

BRITISH ARMY WITHSTANDS POWERFUL HUN OFFENSIVE

MARSHAL HAIG'S LINE TO WEST OF CAMBRAI REMAINS UNBROKEN

His Men Have Inflicted Frightful Casualties on the Enemy in Battle That Has Rivalled in Ferocity Any That Has Preceded it During Three and a Half Years of Warfare—Greatest Conflicts at Cambrai Salient from the Gauche Wood to l'Agincourt, South and North Bases of Salient—On the Northern Salient Germans Bend Back British Line About Two and a Half Miles.

Berlin Foreign Office States That Sixteen Thousand British Soldiers and Two Hundred Guns Have Been Captured—Teutons Use More Than Four Hundred Thousand Men in Attempt to Smash British Front—Huns Had One Thousand Guns in One Small Sector—Kaiser and His Generals at the Scene.

In a battle rivaling in ferocity any that has preceded it during three and a half years of warfare, the British, on a fifty mile front, have withstood a great German offensive in its initial stage. At some points the British line has been bent back, but not as much as had been expected by military experts acquainted with the forces the Germans had brought up and the power of the guns they had behind the line.

As the result of the struggle on that part of the front just west of Cambrai, where the fighting apparently was hottest, the British line nowhere has been broken and Field Marshal Haig's men have inflicted frightful casualties on the enemy.

As an indication of the sanguinary nature of the fighting, the Berlin foreign office states that 16,000 men and 200 guns have been captured. This may be compared to the British losses in the German counter-offensive on December 4, 1917, when six thousand men and 100 guns were captured.

The first reports of infantry fighting were indicative of an attempt on the part of the Germans to drive wedges into both sides of the Cambrai salient. Later despatches have proved that this was the plan of the German general staff. The fighting on the rest of the fifty mile front was but a side issue to the terrific onslaught aimed at Gauche Wood and l'Agincourt, the south and north bases of the salient.

There is no date upon which it is possible to estimate the success attained by the Germans to the south, but names of towns at which the armies were battling, show that on the northern salient the Germans bent back the British line about two and a half miles. It was reported that St. Ledger was the scene of a hard struggle and that Doignies had been retaken by the British. These points are about four kilometres or 2.48 miles back of the British lines as they stood before the attack began.

The concentration of men and artillery on the British front, as shown in official reports, demonstrates that the Germans are making a determined effort to smash the British front. Forty divisions or about 400,000 Teutonic troops are in the fight.

The Kaiser on The Ground.

The total number of cannon the Germans are employing cannot be estimated, but unofficial reports say that there were 1,000 guns on one small sector. Austrian and Bulgarian troops have made their appearance on the British front.

The attack was launched under the eyes of Emperor William, Field Marshal Von Hindenburg and General Ludendorff, the three guiding spirits of the German war machine.

The French report fighting in various sectors, especially in Champagne and Lorraine.

Hostilities are not limited to the front in France, but the Italian battle line is beginning to show signs of activity beyond the ordinary. An Austrian attack in the Brenzella Valley was checked by the Italians after an advanced post had been taken. The Brenzella River is a tributary of the Brenta, and a drive there would be for the purpose of gaining a foothold on a road to the plains of northern Italy.

American cannon have continued the terrific pounding of the German lines in the Lunenburg sector and raiding parties have found that the German trenches there have been demolished. So complete is the evacuation of the German first lines that an American patrol crossed No Man's Land without artillery assistance and without being fired upon by the enemy.

The Germans, continuing their advance in southern Russia, have captured the city of Ochakov, 41 miles northeast of Odessa.

The Germans are also continuing their invasion further north. Chaotic conditions are reported in Northern Russia, where the people are fleeing as best they may from the invading Teutons.

British Statement.

London, March 22.—The Germans on Friday along almost all of the battlefield continued their attacks in great strength. At several points the enemy made gains against the British, but at others he was repulsed in counter-attacks, according to the British official communication issued tonight.

The statement says the British losses are inevitably have been considerable,

but not out of proportion to the magnitude of the battle. The enemy's losses continue very heavy, all his advances being made at great sacrifices. The greatest courage is being shown by the British troops.

The communication says: "This morning the enemy renewed his attacks in great strength along practically the whole of the battle front. Fierce fighting occurred in our battle positions and is still continuing. The enemy has been thrown back by our counter-attacks."

"Our losses inevitably have been considerable, but they have not been out of proportion to the magnitude of the battle."

"From reports received from all parts of the battlefield the enemy's losses continue to be very heavy, and his advance everywhere has been made at great sacrifice."

Gallant Fighting.

"Our troops are fighting with the greatest gallantry. When all ranks and all units of every arm behave so well it is difficult, at this stage of the battle, to distinguish instances."

