

British Line Intact!

GERMAN ARMY GAINS GROUND, BUT BRITISH ARE STANDING FIRM

Battling for Every Point of Vantage, Giving Ground Only When Overwhelmed by Numbers and Exacting Frightful Toll of Lives for Every Foot Abandoned, British Line in Picardy is Still Intact — While Enemy Gains at Number of Points There is No Sign of Disintegration in British Forces.

Bapaume, Nesle and Guiscard Taken by Germans, Who Make Most Progress West of St. Quentin—Enemy Uses Pincers System of Attack Again—French Join British to South of St. Quentin—French Fall Back, But German Progress Not Alarmingly Rapid—Berlin War Office Claims 45,000 British Prisoners.

Battling for every point of vantage, giving ground only when overwhelmed by numbers and exacting a frightful toll of lives for every foot of ground abandoned, the British line in Picardy is still intact.

While the German onslaught gained ground at a number of points on Monday, there was no sign of disintegration in the British forces, which at many points, especially on the northern end of the long line of battle, are standing firm.

The German official report tells of the defeat of the British and their "retreat via Ypres and Sailly." This would seem to indicate heavy fighting far to the north of the Somme battlefield, of which no British report has spoken. There is, however, a town called Sailly south of Bapaume and eastward of this place is a town known as Ytres. It is probable that these were the points referred to in the statement from Berlin.

The largest gains made by the Germans have been west of St. Quentin, where they have captured Nesle and Guiscard. These points, which are at the tip of the Teutonic attack, are over ten miles from the front as it stood on March 21.

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JUDGE BORDEN PASSES AWAY

Well Known Jurist Had Been in Ill Health Two Years — Was Cousin of Sir Robert Borden.

Moncton, March 25.—Death occurred at 9.30 this evening of Robert Allison Borden, judge of the county court of Westmorland and Kent, after an illness lasting over two years.

Judge Borden, who was a second cousin of Sir Robert Borden, was born at Avonport, N. S., seventy-two years ago, but the greater part of his life was spent in Moncton as a practicing barrister. He was appointed judge of the county court March 2, 1912, and ably and honorably presided over the court up to a few months ago.

Judge Borden was a graduate of Mount Allison, studied law with Wetmore and Barker, St. John, and was admitted to the bar in 1869, since which time he has resided in Moncton practicing law up to the time of his appointment to the bench. He was a law partner of C. A. Holstead and Harvey Atkinson, the latter in the law department, Ottawa. He was a brother of Rev. Dr. B. C. Borden, president of Mount Allison University. One sister, Mrs. R. S. Smith, lives in Somerville, Mass.

Judge Borden was one of the most prominent and active citizens in civil life in Moncton, especially during the early days of incorporation. He is widely known in the provinces, not only in legal circles but in commercial and social circles. He is survived by Mrs. Borden, who was formerly Miss Smith, Sussex, and one daughter, Lila, at home.

The funeral will be held Wednesday afternoon under Masonic auspices, the deceased having been a prominent member of the order.

CASUALTIES

Ottawa, Mar. 24.—Casualties: Killed in action—L. P. Breen, St. John, N. B. Presumed to have died—B. A. Colpitt, New Brunswick. E. W. Bean, St. John. Wounded—W. L. McInnis, Shediac, N.B.; J. D. Dewar, Campbellton, N. B. Cavalry. Wounded—Lieut. G. W. Taylor, St. John.

GENERAL AIR-RAID ON TEUTON CITIES

Cologne, Mannheim, Metz and Bruges Heavily Bombarded — Forty-Five Enemy Machines Shot Down and 22 Disabled.

London, March 25.—British aviators have bombed the railway stations at Cologne, as well as various other important cities in Germany, the official statement on aerial operations announces tonight.

The text of the statement reads: "During the night one of the enemy's large bombing machines landed behind our lines. Following a successful daylight raid on Mannheim, other objectives in Germany were attacked during the night.

