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BRITISH

**Germans, Hungry and Crazy,
Knew Their Position
Was Hopeless.**

Defenders of Contalmaison Had to Wait For British Attack as Fire Made Retreat Impossible—Germans Suffered Awful as British Guns Tore up Trenches—Glad to Deliver Themselves up First Chance

(By Philip Gibbs in Montreal Gazette.)
With the British armies on the field July 15.—The village of Contalmaison has been taken by the British again! Whether it was ever held before by more than a handful of men who went in and out, is doubtful.

I have already described in previous despatches how the British concentrated fire on positions in front of the village and the upon the village itself with terrific intensity. I saw the beginning of this bombardment, and watched the men going up to the support of the attack, which was to follow.

It was begun when fresh troops, who had been brought up to help the tired men, who had been fighting in this part of the line under heavy fire for several days and they advanced under cover of the guns to the left and right of the village. It was already hemmed in on both sides, for other British troops were in firm possession of Baillif Wood, to the left, and during the evening, by a series of bombing attacks, Mametz Wood, to the right had been.

Almost Cleared of Germans.

The Germans in Contalmaison knew the position was hopeless. When the British guns lifted they heard the cheers of the British infantry on both sides of the village, and many of them streamed out of the village in a disorderly retreat, only to be caught behind by the extended barbed wire between Contalmaison and Pozieres and Bazentin-le-Petit, so that their front route became a shambles.

The British were quickly in the village, and having learnt the lesson by experience of other troops at other places, made a thorough search of machine gun emplacements and dugouts, so there would be no further trouble with this wasps' nest.

The men left in Contalmaison were in a dreadful state. They suffered to the very brink of human endurance and beyond. They were surprised to find themselves living enough to be taken prisoners.

One of these men with whom I talked this morning told me a tragic tale. He spoke a little English, having been a cabinet maker in Tottenham Road some years ago before he went back to Wurtemberg, where when the war began, he was, he said, taken out in a uniform and told to fight. With the other men of the 122nd Bavarian Regiment he went into Contalmaison five days ago. Soon the rations they brought with them were finished. Owing to the ceaseless gunfire, it was impossible to get fresh supplies. They suffered great agonies of thirst and the numbers of their dead and wounded increased steadily.

"There was a Hole in the Ground," said this German cabinet maker, whose head was bound with a bloody bandage, and who was dazed and troubled when I talked with him. "It was a dark hole, which held twenty men! all lying in a heap together, and that was the only dugout for my company, so there was not room for more than a few. It was necessary to take turns in this shelter while outside the English shells were coming and bursting everywhere. Two or three men were dragged out to make room for two or three others, then those who went outside were killed or wounded. Some of them had heads blown off, some of them had both legs torn off, and some of them their arms, but we went on taking turns in the hole, although those who went outside knew it was their turn to die very likely. At last the most of those who came into the hole were wounded, some of them badly, so that we lay in blood.

Other prisoners told me in effect, that the fire was terrible in Contalmaison, and at least half their men holding it were killed or wounded, so that when the British entered last night they walked over the bodies of the dead. These men who escaped were in a pitiful condition. They lay on the ground utterly exhausted most of them, and that was strange, with their faces to the earth. Perhaps it was to blot out the vision of the things seen.

I shall remember the cabinet maker of Tottenham Court Road. In spite of the clay which caked his face and clothes, and the bloody rag round his head, he was a handsome bearded fellow, with blue eyes, which once or twice lighted up with a tragic smile, so that when I asked him when he and are going, were giving up good positions and plantations which were "In 1915," he said, "when I was wounded at Ypres, I thought the war

would end in a few months, and a little while ago I thought so again." Then he muttered something to himself, but loudly enough for me to hear the words "Surely we cannot go on much longer."

I left these men and further down the road I saw many more prisoners there, nearly 300 of them marching down the side track between some ripened corn under mounted escort. Most of them were young and healthy men who walked briskly, and it was only the few behind who limped as they walked and looked broken and beaten men.

It was a good day in prisoners for about 500 have come down from Contalmaison, Mametz Wood, and Trones Wood, as living proofs of the advances in all those places.

Quite Shut Off.

All the prisoners speak of the terror of the British artillery fire and the documents captured in their dugouts tell the same tale in words which reveal the full horror of the bombardment.

"We are quite shut off from the rest of the world," wrote a German soldier on the day before our great attack. Nothing comes to us, no letter. The English keep such a barrage on our approaches it is terrible. To-morrow morning it will be seven days since the bombardment began. We cannot hold out much longer. Everything is shot to pieces."

"Our thirst is terrible," wrote another man. "We hunt our water and drink it out of shell holes."

Many of the men speak of the torture of thirst which they suffered during the bombardment.

