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Footings Gained By The Germans on Kemmel Hill

Heavy Fighting Continues There, Enemy In Superior Numbers—French Counter Attack To Drive Enemy From Hill

London, April 26—A footing has been obtained on Kemmel Hill by the Germans in their attacks on the northern battle front. The war office so announced today. The fighting is still continuing in this region.

The allied forces were engaged all day yesterday with greatly superior enemy forces along the front from Bellefleur to Hellebeke (a distance of about ten miles) and finally were compelled to give ground.

German posts which were holding out southeast of Villers-Bretonneux on the front south of the Somme after its capture by the British, were cleared up. FRENCH COUNTER-ATTACK

With the British Army in France, April 26—(By the Associated Press)—The French this morning are counter-attacking at Mount Kemmel in an attempt to reclaim the positions taken by the Germans. Yesterday's fighting was of a desperate nature, and the enemy gains were only at a frightful cost.

Paris, April 26—Heavy artillery fighting south of the Somme is reported by the war office.

Berlin, April 25—(via London, April 26)—The supplementary official statement from the German war office this evening reads:—"The army of General Von Arnim is engaged in a battle for Kemmel heights."

In Kemmel Lost? In the Kemmel region, where the French hold a critical position, is not so satisfactory. Mention of Vierstraet seems to suggest the withdrawal of French troops there, which would include the retirement from the last positions at Messing, Bistrie, near Wytchate. The possibility of the loss of the Ypres salient is forecasted if Kemmel should be lost.

British Statement. London, April 26—The British official statement says:—"On the Bellefleur-Hellebeke front, after severe fighting lasting throughout the day against a greatly superior force, the Allied troops were compelled to give ground, and the enemy obtained a footing on Kemmel Hill. Fighting still continues in the neighborhood of Dronoutre, Kemmel and Vierstraet."

"We carried out a successful minor operation during the night west of Meriville and captured fifty prisoners and three machine guns. The hostile artillery has been active along our front from the Lys River to Givency."

French Report. Paris, April 26—The French official statement follows:—"South of the Somme violent artillery fighting continued during the course of the night. We carried out raids at different points on the front, especially in the region east of Lassigny, between the Miette and the Aisne, near Besonvaux in the region of Eparges, in Lorraine, and in the Vosges. We took prisoners. Everywhere else the night was calm."

"South of the Somme hostile posts which were holding out southeast of Villers-Bretonneux have been cleared by our troops. The enemy's artillery has been active also in this region with gas shells. "On the remainder of the British front there was nothing to report."

With the French Army in France, April 26—(By the Associated Press)—The enemy infantry battalions are now coming into the fight with the lightest possible equipment. The most of them do not even carry hand grenades, while most of their bomb throwing apparatus has been left behind owing to difficulty in carrying it forward.

After the preliminary bombardment, they appear to rely chiefly on their rifles, but are well furnished with light portable machine guns, which can be shouldered and for which great quantities of ammunition are carried by extra men. Large numbers of heavy machine guns follow closely in the rear to ward off counter-attacks.

Simultaneously with their attack at Villers-Bretonneux the Germans also began operations to the south against the French and north of the River Somme. At Sully Le Sec and Vaire several attacks were repulsed during the early hours. The first drive against Villers-Bretonneux was made with two divisions and this was thrown back. The Germans immediately put two fresh divisions into line and again surged forward. Five tanks were sent to the north through the valley leading through the southern part of the town and these engines were followed by large forces of infantry.

By noon the Germans had swung a salient about 6,000 yards and 4,000 yards deep about Villers-Bretonneux and were holding the town strongly. They continued to do until 10 o'clock last night, when they were repulsed by a counter-attack. There should have been a moon to assist the British, but the sky was heavily overcast and a dense mist hung over the region.

According to prisoners the enemy had no anticipation of further trouble from the British last night and were sitting snugly in their new position when the storm broke. The British gunners put down a sharp barrage and the British infantry drove forward. The attack was made from the southwest and northwest on Villers-Bretonneux and these two forces drove in towards the eastern part of the town in a converging movement. As a result the British bottled up the town.

Bayonet Fighting. The British infantry fought the town and heavy hand-to-hand fighting ensued, the bayonet being used freely. Six hundred prisoners were taken here alone and a great number of the enemy were killed. The town was virtually cleared, and today only a few straggling pockets of Germans are in the place. Some of them are still dug in along the Villers-Bretonneux-Maree railway embankment with machine guns, and these are causing some trouble, but their ultimate extermination or capture is certain.

In the Bois d'Agneux, just west of Villers-Bretonneux, one German officer and forty men had got a footing yesterday and they hung on until this morning, although they were completely cut off. They surrendered today.

In a counter-attack a large part of the old British positions about Villers-Bretonneux were regained. Today the Germans who still remained in the bottle could not get out, and their comrades were unable to get through the narrow neck to assist them. Saturday night, increasing northeast winds.

Hours of grim fighting followed, all the more so because the artillery on both sides was silent as the combatants became inextricably mixed before the Germans were finally driven out, and this important position, dominating Amiens, was restored to British hands. The enemy may return to the assault on the village, but he is now in an awkward salient, formed by the confluence of the Somme, the Aisne and the Avre and he may soon find himself in a slaughter house position.

