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British Through German Line On Ten Mile Front In Opening Of Big Spring Offensive

Enemy's Defences Penetrated At Every Point Of Attack, Says Haig— Canadians Probably In It

DRIVE ON FRONT BETWEEN ARRAS AND LENS

Commander Reports Satisfactory Progress in Smashing Attack Made This Morning—Move Looked Forward to For Last Few Days—Important Gains Also Elsewhere

London, April 9—The British early this morning attacked the German lines on a wide front, from a point south of Arras to the south of Lens, thus opening what is believed here to be a general spring offensive.

The move has been looked forward to eagerly for some days, the offensive of the British flying corps in the latter part of last week, the attack on Zebrugge on Saturday night and the activity of the French in Belgium, as shown in yesterday's official communication from Paris, were considered a prelude to important military operations.

The British commander, General Haig, whose reports are always modest, says the German line has been penetrated everywhere and that satisfactory progress was made in the direction of Cambrai and St. Quentin, important positions in connection with the new German line.

The extension of the attack northward to Lens doubtless was intended to give the British more elbow room for their operations from Arras to the point of juncture with the French around St. Quentin.

London, April 9—British troops today penetrated the German lines all along a wide front from Arras to Lens. The war office announced, the statement says, that in the direction of Cambrai the British have stormed the villages of Hermies and Boursies and penetrated Havrincourt Wood. In the direction of St. Quentin the British took Fresnoy Le Petit and advanced their line southeast of Leverguier.

No estimate of the number of Germans captured can yet be given, the statement says, but the number is considerable. Referring to the attack on the front between Arras and Lens, the statement says, "we are making satisfactory progress at all points."

IN EARLY HOURS THIS MORNING London, April 9—The statement which is timed 11.25 a.m. is as follows: "We attacked at 5.30 o'clock this morning on a wide front from South of Arras to south of Lens. Our troops have everywhere penetrated the enemy's lines and are making satisfactory progress at all points."

In the direction of Cambrai we stormed the villages of Hermies and Boursies and have penetrated into Havrincourt Wood.

"In the direction of St. Quentin we captured Fresnoy Le Petit and advanced our lines southeast of Leverguier.

"No estimate of the prisoners taken can yet be given, but considerable numbers are reported captured.

The fighting line from Lens to Arras is approximately ten miles in length and lies directly north of the field of the retreat which the Germans have been conducting for the last several weeks. The fact that the lines have been penetrated by the British all along this wide front indicates that there is a general offensive. That it is proving a successful drive is indicated by the statement of "satisfactory progress" being made at all points. An entire new phase of operations on the western front is opened up in this new battle on the Lens-Arras line. The field of attack presents the greatest danger point for the Germans as in the recent fighting a sharp salient was driven into the German line southeast of Arras.

In the Lens region, into which the British are driving, is a rich coal field which the Germans have been exploiting since their occupation of this territory early in the war.

The opening of the new offensive had been foreshadowed in the intense aerial activity of the last two or three days in which hundreds of airplanes have been engaged on both sides. This work, as the British statements have indicated, has given General Haig's staff photographic reproduction of the German positions for long distances behind the fighting line.

Further south the British have continued their progress in the field of the German retreat, the advance reported at Hermies and Boursies being particularly important. Boursies is directly on the road from Bapaume to Cambrai, about eight miles from the latter place. Hermies lies just to the south of Boursies.

In their drive toward St. Quentin, the capture of Fresnoy de Petit puts the British within two and a half miles of St. Quentin's outskirts.

FRENCH REPORT

Paris, April 9—"Between the Somme and the Aisne, patrol encounters occurred during the night," says today's war office announcement. "Notwithstanding the bad weather there was active artillery fighting in several sectors.

"Northwest of Rheims a German attack on our position in front of Ceuroy was repulsed by our fire. South of this point two German detachments were repulsed after a lively engagement with grenades. In the region of Maisons de Champagne we made some progress in grenade fighting. There is nothing to report from the remainder of the front.

MEXICO SOON TO DECIDE HER PART IN THE WAR

Mexico City, April 9—The part Mexico will play in the world war will be decided by the newly elected congress, according to opinions expressed by men in close touch with government affairs. Both chambers are now revising the credentials of the newly elected senators and deputies in preparation for the formal opening of the congress on April 16. It seems probable that there will be no formal expressions of opinion by General Carranza before congress is asked to deal with the matter.

