

CANADIANS IN TERRIFIC FIGHT
Gen. Mercer Severely Wounded, Gen. Williams Wounded and Missing
GERMANS LOST EIGHTEEN SHIPS

ENEMY'S NAVAL LOSSES HEAVIER THAN BRITAIN'S IN EVERY WAY

Official Admiralty Report Says That 18 German Ships Were Sunk in Big Fight, Consisting of Two Battleships, Two Dreadnoughts, Four Light Cruisers, Nine Torpedo Boat Destroyers and One Submarine—British Loss Remains Unchanged at Fourteen.

The British Admiralty "entertain no doubt that the German losses are heavier than the British, not merely relatively to the strength of the two fleets, but absolutely.

German Losses. Battleships, two. Dreadnought battle cruisers, most powerful type, two. Light cruisers, two, Weisbaden and Elbing, latest type; one of Rostock type, and Frauenlob, four. Destroyers, nine. Submarines, one. Total warcraft of all classes, eighteen.

LONDON, June 4.—The British Admiralty tonight issued a statement saying there was the strongest grounds for the belief that the British navy, in the battle with the Germans off Jutland last week, had accounted for a total of eighteen German men-of-war, and that there was nothing to add to or subtract from the original announcement of the British losses.

The statement gave the German losses as two battleships, two dreadnought battle cruisers, four light cruisers, nine torpedo boat destroyers and a submarine. The pessimism which prevailed as a result of the admiralty's original statement of losses, which is now considered to have been needlessly candid and conservative in underestimating the extent of the German losses as compared with those of Great Britain, has been greatly lessened by the latest statement.

German Accounts Are False.

The admiralty reiterates that the German accounts of the German losses are false, and that altho the evidence is still incomplete, enough is known to justify stating that the German losses were greater than the British "not merely relatively to the strength of the two fleets, but absolutely."

There is the strongest ground for believing, says the statement, that the German losses include two battleships, two dreadnought battle cruisers of the most powerful type, and two of the latest light cruisers, in addition to smaller craft, including a submarine.

Results Are Quite Plain.

The text of the statement follows: "Until the commander-in-chief has had time to consult the officers engaged, and write a full despatch, any attempt to give a detailed history of the naval engagement, which began on the afternoon of May 31, and ended in the morning hours of June 1, would evidently be premature. But the results are quite plain.

"The grand fleet came in touch with the German high seas fleet at 3.30 on the afternoon of May 31. The leading ships of the two fleets carried on a vigorous fight, in which the battle cruisers, fast battleships and subsidiary craft all took an active part. "The losses were severe on both sides, but when the main body of the British fleet came into contact with the German high seas fleet a very brief period sufficed to compel the latter, who had been severely punished, to seek refuge in their protected waters. This manoeuvre was rendered possible by low visibility and mist, and altho the grand fleet were now and then able to get in momentary contact with their opponents, no continuous action was possible.

Continued Pursuit Till Dark.

"They continued the pursuit until the light had wholly failed, while the British destroyers were able to make a successful attack on the enemy during the night. "Meanwhile, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, having driven the enemy into port, returned to the main scene of the action and scoured the sea in search of disabled vessels. By noon the next day, June 1, it became evident there was nothing more to be done. He returned, therefore, to his base, 400 miles away, refueled his fleet, and in the evening of June 2 was again ready to put to sea.

British Losses Unchanged.

"The British losses already have been fully stated. There is nothing to add to or subtract from the latest account, published by the admiralty. The enemy losses are less easy to determine. That the accounts they have given to the world are false is certain, and we cannot yet be sure of the exact truth. But from such evidence as has come to our knowledge, the admiralty entertain no doubt that

the German losses are heavier than the British, not merely relatively to the strength of the two fleets, but absolutely. "Then there seems to be the strongest ground for supposing that included in the German losses are two battleships, two dreadnought battle cruisers of most powerful type, two of the latest light cruisers, the Wiesbaden and Elbing, a light cruiser of the Rostock type, the light cruiser Frauenlob, nine destroyers and a submarine."

A despatch from Copenhagen says rumors are current in Hamburg that two German warships additional to those announced in the German communication—the battleship Westfalen and the battle cruiser Lutzow—were sunk in the battle. A wireless despatch received here Saturday from Berlin said the German Admiralty admitted the loss of the Westfalen.

Maintaining its practice of caution, the admiralty still refrains from giving the names of the lost German ships.

List of Casualties.

The official list of the casualties among officers shows that hardly a single officer of the line escaped from the British cruisers sunk in the battle. An additional casualty list of petty officers shows that 43 of them were saved from the Queen Mary, Invincible, Fortune, Ardent and Shark. None were saved from the Indefatigable, Defence, Black Prince, Tipperary, Turbulent, Nomad or Nestor.

The list gives the names of 65 men killed aboard the Warrior and of 27 men wounded. On other ships engaged in the fight 115 men were killed and 85 wounded.

