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OVER 30,000 IRON CROSSES AWARDED IN PRESENT WAR

History of a Famous German Order and Description of the Emblem so Earnestly Coveted by the Soldiers of the Kaiser

It is reported that already 38,000 German soldiers have received the Iron Cross for conspicuous gallantry in the field. This German decoration, which is similar in design to our Victoria Cross, is said to be cast out of guns captured in war, and in this connection carries its resemblance to our decoration a little further, inasmuch as it is said that the Victoria Cross is made out of guns captured in the Crimea.

The Prussian Order was instituted on March 10, 1813, by Frederick William III. Its inception was due to Gneisenau, who in 1811 proposed to the King a general rising against Napoleon, and suggested that all men who served with distinction in the field should be decorated with a black and white scarf or a national cockade.

The King's Scheme.

The King, however, favored an emblem in the shape of two pieces of black and white ribbon sewn in the form of a cross on the breast of the coat. The designs against Napoleon did not mature until after Moscow in 1813, and in that year the Order of the Iron Cross was instituted, as it was thought that a decoration of metal would be more suitable.

On March, 1813, the King of Prussia decreed that "in the present critical state of affairs, on which depends everything for the country, the brave spirit which the nation has so grandly shown deserves to be honored and to be commemorated by some special form of recognition.

Recognition of Merit.

We have, therefore, resolved specially to distinguish the merit which in the war now about to break out shall be displayed, either in actual fight with the enemy, or in the field or at home, in connection with this great struggle for freedom and independence, and after this war not again to bestow this special form of recognition."

By virtue of this decree, the Iron Cross of two classes and a Grand Cross was instituted, on the anniversary of the birthday of the late Queen Louise. Fifty-seven years later, on July 19, 1870, the anniversary of the death of Queen Louise, war was declared against France, and it was thought that no better recognition could be conferred for valor in this campaign than the Order of 1813, although the King in his decree had declared that this distinction would not again be bestowed.

Order of Iron Cross.

On July 19 another decree by King William reintroduced the Order of the Iron Cross. "In view of the serious situation of the Fatherland," he decreed, "and in grateful remembrance of the heroism of our ancestors in the great years of the War of Liberty, I revive in its full meaning and importance the Order of the Iron Cross instituted by my father, now in rest with God."

"The Iron Cross will be given without distinction of rank or position as a reward for merit, gained either in actual fight with the enemy or at home, in connection with this war for the honor and independence of the beloved country."

Emblems Similar.

Both classes of the Iron Cross have a precisely similar black cross of cast iron with silver edging. On the front there is not any inscription. The front face of the cross of 1813 is bare of any insignia. On the reverse of the cross of 1870-71 is a crown and the date, 1870. In the centre is a "W," the initial of the Christian

name of the then King of Prussia. The cross of 1813 bore the initials "F. W." In the centre of the cross are three oak leaves, and the presence on the Order today of the dates 1813 and 1870-71 indicates that the soldier upon whom it is conferred participates by right in the honors of the previous wars.

The Grand Cross.

The Grand Cross can only be received by a commander who has been victorious in a decisive battle after which the enemy has evacuated his position, or who has captured an important fortress, or by a commander who has unflinchingly defended a fortress which has not fallen into the enemy's hands. The Iron Cross is borne on the standards and colors of the troops, and, like the Victoria Cross in our army, its bestowal is not confined to any one rank.

In the campaign of 1813 331 first-class and 6,639 second class crosses were awarded, and six years later it was reported that the cross was worn by 9,136 soldiers and that there were 6,813 inheritors of the decoration.

After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 the number of crosses distributed totalled nearly 50,000. Of this number 3,000 were crosses with the white ribbon with black edging indicating that they had not been awarded for services against the enemy.

FRENCH BANKERS HASTENING HOME

On a Little Trawler—Eager To Fight Their Country's Battles

New York, Oct. 15.—Somewhere between the fishing banks off Newfoundland and European water, a mackerel smack, with twenty-five fishermen, is supposed to be making for the French coast with all the speed her dingy sails can send her. At least those on board the French liner Rochambeau, which arrived here yesterday, saw her headed that way. They are going to fight for France, and until they met the Rochambeau did not even know their country was at war.

Was in Distress.

A lookout on the liner sighted the smack flying signals of distress off the Grand Banks and the Rochambeau ran down on the fishermen. Soon four huge sailors from Normandy drew alongside in a dory and told a story of hardship. They said they had left the French coast in March and the last time they had been ashore was in July, when they put into Halifax.