NINE KILLED IN CROWD WATCHING AUTOMOBILE RACES IN MEXICO

Mexico City, April 9—Nine persons were killed yesterday at automobile races when a car belonging to Jose Santa Maria, Cuban charge d'affaires, and driven by Vicente Rodriguez, left the track at a turn and plunged into a crowd on the outside of the course. Twenty persons were slightly injured.

BIG PAY CAUSE OF RECKLESSNESS OF U-BOAT CREWS

Get Half Value Of Captured Ship, Percentage If Sunk STATEMENT BY LORD CECIL

Says Submarine Campaign Concession of German Weakness—No Figures of Enemy Losses But Ninety Fights With Pirates Since February 1

Amsterdam, April 9.—Via London.—The frontier correspondent of the Telegraph suggests that the recklessness shown by German submarines is due to the high financial rewards offered the crews by the German government. The men who man the submarines get ten per cent higher pay than those in any other branch of the national service and receive in addition substantial bonuses. Fifty per cent of the value of a captured ship is distributed among her crew, five per cent to the commander of the submarine, five to the chief engineer, and twenty-five to the crew. Percentages for torpedoes are based on the insurance value of the vessel. In these cases the submarine commander gets one per cent, the chief engineer one, the remaining officers four and the crew ten. There are also extra rewards for special exploits.

Paris, April 9.—(Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency.)—The Petit Parisien today publishes an interview with Lord Cecil in connection with Germany's submarine warfare. Lord Cecil said that this blockade is a complete avowal of Germany's weakness, and a proof that she has really abandoned the hope of ever obtaining a favorable decision on land. Furthermore, it indicates that she is aware of the impossibility of successfully disputing the Allies' mastery of the seas. Lord Cecil admitted that the losses of the mercantile marine have been important, but less serious than Germany anticipated.

The Allies, he said, were accustomed to talk about the many victims of the Teutonic piracy, but they did not talk of the pirates' losses. "Although I am unable to give particulars of the enemy losses," added Lord Cecil, "I can state that between February 21 and April 1, forty-nine engagements occurred between British ships and German pirates, while since February 1 the total number of fights was more than ninety."

BOSTON GREEKS WANT TO RAISE A REGIMENT

Boston, April 9.—Greeks in Boston are planning to raise a regiment of infantry, trained by former Greek army officers, under the direction of retired army officers, which they hope will be accepted for service with the United States army. A mass meeting has been called by the Greek consuls, Demosthenes T. Timonylis, for the joint purpose of furthering this plan and celebrating the Greek "independence day."



DEMOCRATIC AND PARLIAMENTARY FORM OF GOVERNMENT IS DEMANDED IN RUSSIA

Petrograd, April 9.—The Russian people, which recently declared for the establishment of a republic, at a convention today unanimously adopted a resolution in favor of a democratic and parliamentary form of government. Prince Dolgorouki, president of the central committee of the party, spoke in favor of continuation of the war and adherence to Russia's agreements with her allies until victory is attained.

NINE AND HALF INCHES OF SNOW COVERING THE PHILADELPHIA STREETS

New York Under Mantle of Five Inches—St. John Getting It

Philadelphia, April 9.—Eight and one-half inches of snow covering Philadelphia today exceeding in depth any snowfall during the last winter. The snow began to fall last night and ceased at 11 a.m. New York, April 9.—Worshippers leaving the churches after the Sunday night Easter services walked out into a snow storm which continuing all night long, ended today after laying a five inch mantle of white upon the city. The temperature of 25 degrees at six o'clock this morning was the lowest on any April 9 in the record of the local weather bureau.

WEATHER REPORT

Synopsis.—An area of low pressure, which was west of the Missouri on Saturday, passed eastward across the southern states and is now moving up the Atlantic coast towards Nova Scotia. The weather is cold throughout the dominion. A considerable snowfall has occurred in northern parts of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Ottawa Valley.—Northwest, fair and cold today and Tuesday. Maritime.—Strong wind and moderate gales, northeast to northwest, with a slight snowfall. Tuesday, northwest winds, fair and cold. New England forecasts.—Fair tonight and Tuesday; freezing weather tonight, rising temperatures Tuesday, with gales.