Admiral Lord Beesford, in an interview today, while contending strongly for the view that there was no failure in the British strategy, and that Vice-Admiral Beatty won a brilliant success, tho it was dearly bought, declares that the only mistake made was by the admiralty in allowing the Germans to get first in the field with the news of the battle, or, as he puts it, with "impudent fabrications." Otherwise, said Lord Beesford, no fault can be found with the admiralty.

Many Officers Are Lost.

Rear Admiral, the Hon Horace Lambert Hood, second in command to Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty, and Captains Sowerby, Cay and Prowse, were lost, with many others, whose names are not yet known because the admiralty has not so far issued any casualty list. There were no surrenders, and the ships went down, carrying with them virtually their whole crews. Only the Warrior, which was towed part way from the scene of the battle to a British port, was an exception.

Of about one thousand men on the Queen Mary, only a corporal's guard is accounted for. The same is true of the Invincible, while there are no survivors reported from the Indefatigable, the Defence or the Black Prince.

Still Holds Supremacy.

British naval experts maintain that Great Britain continues to hold the supremacy of the sea by a safe margin, and that her enormous navy could better afford the losses it suffered than could the Germans. The first reports of the heavy loss of life, unhappily, have not been revised. Great Britain mourns for more than 4000 of her seamen, while the German loss is variously estimated at between 3000 and 5000.

Flat Contradictions.

It is impossible to visualize any coherent story of the great battle, which lasted many hours, with the different units at times fighting scattered engagements.

The British and German reports contradict each other flatly on the main facts. The British assert that the German fleet retired when the British battleships appeared, while the German official statement maintains that the German forces were in battle with the entire British fleet.

The British assert that they had only two divisions engaged and that all the units of these were not able to participate in the fighting, and furthermore, that Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, commander of the grand fleet, remained in the area of the battle after the Germans had retreated, and swept it thoroughly in search of enemy ships and survivors.

Many of those wounded in the sea fight have been taken to South Shields and placed in hospitals. Even those seriously injured display fortitude and composure and are proud of the part they took in the battle. They relate that the Germans tried to blind the British crews with their searchlights. One British destroyer, according to these survivors, did remarkable work. She attacked a German battleship and successfully torpedoed it and subsequently sank a German submarine, which was about to attack.

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CANADIANS RECAPTURE POSITIONS IN WORST FIGHT THEY HAVE SEEN

Toronto Battalions Have Held the Entire Front Attacked, and Unless the Fighting Spreads This Is Entirely Their Battle—General M. S. Mercer Severely Wounded and Taken to Boulogne, While Gen. V. S. Williams Is Wounded and Taken Prisoner—Positions Retaken by Hand-to-Hand Bayonet and Bombing Rushes.

LONDON, June 4.—According to information received tonight, Gen. M. S. Mercer has been severely injured, and is being removed to the hospital at Boulogne. Gen. Victor Williams, who accompanied Gen. Mercer, was also severely injured and was taken prisoner. The following four officers who took part in the recent fighting arrived at London at a late hour tonight: Major W. Enver, 40th, abrasions in back; Lieut. Pen, C. M. R., wounds in face; Lieut. Drabble, 49th, wound in cheek and suffering from shell shock, and Lieut. Paton, C. M. R., scalp wounds. All wounds are slight.

BRITISH HEADQUARTERS IN FRANCE, Saturday, June 3.—(Via London, June 4, 10.30 p.m.)—Around famous Hill 60 and Sanctuary Wood the Canadians have been doing the stiffest fighting of their experience in the course of the last two days' action. They have held the entire front attacked, and unless the fighting spreads, this is entirely their battle.

The Canadian troops engaged in the fighting were in the brigade commanded by Brig.-Gen. Victor Williams. This brigade included four regiments of the C.M.R., the Princess Pats and the Royal Canadian Regiment.

The German guns had been relatively quiet for some days, when they suddenly opened up the heaviest bombardment any Canadian veteran has known, using all kinds of guns from heavy howitzers to trench mortars, not only battering the trenches, but covering a wide area of ground in the rear to prevent the bringing up of supports.

"But it was not this time, as in the early battles on the Ypres salient, when the Germans threw three or four shells to our one," said an officer. "The British guns returned equal volumes on the Germans after they were in our trenches."

Hand-to-Hand Fighting.

Under support of gunfire, the Canadian battalions, maintaining the tradition of the first contingent last year at St. Julien, immediately turned on the Germans in a series of counter-attacks. They fought thruout the night and were engaged all Saturday, doggedly bombing their way back to the possession of the position which they had lost. Parties rushed in at different points, bombing and bayoneting right and left, and before their fierce work was ended they had regained all but a few yards.

The German advance had been made over a front of 3000 yards, from Ypres-Comines railway to Hooge point. This was the most extensive front of any recent attack, and the Canadians responded to the test coolly and skillfully. In the Hooge sector the German attack was stopped with heavy loss.

No Change on Sunday.

The British official statement, issued Sunday midnight, says: "The situation around Ypres had not materially altered. There have been artillery bombardments and our troops retain the ground regained in other counter-attacks yesterday. No fresh attacks have been undertaken by us."

