

YOU'LL BE SURE TO FIND IT IN "The MAIL and ADVOCATE"

THE MAIL AND ADVOCATE

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LT. JACKSON SPENT XMAS IN TRENCHES

Newfoundlander Describes Some Interesting Scenes As Germans and Britons Fraternised, Forgetting War for a While.

By last mail Mr. and Mrs. John Jackson received a very interesting letter from their son Alex. who, as is well known, is a lieutenant with the Engineers of the British Expeditionary Force.

The Letter

My Dear Mother and Father.—Just a few lines to let you know how we spent our Christmas Day "campaigning." For a fortnight before a couple of us had been detached from the company and had been working up at the trenches.

On Christmas Eve we came back to our old billets just in time for dinner and went to bed early to have a good sleep and a good slack day to look forward to on the morrow.

The company were to have a holiday—actually the first day with absolute nothing to do since we left England. Up at 9 for 9.30 breakfast. What luxury. Sausages, ham, eggs and bacon for breakfast.

Tour in State

At 10 o'clock we had one of the wagons out with a team of horses hooked in and entirely "manned" by officers—the Major had an armchair sitting in front. We also had on board a step-ladder which we put down when we wanted to dismount. In this wagon we did a tour round in a neighboring town to visit another field company and also to try and borrow a piano from one of the houses.

We got back just in time for our Christmas dinner at 12.30 consisting of tinned turkey, potatoes, beans, beef pudding, mince pies, and also desert, crystallised fruits, etc., so on the whole we did ourselves pretty proudly.

The Princess' Gifts

We were off again at 2 in the officers cart for Princess Mary's gifts to the troops. After we got them we went on to raise the piano, which we had failed to obtain in the morning, but this time we were more successful and returned with a wagon loaded with five officers and a piano. We had only two collisions on the way home, neither of them serious. Then we set the piano down and had a musical evening, the piano being a very capable performer on the piano.

I am sending home Princess Mary's presents and various Christmas cards for you to keep for me till I come home.

Wet Weather Trying

We had a beautiful frosty day for Christmas; today it's been snowing all day, but has now turned to rain; so I suppose we are in for another dose of mud. We especially welcome the dry weather, as most of our work consists in devising expedients for getting rid of the water in the trenches, and so the less wet weather the less work for us.

It was very funny yesterday in the trenches, I believe, and some extraordinary scenes were witnessed. The Germans and our fellows each got over the parapets of the trenches and went and walked about in between our fellows giving them presents of bully beef and cigarettes. The German Col. at one part came out and chatted with our officers. They all said they were pretty fed up with the war, and I'm glad to say that most of our men had the sense to say they weren't and were quite happy though of course, as a matter of fact, everyone is fed up to the neck with it, but it was a good thing not to let the Germans know.

Rumor has it that they had a football match in one part, but I don't altogether believe this; but one thing

Russians Start New Year With Forward Movement Of Big New Poland Army

London, Jan. 16.—The latest official reports from the Russian General Staff disclose new operations on the part of the Russian army which may have far-reaching results.

Starting with their New Year the Russian cavalry commenced a forward movement in Northern Poland, on the right bank of the Lower Vistula River and have reached the Skrawa River, driving a small force of German cavalry and infantry before them. It is believed that the Grand Duke Nicholas, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces, intends to use an entirely new army consisting, according to a Petrograd despatch of from 800,000 to 1,000,000 men in this region, operating in conjunction with the army which is advancing in East Prussia.

This army would place the German troops at Mlawa in a vice and at the same time threaten the Germans in front of Warsaw. The latter are still making occasional attacks on the Russian line and, according to a Berlin report, have taken a Russian vantage point North-east of the Rawka River.

Along the rest of the Eastern front nothing of importance has happened.

In the west the German success in regaining in a few days from the French ground near Soissons which it took the soldiers of General Joffre, Commander-in-Chief of the French forces, a fortnight to capture remains an outstanding feature, although it has been somewhat offset by the reported British success near Labasse and the capture by Zouaves of some German trenches in the region of Arras.

Attacks and Counter-Attacks. There have been attacks and counter-attacks at other points but, generally, it has been artillery which has been kept busy.

The Russians continue to harry the Turks, who made a stand on the border of Trans-Caucasia after their recent defeat and claim to be capturing many more prisoners.

The Russians are also making new dispositions in the Province of Azerbaijan, Persia, which Turks have promised to evacuate as soon as the Russians leave the Province.

CASUALTIES ESTIMATED AT 25,000 TO 50,000. Rome, Jan. 16.—From 25,000 to 50,000 still remains the unofficial estimate of the casualties resulting from the earthquake.

