

# Stubborn Resistance and Enemy's Superior Position Overcome by Tenacity and Bravery of Italian Troops

## STAGE CAREFULLY SET BEFORE BRITISH BEGAN ADVANCE AT FESTUBERT

### No Dramatic Episodes Marked Beginning of Attack Which Ended in Victory Just Before Dawn Before British Silent and Impassive Climbed Over Parapets and Began Charge Without Fuss or Heroics.

In the London Morning Post of May 29th there appeared a lengthy account by a Special Correspondent at British Headquarters in the Field of the beginning of the British advance in the region of Festubert, North of La Bassée, May 15th, 16th and 17th.

The attack was made from two points between Richebourg l'Avoué and Givency. Festubert being the centre of the principal fighting. The northern attack was held at first by the stubborn resistance of the enemy in very strong positions, but our southern advance, which began early on Sunday morning, the 16th, proceeded rapidly, and many lines of trenches yielded to bayonet and bomb attacks, covered by a very strong artillery fire. At some points our infantry was forced back temporarily from positions which had been cleared of the enemy, but they were invariably recaptured by strong reinforcements.

Throughout Sunday and Monday the bombing of isolated detachments of Germans continued. A number of counter-attacks failed to give the enemy the slightest advantage at any point. They succeeded in holding to some isolated positions between the points of attack, but as the "bulges" in our line extended, they were slowly but steadily squeezed until this pressure had been almost entirely removed.

The British troops attacked with great bitterness as well as determination. Not only had the death of the gassed victims around Ypres to be settled for, but they needed to wipe out as well. The regiments of the 7th (Munster) Corps, which hold the German line in this sector, are notorious for their brutality and inhumanity. The 11th, which formally occupied the front trenches, is known to have killed wounded prisoners.

The beginning of the first Festubert advance was not marked by any dramatic episodes. Had you been in the British front trenches late on the night of Saturday, May 15, and again at a quarter past three next morning, you would have seen lines of infantry drawn up, silent and impassive, and a number of officers looking at the minute hand of their watches. Early in the morning they were ordered to climb over their parapets and went out to kill or to be killed, without any fuss or heroics.

Part of the preliminary work of this attack concerned men who are scarcely heard of in the tumult of battle—the Royal Engineers. On them fell the task of making everything ready for the men who are to advance. They had to provide bridging, clear obstacles away from the ground to be traversed, build scaling ladders, dig trenches under fire, and do a thousand and one things at the risk of their lives.

Setting the Stage for the Attack.

For this particular attack the field company had several nights' dangerous duty between the German and British lines. Intervening ditches were spanned with plank footways and marked with charges. Battalions might see them through the smoke of the bombardment, certain entrenching operations were carried out. On Sunday, for our first great advance, the engineers had to dig a communication trench six feet deep and 200 yards long under fire. They worked all night, and by morning they had linked the new line with the old. They wired the whole front, and thousands of sandbags were carried across a dangerous open space. All this by way of setting the stage, before the performance, and changing the scene between the acts.

The enemy knew that an attack was impending. On Saturday they even shouted taunts across. "Come on," they cried: "We are waiting."

The experience of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers shows the tremendous difficulties which had to be overcome by the attacking troops in storming and holding the German positions. I give it in detail, in order to convey some idea of the method of assault.

This battalion, composed principally of North Wales men and Birmingham men, suffered severely in previous engagements. It came out of the battle of Ypres with thirty-five men and no officers, having performed extraordinary acts of gallantry. As part of the force assigned for the Festubert attack, it went into the advanced line on the night of May 15, brought up to full strength, and was ordered to charge the enemy's trenches next morning as soon as the bombardment ceased.

The bombardment lifted at exactly the time arranged by the officers' watches. It was a dull, dark morning, and the "no man's land" in front of the Fusiliers was hidden by a mass of lidded fumes, the enemy's trench, 150 yards distant, being invisible,

blinded by German machine-guns. Still they pushed on.

Captain Rockwell led his men along the trench, stumbling over corpses and the debris scattered about by British shells. On the way they met about thirty-five men of the Scots Guards, who joined them. A hundred yards further along they came under the fire of our own guns, for the advance had been made more rapidly than had been thought possible. For an hour they lay safely under cover while the British artillery systematically bombarded the dug-outs and second-line trenches, in which the enemy still strove to maintain a footing.

