

The St. John Standard

VOL. IX., NO. 14

TEN PAGES

TUESDAY MORNING, APRIL 10, 1917.

WEATHER—CLEARING

PRICE TWO CENTS

CANADIANS CAPTURE FAMOUS VIMY RIDGE; GERMANS FALLING BACK ALL ALONG LINE; BRITISH FORCING THE HUN OUT OF FRANCE

CANADIANS CAPTURE GERMAN STRONGHOLD

Famous Vimy Ridge, Which Cost French Army 100,000 Men Earlier in War, Taken by Gallant Boys From Dominion in Brilliant Charge Against Heavy Odds and in Unfavorable Weather.

With the British Armies in France, April 9, via London—(From a Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press)—The British today delivered a strong blow against the Germans from the region southwest of Cambrai to a point south of Lens. They swept over the German positions from the south of Arras northward on the famous Vimy Ridge, fighting for which cost the French 100,000 casualties earlier in the war. Once before the British gained the crest of this ridge, but under a tremendous concentration of German guns they were compelled to give it up. The ridge was captured by Canadians.

All winter long Canadians have held a footing on the ridge, with the German lines looking down on them.

Wonderful Spectacle. The many prisoners captured were mostly Bavarians, Wurtembergers and Hamburgers. After a beautiful and warm Easter Sunday the weather changed last night, and today's attack was carried out in a pouring rain driven before a gale in which was the sting of January cold.

Air Fighting. The airplanes which have accomplished wonderful work since Thursday's "clearing the air" of German planes, were robbed of the opportunity to participate in the beginning of the offensive. Several intrepid British airmen ascended, but on account of the rain and low lying clouds they could do little or nothing and after being tossed about severely they descended.

Today's attack also hit the north hinge of the recent German retreat from Arras to the Aisne. The Germans evidently had expected a renewal of the offensive in the valley of the Somme, for in making the retreat in that sector they announced that they had completely disarranged the British offensive plans. Today's blow was Britain's answer.

CANADIANS CAPTURED TWO THOUSAND GERMANS

(From a Staff Correspondent of The Associated Press.) With the British Armies in France, April 9, via London.—The war on the western front, which has been moving more rapidly in the past five weeks, broke into full swing today. Widening their attacks, which they have been directing against the retreating Germans in the sector of the Somme, the British struck still further north, and in a series of assaults on a broad front, with Arras more or less the pivotal point, they drove the Germans from scores of important positions, penetrating far into the German lines and inflicting heavy casualties.

A visit to corps headquarters this afternoon indicated that the number of prisoners taken in the past 12 hours will exceed five thousand. The barb-wire "cages" built to receive prisoners were overcrowded long before noon, although the principal attack did not begin until shortly after dawn. The heaviest fighting today developed along a line a few miles southeast of Arras, in the northerly direction to the neighborhood of Lens, but the actions extended far in the direction of St. Quentin. In the territory captured today was the famous Vimy ridge, which had been fought over time and time again ever since the war was ten months old.

The French had fought desperately and valiantly in an endeavor to wrest this vantage ground from the Germans, the battles costing both belligerents untold casualties.

The fighting on Vimy Ridge was carried out by the Canadians, who had retained a footing on the ridge all winter, but always higher up was the enemy. On either side of the Canadians were English and Scottish battalions, and in today's battle there was glory enough for all. The irrepressible "tank" also shared in the honors of the successful assault.

Prisoners had proclaimed this strong point practically unassailable, but sweeping over it today, the British took within it nearly a thousand prisoners, and they captured also dur-

ing the day three German battalion commanders, who compare in rank with colonel in the British army. The Canadians took two thousand prisoners.

It was said everywhere along the attacking line that the Germans appeared to have been taken by surprise, and only in a few instances did they put up a strong fight. One reason for this was that they had been fairly dazed by the British artillery fire of the past ten days.

From the high ground overlooking Arras a panoramic view for many miles of the British attack was presented. The concentration of guns for this operation was probably the greatest for a given amount of front since the war began. Almost countless guns had taken part in the bombardment since the beginning, but it was not until last night that many masked batteries joined in the grim chorus.