Hangar is also important, but it has changed hands so often that the enemy's hold there may be considered precarious. It is possible, however, that the real key position will develop to the south of Ypres and mention of fighting northeast of Bellefleur may indicate such a development.

AN APRIL SHOWER. Miss Maud Curran was tendered a novel shower on Wednesday evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Quinn, 249 Carmarthen street. Miss Curran is to be a principal in an interesting event to take place in the near future. The evening was spent in games and music.

Amsterdam, April 26—Vice-Admiral Schroeder commander of Zebrugge, according to reports reaching here, will be deprived of his command for being taken by surprise by the British on Tuesday. German newspapers generally take the hint from Berlin and represent the enterprise as having been a failure. Some, however, admit that the attack was made with great boldness.

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Four Collieries In Cape Breton Down Over Labor Troubles

Sydney, N. S., April 26—Four collieries are practically closed down, hundreds of men are idle, the production of 2,000 tons of coal a day is being lost to the country, because of labor troubles at the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company's fields at Sydney Mines. While no actual strike was declared, the men today announced a "holiday" to discuss their grievances with the result that not a wheel turned at Princess, Florence, Scotia or Jubilee pits. The meeting was held this morning and adjourned until tomorrow, which is taken to mean that another "holiday" will follow. Wage grievances of men at the wash plant are the main cause of the present trouble.

The men of No. 12 colliery of the Dominion Coal Company, New Waterford, also quit work yesterday because of labor troubles, but these were adjusted and that mine is working again today.

LABOR AND THE WAR

Special Report to Commons—The Needs of the Farm and Railways

Ottawa, April 26—The common agricultural committee this morning received the report of a special sub-committee on the labor situation, and more particularly the employment of non-essential industries.

The report stated that, owing to the long open spring, there is no great need for seeding but that there is a great need of women help. For the harvest season from Aug. 1 to Nov. 15, probably 80,000 men would be required. Ontario members of the committee disputed the statement that there was no serious shortage of men for seeding purposes in eastern Canada. Frank Glass questioned the good judgment of the government in taking men experienced in the work from the farms. In England, he said, it had been found necessary to bring men from the trenches to increase production.

Suggestions were made that the man power census should be taken immediately, and steps should then be taken to equalize farm labor in all the provinces. It was finally decided to receive the report of the sub-committee which was instructed to elaborate its report more particularly in regard to non-essential industries and to prepare a list of industries in which women may be employed to replace men of military age.

Other statements made in the report were that amendments to the Military Service Act would seriously affect the railways which employ 100,000 men and 5,000 to 10,000 men in the coal-mining and fire-brick industries. The act would require for maintenance of way service. The opinion was expressed that for all essential industries, including agriculture and mining, from 80,000 to 75,000 men will be required.

DECLINES TO INTERFERE IN OTTAWA SCHOOL MATTER

Ottawa, April 26—The dominion government acting upon the advice of the department of justice has declined to interfere with the operation of the following Ontario measures:

The act respecting the appointment of a commission for the Ottawa separate schools; the act respecting the Catholic separate schools of Ottawa, the act to amend the law in respect to taxation of the separate schools, and the act to amend the water powers regulation act, all passed in the session of 1917.

WAR NOTES

The Australian navy was represented in the raid on Zebrugge by one officer and eleven men. All returned safely. The market for grain has advanced and undertaken a nation-wide campaign to stamp out "Germanism" in Cuba. All German firms as well as German sympathizers will be boycotted.

The Germans have retaken Hill 63, southwest on the Luce and the Avre rivers, and have fought up to the village of Hailles, further advancing their lines a mile.

Phelps and Perdinand. WEATHER REPORT

Issued by Authority of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, R. F. Stupart, director of meteorological service.

Synopsis—The barometer is high over the greater part of Canada and low over the United States, especially between the Mississippi and the Atlantic, where the weather is overcast and showery. The weather is fair and cool throughout the dominion.

Forecasts. Lower Lakes and Georgian Bay—Fresh easterly winds, fair and cool; Saturday, easterly winds, mostly cloudy and cool.

Ottawa Valley and Upper St. Lawrence, Lower St. Lawrence and Gulf and North Shore—Fair and cool today and Saturday.

Fair and Cool. Maritime—Fresh to strong north winds, fair and cool today and on Saturday.

Superior—Moderate winds, fair and cool today and on Saturday. Saskatchewan and Alberta—Fine and a little warmer today and on Saturday.

New England—Fair tonight except rain on the south coast; Saturday night, increasing northeast winds.

Busy Morning For The Legislators

ONE OF THE BIG GUNS DESTROYED

Paris, April 26—One of the three German long range guns which has been bombarding Paris has been destroyed according to Deputy Charles Lehoucq of the department of the Seine. He said he had talked with the general commanding the sector near Crepy-En-Laonnois, where the big guns are stationed. The enemy, he declared, is constructing new emplacements.