Then the shelling ceased. The air cleared, and Captain Rockwell could see the orchard which was his objective. Just then a German officer and two men rushed down the communication trench dragging a machine-gun. The Fusiliers and Guardsmen fired volleys, killing all three instantly. They pressed gradually along the communication trench, bombing as they went, until they got to the orchard at the end, a distance of 1200 yards from where they started. Here they found half a dozen ruined cottages held by German machine-gun parties.

Although there were only four bomb-throwers left, they clearly the first cottage beyond the trench, which they put into a state of defence. It was impossible, however, to storm the second cottage thirty yards distant on the other side of the road. It was apparently packed with infantry, who slipped steadily, and it also afforded cover for a number of machine-guns. The Fusiliers made several brave attempts to dislodge them, and were then forced to remain on the defensive. They established a post in the first cottage, and the other men dug a trench across the square end of the long communication trench to stop the disastrous enfilading fire.

Here Captain Rockwell and his little band held it throughout the day, coming falling back at night to the German second line when ordered to retire. Seven orderlies were sent back during the day for reinforcements, but only one got through. Captain Rockwell's servant was one of the volunteers killed when trying to get a message through to headquarters giving the location of the party.

Under Fire, Rescued Seven Wounded.

The work of the Welsh Fusiliers yielded a valuable strip of the enemy's heavily-fortified position, won by heavy sacrifice. Great bravery was shown by the ambulance parties, which began working the moment the first men fell outside the British parapet. Lieutenant Koles-Pry, R. A. M. C. (who carried Lieutenant Gladstone out of action on his back), was dressing wounded between the trenches for hours, until he was hit by shrapnel.

Lance-Corporal Welsh and Condry, stretcher-bearers, rescued many men under fire. Welsh, who is a man of great strength, began picking up wounded as soon as the attack began. He carried seven himself, through the heavy fire including Major Dixon, second in command. Condry was wounded in the arm and unable to carry stretchers, but he continued to bandage. All the stretcher-bearers of the battalion worked for twenty-four hours without rest.

A number of German prisoners taken by the Welsh Fusiliers were Polish miners from Westphalia, who appeared to be glad that their fighting days were over.

For two days after its successful attack the weakened battalion held the position assigned it, until relieved by fresh troops and allowed to go back into billets.

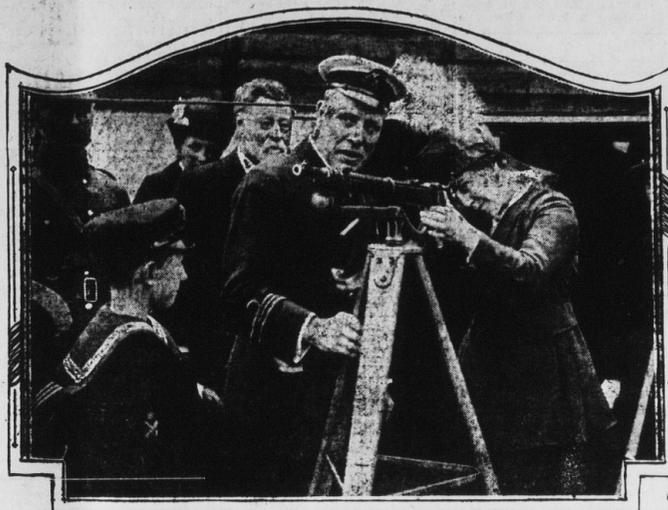
Men began dropping immediately, but the line never faltered. Lieutenant-Colonel Gabbett had hardly set foot on the open ground before he fell dead with five bullet wounds in his body. A second later Major Dixon, the second in command, was shot through both legs within a few yards of his own trench. Captain Rockwell pressed on across the riddled field with his thinning first line, with the second line already close behind.

Scurried Like Rats Before British Bayonets.

Had it been a straightforward dash into the German trench the Welsh Fusiliers would have gained the goal with fewer casualties. But instead of a clear run across country they had to negotiate a broad, deep ditch, less than a hundred feet from their breastworks, by following narrow bridges which had been placed by the sappers. In the early morning light, with the air still obscured by clouds of smoke, the bridges could not easily be seen. Nevertheless the first line got up to the first German trench in less than three minutes and poured through the two breaches made by our guns. The enemy's rifle fire ceased instantly. A few showed fight and tried to meet bayonet with bayonet, but they were speedily overpowered; the majority scurried like frightened rats into a long communication trench; some threw away their rifles and surrendered immediately.

