

On August 28th, 1916, Sir Stanley Maude took command of the British forces in Mesopotamia. Under his energetic leadership the reorganization of the expedition, begun after the disaster at Kut-el-Amara, was carried out thoroughly. Four months were spent in making most complete preparations for the coming campaign. When the troops moved against the Turks, it was with the assurance that the groundwork of victory had been laid.

On December 12th the campaign opened. The British troops moved up the Tigris against the Turks, who had fortified a strong position at Kut-el-Amara. The latter made a strong defence. Their efforts, however, were of no avail. On February 24th, 1917, the British troops entered Kut after a month and a half of constant fighting. They pressed hard on the heels of the beaten Turks, who refused to come to grips again until they reached the Diala River, a tributary of the Tigris which joins that river about eight miles below Bagdad. Again the Turks were forced to retreat before the British onset. Their retirement left the way open into Bagdad, which General Maude entered on March 11th. Four columns were at once sent in pursuit of the Turkish forces. During March and April there was almost daily fighting. The Turks were defeated in nine pitched battles and in many minor engagements. By the end of April General Maude had pushed them eighty miles north of Bagdad and had made his hold on Mesopotamia absolutely sure.

During the fierce heat of the summer months all operations had to be suspended. The end of September saw the British troops again advancing. The Turkish garrison at Ramadie was cut off and forced to surrender on the left of the British front. This brilliant action netted Maude over 3,000 prisoners and thirteen guns. The following month the right wing of the British army had