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## ITALIANS MAINTAIN THEIR FRONT AGAINST TERRIFIC ASSAULTS

Italians Making their Last Supreme Effort to Reach the Venetian Plains before Winter — Paying a Fearful Cost in Lives — Bolsheviki Government's Power Gradually Declining — British Air Attack on Mannheim Beginning of Reprisal Policy — Bolsheviki Government Will Send Propagandists to all Countries.

### AIR REPRISAL POLICY INAUGURATED

LONDON, Dec. 26.—An official announcement issued today says Monday's British air raid on the German City of Mannheim was the first instance of an exact reprisal policy for Hun air-raids over England.

### PEACE NEGOTIATIONS SUSPENDED

LONDON, Dec. 26.—According to a Times Petrograd despatch the Russian-German peace negotiations have been suspended, pending consultation by German delegates with their government on Russia's terms. The Russian delegates, it is stated, are returning to Petrograd to negotiate.

### POPE BENEDICT RECOMMENDS PRAYERS FOR PEACE

ROME, Dec. 26.—Pope Benedict yesterday received the members of the Sacred College for an exchange of Christmas greetings. His Holiness renewed his recommendations for incessant prayers for peace and expressed the hope for a brighter future and rejoiced at the liberation of Jerusalem.

### RUSSIAN GOVT. WILL SEND OUT PROPAGANDISTS

PETROGRAD, Dec. 26.—The government has decided to send out special envoys to all countries, bourgeois as well as neutral, to further the propaganda of internationalism. Two million rubles have been appropriated for this purpose.

### FINLAND WANTS INDEPENDENT

PETROGRAD, Dec. 26.—Finland, according to reports received here, has asked Germany to recognize her independence.

LONDON, Dec. 26.—Monday's war office statement says there is nothing special to report on the British front. Headquarters despatches indicate that Von Hindenburg is waiting further reinforcements before commencing the expected German offensive.

### ITALIAN LINES ATTACKED UNCEASINGLY

LONDON, Dec. 26.—Italian army headquarters despatches say that fierce fighting between Basso and Monte Valbella is in progress today. Despite violent Italian attacks the enemy at a fearful cost still holds the two-thirds of a mile gain which he achieved Monday. A despatch from French army headquarters in Italy says the Teutons are making a last supreme effort to reach the Venetian plains before the winter checks all operations, and that since Saturday they have attacked the Italian lines unceasingly.

### POWER OF BOLSHEVIKI GOVT. WANING

LONDON, Dec. 26.—Despatches from Petrograd are practically unanimous in asserting that the power of the Bolsheviki government is waning, the prime causes being lack of authority, drunkenness, the reluctance of the population to work and the scarcity of food.

### DESPERATE FIGHTING ENDS IN VICTORY FOR ITALIANS

ROME, Dec. 26.—In a desperate battle which lasted all day yesterday, the Italians fought their way back to the positions from which they were forced the previous day on the Asiago Plateau, under an Austro-German attack, according to today's war office statement. Some guns and numerous machine guns which had been abandoned by the Italians in their retirement were recaptured when the old positions were reoccupied.

### KORNILOFF DEFEATED, BOLSHEVIKI DECLARE

PETROGRAD, Dec. 24.—News of a revolutionary plot against King Ferdinand of Rumania has been received at the Smolny Institute, the Bolsheviki headquarters, according to the evening newspapers. There are also said to be disturbed conditions in Rumania. These reports are confirmed in some respects by despatches received here indicating unsettled conditions and a political crisis. A Bolsheviki despatch announces that 6,000 troops of General Korniloff's command have been defeated near Biesgorod by Bolsheviki, chiefly soldiers and sailors of the Black and Baltic Seas fleets. Many machine guns and much ammunition are said to have been captured.

### NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE GET HIT BY SETBACK

LONDON, Dec. 25.—The Bolsheviki commander-in-chief, Chief, Ensign Krylenkov, reports the transference of large numbers of German troops to the western front and the southern western front. Civil war in Russia seems to be spreading. The negotiations between the Bolsheviki and the central powers apparently are not proceeding smoothly. Time gained by the Germans in the negotiations would mean so much more time for

the shifting of troops, now being carried out with the greatest speed possible.

Leon Trotsky, the Bolsheviki foreign minister, has called the attention of the peace delegation to this fact. A special despatch from Brest-Litovsk announces the Germans were not ready yesterday to reply to the Russian peace terms, and consequently the meeting of the peace delegates was postponed until Monday afternoon. It is reported that the refusal of Germany to issue passports to the German Socialists, Haas, Lodebour and Kantsky, who desire to go to Stockholm to acquaint themselves with the Russian revolutionary conditions has produced in Russia an impression which may hamper peace negotiations.