CIVILIANS, FOR THEIR SAFETY, TO BE MOVED FROM BATTERED RHEIMS

Shelling by Germans Continued—In One Day 7,500 Missiles Hurlled Into City

Paris, April 8.—The Germans appear determined that Rheims shall not form an exception to the wholesale destruction of French towns and villages within range of their guns. Last week the devoted city was mercilessly shelled. On Wednesday from two o'clock in the afternoon more than 2,000 shells were counted. The official estimate on Friday gives 7,400 and on Saturday 1,200 were counted. The Germans, with customary mendacity, announce effective bombardment of "depots, batteries and troop centres."

CONTINUE PEACE TALK BECAUSE OF DESIRE TO SEE END OF WAR

Copenhagen, April 8, via London.—Talk of peace, as reflected in the German newspapers, is indefinite and uncertain, although rumors of impending developments on this line appear to attract more attention in Germany and Austria than in the other belligerent countries. Premier Tisza of Hungary, in an Easter article in a Budapest weekly, writes that he thinks he sees signs of the dawn of peace on the eastern horizon, though possibly wilder configurations may flame up.

ELECTORAL REFORM IN GERMANY

Amsterdam, April 9, via London.—The Emperor's Easter message on electoral reform, addressed to Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg is treated by the Berlin press as of the highest importance. The only paper which expresses opposition is the Kreuz Zeitung, which finds little consolation in the fact that the execution of the reform proposal is postponed until after the war, as it believes the chancellor should not now halt on the path of the complete democratization of Prussia and Germany.

ST. LOUIS COMPLETES THE ROUND VOYAGE

New York, April 9.—The Associated Press says the American liner St. Louis arrived here today from Europe, the first armed passenger vessel to make a round voyage from the United States since the German unrestricted submarine warfare.

BREAK WITH AUSTRIA, SAYS WASHINGTON, IS BUT MATTER OF A FEW HOURS

State Department Expects Word By Tomorrow—Ally Has Bowed Again to Will of Kaiser—President Wilson's Reply to King George

Washington, April 9.—Austria-Hungary will formally sever relations with the United States within the next twenty-four hours. That is according to best opinion at the state department. Her final action is regarded as only a matter of hours. All arrangements have been made for the diplomatic readjustment that it will necessitate.

London, April 9.—A despatch to the Daily Telegraph from Milan yesterday said that the Austrian declaration of a rupture with the United States comes as a surprise, according to reports in Swiss diplomatic circles. It was assumed that Austria would continue to temporize, but as she did so in obedience to German requests so now it is assumed she turned front again in compliance with German dictation.

Reply to King George London, April 9.—The reply of President Wilson to the message sent to him by King George, as given out here officially today, is as follows: "To His Majesty George V, King and Emperor: "Your eloquent message comes to me at this critical moment of our national life as proof of the community of sentiment among the free peoples of the world, now striving to defend their ideals, to maintain the blessings of national independence and to uphold the rights of humanity. In the name of the American people and the government to which they look for guidance, I thank you for your inspiring words."

Washington, April 9.—Early action on the administration war legislative programme was forecast upon the assembling of congress today. Chief among these are measures to authorize issuance of bonds for billions of dollars and for raising a big army.

Portland, Me., April 9.—Rev. Charles E. Joyce, pastor of the First Unitarian church, the oldest and one of the richest in this city, was burned in effigy in front of his church by a party of unidentified men last night after he had preached a sermon in which he was reported as expressing the opinion that "the war in which we serve is an unrighteous war."

BRAZIL AROUSED BY TORPEDOING OF THE PARANA

Papers Demand Immediate and Energetic Action RIO JANEIRO ACTIVE

Rio Janeiro, April 9.—Despatches received from all parts of Brazil describe the agitation caused by the torpedoing of the Parana. Everywhere press opinion demands immediate and energetic action on the part of Brazil. Activity prevails in Rio Janeiro and special anchorage has been arranged for the German ships in the port.

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TALK OF NEW BANKS HERE

While there have been various rumors about new banks opening in St. John, it is believed by those who are in touch with the situation that there is not much likelihood that any new branches will be opened until after the war. Among the banks regarded as the most likely to open here, on account of their existing connections with business in this part of the country, are the Imperial and the Dominion and there have been rumors also regarding the Standard Bank of which C. H. Eason is the new general manager, but the latter reports are believed to have little foundation. There was also a rumor that a St. John man who recently was transferred to Toronto was to return as local manager for one of the banks which was said to be preparing to open here. A letter received by a friend here contained an emphatic denial of the report.