Allies Admit Losses On Aisne Near Soissons

German Success Only Temporary Say Military Men

London, Jan. 15.—A reverse of the Allies along the River Aisne in the neighborhood of Soissons, is admitted in the latest French official statement, although the possible effect of the German advance is officially minimized. After continuous engagements which lasted nearly two days, the Germans forced the French to yield in front of Vregny, to the east of Crouy. It is explained by the French war office that the flooding of the river Aisne destroyed several bridges and thus rendered precarious communication with our troops operating on the right bank.

These troops were withdrawn as it was thought impossible to send reinforcements to their support.

BRITISH MAKE IMPORTANT GAIN NEAR LABASSE.

Paris, Jan. 15.—The Havas Agency has received a despatch from St. Omer, dated Jan. 10th, which relates a British victory and advance near Labasse of one mile. The British by an impetuous attack stormed strongly an entrenched German position near Labasse at 2 o'clock this afternoon, after a preliminary shelling. This is an important strategic point and its occupation represents an advance of one mile. The British losses were slight but the Germans lost heavily and many Germans were taken prisoners.

The Portia is making another attempt to go west at 2 p.m.

RUSSIAN FLEET IN BLACK SEA HARRIES TURKS

Damaged Cruisers Breslau and Hamidieh and Destroyed Much Shipping

Paris, Jan. 16.—The French Department of Marine today gave out an official statement which says the Russian fleet in the Black Sea fired upon the Turkish cruisers Breslau and Hamidieh, causing them severe damage. The Russian fleet then proceeded along the coast bays of Sinope, Trebizond and Platane and set fire to and destroyed a large number of the enemy's merchant ships. It also bombarded Port Hopa.

Wouldn't Fit Guns Of Allies

Proving That the Germans Were "Barking up the Wrong Tree"

Washington, Jan. 12.—Investigation into Count von Bernstorff's charge that American manufacturers have been making dum-dum bullets for the allies has established the fact that his "exhibit" bullets do not fit the bore of any rifle in use by the British, French, Belgian or Russian army, or, for that matter, and German or Austrian rifle. They are big gun bullets for hunting rifles, none of which is used by any of the armies in the field.

We thank Mr. I. C. Morris, sail-maker, for a very pretty calendar received.

Violent Artillery Combats Result in Marked Successes For The Allies in The West

Paris, Jan. 15.—The French War Office this afternoon gave out a statement which says: "From the Sea to the Lys there were, yesterday, artillery engagements, some of them quite spirited."

"We made progress near Lombaertzyde and near Becelaere to the North of Arras a brilliant attack by the Zouaves, resulted in the capture, at the bayonet point, of positions of the enemy near the road between Arras and Lille.

In this same region at Targette and St. Laureat, as well as at points to the North of Andechy in region of Roye our artillery secured an advantage over that of the enemy.

Effectual Work. The German batteries were reduced to silence, two pieces of artillery were demolished, a depot of ammunition was exploded and field works, in course of destruction, were destroyed at a point a mile and a quarter North East of Soissons.

The Germans yesterday attacked the village of St. Paul. They entered the village but we lost no time in recapturing it.

In the region of Craonne and near Rheims there were yesterday violent artillery engagements during the course of which the batteries of the enemy were frequently reduced to silence.

Destroyed Bridges. In the region of Perthes, in the Aronne and on the heights of the Meuse there has been nothing important to report. We have destroyed the foot bridges set up by the Germans over the River Meuse.

At St. Mihiel and in the forest of Ailly we repulsed an attack upon the trenches taken by us on January 8th. In the Vosges we repulsed the Germans after a spirited infantry engagement. We broke through their barbed wire entanglements and occupied their trenches.

Along the rest of the front there is nothing to report.

The Fogota will make another effort to get north this afternoon.

Russians Still Actively Chase Defeated Turks

And Report the Capture of Many More Turkish Officers and Soldiers in Armenia

Petrograd, Jan. 16.—The General Staff of the army in the Caucasus has transmitted an official communication as follows: Fighting in the vicinity of Kara Urgan, in Turkish Armenia, continues. We have captured many more officers and soldiers. We are continuing the pursuit of the Turkish troops defeated at Oih, fifty-five miles West of Kars.

We continue to successfully force the Turks out of Trantcheruk region. The other fronts show no important changes.

Holy Water Basins Robbed of Copper

Germans Requisition All They Can of This Metal in Belgium

Brussels, Jan. 12.—The German authorities in Belgium have given orders for the requisition of as much copper as possible. Even the copper of the holy water basins has been taken.