Minister Trotsky has sent a telegram to his delegates at Brest-Litovsk in this connection, declaring that if the Germans refused their socialists passports this would create such a bad impression at Petrograd that it was deemed necessary that the German delegation, which is expected here Thursday, should go to Stockholm instead.

The Bolsheviki commissioners have issued a manifesto to all Russian workmen declaring that as the aristocracy will probably be transformed at an early date into a general peace to all the European peoples, preparation of military equipment is a waste of national labor and funds, and that consequently the output must be stopped immediately and replaced by the production of peace supplies, which the country needs.

The newspapers announce that a delegation from the enemy powers is coming to Petrograd to participate in a conference presided over by Trotsky to discuss the political aspects of an eventual peace conference. Another enemy delegation will participate in the commission meeting at Odessa to discuss technical questions.

### NINE THOUSAND ITALIANS CAPTURED, BERLIN CLAIMS

BERLIN, Monday, via British Admiralty, per wireless press, London, Dec. 25.—The capture by Austro-German forces of Col. Del Rosso and adjoining heights on the Asiago Plateau in Northern Italy, together with the taking of more than 6,000 prisoners, was announced today by army headquarters. The statement reads:

Italian front: Between Asiago and the Brenta, troops of Field Marshal Conrad von Hoetzendorf captured Col. Del Rosso and the heights adjoining to the west and east. Up to the present more than 6,000 prisoners have been brought in.

LONDON, Dec. 26.—The Austrian official statement of Monday as received here supplements the German statement of that date regarding the capture of Col. Del Rosso by reporting the capture also of Monte Valbella. It states likewise that a colonel and several Italian staff officers were captured.

BERLIN, Dec. 25, via London.—Italian counter-attacks upon the positions taken by the Austro-German troops near Asiago were repulsed yesterday, as was an Italian drive on Monte Pertica, army headquarters announced today. More than 4,000 prisoners were taken in the Col. Del Rosso fighting, says the official statement, which reads:

Italian front: A lively artillery duel continued throughout the day between Asiago and the Brenta. Enemy counter-attacks against our newly won positions and a thrust at Monte Pertica were repulsed. The number of prisoners captured as a result of the engagement around Col. Del Rosso has increased to more than 3,000, including 2700 officers.

### CANADIAN AIRMAN KILLED

turned to Death, Following Accident at Fort Worth, Texas

Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 25.—Light, Rainboth and Cadet Manson, Canadian aviators, who had been here about two months in training, were incinerated in an airplane accident yesterday. Their identity was made known by Royal Flying Corps officers to-night. Both of the men were members of the Royal Flying Corps for several months previous to coming to Fort Worth. Investigation proved the men were burned to death after they struck the ground. It was said the machine was flying at a height of two hundred feet, when it struck a "side slip." When the machine struck the ground the gasoline tank was torn open and ignited by a spark. The men were strapped in and with their machine and clothing affairs were unable to remove the straps.

### AIRMAN KILLED

Kingston Cadet Crashes to Earth in Texas

Fort Worth, Dec. 23.—Carlet A. Ross Harrison of the Royal Flying Corps was killed today at Everman, when his machine crashed 400 feet to the ground. Harrison, who was born in Kingston, Ont., had enlisted in the Royal Flying Corps in Canada and had come to Fort Worth two months ago to finish his training.

### SLOW RETURN OF BOXES

Three ballot boxes used in the recent elections in West Hastings are still somewhere in North Hastings. Returning officer, Sheriff M. B. Morrison, is accordingly unable to make his official declaration as to the vote. This morning he telephoned the tardy deputy officers to return the boxes at once.

### MYERS—MIKEL

A marriage of considerable interest in the communities in which the contracting parties resided, was quietly solemnized at the Methodist parsonage, Frankford, by Rev. J. P. D. Knox on Wednesday, Dec. 19th at 10 a. m. The principals were Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Myers of Ridge Township, and Miss Myra Mikel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johnstone Hope Mikel and with shot) and on his finger a large and dangerous ring made of a horse shoe nail. It is said he was in their home communities and departed on the night of Friday.

### WICKETT—MITCHELL

A quiet wedding took place at the Zion church of which she has attended since Dec. 15, 1917, when Mrs. Wickett, of St. Michaels, was united in marriage with Mr. Charles young couple left by train to spend Mrs. Wickett's last by the afternoon their residence in Sidney, where the groom is a prosperous young farmer.

## MESSAGE FROM THE TRENCHES

Just a few lines to you in the hope I haven't forgotten you. I am sending you this little calendar, hoping you get it O.K. You may not know who I am, but just say Walter Embury.

Well, I guess we will be in the trenches another winter. I have been in the trenches twenty months, been wounded three times, but never have been out of France only ten days leave to England, so I think I have done my bit.

Well, I am glad to say we are having good success. Frosty cold at present, but not very wet. There are lots of Belleville boys here. I may say I saw Bert Allen killed at the Somme. I was wounded when I saw him killed. I was also wounded at Hill 70, that is the last.