"Half a ton of bombs were dropped on the railway stations at Cologne, where a fire was started. Over a ton of bombs were distributed between the Luxembourg railway station, where a fire broke out, and the Courcelles railway east of Metz. Two tons of bombs were dropped on the Metz railway station.

"The fight was the most severe so far experienced. Our airplanes shot down 45 enemy machines and drove down 22 out of control. Two other hostile machines were shot down by our anti-aircraft guns. Ten of our machines are missing.

"An equally strong attempt was being made by the invaders to extend the long narrow salient which they had pushed in south of Bapaume, near Longueval—famous in the annals of the battle of the Somme. These places were again the scene of shambles in which the British machine gunners and riflemen exacted a terrible toll of death from the closely pressing enemy.

"Fierce at Nesle.

"Still further south the Germans were pounding the front hard in an endeavor to push on and get a firm grip on Nesle and swing the British right flank back, while the determined defenders were battling doggedly to force the enemy back and reclaim the positions previously held by them along the river.

"The decision at all of these centres is yet in abeyance and the struggle goes on with unabated fury. The resistance of the British right wing has been particularly spectacular.

"On Saturday the Germans essayed the crossing of the Somme on rafts in the Nesle sector, but these expeditious forces were caught in a hail of artillery machine gun and rifle fire and virtually wiped out. Yesterday, however, the Germans succeeded in getting troops across in this manner, and followed these advanced guards up with strong forces which pushed on in the neighborhood of Morchain. The British were contesting the enemy advances fiercely and, at latest reports, were holding the head-hitting enemy strongly.

Yesterday's Developments As Announced by Marshal Haig and the War Office

London, Mar. 25.—"Fighting of the most severe description has been taking place all day on wide fronts south of Peronne and south and north of Bapaume," says Field Marshal Haig's report from British headquarters in France tonight.

"In both sectors the enemy has attacked our positions in great strength with fresh forces, and in spite of the gallant resistance of our troops, has forced us to give ground.

"German troops are in Nesle and Bapaume. Heavy fighting continues."

London, Mar. 25.—The capture by the Germans of the towns of Nesle and Guiscard, announced by Berlin today, is confirmed in this evening's British official statement.

The text of the evening statement reads: "During the morning of March 25, our troops on the front from the Somme as far north as Wancourt had beaten off continuous and heavy attacks with complete success. Heavy losses have been inflicted on the enemy by our artillery and machine guns, whilst our low-flying airplanes repeatedly attacked the enemy's advancing columns further to the rear."

"A heavy attack delivered by fresh enemy troops in the afternoon enabled them to make progress west and southwest of Bapaume, in the direction of Courcellette. South of Peronne, our troops have been pressed back in several places slightly west of the Somme, while further south the enemy has succeeded in making some progress and has captured Nesle and Guiscard."

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CANADIANS NOT INVOLVED IN HEAVY FIGHTING YET

Sir Robert Borden Informs House of Commons on Progress of Operations in France—Very Much Depends on Outcome of Present Combat—Sir Sam Hughes Asks Some Remarkable Questions and is Called to Order.

Ottawa, Mar. 25.—Sir Robert Borden announced in the House of Commons this afternoon that he had been in communication with Sir Edward Kemp by cablegram as to developments in the German offensive. Sir Edward Kemp had replied that the Canadians were not yet involved. Sir Robert also read an extract of the official communication from Paris and London, giving the progress of the operations.

The prime minister continued: "Undoubtedly as far as one can judge, the Germans are throwing absolutely their full forces into the attack. It seems to have been encountered with as great a success as was attained in the first instance. There is no question at all that very much depends upon the issue and I know that the hearts of the people in the whole country will be lifted up in intercession that the right may prevail."

Sir Sam Hughes—"Intercession is very proper, but I should like to ask the following questions of the prime minister, which perhaps he may not be in a position to answer today."

The former minister of militia then proceeded: "(1)—Inasmuch as Canadians are engaged in the titanic struggle now going on for the preservation of human liberty, is the government taking the necessary steps to maintain to the highest degree, the pride, the courage, the resolution, the steadfastness, and the confidence of the splendid and gallant soldiers of Canada, as well as of the Empire at large in this struggle?"