"Exceptional gallantry was shown, however, by the troops of the 24th Division in a protracted defence at Leverrier and by the Third Division who maintained our positions in the neighborhood of Croisilles and to the north of that village against repeated attacks."

"A very gallant fight was made by the 51st Division in the neighborhood of the Bapaume-Cambrai road against repeated attacks."

"Identification obtained in the course of the battle shows that the enemy's opening attack was delivered by some forty divisions, supported by great masses of German artillery reinforced by Austrian batteries. Many other German divisions have since taken part in the fighting, and others are arriving in the battle area."

Huns Continue Battle.

British Army Headquarters in France, Mar. 22.—(By The Associated Press)—The Germans today continued their assault against the positions in the Cambrai sector, notably in the region of Croisilles and Hargicourt. At

least forty divisions have been identified on the battlefield. No such concentration of artillery has been seen since the war began.

On the southern battlefield a bitter struggle was waged today. The enemy had 1,000 guns in one small sector—one for every twelve yards. Severe fighting was proceeding this morning in St. Ledger, southwest of Croisilles.

The hardest fighting yet in the northern battle was between the Canal Du Nord and Croisilles. Doignies was retaken yesterday evening in a brilliant counter-attack. A bright sun at midday today rendered observation possible.

German Statement.

London, Mar. 22.—(British Admiralty, per wireless press)—Sixteen thousand prisoners and two hundred guns have been captured by the Germans according to a German official communication received by wireless tonight.

"The text of the communication follows: 'The successes of yesterday in the fighting between Arras and La Fere were extended in the continuation of our attack.'

"Sixteen thousand prisoners and two hundred guns so far have been reported captured. Before Verdun the artillery duel continued. From other theatres of the war there is nothing new to report."

Had 40 Divisions.

London, Mar. 22.—The news coming from correspondents at the front today that forty German divisions were engaged in the fighting on the front of attack and that the greatest concentration of artillery in the world's history was operating, gave the British an idea of the tremendous struggle on the west front.

"But nothing in the despatches, either from Field Marshal Haig or from the newspaper correspondents had prepared them for the German claim, which reached London late tonight, of the capture of sixteen thousand prisoners and two hundred guns as the result of the first day's fighting in the new German offensive and the disposition at the moment is to regard the claim as an exaggeration."

Capt. Abbott Dead.

The death is announced in Bucksport, Me., of Capt. Melvin L. Abbott, a well known Eastern Steamship Co. pilot, who retired in 1915. He was sixty-seven years of age and had been with the International Line and its successors thirty-two years. He ran to St. John on the steamer Brunswick. Later he went to the Bangor line.

BLAIR, HUGHES AND COMPANY FEED AT GRIB

Foster Government Takes Care of Friends in a Very Substantial Way.

A BUSY ATTORNEY OF FREDERICTON

Much Seed Goes to Political Followers of Band Wagon.

ABOUT 250 MERCHANTS AND FARMERS STILL OWE

Another Tweeddale Scheme Costs the Province Trifling \$1,272.08.

Special to The Standard. Fredericton, Mar. 22.—Answers to enquiries by members of the opposition in the legislature are bringing out interesting information to show that friends of the Foster Government have profited well since that government assumed office.

The other day it was shown that Harry M. Blair, the merchant and discredited scoundrel of the public works department, the gentleman whose testimony Mr. Commissioner Teed refused to believe under oath had been rewarded for his political services by a three months job in Mr. Veniot's department at \$400 per month or \$1,200 in all.

This afternoon came the turn of Mr. Peter Hughes, an enquiry asking what sums he had drawn from the treasury and what were still due to him. The answer showed that already Mr. Hughes, who is a lawyer in Fredericton, has drawn \$213.38 and that \$750 is still due him for services as clerk of the executive council, making in all \$963.38. That this gentleman who was a Foster candidate in York county has obtained in working for the Government when not engaged with his legal duties.

Still Owe The Gov't.

But it is not only in the way of easy jobs that friends of the Foster party have profited. A reply by Mr. Tweeddale, Minister of Agriculture, elicited the information that 250 farmers and merchants in the province are still indebted to the Government for seed purchased last year. Mr. Tweeddale did not announce the total of the bills outstanding but as they ran from 60 cents to more than as many dollars it can be seen that there is a considerable sum still due the department on that transaction.

The seed was imported and sold to farmers a great flourish of journalistic trumpets through Fosterite newspapers heralded the glad tidings that it was part of Mr. Tweeddale's great scheme for the reclamation of New Brunswick into an agricultural paradise and more over that it would not cost the province a cent as the seed would only be sold to responsible parties and for cash or approved notes payable on Oct. 31 last.