No. of Loss. And then you heard about the great battle of Passchendaele. That was a great day for us. Although slightly wounded, I was able to stay with it all we were taken out, this being the third time, and glad to say I am able to fight on, hoping to see more come out and give us a hand.

Wishing you all a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours truly,  
L. Corpl. J. E. Chappell,  
No. 54448, 31st Bn. Trenchers,  
France.

LIEUT. WICKETT HERE  
Toronto Office Spent Few Hours on Christmas with Relatives

Lieut. Harry Wickett, Toronto, of the I.P.A. who was wounded at Passchendaele in the foot, was in the city and spent a few hours of Christmas day with his aunts, Mrs. Stocker and Mrs. Spian. Lt. Wickett went overseas with the 73rd Battery and served at the front with the 18th. He is home on a month's leave. A rather unique incident, is that in July last while at the front he dreamed he was his Christmas dinner with his aunt, Mrs. Stocker. That thought had been in his mind quite often since and after he was wounded he saw the way open to the fulfillment of his dream. Lt. Wickett returned last evening to Toronto.

RIFLE SHOOTING  
A spoon shoot and competitions for the Winchester Rifle will be held

in the Armouries tonight beginning at seven o'clock for the Belleville Rifle Club.

PRESENTATION  
On Christmas Eve, Mrs. Albert Johnstone was the recipient of a handsome pear brooch presented by the O.V.R. Club of St. Michael's Academy.

## ACCLAMATIONS FOR S.S. BOARD

Six Nominating Trustees Re-elected — One New Member

There will be no elections for the trustees of the Separate School Board this year, as the seven vacancies were filled at noon today by acclamation at the nominations at St. Michael's Academy.

The members elected today by acclamation are:  
Father Killen (re-elected) — Dr. Blocker Ward.  
J. M. Trautsch (re-elected) — St. Michael's Ward.  
M. R. Doyle (re-elected) — Chateau Ward.  
W. N. Belair (re-elected) — Baldwin Ward.  
L. P. Hughes (re-elected) — Foster Ward.  
W. J. Hogan (re-elected) — Barney Ward.  
Dr. O'Callaghan in place of Mr. Fitzgerald (retiring member) — Ketcheson Ward.

## RITCHIE'S Economy Prices On BLANKETS

If you have blanket needs that have not been looked after as yet, then by all means buy now, and at RITCHIE'S, for here you will find exceptional values when one considers the splendid qualities. Note these:—



### BLANKETS

## Unshrinkable Wool Blankets

Our large range embraces Blankets from the best Scotch and Canadian manufacturers. Foreseeing the demand there must be for wool, we placed our order many months in advance of other seasons and can therefore offer Wool Blankets at a saving to you of 20% to 25%. We have them in 6 to 8-lb. weights, in White or Grey with Pink or Blue Borders, sizes 60x80 to 68x86. Priced \$7 to \$10 a pair.

## NASHUA WOOLNAP BLANKETS

We are sole Belleville agents for this most wonderful Cotton Blanket. Only on very expert inspection can one possibly recognize the difference in Nashua Woolnap Blanket from a well-finished all Wool Blanket. They are lofty and thick and finely woven and soft and warm, like wool, but not nearly so harsh to sleep between. Nashua Blankets are absolutely unshrinkable and come in plain shades with borders also fancy plaid designs, size 66"x84", and priced low at \$5 a pair.

## FLANNELETTE BLANKETS

Close examination of the Cotton Blankets which we show this season will reveal the fact that from the lowest to the highest priced lines they are manufactured from the very finest cotton procurable, resulting in a Blanket that is soft and warm, yet inexpensive. Our showing embraces the 3 standard sizes—10/4, 11/4, 12/4, in White or Grey with pink or blue borders; priced from \$1.60 to \$3.50.

## EIDERDOWN COMFORTERS

Size 50"x72" and 72"x72", priced \$5 to \$15. Cotton Comforters, \$1.85 to \$6.

### SHORTER STORE HOURS

Commencing Thursday Dec. 27th, we will close our store every day except Saturday at 5:30 p. m. This will continue during the winter months. Making the Store Hours 9:30 a. m. to 5:30 p. m. Saturdays open at 9:30 a. m. and close as usual at 5 p. m.

THE RITCHIE CO., LTD.

Christmas wear, shoes, cases, women's, gats, patts, style all \$0.00 to \$2.50, shoes, PHIPSON'S PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY, USES, you will be solved to \$2.50, chiefs at 35c to \$3.50, 5.00, 25c to \$5.15, \$1.75 to \$1.00, \$2.00, 50c, 85c, 2.50 to \$5.00, 40c, 35c, coun- velties, Co., Ltd., ant adv. in Just try.