (coincidentally

43 HUGHES, *King's Finest*, p. 119.



the non-related Günther von Kirchbach and Hans von Kirchbach) having previously commanded a corps and none of the HKK commanders.

The 32 non-royal generals in 1914 who commanded a corps prior to the outbreak of war had, on average, been aged 57.3, with 38.3 years of service. By contrast, Albrecht was 40.8 and had 23.1 years of service, while Rupprecht was only 36.9, with 19.7 years. Even though both princes had a similar duration of experience as regimental and divisional commanders as their non-royal colleagues, the exceptionally rapid pace with which they had risen through the junior ranks at the start of their careers meant they were far younger by the time they reached command of a corps.

At the outbreak of war, the commanders of the 22 active corps had been in post for an average of 3.2 years. This disguised an uneven spread. Precisely half had been in role for less than two years (Plüskow only since January 1914), whereas five had been in post for five years or more (Hoiningen since September 1907). In part, this reflects the rapid expansion of the army prior to 1914, since XX and XXI Corps were first formed in October 1912 and so had their original commanders (Schultz and Below) still in post. By contrast, the three Bavarian corps commanders all had quite short experience in their roles, with Martini been appointed in April 1912, Xylander in March 1913, and Gebattel in March 1914, each aged 57.2.

Since most of the officers of 1914 who had been appointed corps commanders prior to the outbreak of war were still in that post, they had (by definition) not completed their service at that level. For the expected duration as a corps commander, we therefore need to turn to those nine officers who had moved on prior to the outbreak of war, recognising this represents a very small sample. Hans von Kirchbach had retired at the end of November 1913, while the others had moved to other commands – six to become army commanders. On average, they had held these commands for 5.7 years, with only three (Hausen, Heeringen, and Günther von Kirchbach) remaining for less than six years – Hausen and Heeringen became ministers of war for Saxony and Prussia respectively, while Kirchbach became president of the *Reichs-Militärgericht* (Imperial Military Court).

The highest operational peak of the army was command of one of the eight armies, formed on mobilisation. These were based on the Army Inspections,

which monitored the state of readiness of the troops during peacetime, with only a tiny staff and no command authority over the corps assigned to them. The minimal continuity between the Army Inspections and the armies is shown by none carrying forward their numerical designation and being largely given different corps to command.<sup>44</sup>

In the event, only six of the eight army inspectors became army commanders in August 1914. The head of Fifth Army Inspection, Generaloberst Friedrich II, Grand Duke of Baden, was in post in name only, due to his royal status. He had retired from the army as commander of VIII Corps in 1902, aged 45, to support his aging father, whom he succeeded in 1907. In August 1914, command of Third Army went to Hausen. Given this army held all three of the corps from Saxony, and Hausen had been Saxon Minister of War since 1902, it seems likely that the appointment had been long planned in peacetime. The other substitution was a wartime expedient: the head of Seventh Army Inspection was Generaloberst Hermann von Eichhorn, but he had been injured falling from his horse in May 1914 and was not fit for duty when war broke out. Following his recovery, he was appointed commander of Tenth Army when this headquarters was created in January 1915. In a move that underlined the dynastic importance of the army, Wilhelm was snatched from a period of study with the Great General Staff in Berlin, having previously held no command more senior than that of a cavalry regiment, and put at the head of Fifth Army. The Kaiser appointed Wilhelm's military tutor, Generalleutnant Konstantin Schmidt von Knobelsdorf, as his chief of staff and famously told the Crown Prince, 'What he tells you, you must do'.<sup>45</sup>

Of the non-royal generals who led the Army Inspections prior to the outbreak of war, two (Bülow and Eichhorn) had been appointed in 1912, while the other three (Kluck, Heeringen and Prittwitz) had been in post only for a year or so. None had therefore had any great length of time at that level of command. All were also well advanced in years, with an average age at appointment of 65.8, and the youngest (Heeringen) being 63.2. Kluck was 67.6 when appointed in October 1913, with over 47 years' service.

---

44 MATUSCHKA, 'Organisationsgeschichte', pp. 157-159.

45 *World War I: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, ed. by Spencer TUCKER (Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2014), p. 1432.

