

FOR SALE

Stone Limited... 481 King Street West...

The Toronto World

FOR SALE--7 OAKLANDS AVENUE

Excellent built detached residence... 36 King Street East...

PROBS—A few scattered showers, but for the most part, fair and mild.

FRIDAY MORNING MARCH 22 1918—FOURTEEN PAGES

VOL. XXXVIII.—No. 13,645 TWO CENTS

GERMANS OPEN OFFENSIVE

British Withstand Furious Attacks on Fifty-Mile Front From Croisilles to LaFere By Masses of Picked Troops Who Are Mowed Down Without Reaching Objectives--Struggle Still Continues

EXACTLY twenty-five months after the Germans began the historic battle of Verdun...

The attack was made on a scale hitherto unknown during this war of major offensives...

The bombardment began at five o'clock Thursday morning, just before the early spring dawn was breaking over eastern France...

five hours. Then German infantry stormed out to make the first great assault. The Germans, favored by the wind, moved forward under cover of a pall of smoke...

Describing the battle, Andrew Bonar Law informed the house of commons that lightly held portions of the British line had been withdrawn...

Nor were the German efforts concentrated on the front held by the British. Early Thursday morning the Germans assaulted the French lines near the Village of Ornes...

penetrated a considerable distance. Near Rheims, too, the French were subjected to an assault...

The attacks at Verdun and Rheims, however, may be considered for the time being as mere diversions from the principal attack...

The Germans have called upon the Austrian army for assistance in their effort to carry the battle to the entente allies...

GRAND OFFENSIVE HAS BEEN STARTED

Attack By German Infantry Was Preceded By Heavy Bombardment That Rocked Countryside, But British Were Prepared and Enemy's Objective Was Not Attained, Says General Haig.

BRITISH Army Headquarters in France, March 21.—The Germans this forenoon launched a heavy attack against the British lines over a wide front in and near the Cambrai sector...

Hard fighting is proceeding from a point north of Lagnicourt, southward to Gauche Wood, just below Gouzeaucourt...

The Germans have employed gas shells freely, and a constant stream of high velocity shells has been breaking with frightful concussion far back of the British lines.

The bombardment began in earnest at five o'clock this morning, and about five hours later the enemy forces hurried themselves on the British front line trenches north of Lagnicourt and Louvreal...

SMOKE BARRAGE. At the same time other German forces advanced behind a smoke barrage along the ridge running northward from Gouzeaucourt.

It may be said that the attack in this region was by no means unexpected by the British and that they had made great preparations to meet the onslaught.

The bombardment was of a most terrific nature and finally the infantry drove forward against numerous points in the Cambrai sector.

The preliminary bombardment had extended from a point below St. Quentin north to the River Scarpe, and at last reports sanguinary fighting was in progress as far south as the region of Hargicourt and as far north as Bullecourt.

The early stages of the battle would seem to indicate that the enemy was trying to drive a wedge on both sides of the Cambrai salient and pinch it off. A keen struggle has been proceeding in the neighborhood of Bullecourt and Lagnicourt and south of the salient near Hargicourt and Ronsoy.

The British had been looking for this attack today. Not only have prisoners declared that yesterday or today would mark the beginning of the offensive on this front, but there were abundant signs of an enemy smash against this sector, which was the scene of the last great battle in the British theatre.

BRITISH ARE WELL PREPARED. It is too early to predict the outcome of the first few hours of the struggle, in which vast forces and every conceivable engine probably were employed.

This much is certain. At no period has the British war machine been in such perfect condition, never before has there been higher morale or optimism among the British troops.

Germany is staking everything on this play, and if the great attack fails to break clear thru, it is believed that the Germans will be finished, for they have nothing further to offer, except a gradually weakening defense.

MOST INTENSE BOMBARDMENT. The bombardment today was one of the most intense seen along this front. As had been generally expected, the Germans depended on short heavy artillery work to carry their troops forward.

The sky was heavily overcast all day, rendering aerial observation difficult.

HAIG'S OFFICIAL REPORT

FIELD Marshal Haig's report from British headquarters in France describes the German offensive as comprising an intense bombardment by the artillery and a powerful infantry attack on a front of over 50 miles.

"At about 8 o'clock this morning, after an intense bombardment of both high explosive and gas shells on our forward positions and back areas, a powerful infantry attack was launched by the enemy on a front of over 50 miles, extending from the River Oise in the neighborhood of La Fere to the Senese River about Croisilles.

"Several enemy divisions which had been specially trained for this great attack have already been identified, including units of the Guards."

ATTACK ON BRITISH LINES IS GREATEST IN HISTORY

Bonar Law Tells House of Commons That Government and War Council Knew of the Attack and Urges People Not to Be Alarmed.

London, March 21.—The German attack against the British lines today was on a larger scale than any made thus far during the war on any part of the western front...

