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BRITISH TROOPS WEST BAPAUME FROM GERMAN HANDS; STRATEGIC PIVOT OF WEST FRONT OCCUPIED---IN FLAMES

Crowning Feat Of Gallant Khaki Men In Drive On The Somme

London, March 17.—Bapaume on the Franco-Belgian front has been captured by the British, so Reuter's agency announces.

"Our troops entered Bapaume this morning after stiff fighting," Reuter's correspondent telegraphs. "The place was in flames, the Germans having evidently made all plans for setting fire to it when forced to retreat."

"Our troops are reported to be beyond the town."

TWO OTHER TOWNS

London, March 17.—Reuter's correspondent at British headquarters in France, wires that the towns of Le Transloy and Achiet Le Petit also are reported to be in the hands of the British.

Paris, March 17.—French troops advanced last night north of the Avre, and between the Avre and the Oise, making progress over a front of thirteen miles and to a depth, at some points of two and a half miles.

ADMIT LOSSES

Berlin, March 17.—(Via Sayville)—A further retirement of the German forces on the western front, between Sully and St. Pierre Vaast Wood and also between Beauvraignes and Lassigny, was announced today by the war office.

British Onward Sweep Reckoned In Miles As It Gathers Momentum

Allied Lines on West Extend and Weight of British Metal Proving Decisive Factor—High Morale of the Field Augurs Well For Spring Offensive

British Headquarters in France, March 16.—(Via London, March 17.—(From a staff correspondent of the Associated Press)—The retreat of the Germans in the Aene and the Somme regions continues to give the seat of movement to the war in the west and a trip now days along the ever-extending new British lines reveals a picture the like of which has not been seen on this front for more than two years. Substantial progress was made by the Allies in the battles of the Somme last summer and autumn but after the initial forward sweep the fighting became so bitter and the resistance so dogged that the advance could be counted almost by feet if not, at times, by inches. Recently the onward movement has been reckoned in miles and it is strange to see field fortresses that last year cost thousands of German lives to defend, now yield within a few hours after the British "heavies" have begun to pour out their torrent of high explosives.

It is interesting to stand behind a battery of British howitzers and watch the high morale which is in evidence throughout the British army. They whistle and sing and bandy jokes as they work. As the firing bottom is pressed the crew jumps back for a moment from the gun carriage but have leapt again to their allotted posts before the easy acting recoil has returned the mammoth weapon to its original position.

It is easy to distinguish the scream of a departing projectile from one which is being sent in return by the Germans and the onlooker can watch without difficulty the black base of a British shell French border.

UNITED STATES WILL NOT JOIN

Declines Carranza's Invitation Re-cutting Off O. Supplies For Armies In Europe

DEFINITE REFUSAL SENT

Washington, Mar. 16.—The United States sent to General Carranza today a formal notification that it cannot participate in his proposed pan-American concert to cut off munitions and food shipments to the European belligerents with a view to forcing peace. The reply is understood to point out that such a move would have no justification in international law. It is going forward through Ambassador Fletcher at Mexico City, and will not be made public until it has been delivered.

Officials last night emphasized that, although the note refuses flatly to cooperate in Carranza's plan, it is friendly in tone and avoids any statements which might give offense to the de facto government. From this it is inferred that the communication does not reflect the suspicion of German influence among officials here from the first, and was accentuated by revelation of Foreign Minister Zimmerman's efforts to align Mexico with Germany against the United States.

In many quarters here the belief prevails that a softening of General Carranza's attitude toward this government would result in the withdrawal of the American troops and the exposure of German intrigues in Mexico. Editorial comments in Mexican newspapers are pointed to also as showing a better feeling toward Carranza's plan, and the reception tendered Ambassador Fletcher has been gratifying to officials here.

MARGARET COLL LEADS FIRST AID GRADUATES

High Marks Made by Graduating Class Under the Direction of Captain McCarthy and Captain Barracough

Twenty-five members of a large class in first aid, instructed by Captain McCarthy and Captain Barracough, presented themselves for an examination conducted by Major Skinner assisted by Captain Thomas. All were successful in qualifying. Miss Margaret Coll with 98 marks, Miss Ada Williams with 97, Mrs. A. M. Rowan with 96, as well as others, made very high marks and the following young ladies will receive certificates of proficiency from Ottawa.