*Staff and Line Postings*

Line command, however, was only part of the way in which officers might spend their careers. There were many roles and opportunities for ambitious officers that did not involve command of troops. The importance of such roles was underlined by Hughes:

The most efficient way to attain high rank was through the General Staff, whose officers routinely received rapid promotions. Many, if not all, of Prussia's most famous generals attained their high rank through many years of service as General Staff officers. [...] One officer went so far as to assert that the only way to escape the "oxen's tour" of the normal officer was to attend the War Academy and to serve on the General Staff.<sup>46</sup>

These may be divided into service with the *Großer Generalstab* (Great General Staff – the army's headquarters in Berlin, with the *Truppengeneralstab* (Troop General Staff – the staff roles with field formations), or in other staff roles, such as an instructor at a service school or in the War Ministry.

The starting point for this analysis is to consider whether the officers attended the War Academy (*Kriegsakademie*), which was controlled by the Chief of the General Staff and provided training in staff matters.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, of the 51 officers, only half (26) had attended this institution. Of the army commanders, only Hausen and Prittwitz had done so. More broadly, of the non-royal officers, and recognising the need for caution given the small size of the sample, Guards officers were a little more likely than average to have attended the War Academy (11 of 17), while cavalrymen were less likely (2 of 6), and artillery and pioneer officers much more likely (7 of 8).

Hughes noted almost exactly one third of all generals during the Empire had attended the War Academy, rising to just over 40% of newly-promoted generals at the end of the period, immediately before 1914.<sup>48</sup> With 54% of the non-royal army and corps commanders of that year having attended the War Academy, therefore, that institution's graduates were disproportionately well represented, suggesting this was indeed an important boost to an ambitious officer's career.

46 HUGHES, *King's Finest*, pp. 82-83.

47 MATUSCHKA, 'Organisationsgeschichte', pp. 196-198.

48 HUGHES, *King's Finest*, pp. 89-90.

In looking at the duration and influence of staff service on the officers' careers, this needs to be put into the context of their overall length of service. On average, the non-royal generals served for 39.3 years between receiving their commission and taking command of a corps, though this was within quite a wide range – Martini requiring only 35.3 years (all the Bavarian other officers reached this level after 36 years, much more quickly than almost all of their Prussian peers), while Boehn and Quast took over 43 years.

On average, the officers in the sample served in the Great General Staff for exactly 4 years. Line officers tended to serve a little longer (4.5 years), while cavalrymen served for a shorter period (3.6 years), thereby reflecting attendance at the War Academy. But these averages hide a deeper picture. Looking at the spread of duration of service with the Great General Staff, three groups can be identified: those with no or minimal (less than a year) service, those with 3-6 years' service, and those with extended service.

Of the 51 generals, almost half (23) had either no service with the Great General Staff or no more than a year. A further 13 had 3-6 years' service, while 11 spent more than 7 years in that institution. Of the six officers who spent 10 years or more there, Hausen was the only army commander, while three others commanded reserve corps (Beseler, Gronau, and Steuben), and two of the three Bavarian corps were commanded by such officers (Xylander and Gebattel), suggesting such experience was especially valued by that country's army. Of the Prussian generals, Bülow, Scholz, and Steuben had been Deputy Chief of the General Staff, while two Bavarians (Xylander and Fasbender) had been Chief of the General Staff for that country's army. Conversely, of the army commanders, Kluck and all three of the royal princes had no or minimal service with the army's headquarters in Berlin.

Turning to the *Truppengeneralstab*, a similar picture emerges. On average, the corps and army commanders of 1914 had just under 4 years in such roles, though this time Guards officers were more likely to have spent longer than average (4.7 years) in these roles and Line officers less time. Cavalry officers, again, tended to have less service in these staff positions (3.3 years).