The Fusiliers had orders to push through 300 yards of communication trench, and gain an orchard about 600 yards beyond. They had lost heavily in officers and men in the time it took to reach the enemy's first line, and German howitzers were now concentrating on them with furious salvos of high-explosive shell. Of the machine-guns only one now remained—in charge of Sergeant Butler, who had been wounded at the beginning of his journey, but nevertheless stuck to his gun, and brought it into action when the work of clearing out the enemy trench began. They were being en-

### LADY JELICOE OPENS A RIFLE RANGE FOR BOYS



LADY JELICOE FIRING A SHOT. PHOTO BY J. H. C. CHAMBERS

Lady Jellicoe, the wife of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, who is in command of the British Grand Fleet, opened a miniature rifle range for the Boys' Naval Brigade at Leytonstone, London, on May 23. The picture shows her firing the first shot. Lady Jellicoe made a good score and announced her intention to send the target out to Sir John.

### ITALIANS TAKE HEIGHTS ON THE ISONZO RIVER

#### By repeated and daring charge drive enemy from last position of strength near Plava.

Rome, June 20.—An official statement from the main headquarters of the Italian army, most of which is devoted to details of the two days struggle for the heights on the left bank of the Isonzo river, near Plava, says that the Italians took the last of these heights remaining in the hands of the Austrians on June 17, and that while the Italian losses were heavy the results gained were important. The communication says that on the Isonzo, which the Austrians "passed by main force," the Austrian positions have been taken one after another, by assault. The statement follows:

"Artillery duels and engagements between small bodies occupied several points on the front on June 15. In 'Carina' the enemy made a fresh attack on Preffold and attempted to approach the head of the Valonia Pass. They were repulsed in each case.

"New details now have been received of the struggle, which continued two days and a night, for the heights on the left bank of the Isonzo river, commanding Plava village, which is situated at the bottom of a defile enclosed by steep, wooded slopes, between which the river runs, deep and rapid. The bridge crossing the Isonzo at this point had been destroyed by the enemy. With patient efforts and boldness we threw bridges across during the night, and at dawn on the 16th our troops began an attack. The movement was carried out all day slowly, on account of the enemy's resistance and the difficulties of the ground, increased by serious artificial obstacles and solid entrenchments, protected by extensive barbed wire entanglements, strengthened by iron bars.

"Numerous heavy guns, even twelve-inch guns, were concealed in commanding positions which were difficult for our artillery to reach. Nevertheless, supported by the fire of our batteries, our troops succeeded, by repeated bayonet charges, in debouching on the enemy's first line towards evening. During the night the enemy tried several times, with sudden dashes, to deprive us of the ground conquered, but always they were thrown back.

"On the 17th our troops completed their success by carrying the heights still in the hands of the enemy. The latter then concentrated on them violent artillery and machine gun fire, which was followed up by another counter-attack by fresh troops. He was demolished and finally driven back at the point of the bayonet. We made over 150 prisoners, including four officers, and captured a quantity of rifles, munitions and one machine gun. Our losses were serious, but the results obtained were important.

"On the Isonzo, which we passed by main force, the enemy's positions, naturally commanding and further strengthened, have been one after another taken by assault. Attempts to assume the offensive by numerous seasoned troops have been constantly repulsed. On the heights of Plava our infantry, well supported by artillery, has given a fine example of tenacity and bravery.

three o'clock from the residence of her mother, Mrs. Charles S. Holder, 217 King street, West St. John, to St. George's church where burial services were conducted by Rev. W. H. Sampson. Interment took place in Cedar Hill. A large number of beautiful floral tributes were received.

### GAY NIGHT LIFE OF LONDON UNAFFECTED BY GREAT WAR

(Continued from page 1)

seen only one drunken woman and that was in the West End.

SOLDIERS AND SOBRIETY.

As for soldiers, you see them everywhere, and they are not now, as they were at one time, deprived of their right to have a drink if they want it. I have seen a few soldiers who were evidently exhilarated; but I have not yet seen a man in uniform who could be considered really drunk. That may be due to an exceptionally efficient police force, I don't know. But remember there are probably a thousand, or two thousand, or more soldiers in London to every man in uniform you see in St. John; possibly the ratio may be 10,000 to 1. And the publicans and sinners here are no better than anywhere else. Distillers and brewers have a patriotic regard for dividends; to get 'neat whiskey or beer you have to pay quite as much as you would in Canada.