Miss Margaret Coll, Miss Ada B. Williams, Mrs. A. M. Rowan, Miss Jeanette Neilson, Miss Blenda McIntyre, Miss Adda Merren, Miss Bertha Estabrook, Miss Elsie Knowlton, Miss Grace Doherty, Miss Blanch Eagles, Miss Christina McEwen, Miss Ethel Parker, Mrs. E. T. Cheyne, Miss Ella Francis, Miss Anna Goodspeed, Miss Sarah Thomas, Miss Nellie McIntyre, Miss Edith Allan, Miss Alice Haggerty, Miss Caroline Bellie, Miss Catherine Morgan, Miss Mabel McConnell, Miss Marjorie Gramman, Miss Elizabeth Robinson, Mrs. Dollard Frame.

COMMISSIONER RUSSELL TO INTERVIEW C. P. R.

Will Take Up Matter of Summer Port Activities With Company—To Go to Ottawa Regarding Attend Conference Regarding Development of This Port

Commissioner Russell will visit Montreal, where he will wait upon the C. P. R. and learn, if possible, what activities that company proposes for the port of St. John this summer. It is likely that he will also present to the C. P. R. officials his views relative to summer port activities here.

Commissioner Russell will leave tonight for Ottawa to be in attendance at a conference. He has not been asked to prepare specially any reports on port development, nor on present activities, the invitation from the department merely stating that it would be to the advantage of the port of St. John if he were present. It is understood that he is the only representative from the city that will attend the conference.

On his return from Ottawa, Commissioner Russell will attend a conference.

BRITISH AMBASSADOR ON VISIT TO OTTAWA

Ottawa, Ont., Mar. 17.—Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, British ambassador at Washington, and Lady Spring-Rice, arrived in Ottawa today and are guests of Their Excellencies the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire.

MRS. WILLIAM SMITH

Many will learn with regret of the death of Mrs. William Smith of 281 Princess street, which occurred at 1:30 o'clock this afternoon after a lingering illness. She was sixty-two years old. She leaves besides husband, three sisters—Mrs. Alexander Duff, Mrs. Robert McKean and Mrs. Annie T. Bingham, all of this city. The funeral will take place on Monday afternoon from her late residence.

Comparative Calm On The Canadian Front

Chiefly Artillery Work and Huns Lose Heavily; Our Casualties Light — A Reminiscence of the Boer War

Canadian Headquarters in France, via London, Mar. 16.—(By Stewart Lyon, special correspondent Canadian Press)—The report in the British press that Field Marshal Von Falkenhayn and staff have arrived in Belgium and located at Driemont has aroused great interest among the Canadian soldiers.

Comparative calm still prevails along the Canadian front, broken by artillery activity at nights when it is intended to drive off enemy working parties in these exchanges. The Canadians are using shells much more freely than the enemy, whose losses must be heavy. The casualties along the Canadian lines of late have been exceptionally small.

The arrival of General Smuts in England and his statement to the British people is regarded as splendid and of special interest to the Canadians who offer an officer who rode a white horse. I took two shots at him but missed with both. Afterwards I learned that it was Smuts."

RESERVE RESERVOIR MAY BECOME HAUNT OF LOCAL WALTONS

Commissioner Wigmore Outlines Tentative Plans to Throw Little River Reservoir Open to Local Anglers—Boats May Be Placed on Lake and Change Made

This morning the first new gate under the Marsh bridge was put in. The department has decided to try out one gate first and if it proves satisfactory to day until all four gates have been replaced. One new gate has been made. Commissioner Wigmore says that the work will be completed by the end of the month. The experiment with the first gate indicates that installation of new gates will improve conditions at the Marsh bridge.

Commissioner Wigmore, in following up on the suggestion of the anglers, will hold a meeting in his office at about 10 o'clock. The reservoir will likely be opened to the public in the near future. Commissioner Wigmore said to a reporter today that he has a few boats which will be placed on the reservoir and a boat house erected. The fishing will be conducted under the supervision of the department's fishery inspectors. Commissioner Wigmore said that the reservoir is a water reserve, and he does not favor but as the Little River reservoir is a water reserve, he feels that the department should not allow anglers using it. He said that perhaps a small fee would be charged for the fishing privileges, merely so that it would not be abused by the ever-ardent angler. The scheme is not calculated to net the city any profit, but make for the utilization of the latent fishing resources of the reservoir.