"Everyone of us in these five days has become years older. We hardly know ourselves. Bechtel said that in these five days he had lost ten pounds. Hunger could easily be borne, but thirst makes one almost mad. Luckily it rained yesterday and the water in shell holes, with the yellow shell, sulphur, tasted as good as a bottle of beer. To-day we got something to eat. It was impossible to bring food before up into the front line under the violent curtain of fire of the enemy."

One other out of hundreds tells all in a few words: "We came into the front line ten days ago. During this ten days I suffered more than at any time during the last two years. The dugouts are damaged in places and the

Trenches Are Completely Destroyed.

We do not gloat over the suffering of our enemy, though we must make his yield. I have seen things to-day before which one's soul swoons and which, God willing, my pen shall write so that men shall remember the meaning of war but now, when these things are inevitable, we must look only to our progress toward the end.

To-day we made good progress toward it. Yesterday I wrote of a position we attacked on July 1, as a great German fortress with a chain of strongholds linked by underground works. In ten days, by wonderful gallantry of the men and the great powers of the guns, the British have smashed several of their forts as strong as any on the western front and defended as stubbornly by masses of guns and troops, and have stormed a way in so deeply that the Germans are now forced to fall back upon the next line of defence.

The cost has been great, but the German losses and the present position in which they find themselves prove the success of the main attacks. For the first time since the beginning of the war the initiative has passed to the British; and the German Headquarters Staff is pushed for reserves.

**Loyalty in the
Fiji Islands**

MONTREAL, July 8.—Speaking at a recruiting meeting here yesterday, S. F. Marlow, a member of the third draft sent from the Fiji Islands to the battle front, said that of the first contingent of eighty-four men from the Island who went into the trenches of Tottenham Court Road. In spite of the clay which caked his face and clothes, and the bloody rag round his head, he was a handsome bearded fellow, with blue eyes, which once or twice lighted up with a tragic smile, so that when I asked him when he and are going, were giving up good positions and plantations which were "In 1915," he said, "when I was wounded at Ypres, I thought the war

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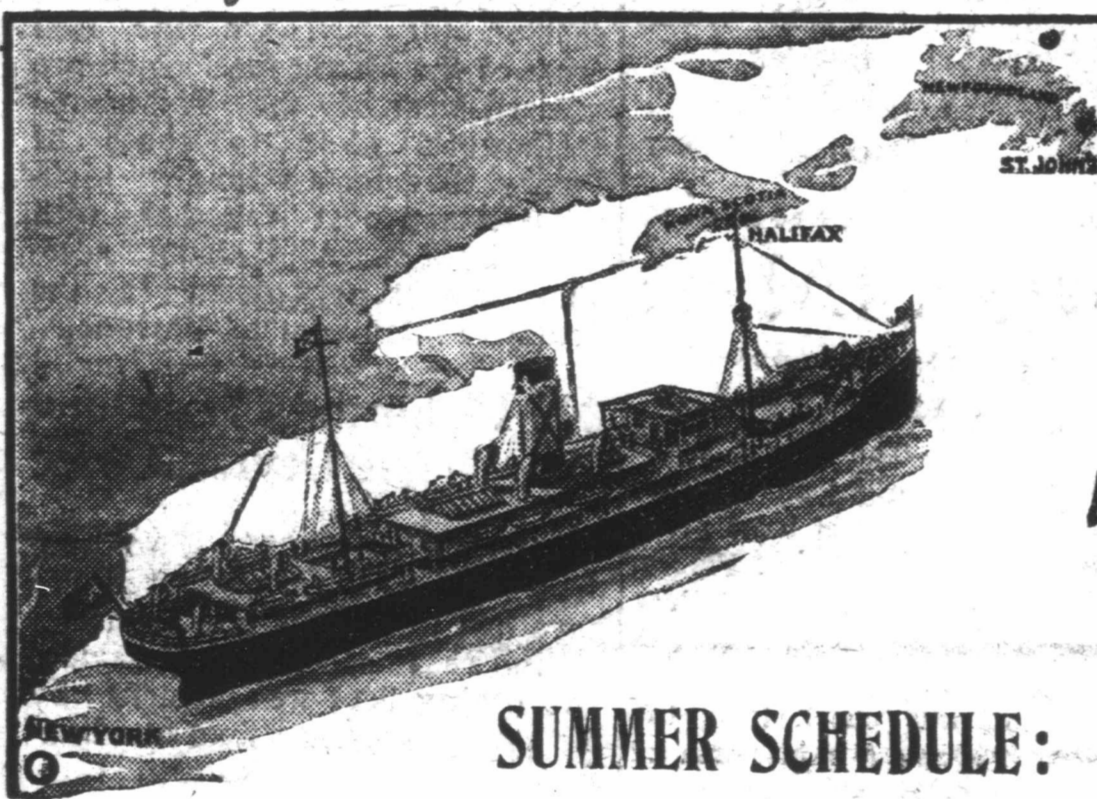
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**The Wounded Are Quickly Removed—
Great Work of Stretcher Bearers
In Vicinity of Peronne.**

(By Georges Lehir, in Montreal Gazette.)