A NEW ORDER OF THINGS.

But the most of the world is in the melting pot. The old order has broken down; a new order is emerging. Social, political and religious shibboleths are going by the board; politicians, pedagogues and persons no longer matter greatly. The fighting man has the right of way; the soldier, not so long ago refused admittance to first class theatres, is the man of the hour. Ubiquitous and invincible he is on the whole rather modest. A good many of the proprietors, dear to the heart of Puritanism, are no more; life is franker and freer, and youth asserts itself, gallant and debonaire. On the surface it is a merrier England than before the war, and a kinder.

In the evening soldiers are out walking with their girls everywhere, generally with arms about each other's waists, and if they stop to kiss, the passers-by merely smile. Now and then you meet a bluejacket with a girl tucked under either arm, but not often, for the bluejackets are mostly on the gray waters of the North Sea.

WHEN WAR BRINGS MERRIMENT.

But Jack enjoys his brief leave ashore in a more lively manner than the soldiers have learned how to do. In some ports you meet groups of bluejackets, with banjos and accordions, making music to which their comrades and families of girls dance on the smooth pavements. On you may pass a group of school girls, out for an evening's lark, waiting in the middle of the street, and singing:

"Jolly good luck to the fighters of England,  
"Jolly good luck to the soldiers of France,  
"Jolly good luck to the brave lads of Belgium,  
"And jolly, jolly good luck to the girls of England,  
"When the soldiers come marching home."

On several occasions I have seen a bunch of these girls hold up a couple of pink-faced youths in uniform and salute them with resounding smacks. And they were evidently quite nice girls, just a bit exuberant. At any rate when the soldiers tried to return the compliment the girls soundly boxed their ears, and ran away, laughing heartily.

WHAT THE SCOT THOUGHT.

This evening I was strolling along the Strand, Whitehall, Pall Mall and other streets with a Scotch Scot, in fact a dour Highlander, who has lived ten years in Alberta, and is now serving with one of the western battalions. "Why are all these English girls singing, often just to themselves?" he asked. "I've been for a holiday in Scotland; it's different there, though I think there are a great deal more men in uniform, old and young, in Scotland." I don't know the answer yet. But I don't think they are singing just to keep their courage up, though they feel today that the war is going to be long, and cruel, unless the unexpected happens. I can only account for the spirit of the English on the same principle by which I explain the attitude of the Scotchman who has lived ten years in the Canadian West. While I was with him we passed many officers; he did not salute one of them. I remarked upon this; he called his attention to the fact some officers had glared at him, as if they would like to take his scalp. He said: "Well, maybe they did, but probably they hadn't been to the front. When on duty we always salute our officers; that is part of the game. But off duty, what does it matter? My officers are fine chaps; I'd do anything in reason or the way of duty for them, but I did not join the service to shine their shoes or kow-tow to anybody. I have a tidy ranch in Alberta; I could buy out many of my officers. I left Canada to do my little bit. I have been offered a job that would keep me out of the trenches. I don't want it. Not that I have a burning desire to go into the trenches, not at all. And so perhaps it is with these girls of London. Many things that formerly appeared of value no longer count. If their manners are bold, it is because their hearts are bold, because no longer mock modesty masks the need of kindness. There are wounded men everywhere, and there will be many more. It is for many a clear case of 'sing while ye may, another day may bring snow of sorrow.' Red tape may come near strangling this nation, but its spirit is all right; given a fair show by officialdom—its heart is full of good red blood.

COLIN MCKAY.

### HERO'S FUNERAL FOR LT. WARNEFORD

#### Body of brave aviator will be interred in England with honors befitting a hero.

Paris, June 20.—Arrangements for the funeral service at Versailles for Lt. R. A. J. Warneford, of the British Royal Navy Flying Corps, and Henry B. Needham, the American aviator who were killed in an aeroplane accident last Thursday, have been cancelled and the bodies have been brought to Paris. Mr. Needham's body has been placed in the mortuary chapel in the American Church of the Holy Trinity, awaiting a reply to a despatch sent from the American embassy to his widow, who is in the United States, asking for instructions. Lt. Warneford's body will be sent to England where some form of public funeral, befitting the man who has been hailed as a hero for his recent destruction of a Zeppelin airship, will be held.

