

Woman Spy's Drying Wash Signal German Flyers

Furloughed Pollu Tells How Aged Landress, Left Behind by Enemy, Used Arrangement of Soldiers' Linen to Reveal Military Secrets—The Story of the Blacksmith and His Wife—An Officer in the French Army Who Was a Spy.

Paris, Dec. 23.—A day or two ago the Paris papers contained a brief paragraph telling of a young girl, a milliner, in the neighborhood of Grenoble, who had been caught playing the spy for the Germans and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. "We don't shoot women spies any more," said a soldier friend of mine on permission from the Somme front to whom I spoke of the story. "There have been no women shot for a long time. They generally get about twelve years at hard labor."

"Are you as much troubled as ever by spies?" I asked.

He laughed. "As long as there is war there will be spies," he replied. "You can't stamp them out. The only thing that you can do is to try to catch them. It was only a few weeks ago that we caught a woman spy on the Somme."

"You remember when we took Bouchevignes? Long enough ago, it was. Well, there was not much left of the village when we got it. Our artillery had knocked it pretty well to pieces, but we found an old woman there. She had remained all through the German occupation, and had even managed to hide and stay behind when all the rest of the civil population had evacuated. She was in a cellar during our bombardment, and when we went into the town she came out to welcome us, the only one of the original French inhabitants of the village remaining. As it was French again, she insisted on remaining. It was her home and she had succeeded in clinging on all the time the Germans were there. She saw no reason why she should go when the French came back into occupation."

The Old Washerwoman.

"She stayed and did our washing for us. She was busy all the time, and every morning she would take the wet clothes out and spread them on the ground to dry. You could see soldiers' shirts and underwear all around the cellar where she lived and hanging on all the posts and pieces of wall."

"The old woman potted around and worked most industriously at her tubs. She always came out when there were troops going through the village, and she would talk to the men, find out where they were going, where they came from and how long they expected to be there. And whenever she came out from her tubs she would go to her wash, lying out to dry, examine it, turn it over, rearrange it. She was a wonderful washerwoman. It was a mania with her, having everything just right for the French soldiers, who had won back her home for her in France."

Germans Knew Concentrations.

"But the Germans seemed to know every concentration of troops we made in that region. Their shells received us every time. We could not make a move that they did not know all about. We set three men to the special duty of finding out how the Germans got their information. The first thing they found out was that there were more air fights over Bouchevignes than at any other part of the line. There seemed to be always a Boche aeroplane hovering over the ruins. They decided that there must be something about Bouchevignes which made it a particularly good observation point. As the old woman was the only thing that distinguished the place from any other ruined village, they arrested her."

"At first she denied everything, but the German accuracy in bombarding our concentrations ceased with her arrest. It does not take a long argument to convince a drumhead court-martial, and the old woman saw that the game was up. She then claimed to be French, and said that she had consented to spy for the Germans partly under threats, partly because her life had been spared by them, and partly because they had paid her well, and she had no other way of getting any money to live. Finally, she acknowledged that she was a German and had been purposely left behind to spy when the Germans got out."

"She got twelve years at hard labor."

The Three Plough Horses.

"Spies work all kinds of tricks," my friend continued. "There was the old fellow, who came back to his farm just behind the lines and started to do his fall ploughing with three horses, a red, a white and a black. He did his signalling by changing the position of the white horse in the team. He was easy to catch, as a team, especially a plough team, always works in the same order. Some of our men who were farmers noticed how he was constantly changing his horses about. They talked about it among themselves a bit and at last one of them spoke of it to an officer. The alleged farmer was investigated and shot."

"It takes a little time to catch a spy, you know. The unusual gets to be a habit, so you don't notice it. And men will talk about something among themselves for a long time before it will occur to one of them to report it to an officer. I remember at the time we took Bellow-en-Santerre some of our men got clear through to the Somme, which was sufficiently far. Our patrols wandered for four days all over the territory between Bellow and the River. There was not a German there. We had completely broken their lines. But the patrols did not report it because we had been ordered to take Bellow and stop there. At last it occurred to one of the men to tell his captain that he had been down to the river that day, and after two days the captain succeeded in getting it to the Brigadier-General in command. The general thought it was fresh news, but, unfortunately, the Germans had used the intervening two days to bring up men and re-establishing themselves. Result, when the general, without a fresh investigation, ordered us to occupy the ground the Boches were ready and waiting for us. Our ambulance got plenty of work, we never got out of Bellow and the general lost his job. Served him right, of course."

Blacksmith a Jolly Dog.

"It is the same way with spies. They are almost sure to get a certain length of time to do their work before they are caught. We ran across a blacksmith a couple of months ago who was one of the most congenial fellows you ever met. He had his shop right beside one of the main roads used by the troops in going back and forth to the trenches and he always had a stock of wine and something to eat. His shop did not keep him very busy and he was nearly always at his door. He would talk to the soldiers, give them a drink, ask where they were going and want to know how long they would be gone, so that he would be waiting to give them another glass of wine when they came back. He was very popular with the soldiers, because he was such a good fellow, always ready with a joke and a glass of wine."