Few Political Friends.

"Now many months later he is forced to announce that 250 of those persons who were to step up and deposit their cash for seed or who were certainly to pay for it in thirty days are still delinquent. What is the inference? Was the seed sold to unreliable parties or to political friends with the understanding that the widely advertised terms of sale could be stretched a little bit to meet their particular cases. At any rate the money is still due.

The greater production meeting in Fredericton, another of Mr. Tweeddale's schemes, was shown to have cost \$1,272.08. This, it is understood, covers advertising and the expense of delegates. Whether it is worth the cost is a matter concerning which there is much diversity of opinion.

CAPT. ABBOTT DEAD

The death is announced in Bucksport, Me., of Capt. Melvin L. Abbott, a well known Eastern Steamship Co. pilot, who retired in 1915. He was sixty-seven years of age and had been with the International Line and its successors thirty-two years. He ran to St. John on the steamer Brunswick. Later he went to the Bangor line.

VICTORY BONDS NOT TO BE TAXED IN PROVINCE

MORE ROBBERIES OCCUR IN NEW GLASGOW TOWN

Store Entered and Several Hundred Dollars Worth of Clothing Taken—Highwaymen Hold Up and Rob Woman Ticket Seller.

Special to The Standard. New Glasgow, N. S., Mar. 22.—It is beginning to look as if New Glasgow is infested with a gang of highway men and burglars. The clothing store of J. Fisher Grant was robbed yesterday. The burglars entered by one of the upper windows at the rear of the store. Officers Lewis and Hayden passed the store at 1 a. m. and found everything alright. When Officer Lewis came along again about 1.30 he noticed a broken window. He immediately sounded his whistle and this brought Officer Hayden upon the scene.

Just how much clothing was stolen is not known but in checking up the property missed from the store, three raincoats, a quantity of underwear, caps, ties, etc., amounting to between \$300 and \$400.

Only a very few hours before this robbery was committed the woman ticket seller at the Academy left the theatre for N. W. Mason's confectionery store, a distance of just one block. She had under her arm two rolls of tickets and a cash box which contained \$70. When about half way between the theatre and the confectionery store she was stopped from behind and made a grasp for the box and the tickets. They succeeded in getting the tickets, but she managed to hold on to the cash box. The highway men made their escape.

CASUALTIES

Ottawa, Mar. 22.—Tonight's list of 107 casualties reports twenty-eight men killed in action, one killed accidentally, two died of wounds, three died, two missing, four reported dead by Germans, three prisoners of war, thirty-six wounded, twenty gassed and eight ill. The list includes:

- Artillery.
- Gassed: F. S. Webster, Shediac, N. B. Forestry Corps.
- Wounded: C. I. Hachey, Free Grant, Gloucester county, N. B. Cavalry.
- Missing: Lieut. G. W. Taylor, St. John, N. B.

TWELVE MORE DEAD

Washington, Mar. 22.—Twelve additional deaths as a result of the collision between the destroyer Manley and a British man-of-war March 19, were announced today by the navy department.

It was announced also that ten men not reported yesterday also were injured.

N. B. MAN A VICTIM

Salisbury, Mar. 22.—One of the twenty victims of a lumber camp fire at Riverdale, N. S., near Truro, was George Ayles, a nephew of Crossdale Ayles. He was born at Cherryvale, Nova Scotia, three miles from Salisbury. He was forty-five years of age and unmarried.

MAINE FIRE

Minn. Me., Mar. 22.—Fire yesterday destroyed St. Mary's Roman Catholic church, the town hall, town schools, and two residences. The loss is about \$25,000.

PERSONALS

Mrs. Henry S. Culver and Miss Dorothy Culver left by the Boston Train last evening for Vineland, N. J., where they will spend some months.

Mrs. Elizabeth Corrigan is reported seriously ill at her home 60 Chapel street.

Mrs. George Thompson.

The death is announced in Carleton Place, Ont., of Mrs. George Thompson, formerly Miss Helens Ridgout, of Upper Kent, Carleton county. She was fifty-five years of age. Mrs. George Hawthorne of Upper Kent is a sister.

Premier Foster Compelled to Yield to Opposition Members and Some of His Supporters Who Protested Against His Plan—Assessment of \$518,000 for Patriotic Fund, Although Only \$400,000 is Required, Planned by Government—How Much Did Hon. W. P. Jones Draw?

Special to The Standard. Fredericton, Mar. 22.—Victory bonds are to be exempted from taxation not only in St. John but in every other community throughout the province. This was the practical result of the consideration in committee of the whole house this afternoon of a measure sent up by the city of St. John asking authority to exempt Victory bonds sold in that centre. The bill was introduced by Hon. Dr. Roberts on Thursday, but he took no part in urging its passage, and it is due to the opposition members from St. John that the action of today was decided upon.