With the French army before Peronne, July 17.—"There, gentlemen, we have reached our destination, the couple of miles before us lies Peronne," said the officer who conducted us through a weary maze of muddy trenches as we came to a low earth-covered shack—a poste d'observation on the southern slopes of the great Sarterre plateau, which, two weeks ago, was thought by the Germans to be an impregnable barrier against the all offensive towards the River Somme which rounds its northern side.

For three long hours we had plodded through sticky mud, stumbling at intervals against the narrow trench sides. Half an hour ago our guide electrified us with the quiet words: "Here was where the attack began." It was a long narrow trench, evidently freshly dug, fully fifty yards in front of the deeper permanent trenches. Yet so well had the work been done by the victorious troops that the lines of trenches and bayonet dugouts in the aftermath of the battle seemed in no-wise inferior to those constructed during the period of comparative inaction.

The most remarkable feature of our pilgrimages was the entire absence of any traces of the battle. We knew that every foot of the ground was stained with French or German blood, yet no human bodies were visible. The guide told us that two hours after the Germans' first line position was in French hands the wounded already had been treated at advances posts de secours. Stretcher-bearers had made no distinction despite the continuous fire and had gathered friend and foe alike with calm, unhurried rapidity. Our observation post is right on the crest of the plateau. From either side telephone wires radiate and we realize the necessity of the earth being piled above the roof, for here we are in plain view of the German guns across the river, and any sumptuous building would instantly be reduced to fragments.

As far as the eye can see the view is utterly the same; utterly monotonous. Nothing but desolate slopes that one were a thickly populated French countryside. The complete inhumanity of the outlook strikes one tremen-

dously. Here two great armies are at death grips, yea apart from the incessant tumult of cannonade and the never-ending rows of little smoke clouds, new ones forming before the preceding ones have time to melt—one might be thousands of miles from us through a weary maze of muddy trenches as we came to a low earth-covered shack—a poste d'observation on the southern slopes of the great Sarterre plateau, which, two weeks ago, was thought by the Germans to be an impregnable barrier against the all offensive towards the River Somme which rounds its northern side.

**PESSIMISTIC
VIEW OF THE
WAR SITUATION**

The Deutsche Tageszeitung prints an interview which Professor Ordo, well known Italian economist, has just had with Signor Giolitti, in which the latter gives rather pessimistic views regarding the European situation:—

"The independence of Italy has been shattered for years to come," said Signor Giolitti. "In place of our dependence upon Germany and Austria-Hungary, which after all, was only a product of our imagination, for we could not really speak of it as dependence, considering the fact that Germany and Austria-Hungary sent us yearly two billions in trade, we are now dependent upon England and France.

"That the situation will in time become intolerable this war has already proved. England has tied our hands and yet expects us to do big things. France asks assistance to crush Germany, offering us nothing in return but honeyed words. Nations cannot organize to win big victories as readily as a revolt can be developed or an unpopular minister.

"The Paris conference did not dispel the suspicion and mistrust that exist among the allied nations. Despite all her cry about crushing German militarism, England really wants to wipe the German navy out of existence but to keep German militarism intact for a possible conflict with Russia later.

"Russia wants the Serbian Adriatic; Italy wants the Italian Adriatic; England wants the integrity of Austria-Hungary upheld; Russia wants Austria-Hungary crushed; Japan demands a free hand in China; England wants a free hand in China, and America wants to be the protector of China.

"The Paris conference produced nothing and could not produce anything more than mere words, behind which there was not a single thought worth while."

**Revolt Against
Turkish Rule**

LONDON, July 17.—The revolt against Turkish rule in Arabia is spreading, says a Reuter despatch from Cairo, and it is stated that the Grand Sheriff of Mecca, leader of the rebels, has an ample supply of men, guns and ammunition. Arabian troops under Said Idriss have captured the town and fort of Kufufuda. The garrison of eight Turkish officers and 190 men were made prisoners, and Idriss' flag now flies over Kufufuda.

The garrison of Fort Taifis still holding out, and an attempted sortie was repulsed with heavy losses by the Arabs, who captured two guns. The Grand Sheriff has ordered the chiefs besieging the fort to hold out until the garrison surrenders. It is understood that Arabs from Medina to the outskirts of Damascus are supporting the Grand Sheriff. Emir Nuri Shalam has thrown his support to Grand Sheriff. Emir Shalam some time ago received many presents from the Turkish Government, but he refused to join in an attack on the Suez Canal. The Arabian newspaper Mokattana, the despatch