LOCAL SOLDIERS CONCLUDE BIT ON THE WEST

Arrived Home in Military Party Last Night—Sgt. M. F. McLeod Suffered Shell Shock — Pvt. Smith Wounded

In the party of returned soldiers arriving in the city last evening, was Sergeant M. F. McLeod, son of Mrs. Sarah McLeod, of 109 Charlotte street. Sergeant McLeod is a member of the 4th Pioneer Battalion. He is home suffering from a shell shock. Sergeant McLeod was one of the first St. John men to enlist. When the war broke out he offered his services with the first heavy artillery unit to be organized, under Major Magee, and with that unit proceeded to England. On the final medical test there he was unable to don the uniform again and was returned to Canada. He then returned to civilian life and was employed as a driver in the fire department.

While employed with the fire department he was called upon by military authorities to don the uniform again and joined the 4th Pioneers as a private. Soon his ability as a soldier was recognized and he was promoted to the rank of corporal and then to sergeant. Sergeant McLeod's stay in France was a short one, being there but four days when he suffered shell shock, caused by the explosion of a bomb. It is quite probable that after he recuperates he will return to France.

Private Francis Leo Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Smith, a member of the 21st battalion, arrived home last evening after spending six months on the firing line in France. Private Smith is suffering from wounds in the left leg, which he sustained on the Somme front on September 15.

Private Smith went overseas as a member of the 50th battalion and crossed to France with a draft from that unit. He is only eighteen years old, and prior to enlistment was in the employ of the Optical Company, George street. Private Smith is of the opinion that his wounds will render him unfit for further service at the front.

26th Man Home

Private George Miller, of 87 Chesley street, a member of the 26th battalion, arrived home last evening. He is suffering from wounds received in France. Among the returned soldiers to reach the city last evening was Acting Sergeant Herbert Lockwood of 9 Gilbert's Lane. He has been sent back owing to ill health. He went over with the 58th Battalion as a band-aid sergeant but did not succeed in getting as far as France. He left a wife and two small children in the city and although he never got to the front he can be satisfied that he has made the brave attempt and carried it through to the last issue to do his bit for his country. He expects to get his discharge.

Emblems Of Former Russian Autocracy Dragged In The Dust

Last Vestige of House of Romanoff Removed as Monarch of the Line Leaves Throne—Prince Lvoff May be President of New Republic — Czar's Son Reported Dead

Petrograd, March 16, via London, March 17.—The autocracy which has held Russia in its grip since the beginning of history fell today. The House of Romanoff, which has ruled the empire for 400 years, came to an end with the abdication of Nicholas II, perhaps the weakest representative of his line. Following on the heels of this startling development came the rumor, tonight, of the death of the emperor's little son whose abdication was included in that of his father.

Although apparent from the beginning of the revolution that the removal of the monarch was the inevitable end, the actual fact so suddenly accomplished came as an overwhelming surprise to the population.

TEAR DOWN SIGNS OF ROYALTY

Within four hours after the abdication of Grand Duke Michael, who, automatically, became regent on the passing of the emperor, the crowds in the streets had secured ladders and began to tear the imperial insignia from the winter palace and the front of buildings in the main thoroughfares. In a short time all emblems of the old empire literally lay in the dust.

In anticipation of the news bigger crowds than ever packed the halls and grounds of the Tsar's Palace, awaiting official confirmation, by the Duma committee, of rumors which had excited the people to fever pitch during the last twenty-four hours. When the tidings at last leaked out from the committee rooms, orators, who had been haranguing soldiers and workmen from the balcony of the palace, suddenly interrupted their discourses and shouted the news to the crowds below them.

Indescribable confusion seized the vast throng. A roar of cheers such as never before had been heard in those stately halls continued until the men and women were forced to cease, from utter exhaustion.

Just what form the new government will assume is indefinite tonight. For the moment neither authority rests with the twelve members of the Duma executive committee and the cabinet headed by Prince Lvoff, who, according to some forecasts, will be president of a new republic, it is believed that, in the interim and until the convocation of a constitutional assembly, power will slowly pass into the hands of the new cabinet which will then present the anomaly of a new government without a supreme head.

RUSSIA A REPUBLIC

Arrests of Individuals of Touch with the New Order of Affairs Continue from Day to Day

Petrograd, March 16, via London, March 17.—Unless improbable events occur, Russia has today become a republic. The outcome depends on how the manifesto of the new government is received by the six million soldiers at the front.

