

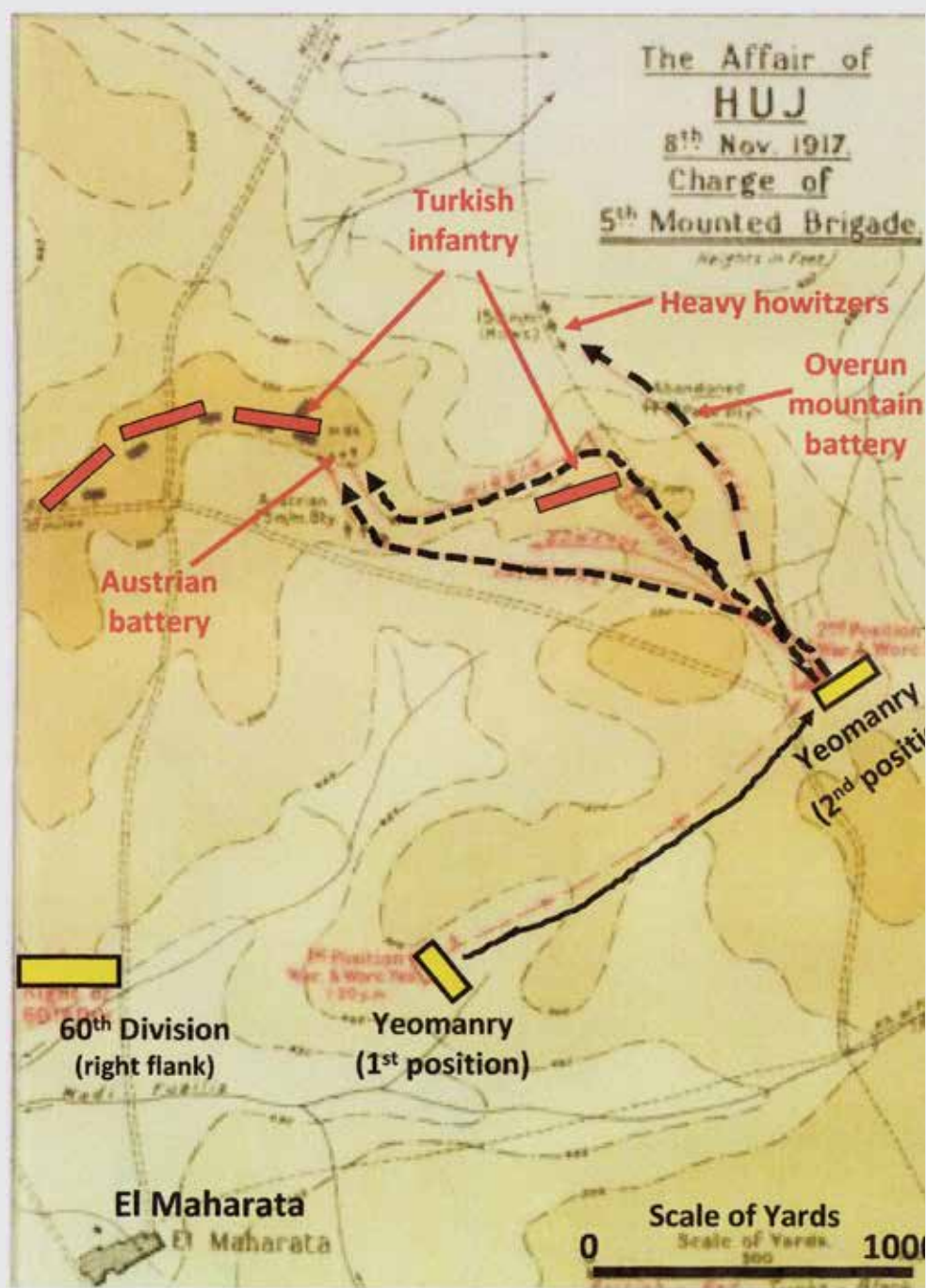
# WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

## The Charge at Huj



Charge of the Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry at Huj, 8th November 1917, by Lady Butler

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Battle Lines



Captured Turkish gun



Turkish prisoners



Enemy plane at the Beersheba redoubt.



Hundreds of horses drawn up on the beach at Gaza.



After the battle.

### The Middle East Theatre of War

At the outbreak of Great War the Ottoman Empire allied itself with the Central Powers (Germany and Austria), and constituted a serious threat to Great Britain's interests in Egypt and the Middle East, particularly to the Suez Canal, the vital route to British India, and to the Caspian and Gulf oilfields.

To combat this threat Britain, allied with Russia, opened up a number of campaigns in the Middle Eastern Theatre - Gallipoli, Persia, Caucasus, Persia, Sinai and Palestine.

### The Charge at Huj occurred during the Southern Palestine Offensive, approximately one month prior to the capture of Jerusalem.

Two English cavalry regiments, The Warwickshire Yeomanry and the Worcestershire Yeomanry, were posted to the Middle East and formed part of the Desert Mounted Corps which, during the Palestine campaign, took part in the celebrated "Charge at Huj" on November 8th 1917. This heroic incident has been likened to the "Charge of the Light Brigade", in that a small cavalry force charged a superior enemy position defended by artillery. The charge was successful, resulting in the capture of the position, 70 Turkish prisoners, 11 artillery pieces and 4 machine guns; but British casualties were heavy – 26 killed and 40 wounded, and 100 horses were lost.

*A participant's account is given by Lieutenant Mercer of the Worcesters;*

*"Machine guns and rifles opened up on us the moment we topped the rise behind which we had formed up. I remember thinking that the sound of crackling bullets was just like hailstorm on a iron-roofed building, so you may guess what the fusillade was....A whole heap of men and horses went down twenty or thirty yards from the muzzles of the guns. The squadron broke into a few scattered horsemen at the guns and seemed to melt away completely. For a time I, at any rate, had the impression that I was the only man left alive. I was amazed to discover we were the victors".*

Amongst the other surviving participants in this action was a Wolsingham man, Private JOSHUA THOMAS MANN of the Warwickshire Yeomanry.