In a large factory in Brussels, copper of more than 300,000 francs' value has been requisitioned. The forts at Namur and Liege are being repaired. Food is becoming scarce in Ostend, and the population is in lamentable distress.

The Sagona left for Halifax this morning.

WILL NAME NEW SEALER "ICELAND"

Hoped to Have Her Ready For Sealing Voyage This Spring, But War Conditions Are Delaying the Work

It is not yet known if Messrs Baine Johnston & Co.'s new mammoth sealing steamer will be ready for the ice-fields next spring.

This is a hard year with the ship-building concerns on the other side because of the many and large orders for the Admiralty.

Repeatedly workmen are taken from private contracts and put on Admiralty work. This has happened with the new sealing steamer, and consequently she may not reach Newfoundland in time to prosecute the voyage.

Called the "Iceland." The new steamer will be called the Iceland—an appropriate name—considering the work at which she will be employed.

The firm had an Iceland before, and a popular and successful little vessel she was, until the ironclads came along.

The new Iceland will be the latest and best in sealing ships. She will be the largest and a valuable addition to our fleet.

The following comparisons are published and will show how she stands with the Bowring patrol liner Stephano:

Table with 4 columns: Name, Tonnage, Length, Width, Depth. Includes Stephano and Iceland.

Good Cargo Carriers. As the Iceland has only accommodation for a dozen passengers she will be able to carry much more cargo than the Red Cross boat.

Messrs. Napier and Miller, of Old Kilpatrick, are the builders.

They have constructed several of our icebreakers and have turned out first-class work.

The Iceland will be as perfect as man's ingenuity can make her. Nothing but the latest and most efficient appliances will be installed.

Her construction is such that it will be almost impossible to sink her, and it is correct to say that no other steamer afloat will be safer.

Grand Accommodation. There are electric lights in all parts and everything else to tend to make her safe. The quarters for the officers, crew and sealers could not be better. The sealers' quarters are roomy, well lighted and ventilated, and steam heated.

A large hospital, containing ten or a dozen cots have been arranged for, and there is a special room for the doctor.

The officers and engineers have rooms to themselves, with dining-rooms adjacent.

The toilet arrangements are the best devisable, there being special rooms for the various departments.

Strongly Built. The decks are of iron, sheathed with hard wood. There are light derricks, each capable of lifting five tons, and are so placed in position that cargo may be handled quickly.

The engines are being made by D. Rowan & Co., Glasgow, who made the Stephano's.

The contract calls for 14 knots, and very likely the steamer will be able to do much better.

The Iceland will be in demand, we think, by sealers as special attention will be made for the comfort of the men. It will be hoped by all that she will be ready for next spring. At present work is going ahead rapidly, but the men have been taken off once or twice for Admiralty purposes and (Continued on page 6)

Shouting "Canada and Old England," The Canadians Broke German Lines Hurling the Enemy From The Trenches

London, January 16.—The Canadian regiment at the front has distinguished itself in a stirring bayonet charge at a place near Ypres, known as "Dead Man's Valley," according to The Daily Chronicle's correspondent in Northeast France.

The Germans, the correspondent says, had moved a great mass of men against this spot on the British front. Mud helped the thin British line to hold, but the honors were barely even until the Canadian regiment hurried up from the rear.

Suddenly there was heard a roar of voices and a long line of slouch-hatted men with fixed bayonets rushed forward with the battle cry "For Canada and Old England."

The Germans broke before the charge, which carried everything before it. Trench after trench fell and the Canadians did not cease until the Germans had brought up their artillery.

The ground gained extended over a mile in front.

Sultan Confers Turkish Honors On Americans

U.S. Ambassador, Wife and Daughters Decorated For Philanthropic And Educational Work

London Jan. 16.—The Sultan of Turkey has conferred the decoration of the Grand Order of Nichan-I-Chefakat on Mrs. Henry Morgan Thau, wife of the American Ambassador to Turkey and the decorations of Second class of the same order on the three daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Morgan Thau in recognition of services they are rendering to philanthropic and educational institutions in Turkey.

This announcement is made by The Jewish Chronicle.

certain is that hardly a shot was fired all day and in one place they've arranged to fire over each other's heads for a fortnight.

I thought something of the sort would happen as when I was out on Christmas Eve they were shouting to each other from the trenches, in fact doing more shouting than firing.

—ALEC.

WEATHER REPORT

Toronto (noon)—Fresh N. W. winds, fair and moderately cold today and Sunday