When the bill came up this afternoon Premier Foster withdrew his opposition to it, stating that he had been informed that the bonds had been sold in St. John on the understanding that they would not be taxed. This being the case he did not press his objection.

Mr. Robinson Agrees. Hon. Mr. Robinson said a general bill should be introduced exempting similar bonds sold in other parts of the province. This view was shared by Hon. Mr. Sweeney, who said that municipalities and counties in the province had issued bonds for patriotic purposes and it would be unfair to tax them if the Victory bonds were exempted. Hon. Mr. Baxter pointed out that municipal bonds were exempted from taxation anyway and there was no necessity to make additional provision for them. The Victory bonds being issued by the Canadian government did not come under existing legislation and an act to cover them should be passed.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said that in canvassing for Victory bonds in his own county he has said that they were exempt from taxation.

Hon. Mr. Murray, leader of the opposition, said that he had done the same thing as chairman of the committee in Kings county.

Mr. Peck of Albert made a similar confession. Mr. Foster finally suggested that the bill be permitted to stand and that a bill covering the situation all over the province be submitted in its stead. This was agreed to and the committee reported progress.

Patriotic Assessment.

Hon. C. W. Robinson introduced a bill to provide for the patriotic assessment in the same sum as last year, \$518,000. Last year the whole sum had been devoted to the purpose of the patriotic fund, but he had been informed that less money would be required this year. In fact he thought \$400,000 would cover it. He made the sum in the bill the same as last year, however, in order to cover assessments for other patriotic purposes, for which it might be necessary to raise money. The bill was read a first time and will be considered in committee next week.

Another interesting little side light of the afternoon was a protest from Mr. Veniot against the number of questions asked by the opposition. In the case a question by Mr. Smith of Carleton respecting bridge expenditures had required the services of four members of his staff two days to prepare the information requested.

Missing Accounts.

It may be said that the asking of questions on the floors of the legislature has always been one of the features of the work there and that in many cases there is no other way of obtaining the desired information. In the case of the question of which Mr. Veniot complained Mr. Smith explained that if the public accounts had been on the tables of the members

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WANT GOVERNMENT TO OPERATE CARAQUET AND GULF SHORE RY.

Large and Representative Meeting Held at Caraquet—Meetings Being Organized Throughout Gloucester—No Train from Bathurst Since Five Weeks Ago—Farmers, Fishermen and Merchants Fear They Will Lose Heavily.

Special to The Standard.

Caraquet, Mar. 22.—A large and representative public meeting was held here last night in connection with the agitation to have the federal government take over the Caraquet and Gulf Shore Railway. Strong addresses were delivered by prominent citizens and business men present, after which a committee was appointed and instructed to draw up resolutions and have them forwarded to the minister of Railways, the Hon. F. B. Carvell, O. Turgon, M.P., and the representatives of the county in the Local Legislature. The following resolutions were unanimously passed:

Whereas, petitions pointing out the deplorable and unsafe condition of the Caraquet and Gulf Shore Railway and its unfitness to satisfactorily perform the public service required of it were signed by a large number of the residents and ratepayers of this county and forwarded to the Hon. F. B. Carvell, Minister of Public Works, Ottawa, respectfully asking that the government acquire the railway and operate it as part of the government railway system in the interests of the people; and

Whereas, the Caraquet and Gulf Shore Railway represents the only system of transportation on the south side of Bay of Chaleur from Bathurst, Shippegan and Tracadie, a distance of more than a hundred miles, on which is dependent the traffic resulting from the agricultural, lumbering and extensive fishing industries along the coast; and

Whereas, the service performed by the railway, which for some time has been most unsatisfactory and irregular, has now become entirely inadequate to handle the increased traffic, notwithstanding the equipment recently obtained from the government; and

Whereas, the government has taken no definite action thus far to acquire the railway and operate it in the interests of the people; therefore

Resolved, that in the opinion of this meeting representative of the industrial, agricultural and fishing interests of the community the time has now arrived when serious loss and injury will accrue to these industries unless the railway is taken over by the government railway system.

It is understood that meetings are being organized in all the parishes of the county as the people are up in arms against the present situation. It is over five weeks since a train has come through from Bathurst and as a matter of fact there has been no regular train service since last November. There are hundreds of car loads of potatoes and other produce in the low-lying parishes of this county which farmers are unable to market owing to the lack of railway service, besides enormous quantities of provisions and fishing supplies which must come over the railway to be distributed among the different fishing localities along the coast and it is felt that unless immediate relief is afforded and the government take over the railway and operate it serious loss will result.