Looking down into the valley tongues of flame could be seen flashing from hundreds upon hundreds of gun mouths, like so many white-hot serpents' fangs. The guns were playing upon the ridges looming up in the distance enveloped in darkness, upon which lay the German lines.

As dawn approached the British batteries, one by one, became strangely silent. For half an hour the stillness was almost oppressive. The hot pit flashes disappeared. All this

DUAL EMPIRE AND U.S. TO GO TO WAR?

Austria-Hungary Breaks off Relations with Republic, Apparently Preliminary to Formal Declaration.

Washington, April 9.—Austria-Hungary, ranging herself unreservedly with Germany, has severed diplomatic relations with the United States, precipitating a situation which generally is expected here to lead to war. Baron Erich Ziwidnek, the Austrian charge, asked the state department today for passports for himself, his staff and the Austrian consular force in this country, and simultaneously American Minister Stovall reported from Bern that Austria had announced the break in relations to the American embassy in Vienna yesterday.

Immediately the treasury department ordered the seizure of all Austrian bank notes in American harbors. The Austrian crews were taken off and sent to immigration stations and American guards put on board. Whether Bulgaria and Turkey are preparing to follow suit still is unknown, but officials generally believe that sooner or later they will do so.

time, however, the German star shells and flares were ascending with the same monotonous regularity which marks the German positions along the entire front.

The storm delayed the coming of dawn to such an extent that it was still quite dark when the moment set for the British attack arrived.

Then as if the myriad of guns had been synchronized to the tick of a watch, they broke the forbidding stillness with a volcanic roar. The earth trembled from the shock. The flicking tongues of the inferno appeared now to have been multiplied a hundred fold. The objective hills began to writhe under the tortures of the screaming shells. In the air, played the shrapnel barrage shells, breaking their giant fiery dashes, and hurrying their leaden hail of death on all below. The first volley scarce had reached the German lines when up went the ever-ready signals of distress and "S. O. S." calls for assistance from the supporting artillery. It was difficult to realize that this was not simply a stupendous, almost supernatural, pyrotechnic spectacle arranged for the pleasure of the Gods. It was more difficult still to realize that it was actual reality of war, and that the thousands of flashes and quick flames playing in the dawn were funeral torches lighting the way of souls into eternity.

From the moment the great crater erupted along the horizon, the whole world seemed red. Under the glare of the exploding mines which had been dug under the enemy lines, and out under the shells, could be seen the British soldiers trudging, trudging across "No Man's Land" to a hand-to-hand encounter with the Germans. They moved closely behind the protecting shell curtain sent up by their guns.

As this barrier moved forward, the men kept pace. It will ever be an amazing feature of this war the absolutely cold valor with which the men go into action. Never the old shouting or the impulsive rush to victory—just a slow, deliberate trudge, not more than two or three men grouped, and each silent, with his own thoughts, until actual fighting with the hitherto unseen foe begins. Then it is a quick surrender, a shot or a bayonet thrust, and the attacking wave moves on.

CANADIANS GET PLACE OF HONOR

Vimy Ridge Strongest Defensive Position of Enemy on Western Front.

GREAT GUNS OF BRITISH CAUSED RAIN OF DEATH

Germans Annihilated or Scattered by Terrific Bombardment.

Canadian headquarters in France, via London, April 9.—(By Stewart Lyon, special correspondent of the Canadian Press)—The crest of the Vimy Ridge has been carried. The strongest defensive position of the enemy on the western front has been captured by the army of Sir Douglas Haig, and the Canadian corps was given the place of honor in the great event, being strongly supported by some of the most famous of the British formations. The attack was preceded by a bombardment which continued for several days, and in which guns of the heaviest calibre, formerly used on only the biggest battleships, took part. The results, as revealed by aerial observation, were a repetition of the battle of the Somme, aeroplanes, flying low, could find only shapeless masses of churned-up earth where the enemy's first line had been.