London, March 17.—A Reuter's Petrograd despatch says that prior to his abdication, the Russian Emperor transferred the supreme command of the Russian armies to the Grand Duke Nicholas.

FURTHER ARRESTS

Petrograd, Mar. 16.—Arrests of individuals of touch with the new order of affairs continue from day to day. Among the latest arrested was the Countess Kleinmichel, a prominent Russian woman, who is well known in court circles and who is suspected of a dissemination of pro-German propaganda. Hitherto she had enjoyed immunity because of her influential connections. The countess was taken under guard to the Duma building.

M. Soukhomlinoff, former minister of war, narrowly escaped lynching at the hands of angry soldiers, when his identity became known as he was being conducted before the Duma committee.

Yesterday morning the sixty trains were despatched over various lines for the purpose of bringing foodstuffs and other necessities to the capital. While it is too early to observe any marked change in the prices of food, it is significant that in several shops notices of greatly reduced prices have been posted. A large number of tea houses have announced that they will supply tea free to soldiers.

TEXT OF MANIFESTO BY CZAR ANNOUNCING THAT HE ABICIGATES

Petrograd, March 17.—The following is the text of the imperial manifesto in which the Russian emperor announced his abdication and that of his son, Nicholas II, by the grace of God, Emperor of all the Russias, Emperor of Poland and Grand Duke of Finland, etc. make known to all our faithful subjects.

"In the day of the great struggle against a foreign foe, who has been striving for three years to enslave our country, God has wished to send to Russia a new and painful trial. Interior troubles threaten to have a fatal effect on the final outcome of the war. The destinies of Russia and the honor of our dear fatherland require that the war be prosecuted at all cost to a victorious end. The cruel enemy is making his last effort and the moment is near when our valiant army, in concert with those of our glorious allies, will definitely chase the foe.

"In these decisive days in the life of Russia we believe our people should have the closest union and organization of all their forces for the realization of speedy victory. For this reason, in accord with the Duma of the empire, we have considered it desirable to abdicate the throne of Russia and lay aside our sovereign power. Not wishing to be separated from our loved son, we leave our heritage to our brother, the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich, blessing his advent to the throne of Russia.

"We hand over the government to our brother in full union with the representatives of the nation who are seated in the legislative chambers, taking this step with an inviolable oath in the name of our well-beloved country.

"We call on all our faithful sons of the fatherland to fulfill their sacred patriotic duty in this painful moment of national trial and to aid our brother and the representatives of the nation in bringing Russia into the path of prosperity and glory. May God aid Russia."

PERHAPS HE WILL BE WELCOMED HOME SOON

John McCann, of 16 Mill street, is in receipt of a letter from Charles Cullen, a former boarder at his home, who is now in hospital in Errington, England. Mr. Cullen states that he is so seriously injured this time that he is afraid he will not be fit for further service at the front and may be returned to Canada at an early date.

Private Cullen went overseas with the 1st Canadian contingent and was through all the big engagements of 1915-16 and has been previously wounded. After recuperating from the effects of his first wound he returned to the front and was later wounded a second time. His many friends will be pleased of the prospect of seeing him soon although given to learn that he has been severely wounded.

WEATHER REPORT

Issued by Authority of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, R. F. Stupart, Director of meteorological service

NOT PROMISING

Southeast to southwest winds with variable strong winds and rains, west to northwest, light falls of snow or sleet, partly fair.

PROMISED LABOR SUPPLY

The board of trade has received a communication from a commissioner in Saskatchewan regarding a man named Charles Peters of 43 Brooks street, who he was in a position to provide farm labor in western Canada. On the strength of the offer the commissioner said he interviewed several of the farmers throughout the province, who were in need of farm help and practically promised them that he would secure the necessary assistance from a St. John contractor. Further communication with St. John failed to locate Mr. Peters and the commissioner writes the board of trade asking for information regarding the man.

GAME FORFEITED

In the Y.M.C.A. bowling league last evening the Sparrows had no opponents as the Hawks failed to appear before 8:30 o'clock. The Sparrows bowled with the result given below. It is said the game has been protested.

Smith	89	92	89	270	810
Colgan	77	104	93	274	914
Colgan	80	82	81	243	81
Cosgrove	87	87	85	259	869
Christman	87	80	79	246	84
	420	455	423	1298	