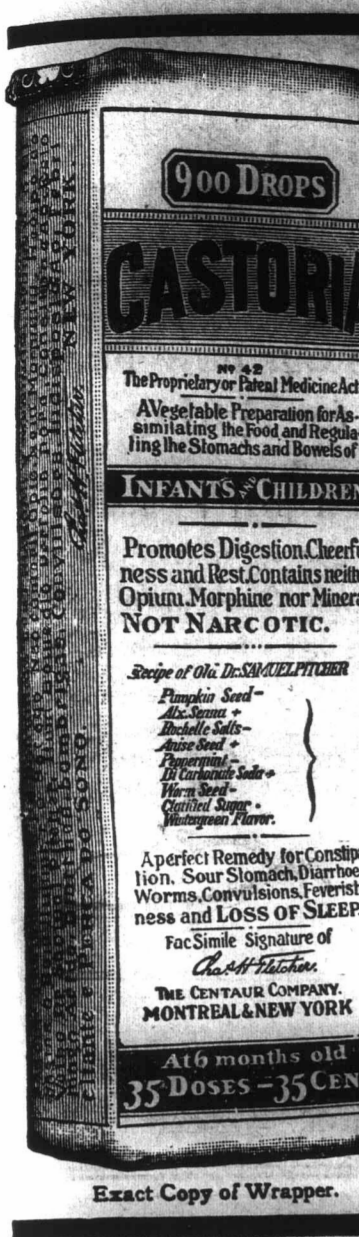


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What Happened to the Vitals of the Bluecher

Detailed Narrative of the Frightful Punishment*
of the German Cruiser in a Naval Battle
Unparalleled in all History--A Fleet
Surgeon's Graphic Story of the
Scenes Among Wounded.

(By a Survivor of the Ill-Fated German Cruiser Bluecher.)

We had just had breakfast on the Bluecher when a fast British scout cruiser hovered for a moment on the far-distant horizon and then disappeared. We knew at once that our location was being reported by wireless to the nearest British patrol ships. Orders were signalled at once through the German fleet to turn away from the British shore and steer for home. It was Sunday morning. About nine o'clock columns of smoke could be seen on the far horizon behind us. The enemy were after us—but not yet could we see them. Suddenly from the blue sky above a shell fell near us, with a moaning, groaning whine. We could see no ship. From somewhere below the horizon had come that shot.

Nowhere visible were there any warships of the enemy which our gunners could find for a target. Still out of the skies above us more shells continued to fall in front of us, beside us and behind us. Finally the observers at the mast-head were able to make out through their telescopes the tops of the masts of a ship, but our hull was buried out of sight, and yet those British gunners in their turrets, who could not see even the tops of our masts, were rapidly getting the distance and range of the Bluecher from the fire-control officers far up in their own mast tops.

At this moment was the beginning of a naval battle the like of which had never occurred before in the history of sea power, for never before have ships of such size and speed, with guns of such range and punishing power, been engaged. This battle, which began between ships more than ten miles apart which could not see each other, continued to increase in fierceness of action until the British pursuers, who had worked themselves up to the astonishing speed of thirty-four miles an hour, began to overtake us and rake us at point blank range. Although the Bluecher was protected by six-inch plates of armor and six-inch plates on her turrets, we knew we were doomed. We were at the mercy of five British battle cruisers, faster in speed, heavier in armament and more powerful in guns.

What happened to the Bluecher that Sunday morning is a story unparalleled by anything in the previous history of the world. The Bluecher received every imaginable form of projectile, and as a final kick its end was hastened by a torpedo from the British cruiser Arethusa.

A curious fact is that our most frightful punishment came in the early stages of the engagement when the British ships were eight or ten miles away from us. This extraordinary occurrence was due to the British thirteen-and-a-half-inch shells that were fired at such a high elevation that they came down upon us from the sky, piercing our unprotected decks and penetrating to the bottom of the ship, where they exploded in the very vitals of the Bluecher, doing the maximum amount of damage and destruction.

The British ships, as I have said, were away on the horizon, more than ten miles distant, when they started to fire. Shots came slowly at first. They fell ahead and over, raising vast columns of water; now they fell astern and short. The British guns were finding the range. Those deadly water spouts crept nearer and nearer. The men on deck watched them with a strange fascination.

Soon one pitched close to the ship, and a vast watery pillar, a hundred metres high, one of them affirmed, fell lashing on the deck. The range had been found. Dani aber ging's lost! Now the shells came thick and fast, with a horrible droning hum. At once they did terrible execution. The electric plant was soon destroyed and the ship plunged in a darkness that could be felt. "You could not see your hand before your nose," said one.