"I am sure that with the knowledge beforehand of what has happened in similar attacks on either side," continued Bonar Law, "the house and country will not be unnecessarily alarmed by information of that kind."

"I may say that only three days ago we received information at the cabinet from headquarters in France that they had definitely arrived at the conclusion that an attack would be launched immediately, and as they were prepared to meet it the country need have no cause for anxiety."

OSTEND BOMBARDED; HELIGOLAND ATTACKED

British Monitors and Seaplanes Destroy Enemy Aircraft and Gain Success on Coast.

London, March 21.—Ostend was bombarded by British monitors today and Heligoland was attacked by seaplanes, according to the official announcement tonight.

The admiralty statement says: "Ostend was bombarded this afternoon by British monitors with successful results. Prior to the bombardment four enemy aircraft were destroyed by our naval air squadron. Enemy aircraft attacked the British machines while spotting for the bombardment, with the result that another enemy machine was destroyed."

GERMANY MAY DECLARE WAR ON HOLLAND NOW

The Best Local Paper. The Toronto World yesterday published 47 purely local news items.

THIS BATTLE MAY DECIDE WHOLE WAR

London, Reassured by Bonar Law, Calmly Awaits News of Battle's Outcome--Tremendous British Preparations Create Confidence.

LONDON, March 21.—Altho a battle is being fought which is likely to develop into the greatest struggle of modern history, and perhaps settle the result of the war, the English people preserve the same quiet calm they have worn for the past four years.

The statement made by Andrew Bonar Law in the house of commons was circulated in the hotels and other public places. That is the last news the majority of the people will have of the great struggle before they see the morning papers, but Mr. Bonar Law's words have carried much assurance.

The Germans had talked so freely about their great offensive that many people thought they were making a feint to conceal some other policy; some looked for a campaign against Salonica, instead of a big attack in France.

Extensive preparations have been made by the English hospitals to receive the trains of wounded from the channel ports, which follow every battle. The first of them is expected tomorrow.

MASSES OF TROOPS EMPLOYED WITH GREAT WEIGHT OF GUNS

Germany Appear to Have Penetrated British Front Line at Certain Points Between Scarpe and Vendeuil.

London, March 21.—By employing masses of troops supported by a great weight of artillery, the Germans appear to have penetrated the British front line at certain points between the Scarpe and Vendeuil, says Reuter's correspondent at British headquarters, telegraphing this evening.

AMERICAN MILITARY OBSERVERS CANNOT SEE GRAND OFFENSIVE

They Are Waiting For Full Scope of Enemy Action Against Both British and French Fronts.

Washington, March 21.—Even word from London that the drive launched today by the Germans on the west front is on a larger scale than any undertaken there since the war began has failed to convince American military observers that the long-heralded German grand offensive is at hand.

Will Move for Address to King Barring Hereditary Titles

DINEEN'S MEN'S HATS. The Dineen Company are putting on a special display of High Grade English Hats for men—comprising silk hats, soft and stiff hats, opera hats, trowed hats and caps, all the latest production from 'Christy Co. and Henry Heath of London, England.

SUE ESTATES OF DIRECTORS WHO ARE DEAD

Debtors Holders of Dominion Permanent Loan Company Meet.

STORY OF OPERATIONS

Liquidator Tells of What His Investigations Have Brought Out.

NUTSHELL. Liabilities \$4,298,714—Assets \$4,770,000.

Humor, pathos, sarcasm, anger, all found expression from some four hundred debenture holders and depositors of the defunct Dominion Permanent Mortgage Corporation, who gathered in Osgoode Hall yesterday to listen to the tale of the operations which caused the collapse of the institution on Feb. 11.

AMERICAN MILITARY OBSERVERS CANNOT SEE GRAND OFFENSIVE

They Are Waiting For Full Scope of Enemy Action Against Both British and French Fronts.

WILL MOVE FOR ADDRESS TO KING BARRING HEREDITARY TITLES

DINEEN'S MEN'S HATS. The Dineen Company are putting on a special display of High Grade English Hats for men—comprising silk hats, soft and stiff hats, opera hats, trowed hats and caps, all the latest production from 'Christy Co. and Henry Heath of London, England.

THE BEST LOCAL PAPER. The Toronto World yesterday published 47 purely local news items.

GERMANY MAY DECLARE WAR ON HOLLAND NOW

AMERICAN MILITARY OBSERVERS CANNOT SEE GRAND OFFENSIVE

WILL MOVE FOR ADDRESS TO KING BARRING HEREDITARY TITLES

DINEEN'S MEN'S HATS. The Dineen Company are putting on a special display of High Grade English Hats for men—comprising silk hats, soft and stiff hats, opera hats, trowed hats and caps, all the latest production from 'Christy Co. and Henry Heath of London, England.

THE BEST LOCAL PAPER. The Toronto World yesterday published 47 purely local news items.