"(2)—Have the government taken precautions in the management of the forces, the appointment and the promotion of officers therein and the granting of honors, awards and decorations that favor from female society, created or undue influences shall not prevail, but that all shall be awarded on the one basis of merit and fitness alone."

Here the Speaker interrupted by calling Major-General Hughes to order. The Speaker remarked that the questions were not of such urgency that they could not go on the order paper.

Sir Sam, however, concluded his questions. He asked if the government had done anything to prevent panicky and sensational dispatches from a "few mentally epileptic reporters from overseas." He also asked if the government had any explanation why the allied forces, "splendidly armed and equipped and in chosen positions of their own, made up of the best men in the world and numbering from seven to ten men per yard of front recently gave way before an enemy not their equal in manhood nor superior in armament, even though they numbered thirty men a yard of front in an attack."

Major-General Newburn answering a question by Mr. Demers stated that 448,022 men have enlisted voluntarily for overseas services from the start of the war to date. From January 1st, 1917, to September 1st, 1917, there were 47,727 voluntary enlistments. The total number of recruits who have enlisted to date is 472,728.

Mr. Casgrain asked the minister of militia if the government was aware or not that certain young men of militia age residing in the district of Toronto inflicted wounds on themselves to avoid military service. Sir Robert Borden in reply said that the government had no information in regard to the matter, but that if definite statements were made there would be an investigation.

Replying to Mr. Casgrain, it was stated no definite announcement had been made by the military authorities that from 150 to 250 thousand soldiers would be brought back from Europe to Canada before the month of June.

In replying to further questions by Mr. Casgrain the minister said information was not available as to how many of the soldiers to be returned are wounded.

Two motions of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the first for a copy of all memoranda and petitions by subjects of Austria naturalized in Canada setting forth grievances and suggesting remedies and the second for a copy of all petitions or communications of any kind, either asking for or opposing the importation of coolie labor, from the 1st of September last, were carried.

Hon. Robert Lemieux asked for a copy of all letters and telegrams exchanged between the Dominion government and the various provincial legislatures concerning the order-in-council of December 22nd, 1917, respecting the sale of securities by provincial, colonial or foreign governments, or other bodies. Mr. Lemieux in moving for the production of these documents, stated that the order-in-council of December 22nd was illegal and unconstitutional inasmuch as it attempted to control the borrowing powers of provincial governments.

Field Marshal Haig's Army Is Gallantly Defending Amiens

GOV'T IS NOT A GOOD BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Too Hasty Preparation of Bills and Consequent Waste of Valuable Time.

MANY MEASURES ARE REVAMPED

Government Evidently Lacks Faculty of Preparing Proper Legislation.

OPPOSITION LEADERS MAKE A PROTEST

Stumpage Bill Does Not Even Suit All Government Members.

Special to The Standard.

Fredericton, Mar. 25.—Every session of the legislature brings its quota of evidence that the title legislation submitted by the government bears all the marks of hasty preparation and insufficient discussion and consideration in council. Measures offered to the House are found when they come to the committee stage to be incomplete in structure and even faulty in principle also that members of the government have not completely decided in their own minds as to the merit of the bills. The natural result of this condition is a wasting of time and money in the discussion of measures in committee only to have a large proportion of them held over and amended. It really seems as if the government in itself lacks the faculty of preparing acceptable legislation but submit their unfinished productions to the committee, hear the criticism and suggestion of members not only on the opposition side but often on their own benches and then hold the bills over to introduce them again in improved shape.

Much Time Wasted.

In the House tonight Hon. Mr. Murray, leader of the opposition, and Hon. Mr. Baxter protested against the wasting of time in the discussion of incomplete legislation. The subject under review was a government measure introduced by Hon. Mr. Smith, Minister of Lands and Mines, to facilitate the collection of stumpage. The bill was introduced on Friday, but when it came back tonight was not in shape and aroused opposition from government supporters, including Hon. J. P. Burchill. It was evident that sufficient consideration had not been given in council and Hon. Mr. Murray pressed this point. Hon. Mr. Smith admitted that he had not had opportunity to consider the bill as it should have been considered. Hon. Mr. Robinson suggested that it should be withdrawn until a better measure could be worked out.

