

E7 The Middle East

In Palestine during 1917 the British made two unsuccessful attempts (March and April) to take the city of Gaza. Under a new commander, General (later Field Marshal) Sir Edmund Allenby, the British broke through the Turkish lines at Beersheba (November), compelling the evacuation of Gaza; and on December 9, Allenby's troops took Jerusalem. The year also witnessed the beginning of the brilliant leadership of British Colonel T. E. Lawrence, known as Lawrence of Arabia, in the Arab revolt against Turkey. Arab troops led by Lawrence took the Turkish-held port of Al'Aqabah in July, and during the remainder of the year executed many forays against the Turkish-held Hejaz railway. The year 1917 was also marked by British successes in Mesopotamia; they took Baghdad in March and by September had advanced to Ramadi on the River Euphrates and Tikrit on the Tigris.

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