Food Spoilt.

They remained there only long enough to unload and get supplies. In a storm three weeks ago, most of their provisions were spoiled by salt water. Food and water were gathered on the liner, when one of the men heard a passenger pass a remark about the war. It was the first the fishermen had heard of it. They listened in amazement when told that France had been fighting Germany more than two months.

Decided to Go Home.

Then, working like madmen, they loaded their craft with provisions. Before they left they decided they would go back to fight for their country, and while the Rochambeau was getting under way again the men boarded their craft. Soon there was a shout from all twenty-five throats aboard the little boat and a hurried setting of sail. The last those aboard the Rochambeau saw of the smack she was headed east with her lee rail down.

Waterwitch Arrives

Crosbie's Waterwitch, Capt. C. P. Moore, arrived Saturday after a fine run from Bahia. The captain and crew are all well. Capt. Moore, who is well known for his quick passages has made another splendid round trip.

"Prospero" Crowded

The Prospero last trip to St. John's carried more passengers than at any other time this year. They were mostly fishermen who were returning to their homes in the Northern Bays from the northward. The purser, Mr. F. Miller, and the stewards had a busy time as the passengers numbered nearly 500, but all were comfortably accommodated, though the sleeping apartments were at a premium.

READ THE MAIL AND ADVOCATE

BOTHA'S ACTION PROVES POPULAR

Cements Together in Common Patriotism All Classes in the Union of South Africa

The decision of General Botha to Forces in the field is regarded as a brilliant master-stroke which will take supreme command of the Union rally the whole British population and a large majority of the Dutch to the support of the Government's German South-West African policy.

The only anxiety is lest the absence of a man of such commanding influence should provide an opportunity for the malcontents in the Union. It is hoped, however, that by the time General Botha leaves the situation will be cleared up.

Inspires the Dutch.

Undoubtedly the knowledge that General Botha is in command will not only elicit a response from the Dutch to the Government's call for volunteers, but will inspire confidence in the success of the operations through out the country among Dutch and British alike. No more decisive counter-stroke to General Beyers' and General Hertzog's propaganda could possibly be imagined.

Never in the history of Bloemfontein has there been such a large, enthusiastic meeting as the demonstration in the Grand Theatre to express loyalty to the King and the Empire, and to give whole-hearted support to General Botha and the Government in the present crisis.

Both Nationalities.

The speakers were both Dutch and English, and included Mr. Arthur Fichardt, brother of the Hertzogite member of the House of Assembly, and Mr. Haarburger, the ex-mayor of the city, who, although German born, is now a British subject.

A loyal resolution was adopted, amid a remarkable demonstration, the great audience singing "Rule Britannia" and the National Anthem, which were taken up by the crowds outside, who were unable to gain admission to the hall.

BRIDGE GAVE WAY AND 600 DROWN

Tragic Accident on Railway Line as Train Bearing Wounded Was Passing

Paris, Sept. 29 (by mail to New York).—When a train carrying wounded and German prisoners from Meaux to Paris plunged through a weakened bridge across the Marne on Sept. 20th, there is every reason to believe that nearly 600 wounded men were drowned.

The utmost secrecy has surrounded the affair, but I have been able to obtain the following facts:

The train consisted of eighteen cars, each car carrying fifty wounded men. Many of these men had lain on battlefields without attention of any sort for from one to two days, and were congratulating themselves on the fact that they had been rescued and were on the way back to the comfortable hospitals in Paris.

German Prisoners on Board.

On the rear of the train as it departed from Meaux in the early evening, was attached a car-full of German prisoners.

Before reaching the Marne, the engineer, who had never before operated an engine on the line, was given orders to stop at a red light, which he would find. A switchman, who misunderstood his instructions, sent the train on the wrong track and the light, which was the stopping signal, was never seen by the engineers.

Instead, he saw ahead of him another red light which had been placed at a gap in the bridge over the river. He ran up to this light and to his horror the bridge beams began to break under the engine.

Then the coupling broke behind him. The engine had reached a solid part of the bridge, but the cars, with the exception of the rear car, which contained the Germans, plunged into the river with their load of wounded men.

Soldiers were summoned from both sides of the river, but only 160 men were taken from the wreckage alive. Reports indicate that about 600 wounded men, too weak to struggle for their lives, were drowned like rats.

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