Mr. Baxter agreed that this could be done, but did not think such action was in line with the title of the administration "The Business Government."

It had become the habit to bring legislation to the committee as an unfinished garment, have it considered and then withdrawn to be tailored to suit. This was not the plan followed by the former administration. When their bills were brought in they were correct in principle, were put down when ready and then passed.

Had Two Policies.

The present government in its administration of the stumpage question had pursued two policies within a few weeks, first they had decided upon a high stumpage and later they decided to change it. These things had been done by a government dignified by the name of a business man's government. Mr. Potts took the same view. The government really seemed to be doing

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Kaiser's Hope of Successful Enveloping Movement Not Yet Realized.

ADVANCES OF ENEMY MOSTLY NEUTRALIZED

British Army Has Suffered Heavy Defeat But Not a Disaster.

GERMANS CONTINUE VIOLENT FIGHTING

British Now Have Their Toes in and Are Holding Gallantly.

By Arthur S. Draper. (Copyright 1918—Special Cable to New York Tribune and St. John Standard.)

London, Mar. 25.—Like a football team battered back to the 25 yard line, Haig's army has found itself and is making a gallant defense of Amiens, which is the immediate goal of the German forces. The Kaiser's hope of a successful enveloping movement has not been realized and his plans to seize Amiens, an important railway center, has been so far frustrated.

The British army has suffered a heavy defeat but not disaster. A line running south from Bapaume along the west bank of the Somme canal roughly follows the British positions at the opening of what Hindenburg calls the "Great Battle of Bapaume." Against these positions the Germans have made repeated assaults, but British counter-attacks have neutralized most of the enemy's advances.

North of Bapaume and south of Peronne the greatest pressure has been brought to bear, but it has not been sufficient to displace the defenders. The enemy continues to fight with the greatest violence and desperation along the whole sector, but there is no question but that the British now have their toes in and are holding gallantly.

Still Some Danger.

The British are not out of the woods although the situation has improved considerably. The British withdrawal was orderly. The British have also shown by their counter thrusts, that although buffeted and beaten, they still carry a heavy punch.

I understand that several French and American divisions held in reserve have been in action and have given good account of themselves on the right flank. About Koyon and the River Oise, the French have been giving the British invaluable assistance since Saturday. Several divisions have been hurled into the breach and the German onslaught has been somewhat retarded.

Necessarily the British, in their hurried retirement, were forced to abandon many guns and large quantities of stores and ammunition, but the German claims of rich booty should be accepted with reserve. Guns on concrete emplacements were obviously immovable but the British destroyed these before abandoning them.

I have made two trips over the present battlefield which the British secured only a short time back. If further retirement is necessary, the British will fall back to Albert-Roye line of 1916, covering Amiens. This is an especially strong position. Anglo-French forces held it from the fall of 1914 to the opening of the Somme offensive in July, 1918. The whole country is undulating, offering exceptionally good defensive positions.

May Try for Rheims.

If the enemy is held here, it is reasonable to expect he will attempt a drive with Rheims as the objective. Already an intense bombardment has been opened in this sector.

Armentieres and LaBassee are also likely to become lively soon. To lose Peronne means nothing nor does the evacuation of Bapaume; the only thing that counts is that the armies of Byng and Gough remain intact. The haul of British prisoners, most of whom are from Scotch battalions, causes no alarm, because the public appreciates the size of the forces engaged.

On this point, Hilaire Belloc comments: "His claims are familiar to the public—30,000 prisoners, 600 guns. The numbers he massed for the first shock are also familiar—40 divisions swelling in the second day to 50 as losses were replaced and fresh troops were brought forward, and perhaps 25 more divisions still remaining to be thrown

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