Down below decks there were horror and confusion, mingled with gasping shouts and moans as the shells plunged through the decks. It was only later, when the range shortened, that their trajectory flattened and tore holes in the ships sides and raked her decks. At first they came droppings from the sky.

Death and Destruction Beyond the Power of Expression.

Open doors bang to—and jam—and closed iron doors bend outward like tinplates, and through it all the bodies of men are whirled about like dead leaves in a winter blast, to be battered to death against the iron walls. In one of the engine rooms—it was the room where the high velocity engines for ventilation and forced draughts were at work—men were picked up by that terrible Luftdruck and tossed to a horrible death amid the machinery. There were other horrors too fearful to recount.

It was appalling below deck it was more than appalling above. The Bluecher was under the fire of so many ships. Even the little destroyers peppered her. "It was one continuous explosion," said a gunner. The ship heeled over as the broadside struck her, then righted herself, rocking like a cradle.

Gun crews were so destroyed that stokers had to be requisitioned to carry ammunition. Men lay flat for safety. The decks presented a tangled mass of scrap iron.

In one case, the only one, as they thought undestroyed, two men continued to serve their gun. They hied it as the ship listed, adapting the elevation to the new situation. The Bluecher had run her course. She was lagging lame, and with the steering gear gone was beginning slowly to circle. It was seen that she was doomed, but still the gunfire from the British kept up with relentless, incessant fury.

Som of the men on board were rendered deaf. The ship quivered and rocked under the recoil of her own guns. The deadly British broadsides made her reel. The guns were torn from their settings and whole gun crews hurled to destruction. Men hurtled down from aloft, bruised, bleeding, dead.

Men were swept from the deck like flies from a tablecloth. Everywhere blood trickled and flowed. It was a fever of excitement. Men found blood pouring down their legs, but could not locate their wounds. Men in authority lost their heads and confusion reigned. Their nerves could not stand the strain.

A shell would burst in the interior of the ship in a halo of flame and fire would arise from her deck, though there was nothing on deck apparently that could burn. During the fight one of the sailors noticed the captain pull up his trousers and search for a wound; no one could then say whether he was wounded or not.

It is generally believed that a ship fighting end-on stands the smallest chance of being hit. That is what our naval text books teach us. But that is no longer the case. The effective target presented by an armored ship end-on is really much greater than when she is broadside-on, besides, in the former position, losing whatever protection might be afforded by her vertical side armor. This is one of the unexpected lessons taught by the ill-fated Bluecher.

We knew we had more than a hundred miles to go before we would reach the protection of our mine fields, and we knew that the Bluecher had the poorest chance of any of the German ships, as she was the slowest. Desperate efforts were made to keep

the Bluecher at her maximum speed but no matter how hard we tried to get away we saw the big English ships steadily overhauling us.

We knew what was in store for us as soon as our officers were able to make out the outlines of the approaching ships. We knew the armanent and he gun equipment we had to face. We knew that each of those oncoming British battle cruisers could throw a weight of metal of 10,000 pounds twice every minute—a total of fifty tons of projectiles every minute. Yet through it all some never despaired of their lives; others from the beginning gave themselves up as lost.

As the nearest of the English ships drew closer, the angle of their gun fire became flatter, but still from far off on the horizon came the shells that seemed to drop from the skies. After a time we were receiving literally a hailstorm of shells—some falling from overhead down through our decks, some penetrating through the stern and travelling half way the length of the ship, and still others coming straight through the sides.

And this was not all. The big British battle cruiser that led the British line thundered past us and then began to rake us with her stern batteries. The gunners in the stern turrets of the British ship had been standing idle and restless, impatient to have a hand in the fight. As the ship drew past us the rear guns for the first time had a chance at the Bluecher, and they tore our bow and forward works with their heavy shells while the after guns of the secondary batteries raked our decks at point-blank range.

We were the first under fire in the action and we were the last under fire. Practically every English ship poured projectiles into us. I have never seen such gunnery, and there has never been the like of it before in the history of the world. We could not fight such guns as the English ships had, and before long we had no guns of any kind to fight with. Our decks were swept by shot, our guns were smashed and the gun crews wiped out.