Again, these averages obscure the variation within the groups. Of the 51 officers in the sample, 19 served for a year or less in such operational staff posts. A further 18 gained 3-6 years of experience there, while 8 filled such positions for 7 years or more. There was no overlap between those with ex-

tended service in the Great General Staff and those who focused on the Troop General Staff, but their spread between the different groups in 1914 was very different. Whereas 4 reserve corps were led by generals with lengthy experience (more than 9 years) of the Great General Staff, none had such long service with the Troop General Staff (though 7 of 13 spent at least 4 years in these posts). By contrast, whereas 4 active corps commanders spent 6 or more years with the Great General Staff, 7 others had been with the Troop General Staff for at least 7 years.

Finally, there were many other staff roles, including in the Kaiser's court, the War Ministry, as an instructor or commander of a service school, or as an inspector for one of the services. On average, the 51 generals spent just over 5 years in such roles, prior to commanding a corps, a year more than the average for either the Great General Staff or the Troop General Staff. Again, it is perhaps not surprising Guards officers, with their closer connection to the imperial court in Berlin, tended to spend longer in such roles (5.7 years). Similarly, officers from technical arms spent a far greater proportion of their careers (11 years) in posts of this kind, though this may be skewed by several commanding fortresses.

Once again, using the previous groupings, 13 of the generals of 1914, including all three princes, had no or minimal service of this kind, while 25 filled such roles for 3-6 years, and 10 for 7 years or more, including three of the army commanders. Three had been Minister for War (Hausen, Heeringen, and Einem), while six had been service inspectors.

Taking these various elements together, although only half of the generals of 1914 had attended the War Academy, on average they had spent a third of their service prior to taking up command of a corps in roles that did not involve the direct command of troops, with only slight variation between Guard and Line officers or between infantry and cavalry. Technical officers, by contrast, averaged only half of their careers with the troops.

Again, these averages hide some important variations. First, it is notable the non-royal army commanders spent a much greater proportion of their careers away from the troops than the corps commanders, with even Kluck, who had not attended the War Academy and never served with the Great General Staff or the Troop General Staff, spending only three-quarters of his career with the troops (he spent the 1880s as an instructor and commander of non-commis-

sioned officer schools). By contrast, Hausen, Heeringen and Prittwitz spent only about half their careers with the troops, while Bülow spent more than two-thirds of his service away from line command posts.

More broadly, of the 48 non-royal generals in 1914, 12 had spent less than half of their career with the troops. In addition to Hausen, three others had served with the troops for only a third of their careers – Hoiningen, who combined extended service with the Troop General Staff with 6 years as a military attaché, Beseler, who had spent 11 years with the Great General Staff and a further 7 years as Inspector of Pioneers and Fortresses, and Steuben, who had been with the Great General Staff for 16 years and served for a number of years at the War Academy, becoming its Director in 1913. Conversely, 12 of the officers had spent at least five-sixths of their service with the troops, including 6 of the active corps commanders, 4 of the reserve corps, and 2 of the cavalry commanders. By contrast, the royal princes spent almost all their careers in command of units.

#### *Career Assessment*

We have examined the senior field commanders of the German Army of 1914 through a series of lens, considering their social background, their education and age when commissioned, their progress through the ranks, the duration of their field commands, and the nature and extent of their staff service. It is necessary to pull this together to give a picture of the generals as a group.

First, it is clear three army commanders, Wilhelm, Rupprecht, and Albrecht, owed their positions to their status as royal princes, rather their professional military merit. While this was most obviously true of Wilhelm, whose largest command had been a cavalry regiment, all three enjoyed highly accelerated careers, reaching senior rank and formation command at ages other officer could only dream of. Not only did these princes spend far less time as junior officers, they also undertook none of the staff roles typical of most other officers, giving them a very narrow range of experience.

Turning to the non-royal officers, many matched the common perception of the senior German officer: they came from longstanding noble families, were born in the Prussian heartlands, the sons of officers, and attended one of the (in)famous cadet schools. But this is a very partial picture and obscures

the fact that a significant proportion of the generals came from rather different backgrounds.

Although all were nobles by 1914, almost exactly a quarter had been born as commoners and personally ennobled, a far higher proportion than in the generalcy as a whole. Almost half were not Prussian at birth, and almost one in five never considered themselves such, being Bavarian or Saxon, much higher proportions than amongst all generals. Finally, two in five had attended a *Gymnasium* or university, including all the Bavarian generals, double the rate of other generals.