(Continued on page 2)

VICTORY OF VIMY RIDGE A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT FOR CANADIAN TROOPS

Officers Familiar with the Scene of Sunday's Big Success Tell of its Magnitude and Importance.

"Well, sir, it is the beginning of the end," said a returned officer last night when he was informed by a Standard representative that the Canadians had captured Vimy Ridge. "Without a doubt it was one of the strongest, if not the strongest German position on the western front. You can't imagine what this will mean for the Allies. From that ridge the Allied artillery can command a whole uninterrupted view of the valley and table lands below. The Canadian artillery will play havoc with the Germans now."

"This position cost the French 100,000 of their best troops," remarked an officer recently, who was in St. John on his way west, and the Canadians have been given this position to look after. Wait until the spring drive comes and you will hear of the Canadians carrying out a glorious work in this section of the country," concluded the officer on that occasion.

Apparently that time has come. Last night the world was given notice of the fact that the Canadian troops, now considered the premier troops on the western front, had driven the Germans from their most heavily fortified position. "I know the position as well as I know the city of St. John," resumed the local officer, "and let me tell you the Canadians have a lot to be proud of. Not only have they distinguished themselves by driving the Germans out, but in the capture of so many prisoners."

Several of the returned men in the city commenting on the capture of Vimy Ridge spoke of the advantage which the position would render. "The battle of Vimy Ridge will be recorded in history as one of the greatest victories won by colonial troops in France," was the expression which

BRITISH MAKE GREAT DRIVE IN FRANCE

Troops of King George Make Advance of From Two to Three Miles on Front Extending From Henin-Sur-Cojeul, Southeast of Arras, to Givenchy-En-Gohelle, a Distance of About Twelve Miles.

BRAZIL TO ENTER THE WAR SOON

Foreign Minister at Rio Janeiro Refuses to Receive German Diplomat who will Leave Country at Early Date Probably.

Rio Janeiro, April 9.—Dr. Lauro Muller, foreign minister, has refused to receive the German minister. Dr. Muller gave urgent orders that a steamer in Rio Janeiro be made ready at once for a mission abroad.

Dr. Muller conferred with the war minister and the chief of staff. He also urgently requested a report from the Brazilian legation in Paris.

To Sever Relations. Washington, April 9.—In Latin-American diplomatic quarters here it was said late today that Dr. Muller's refusal to receive the German minister to Brazil undoubtedly meant that the government definitely had decided to sever diplomatic relations with Germany.

Dr. Muller's orders that a steamer be prepared "at once for a mission abroad" was interpreted as meaning that the Brazilian government also had determined to arrange for the immediate departure of the German officials. It was considered doubtful that 46 German ships in Brazilian ports would be seized at this time, unless it should appear that the vessels might attempt to escape, or were in danger of being damaged or destroyed by their crews.

REPUBLICAN FLAG RUN UP IN DUBLIN

Colors Raised on Ruins of Old Post Office and from Nelson Pillar—Some Excitement.

London, April 9, 5.15 p. m.—Some excitement was created on O'Donnell street in Dublin today by the hoisting of the republican flag on the ruins of the post office, while a small party waved a similar flag from the Nelson pillar, says a despatch to the Star from Dublin.

The police removed the flag from the post office and dispersed the crowd without making any arrests. Here and there in the city, the despatch reports, a small reproduction of the proclamation of the provisional government of the Irish republic was seen with a foot-note reading: "The Irish republic still lives."

Gained popularity last night after the announcement was made by The Standard, through the slide at the Imperial Theatre.

London, April 9.—An advance of from 2 to 3 miles has been made by the British troops on a front extending from Henin-Sur-Cojeul, southeast of Arras, to Givenchy-En-Gohelle, a distance of about 12 miles. The official report from army headquarters in France makes this announcement tonight and adds that the advance continues. The famous Vimy Ridge was carried by Canadian troops.

Thousands of German prisoners were taken by the British. Up to two o'clock this afternoon 5,816 including 119 officers, passed through the receiving stations, and according to the official report, many more remained to be counted.

Stormed Defences.