One particular shell from a thirteen-and-a-half-inch gun I remember well. I saw it coming and watched it burst in the heart of the ship. This single projectile probably killed and wounded not less than fifty men. We had our floating equipment handy and soon began to put it on. Many of the men leaped into the water, preferring to trust to getting picked up by the British rather than remain for certain destruction on the doomed and helpless Bluecher.

It was early in the action that the concentrated fire of the British guns on the Bluecher landed a shell directly over the engine room. This slowed up the ship and we began to drop back. Very soon a second shell reached the engine room, and we signalled the rest of the fleet, "All engines useless." In another half hour the Bluecher was a mass of flame from fore bridge to stern. One shell pierced the foundation of a turret and set off some ammunition, causing a deafening explosion and great loss of life within the turret.

In the midst of the infernal noise and carnage a strange incident happened. A reserve sailor who stood unoccupied near one of the gun crews followed the details of the battle as they were telephoned to the turret from time to time by the commander. Finally, unable to keep back his feelings, the sailor produced a violin. While the guns roared in he turrets and pillars of water were thrown up by the falling shells he played "The Watch on the Rhine," and from all sides the men joined in the song.

Battered above decks, the vitals torn and twisted, and with many holes in her sides, the Bluecher reeled and stumbled like a drunken sailor. But it was the torpedo of the Arethusa that was the final death blow. She drew alongside, and one of the British officers shouted through a megaphone a warning in German that they were about to launch a torpedo. Our men understood, and many of them took headers into the water.

Steaming within 200 yards of the reeling Bluecher, the British warship discharged her torpedo, which went home. The explosion had an appalling result, and none would have survived if they had remained clinging to the wreck.

The wounded Bluecher finally settled down, turned wearily over and disappeared in a swirl of water.

BIG ISLAND.

Our cheese factory reopened on Monday. The farmers are looking forward to a prosperous season, cheese being such a high price at present. Mrs. Wallace Cole has returned

Some after spending a few days visiting friends at South Bay. Mr. and Mrs. R. Dunning spent Sunday with their daughter, Mrs. Earle Purteile. Glad to report Miss L. Sprague who has been ill is convalescent. Mr. and Mrs. B. Barker of Northport, spent Sunday with Mr. Wm. Peck and family.

Mrs. Jno. Warden and daughter Muriel took dinner on Monday with Albert Wager and family. Glad to report Miss Reta Williams who has been confined to the house for a few days with the measles is able to attend school.

The much needed rain came on Saturday and was much appreciated by the farmers. Mr. and Mrs. Woodley and family of Belleville, motored down on Sunday and spent the day at Mr. Peck's. Mrs. Eliza Varney passed away on Monday at the home of her adopted daughter, Mrs. W. Goodmurphy.

FOXBORO.

Mr. and Mrs. Herb. Eggleton and children visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. Cook last Sunday afternoon.

Mr. Robt. Ward of Peterboro spent Monday the guest of his daughter Mrs. D. Ketcheson.

Miss Mary Wannamaker spent Sunday afternoon with the Misses Gladys and Nellie Stewart.

Mr. and Mrs. Will Prentice and children spent Sunday the guests of Mr. and Mrs. E. Prentice at Frankford.

Next Sunday morning will be Quarterly Meeting in Foxboro Methodist Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Dafeo also Mr. and Mrs. Windsor Dafeo of Moira, were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Walt on Sunday last.

Mrs. W. Gowsell called at the home of Mrs. A. Bailey on Sunday afternoon.

Miss Flossie Rose returned home on Monday after visiting friends at Thomasburg.

Mrs. R. Walt and daughter Odrey spent Tuesday with Mrs. Earl Sills.

Inferior Lightning Rods

Again I wish to warn the farmers of Ontario against inferior lightning rods. One of the same companies that buncoed the farmers with iron-centered rods last year is reported to be selling the same rod again this year. Watch out for them.

There is no difficulty in spotting these rods. The outside covering is a thin sheet of copper. Inside the copper is a strip of galvanized steel or iron one-half inch wide and two galvanized steel or iron wires about No. 10. The copper sheath is twisted around the strip and wires giving the rod a corrugated appearance. The steel or iron will rust in from five to ten years. For photographs of what happened to a rod of this kind in less than eight years see Figure 24, Bulletin 220, which may be had by writing the Department of Agriculture, Toronto.

An Illinois firm is circulating the trade and others advocating the "Mast" Lightning Rod System. They declare that twisted cables are positively dangerous claiming they act like "choke-coils," that tubes should only be used, that insulators must be used, etc. For concentrated essence of error these circulars surpass anything else I have seen.