In short, alongside the 'typical' Prussian caricature, a significant proportion of the German field commanders of 1914 were men from middle class (or more humble) backgrounds, who reached the top of the army through sheer ability, indicating the modernisation of war, as it lost the last vestiges of Napoleonic tactics and entered the technological world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was being reflected in the ways in which merit was identified among rising officers.

Looking at the generals' progression through the ranks, it is clear they spent a very long time indeed as junior officers, averaging around 20 years' service prior to promotion to *Major*, reaching this milestone at just over the age of 39, though this was still several years faster than the average for all officers. Even as subalterns, therefore, the future generals were recognised as well above their peers, and to some extent this more rapid promotion at the early stages of their career, coupled with their young age when commissioned, meant they had time to secure further promotions. The next milestone came rather more quickly, with promotion to *Generalmajor* after a further 12 years on average, at the age of 51. Again, this was somewhat faster than their peers. The final step was promotion to *General der Infanterie / Kavallerie / Artillerie*, which required on average almost another 8 years and was attained at the age of about 58. Although, overall, cavalry officers were promoted more slowly, and officers in the Bavarian Army more quickly, variation in the rates of promotion seems to have been greater between individuals, rather than between sub-groups, such as Guards officers or technicians.

Moving to consideration of the unit and formation commands held by the officers, as they progressed from commanding regiments to commanding corps, all had significant experience at these different levels. On average, the

generals spent about three years at each of the key three stages of regiment, division and corps. While individuals might spend more or less time at each level, these variations tended to be evened out between them, such that shorter service in command of a regiment might be matched by longer service with a division, and vice versa. This applied equally to the royal generals.

Finally, the officers may be divided into three groups in terms of the nature of their service. About a quarter, and all three royal princes, spent virtually their entire careers in command of units and formations of ever larger size. By contrast, another quarter spent less than half of their careers with the troops, including a handful who spent only a third of their service in such roles. This was especially true of the men who were to be army commanders in 1914. More common, however, accounting for about half of the generals, were those who spent about two-thirds of their time with the troops, with the remainder with the Great General Staff in Berlin, the Troop General Staff, or in a wide range of other staff roles, such as the War Ministry. Therefore, the majority had a breadth of experience that allowed them to 'place' their roles as senior field commanders into the broader context of the military system as a whole, yet few were technicians with little knowledge or understanding of the practical realities of operational command.

These were the senior field commanders of the German Army in August 1914. They were the product of perhaps the professionally most respected army in the world. In addition, half (26) had seen active service in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, and 5 also fought in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. But that combat experience was more than four decades earlier, when they were lieutenants. Since then, their service had been in peacetime, during a period of enormous change in technology, not just weapons but also transport and communications, which transformed the size and nature of the battlefield. How would they fare?

### *5 Wartime Experience*

It is a commonplace the realities of modern warfare shattered these proud generals. Of the army commanders, Prittwitz lost his nerve when defending East Prussia and was sacked within three weeks, replaced by Hindenburg. Three others were gone within months, the three princes saved only by their



royal status, and Heeringen hanging on in the quiet sector near Switzerland. This was surely evidence of failure, reinforced by Moltke's dismissal as Chief of the General Staff.

In part, this failure could perhaps have been predicted, not least because the generals were old men. Apart from the three royal princes, all the army commanders were in their 60s, while the youngest corps commander (Frommel) was 57. Writing after the war, J.F.C. Fuller declared, 'In war it is almost impossible to exaggerate the evil effects of age upon generalship, and through generalship on the spirit of an army. [...] in war the physical, intellectual, and moral stresses and strains which are at once set up immediately discover the weak links in a general's harness. [...] the older a man grows the more cautious he becomes, and [...] the more fixed become his ideas.' Fuller noted the most successful Napoleonic generals and in the American Civil War were under 40,<sup>49</sup> more than twenty years younger than the German generals of 1914.

That this wholesale failure was perhaps typical of all the armies of 1914 may be suggested by reference to the French Army. By the end of that initial year of warfare, 'only three [out of five] army commanders, [and] six [out of twenty-two] corps commanders [...] had remained in post since mobilization.'<sup>50</sup> But closer examination suggests this picture is at odds with reality.