The long range bombardment of Paris was resumed during last night. Up to 6 o'clock, as far as could be ascertained, nobody has been hurt and the damage done was not appreciable.

Prorogation of The House Tomorrow

Agreement Relative to New Wing of East St. John Hospital Confirmed; Some Lumber Matters; Mr. Le Blanc Takes Exception

Fredericton, April 26—In an effort to complete the work of the session today so that the House may be prorogued on Saturday the members of the legislature spent a busy morning in committee of the whole and succeeded in disposing of a large number of bills.

One of special interest in St. John was that confirming an agreement between the commissioners of the East St. John County Hospital and the Military Hospitals Commission regarding the erection and operation of a new wing to the hospital to care for returned soldiers suffering from tuberculosis. This was recommended without change.

In order to do away with the opportunity for violations of the law prohibiting the export of pulp wood from crown lands, the committee recommended a bill to repeal an amendment to the original bill. The amendment had permitted the operators to pool their cut from crown and private lands and export a quantity equal to their cut on private land regardless of which source it was from. This had led to abuses.

A large number of bills on which the House was agreed were passed without discussion. The longest discussion of the morning occurred over a matter relating to a committee of police authorities of Shediac and Moncton in the enforcement of the liquor laws. Hon. Dr. Smith appealed for home rule for Shediac and the House still was discussing the matter when recess was taken at one o'clock.

EXTREMELY GRATIFYING REPORTS FROM QUEBEC

Ottawa, April 26—Reports described as "extremely gratifying" have been received by the director of military service from the Province of Quebec. Since the announcement of the government's intention to cancel exemption of Class 1 men between the ages of twenty and twenty-two inclusive, large numbers of young men in the province have signified their willingness to serve without waiting for the necessary call.

"Our reports indicate," said Lieut. Col. Machin, director of military service, today, "that a large number of young men in the Province of Quebec are voluntarily joining ahead of time. Among them are sons of many prominent men. With such a splendid lead, it may well be anticipated that others will follow."

CALL TO MEN OF 21 IN STATES

New York, April 26—House adopts resolution calling out men "who have reached the age of 21 since June 5, 1917." St. Paul directors again defer action on dividends. President Bryan explained that matter would not be considered until the road's contract with the government had been signed, which he hoped would be in time for submission to stockholders at annual meeting on May 18.

SPEDING UP SALE OF LIBERTY BONDS

Washington, April 26—Subscription to the third Liberty loan which will bring the total well above \$2,000,000,000, or two-thirds of the minimum was the goal of the Liberty day drive under way today throughout the United States.

The day was a holiday by presidential proclamation, and virtually everywhere efforts were being made to speed up the sale of bonds by demonstrations.

IN WALL STREET

New York, April 26—Trading in stocks today was limited to the forenoon session in recognition of "Liberty Day." The market gave further proof of underlying firmness, however, although interest centred mainly in speculative issues at advances of 1 to 3/4 points. Peoples Gas, United Railways and Philadelphia Company also added to recent gains, the latter rising four points. Ralls were again agitated with moderate strength in Reading and Pacific. U. S. Steel made an extreme gain of a point on steady accumulation. Superior Steel rose 3-3/4, but Gulf Steel reacted six points. The closing was strong. Sales approximated 200,000 shares.

Stocks in control of pools were again prominent at the opening of today's market, recovering a considerable part of yesterday's irregular setback. Samatra tobacco and Distillers made initial gains of one to two points with International Paper, Baldwin Locomotive, Reading, Philadelphia Company and Peoples Gas. There was a fair inquiry for U. S. Steel, United States Rubber, General Motors and Central Leather. Gulf States Steel forfeited two points of its recent substantial advance. Liberty bonds were firm.

SMALLPOX CASES

Four cases smallpox have been discovered within last twenty-four hours. Last night on the Halifax-Jamaica steamship service by renewal of license to the Norwegian steamers.

Rev. T. S. Boyle of Windsor, N. S., presided yesterday at the opening convention of the Canadian Fraternal Association in Hamilton, Ont. Delegates in attendance represented prominent fraternal societies of Canada and the United States.

An aerial line between Nice, Paris and London is to be established soon. The work of raising the American liner St. Paul is progressing rapidly. The ship had no cargo aboard.

LYNCH, SINN FEINER, IS TO BE DEPORTED.

Dublin, April 26—Diarmid Lynch, Sinn Fein food controller, who has just completed a term of two months' imprisonment for seizing and slaughtering pigs in Ireland, will be deported. Lynch, who is an American, probably will be placed on an American-bound ship. He took a prominent part in the rebellion in 1916, and was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude at that time, but later was released.

RETURNED MEN LEAVE FOR FARMS. Toronto, April 26—Twenty-six more returned soldiers left for northern Ontario last night, under arrangement between the military authorities and the provincial government and will enter upon farming in the clay belt.

Newspit. New York, April 26—Canada was asked to restrict and the United States urged to place an immediate embargo on the export of newspaper paper in a resolution adopted by the American Newspaper Association yesterday.

As to price fixing the report of the paper commission declared "that the government does not contemplate any radical action."

On Wednesday three German airplanes were brought down on the western front. Two Britishers are missing.