FUNERALS.

Mrs. Ruth Bray.

Hillsborough, N. B., June 19.—The funeral of Mrs. Ruth Bray was held on Thursday from the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. F. Taylor. The services were conducted by Rev. Ritchie Elliott, and the hymns sung were, "Shall We Gather at the River," "Jesus is Mine," and "I Need Thee Every Hour." The floral tributes were beautiful. Interment was in the Gray's Island cemetery.

The funeral of Mrs. Francis Boudreau, late of Bathurst, took place yesterday afternoon from the residence of her daughter, Mrs. C. W. Doyle, 52 St. Patrick street, to the Cathedral, relatives acting as pall-bearers. Service was conducted by Rev. William J. Duke, interment being in the old Catholic burying ground. Many beautiful floral remembrances were sent by friends.

The funeral of Miss E. Hilda Rogers took place on Saturday afternoon at

### Brilliant Charge by The Russian Artillery Caused A Panic Among Enemy

Checked Germans' Offensive in Battle of Lubaczow—The 91st German Regiment Entirely Sabred or Dispersed.

Petrograd, June 20.—The following official war statement has been given out here:

"There is no change in the Shavil region. West of the Niemen river the German attacks in the directions of Suwalki and Kalwarya, on June 17 and 18, delivered with small forces, were repulsed by midnight.

"In Galicia, on the Tanew front, there were engagements with the advance guard. In the direction of Rawka-Ruska, on the night of June 17-18, there were actions in the region of Nowina and Ulkico. From details of the battle in the region of Lubaczow it appears that our cavalry on June 15, made an exceptionally dashing charge against the German infantry during which the 91st German Regiment was entirely sabred or dispersed. This attack caused a panic in the German ranks and arrested their offensive. On the front, Kamenny-brod-Komarino, advanced detach-

ance  
battalion  
ment of  
Hats  
lar Turban  
ailor.  
floor for  
S  
lor you can  
Seashore Hats,  
ort Hats  
colored Ribbon  
c. yard up.  
o. Limited.

these being victims of boating  
Retreating Along Whole  
Front, Vienna Says  
June 20, via London, June  
Russians have been in gen-  
treat since three o'clock this  
along their entire front, after  
been forced out of their posi-  
the Wereszka river, a short  
to the west of Lemberg.

PERA HOUSE  
night AND ALL  
THIS WEEK  
LITINE WED. and SAT. only.  
Return Engagement of the  
Popular.  
RPHUM STOCK CO.  
Eleanor Flowers and Walter J. Connolly  
ONIGHT—Tue., Wed. Wed.  
Matinee  
THE MILLS OF THE GODS  
Stirring Sensational Drama of  
N. Y. Business Life, by Geo.  
Broadhurst.  
HUR, FRU, the Best Comedy  
of the Year  
MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM  
Authorized, Roxy Version.  
Thursday Mat. and Night, by re-  
quest of many patrons  
"LOTTERY OF LOVE"  
LIGHTS, Orchestra, 50, 35c.  
Circle, 25c. Balcony, 20c., Gal-  
lery, 10c.  
MATINEES—25c., 10c.  
ats On Sale NOW for All Performances

gement Arrangements  
HEATRE  
ONLY  
THREE  
SHOWS  
DAILY  
WEDNESDAY  
Story of Alaska.  
MILERS"  
brought to St. John.

NDIOUS FORCE, giving a  
ex Beach's astounding story  
when unscrupulous politico-  
of early prospectors. Will-  
I, the villain; Kathryn Wil-  
Beattie Eytone also promi-  
participate, tens of thousands  
on picture and thousands  
on. The fight between Far-  
ing realism.

he law of physical force.  
hole town dynamited.  
horrential Alaskan rains.  
among the dives of Nome.  
merican political crooks.  
STARTING 2 O'CLOCK  
linee bill will include Charles  
ated Weekly, and Miss  
AT 7 and 9.15  
usly. Last show ends 11.15.  
Theatre parties may be  
accommodated with box  
chairs by telephone. Autos  
can be parked on left-hand  
side of Imperial Place.  
he Spillers" is the greatest film  
Canada.  
Y, WEDNESDAY

## Have You Done A Kind Deed?

Then turn to page 7  
It will interest you.