The first way the performance of the German generals might be assessed is their longevity in post. As has been seen, the army commanders did not last long: Prittwitz was sacked in August 1914, Hausen gave up his command the following month, Kluck in March 1915, and Bülow in April. But only Prittwitz was dismissed. Hausen was laid low by typhus, Kluck was severely wounded by shrapnel when visiting his troops, while Bülow suffered a heart attack. These may be indications they were too old for such operational roles, but they are not proof of incompetence.

Looking at the 43 corps and cavalry commanders, by the end of 1915, just three had been sacked (Tschepe, Egloffstein, and Martini), while two had retired due to ill health (Pritzelwitz and Emmich). Tschepe was later re-em-

49 Major-General J.F.C. FULLER, *Generalship: Its Diseases and Their Cure* (London: Faber & Faber, 1933), pp. 26-27.

50 Hew STRACHAN, *The First World War: Volume I: To Arms* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2001), p. 227.

ployed, as Governor of Romania. Two other corps commanders, Hoiningen and Beseler, were moved from their corps commands to become governors (Belgium and Warsaw respectively). Finally, Hollen reverted from command of HKK 4 to command an infantry division, his position prior to mobilisation. In short, in contrast to the swathe of dismissals by Joffre in the senior ranks of the French Army, by the end of 1915, only two German commanders were entirely removed from senior command, one was demoted, three given roles governing occupied territories, and two invalided from the service – just eight officers.

Indeed, the longevity of the commanders stands out. Three retired during 1916, and ten more in 1917. But 30 of the 51 were still serving in 1918, and six of the others had retired due to illness. Given that, by the final year of the war, every one of the officers, apart from the royal princes, was aged over 60, their ability to continue to hold senior operational commands through the long years of warfare seems remarkable.

A second way to consider the success of the field commanders of 1914 is to examine the roles they held subsequently. Of the 43 corps and cavalry commanders, 16 were promoted to command armies, while a further 5 commanded an *Armee-Abteilung* (Army Detachment), a force larger than a corps that did not come under the control of an army.<sup>51</sup>

It can therefore be argued that, although the army commanders of 1914 may indeed have proven themselves not up to the job, this was more a question of their physical inability to keep going, rather than due to any lack of competence, with only one being dismissed. The corps commanders proved rather more successful, with half securing further promotion and only a handful being dismissed, the gradual attrition in their ranks being more a product of their age than their ability.

Perhaps Spenser Wilkinson was right and the German Army of 1914 had indeed ensured its higher commands were held by ‘such officers as unite distinguished abilities and military education with corresponding qualities of character and with bodily activity’.<sup>52</sup>

---

51 CRON, *Imperial German Army*, pp. 84-85.

52 WILKINSON, *Brain of an Army*, p. 100.

*Appendix – German Army and Corps Commanders, August 1914*

1 <sup>st</sup> AOK	Genobst	Alexander	von Kluck
2 <sup>nd</sup> AOK	Genobst	Karl	von Bülow
3 <sup>rd</sup> AOK	Genobst	Max	von Hausen
4 <sup>th</sup> AOK	Genobst	Albrecht	Duke of Wurttemberg
5 <sup>th</sup> AOK	Genmaj	Wilhelm	Crown Prince of Germany
6 <sup>th</sup> AOK	Genobst	Rupprecht	Crown Prince of Bavaria
7 <sup>th</sup> AOK	Genobst	Josias	von Heeringen
8 <sup>th</sup> AOK	Genobst	Maximilian	von Prittwitz
Garde	Gen d Inf	Karl	von Plettenberg
I	Gen d Inf	Hermann	von Francois
II	Gen d Inf	Alexander	von Linsingen
III	Gen d Inf	Ewald	von Lochow
IV	Gen d Inf	Friedrich Bertram	Sixt von Arnim
V	Gen d Inf	Hermann	von Strantz
VI	Gen d Inf	Kurt	von Pritzelwitz
VII	Gen d Kav	Karl	von Einem gen. von Rothmaler
VIII	Genlt	Erich	Tülff von Tschepe und Weidenbach
IX	Gen d Inf	Ferdinand	von Quast
X	Gen d Inf	Otto	von Emmich
XI	Gen d Inf	Otto	von Plüskow
XII	Gen d Inf	Karl	d'Elsa
XIII	Gen d Inf	Max	von Fabeck
XIV	Gen d Inf	Ernst	Freiherr von Hoiningen gen. Huene
XV	Gen d Inf	Berthold	von Deimling
XVI	Gen d Inf	Bruno	von Mudra
XVII	Gen d Kav	August	von Mackensen
XVIII	Gen d Inf	Dedo	von Schenck
XIX	Gen d Kav	Maximilian	von Laffert
XX	Gen d Art	Friedrich	von Scholtz

