

TIMELINE: The Jewish Legion

1914 On October 31, Vladimir “Ze’ev” Jabotinsky learns that Turkey has entered the war. He decides that the Jews must help England defeat Turkey and end Ottoman Rule in Eretz Israel.

1915 On March 15, Jabotinsky and Josef Trumpeldor, a Russian-Jewish war hero, meet British General John Maxwell to convince him to form a Jewish Legion. He offers the formation of a Mule Corps instead. Trumpeldor agrees to join. Jabotinsky refuses.

1915 On April 27, the Zion Mule Corps. arrives at Gallipoli. They are led by Lieutenant-Colonel John Henry Patterson.

1915 In the summer months, Jabotinsky travels to Europe to pursue his Legion idea. He meets statesmen in Rome, Paris and London but, in his words, it is “a sad tale of disappointments and failures.”

1916 Late in the year, a group of former muleteers from the Zion Mule Corps. arrive in London and reenlist.

1917 In January, Jabotinsky himself enlists with the Jewish unit.

1917 In February, the Russian Revolution and the removal of the czar eliminates one of world Jewry’s main psychological hurdles to joining the Allied cause.

1917 On July 10, the Jewish Legion is formed. Lieutenant-Colonel John Henry Patterson is made its commander.

1918 In June, the Jewish Legion arrives in Palestine.

1918 The anti-Zionist British military authorities begin to demobilize the Jewish Legion. The Jewish Legion faces outright discrimination.

1919 In January, Jabotinsky makes efforts to prevent demobilization.

1919 In August, Jabotinsky is demobilized himself.

1921 The last of the Legion members are demobilized.