The British official statement, issued Sunday morning, reads: "Fighting of a very severe nature continued unceasingly southeast of Ypres, between Hooge and the Ypres-Menin railway. Following on their initial advantage obtained yesterday evening in penetrating our forward line in this neighborhood, the Germans pushed their attack during the night and succeeded in pushing thru our defences to a depth of 700 yards in the direction of Zillebeke.

"The Canadian troops, however, who are holding this sector of the defences, launched counter-strokes at seven o'clock this morning, which have succeeded in gradually driving the enemy from much of the ground he had gained. The Canadians behaved with the utmost gallantry, counter-attacking successfully after a heavy and continued bombardment.

Enemy Losses Were Severe.

"The enemy losses were severe. A large number of German dead were abandoned on the recaptured ground. Generals Mercer and Williams of the Third Canadian Division, who were inspecting the front trenches yesterday during the bombardment, are missing.

"Opposite the left bank of our line near Fricourt, north of the River Somme, a small party of a regiment raided the German line last night, bringing back a few prisoners. This party had a sharp engagement in a German trench and suffered some casualties, but succeeded in bombing several German dugouts.

"Southwest of Angres last night we carried out a successful enterprise. Our party entered a German trench,

disposed of the garrison above ground and bombed five dugouts before retiring, without loss. "Today there has been a good deal of artillery activity about the Loos salient. Yesterday our aeroplanes, favored by fine weather, accomplished much successful work."

Climax of War Approaches.

A Canadian Associated Press Cable from London this morning says: It is considered here that it may be taken for granted that the ordeal thru which the Canadians are passing is one of many episodes showing that the tremendous climax of the war is fast approaching. The fighting at Zillebeke is exact in character with that of Verdun, tho in intensity it is so far on a much smaller scale. The lists certainly make grave reading, yet the length will not surprise anybody who has any realization of the character of the German preliminary bombardment of the Canadian front trenches. The enemy's heavy shells, hurled hour after hour, blow into fragments everything living and dead near where they fall. There is really no immediate and judicious answer in a military sense to this kind of attack except to await one's own time.

The bombardment with shells of a weight such as never has been known previous to the last six months went on thru the night. The Canadians stuck where they were posted while there was anything of a semblance of earth work to protect them, suddenly retiring when to remain only meant extermination for all.

Meanwhile the Germans pushed forward a thin spreading of men on the ground which their artillery had churned into chaos. A breadth of nearly half a mile was thus covered.

Counter-Attack on Saturday.

Then in the early morning of Saturday there came the time for the inevitable counter-attack. The Canadian machine guns started with their deadly watering of the disputed ground. Afterwards their supporting companies advanced by short rushes, while their heavy artillery, supporting from behind, pounded the German rear to disorganize the sending of reinforcements.

No News at Ottawa.

OTTAWA, June 4.—Up to a late hour tonight the militia department was without information on the latest battle of Ypres, in which the Canadians again bore the brunt of the German onslaught. Major-General Hughes was expecting a special report on the engagement on Friday and Saturday, but this had not been received up to midnight and the department is dependent on press despatches for its information.

The department has no indication of the casualties, but they will likely be heavy, as counter-attacks have generally been costly in warfare as carried on in France.

Was Colonel of the Q. O. R.

Major-General Mercer, commander of the 3rd division, who is reported missing after the determined attack on the Canadian lines at the front, was colonel of the Queen's Own Rifles of Toronto before the outbreak of war. When war came he was placed in command of the second brigade of the 1st division which was sent over from Canada. He proved equal to the confidence that was placed in him, and distinguished himself in various heavy engagements in which the Canadians took part. When the Canadian forces at the front were increased by the sending over of the 3rd division a few months ago Gen. Mercer was selected to command it.

On Friday when he was last seen he was sharing with the men the dangers of the front line trenches which he was inspecting. This inspection was all the more necessary because of the very difficult ground for trenching which the Canadians are holding.

General Mercer before the war was recognized as a very capable officer, and he took a most active interest in military affairs. In 1913 he was among the Canadian officers who accompanied Gen. Sir Sam Hughes to Europe to witness military manoeuvres in several countries.

Brig.-Gen. Williams.

Brig.-Gen. Victor A. S. Williams, who is also reported missing in command of an brigade of the 3rd division. When war broke out he was adjutant-general at Ottawa headquarters, and was a very popular officer. He saw service in South Africa, and afterwards was in command of the Royal Canadian Dragoons of the permanent force at Stanley Barracks, Toronto. When the first Canadian expeditionary force was assembled at Valcartier Gen. Williams, then Col. Williams, was made camp commandant. Later he went to England and was engaged in organization work and the training of Canadian troops in England. When the 3rd division was formed he was made a brigade commander.

Mrs. Williams, wife of Gen. Victor Williams, has been in England for the last year.

Gen. Mercer's Career.

Major-General M. S. Mercer was born in Etobicoke, but spent his boyhood days in Western Ontario, his father, Thomas

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