XXI	Gen d Inf	Fritz	von Below
Garde Res	Gen d Art	Max	von Gallwitz
I Res	Genlt	Otto	von Below
III Res	Gen d Inf	Hans	von Beseler
IV Res	Gen d Art	Hans	von Gronau
V Res	Gen d Inf	Erich	von Gündell
VI Res	Gen d Inf	Konrad	von Goßler
VII Res	Gen d Inf	Hans	von Zwehl
VIII Res	Gen d Inf	Wilhelm	Freiherr von Egloffstein
IX Res	Gen d Inf	Max	von Boehn
X Res	Gen d Inf	Günther	von Kirchbach
XII Res	Gen d Art	Hans	von Kirchbach
XIV Res	Gen d Art	Richard	von Schubert
XVIII Res	Genlt	Kuno	von Steuben
HKK 1	Gen d Kav	Manfred	Freiherr von Richthofen
HKK 2	Gen d Kav	Georg	von der Marwitz
HKK 3	Gen d Kav	Rudolf	Ritter von Frommel
HKK 4	Gen d Kav	Gustav	Freiherr von Hollen
I Bav	Gen d Inf	Oskar	Ritter u Edler von Xylander
II Bav	Gen d Inf	Karl	Ritter von Martini
III Bav	Gen d Kav	Ludwig	Freiherr von Gebstattel
I Res Bav	Gen d Inf	Karl	Ritter von Fasbender



# *Storia militare contemporanea*

## *Articles*

- *Italian Military Officers on Service of the Greek War of Independence: Case Studies from D. Romas' Archive,*  
by CHARALAMPOS N. VLACHOPOULOS
  - *German Corps and Army Commanders of 1914 A Prosopographical Study,*  
by MARTIN SAMUELS
  - *Le lieutenant interprète Jean Schlumberger, de la N.R.F. au Rechésy, un embusqué?*  
par GÉRALD ARBOIT
  - *Guglielmo Marconi nella grande guerra tra patriottismo e intuizioni innovative,*  
di COSMO COLAVITO
  - *La fuga dei prigionieri austro-ungarici dai campi italiani tra percezione e problemi reali,*  
di BALAZS JUHÁSZ
  - *Carità pelosa. Gli aiuti italiani all'Ungheria post-asburgica,*  
di BALAZS JUHÁSZ
  - *La Sezione 'Scienze Militari' nella Enciclopedia Italiana,*  
di ALESSANDRA CAVATERRA
  - *Il controllo a lungo raggio del deserto. Le esperienze italiane nella Libia degli Anni Trenta,*  
di BASILIO DI MARTINO
  - *La politica antisemita nelle scuole militari e nelle Accademie delle Forze Armate (1937-1938),*  
di GIOVANNI CECINI
  - *Il Centro Integrativo Selezione Ufficiali. Un esempio delle contraddizioni militari della RSI,*  
di FERDINANDO ANGELETTI
- 

## *Rethinking Contemporary Military History Three Useful Reprints under kind permissions*

- *Resources Versus Fighting Quality: Rethinking World War II*  
by JEREMY BLACK
- *Recording the Great War: military archives and the South African official history Programme, 1914-1939*  
by IAN VAN DER WAAG
- *Ranke and Files: History and the Military*  
by PHILIBERT BAUDET