Beware of the man with the iron-centred rod and the man who claims that twisted cables are dangerous. This department will be glad to be informed regarding the operations of either.

Department of Physics Wm. H. Day
O.A.C. Guelph.

Appoint Manager for New G.T.P. Hotel

The appointment is announced of Mr. James Robb to be manager of the new Grand Trunk Pacific summer hotel "The Minaki Inn." This hotel, which has accommodation for over four hundred guests, is situated at Minaki, Ont., one hundred and fourteen miles east of Winnipeg, on the G.T.P. main line. Mr. Robb has been associated with the Dining Car Department of the Grand Trunk System for several years and for some time past has been in charge of the restaurant at Bonaventure Station, Montreal.

Before Mr. Robb left for the West he was presented by his friends in the Grand Trunk and the Canada Railway News Company with a purse of gold. Mr. C. W. Johnston, Assistant to the Passenger Traffic Manager of the Grand Trunk System, who made the presentation, said Mr. Robb had endeared himself to a large circle of friends in Montreal and he carried with him warm wishes for his success in his new enterprise.

Warts are unsightly blemishes, and corns are painful growths. Holloway's Corn Cure will remove them.

NOT WAR, BUT MURDER, WRITES LIEUT. HODGE

Get so Used to it You Can Sit on Dead Men and Eat Your Dinner.

Campbellford.—April 30.—Lieut. Harry E. Hodge of the 40th Northumberland Regiment, who is in command of a machine gun at the front, wrote a letter, which was received a few days ago by friends, which will be of special interest in the light of the recent severe engagement in which the Canadian troops have been engaged. He says:

"I had quite a time the other night. I went out to an old building, another officer and a private accompanying me. We went to locate a good gun position. It was an old building, about fifty yards from the German trenches. It took some careful work and not a sound. As I got to the building, which had walls only about four feet high, I took a look over, and to my surprise it was occupied by Germans, with only a brick between us. They saw me at the same time I saw them. They dared not raise their heads, for fear we would shoot, and we were in the same position. After keeping still for some time we thought we would retire by backing up. As I was backing over a culvert I went splash into a creek and made a racket loud enough to awaken the whole army, but we kept them under cover, and in about three hours we got back to our trenches again, all that time going fifty yards, and none the worse, only a good ducking for me. You know I never liked the sight of blood, but here you can sit on a dead man and eat your dinner, you get so used to it. This is not war, it is murder."

Lieut. Hodge closes by stating that men have been sent him to fill up the empty places, and says: "We do not know what we are up against."

SIR WILFRID WILL ADDRESS LIBERAL CLUB

Special to The Ontario.

TORONTO, April 30.—A telegram from Ottawa announces that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has accepted Friday, May 21st, as the date of his visit to Toronto to speak at the annual dinner of the Liberal Club Federation of Ontario. Notices to this effect are being sent out this week to the Secretaries of all the clubs in the Federation. Places at the dinner will be strictly reserved to Liberal Club members from all parts of the Provinces. The demand for tickets is likely to be much larger than the supply.

The dinner will be held in the Ontario Club with Sir Wilfrid and Mr. N. W. Rowell as the guests of honor. The other speakers will be young men prominent in the Federation movement. The dinner will be preceded in the afternoon by the Annual Business Meeting of the Federation of which the chief feature will be a symposium of opinions as to the best methods of conducting clubs. Emphasis will also be laid on the part the Federation has played in holding patriotic meetings for its members to study and discuss the war and plans for continued activity along these lines.

Sir Wilfrid, while in town, will, during the afternoon, address the members of the Provincial Women's Liberal Association which is holding its annual meeting in Toronto on the same day.

Grand Trunk Agents for Alaska Cities

The appointments are announced by the Grand Trunk System of two agents to look after the Company's interests in Alaska. Mr. John R. Beegle is to be agent at Ketchikan and Mr. H. R. Shephard, agent at Juneau. These appointments are a further indication of the striking development which is taking place in Alaska.

Drowned in the Oswego River

Word has reached Mr. B. A. Sanford of this city that his niece, Viola Sanford, aged 15 years, daughter of Mr. Fred Sanford, a former resident of Belleville had been drowned on Monday in Oswego River, one mile above Phoenix. Viola was one of four in an overcrowded canoe which capsized. John Merritt, aged 22 was also drowned. Catherine Munger and Leroy Munger, brother and sister were saved. Viola Sanford was unable to swim. The water was 15 feet deep at this point and the bodies have not been recovered as yet it is believed.

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