The text of the statement reads: "The operations continue to be carried out successfully in accordance with the plans. Our troops everywhere stormed the enemy defences from Henin-Sur-Cojeul to the southern outskirts of Givenchy-En-Gohelle, to a depth of from two to three miles, and our advance continues."

The enemy's forward defences on this front including Vimy Ridge which was carried by the Canadian troops, were captured early in the morning. These defences comprise a network of trenches and fortified localities—Nueville-Vitasse, Telegraph Hill, Tilloy Les Mofflaines, Observation Ridge, St. Laurent-Bianzy, Les Tilleuls and La Folle Farm.

Capture Fortified Places.

"Subsequently our troops moved forward and captured the enemy's rearward defences, including in addition to other powerful trenches, the fortified localities of Peuchy, Chapelle De Peuchy, Hyderbad re-doubt, Athies and Thelus.

"Up to 2 p. m., 5,816 prisoners, including 119 officers passed through the stations and many more remain to be counted. Of these a large number belong to the Bavarian divisions, who have suffered heavy casualties in today's fighting."

Demicourt Taken. "The captured war material includes guns and a number of trench mortars and machine guns which have not yet been counted."

"In the direction of Cambrai further progress has been made in the neighborhood of Havrincourt Wood. We have captured the village of Demicourt."

"In the direction of St. Quentin we captured the village of Pontru and La Vergerue."

"The aerial activity of the past few days has continued with great energy. Several successful bombing raids were carried out by us, our machines cooperating with our artillery with excellent results. Two hostile machines were destroyed and fifteen others were driven down, and probably crashed. Two German kite balloons were brought down in flames. Ten of our airplanes are missing."

FOUR INJURED, ONE PROBABLY FATALLY, WHEN STAGING IN THEATRE AT AMHERST FALLS

Daniel Barnes Likely to Die—False Work of Empire Theatre Under Lease to F. G. Spencer of St. John and Being Reconstructed Collapses—Woman Heroically Rushes to Rescue of Men Buried Under Timbers.

Special to The Standard. Amherst, N. S., April 9.—Four men were nearly hurled to death this afternoon when the falsework of the Empire Theatre burned some time ago and now under process of reconstruction, collapsed, carrying with it three carpenters and the general contractor who were working upon it.

Daniel Barnes was severely injured and it is thought he has but little chance of recovery. He was pinned to the ground by a heavy piece of timber. Both hips were broken and he suffered painful internal injuries. Amelie Allen, the general contractor, in the fall had his arm broken in two places, and Charles Jackson was badly cut about the head. Fred Ripley escaped with a few minor contusions.

Forty Feet High.

The falsework is over forty feet from the ground and at the time the four men were engaged in hoisting a heavy joint to use in the roof. The staging, unable to stand the heavy strain put upon it, without warning collapsed and the four men were precipitated to the hard floor on the interior of the theatre.

A Heroine. Buried in the fallen timbers the men would have suffered for several additional minutes but for a rescue party headed by Mrs. George Goldsmith who heard the calls for help from an adjoining house. She unflinchingly of the still falling planking, added

up in some places.

the carpenters in extricating the injured men. Barnes was immediately rushed to the Highland View Hospital in the ambulance. His condition is critical. Mr. F. G. Spencer, of St. John, is the lessee of the theatre, its owner being Mr. J. V. H. Moore.

HEAVY SNOW STORM
STRIKES THE CITY

The heavy snow storm which raged in New York and west of that city, on Sunday night, reached St. John about noon yesterday. During the morning, although cold, the sun was bright, and the bracing weather was ideal. Towards noon the sky clouded over and soon the snow commenced to fall thickly. The wind increased from the northwest, and late last night the storm had reached the proportions of a small sized blizzard. There was no let up in its fury all the afternoon and night. The street railway officials found it necessary during the night to have the sweeper at work over the line, keeping the tracks clear for the running of the trolly cars.

At three o'clock this morning over a half foot of snow had fallen on the level and there was no indication of the storm ceasing, while the high wind had caused the snow to bank