"But our concentrations were known to the Boches. Our men were being shot down. We never could prepare anything in advance and bring it off successfully, because the Boches knew just where we were getting ready to do something. Some of our spy catchers got to work to find the leak. They hunted through the sector for the best place to pick up news about troop movements and they found, of course, that all the soldiers were friendly with the blacksmith. His shop was raided one day. He had been left behind by the Germans. He had a three months' store of wine and food in his cellar. Of course he could give our men wine. But he had, also, direct telephonic communication from his cellar with the German line. He was shot."

"The worst case that I ever knew of—but it was not the only one of the kind—was an officer in the French army who was a German spy. You can see from that how thorough the Boches are. That man had been sent from Germany to France when he was a boy. He had been educated in France and had gone to the French military school. He was an artillery officer and one of the best. He was a lieutenant at the beginning of the war, but when the Somme offensive began he was a captain in command of a battery. For all that time he had done his work without being suspected."

"On the Somme he was in charge of his battery, which was firing ahead of our men during an advance. The battery got a signal that their range was too short and they were firing into our own men. The sergeant told the captain, but he said they were firing according to orders and not to change the range. The battery fired another round and got another signal from the infantry that they were firing short. The sergeant spoke to the captain again and the captain lost his temper and swore at the sergeant. He ordered another round at the same range and the sergeant refused. The captain tried to fire one of the guns himself."

"It was very important for the Germans to stop our advance at that point. It might have saved Comblès. But the sergeant knew as much about the situation as the captain. He knew what it meant to have our troops stopped there. We might have lost a brigade. We might have lost a division. He threatened the captain with a rifle and arrested him. It is something to arrest your own captain but the sergeant did it, and there was a drumhead court martial and the captain was shot. He confessed, when he saw it was all up with him, and bragged of the two years he had escaped being caught and of what he had done. He was brave enough but—Well, think of it! Educated in France, an officer in the French army, living at the expense of France, living a lie for ten years, waiting for 'the day' to betray those who trusted him. It takes a German to do that."

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S. MILLEY.

Great Jutland Battle

Described by Petty Officer Sercombe of the ill-fated H.M.S. Warrior, at Botwood Club Last Night—Mr. F. A. Jago Presented with an Address.

Shortly after eight o'clock last night there was barely standing room in the Botwood Hall, Hutchings Street, so great was the crowd that assembled to listen to an address on the greatest of all naval battles, the great Jutland fight. Rev. H. Uphill presided and extended a hearty welcome to all. He made mention of the fact that this was not a church gathering and those desiring to light up could do so at their pleasure. The affair opened with a musical selection by H.M.S. Briton's string band, followed by songs from Messrs. Macklin and Blackmore, a recitation by Mr. Brett and a violin solo by Mr. Jago, all officers of H.M.S. Briton. The Chairman in introducing the Speaker of the evening, spoke briefly on the splendid work of the Royal Navy, which to us needed no recommendation, and as Petty Officer Sercombe stepped to the platform he was greeted with vociferous cheering by the large audience, who also sang at the top of their voices "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." The Petty Officer thanked the audience for the splendid reception given him, and getting down to business he drew a lightning sketch of H.M.S. Warrior, to which he was attached for a period of five years. By the aid of this sketch he pointed out the various positions in which the Warrior's guns were placed and in brief gave an excellent account of the warship from bow to stern. She was 13,850 tons, had a complement of 750 officers and men, carried several 9-inch guns and from 24 to 30 smaller guns. The Warrior, in company with the Defence, Black Prince and Duke of Edinburgh put out from the port of — in England. Steaming at the rate of 18 nautical miles an hour, with nothing but their orders to go by, the ships felt their way along in the darkness. After steaming for several hours orders were given to change their course in a southerly direction and about 2.30 p.m. the next day a flight Lieutenant of H.M.S. Engadine, who was out scouting in a seaplane, reported the enemy in a certain position. All the crew were drummed to the quarter deck and the pleasing announcement was made that they were about to prepare for action. This brought forth a great cheer from the whole ship's crew, who were all anxious to have a bang at the enemy. The Warrior at her best is rated at 21 knots an hour, but by applying every possible attention to her engines an extra knot was gained. The order was given to fire the electric tubes to see if they were in working order. This being done the Warrior went into action at 5.55 p.m. on the same day and let go a broadside at the enemy, while the big ship was tearing through the water at the rate of 600 feet every 15 seconds. A few minutes afterwards a German light cruiser, one of a squadron of five battleships, three battle cruisers and two light cruisers, was seen to topple over and sink, while the British squadron of four ships was confronted by more powerful ships and heavier guns. The Black Prince, the Defence and the Duke of Edinburgh were soon after put out of commission, which left the Warrior to continue the fight with the nine remaining Germans. So great was the hammering received from the Huns that there were thirty shell holes in the Warrior's bow alone, not to speak of the other shells which entered the engine room and other parts of the ship, killing several engineers, stokers, ship-carpenters and others. The commander of H.M.S. Warspite, seeing the danger of losing the Warrior, rushed his ship in between the enemy and the Warrior. She opened fire, but was badly hit in the stern which put her rudder hard-a-board, and for a period of twenty-five minutes she circled around the Warrior at the rate of 22 knots an hour. The most peculiar thing about the fight is that not one of the Warrior's guns was put out of commission. Late that night the badly battered ship crippled out of the firing line and was again signalled at daybreak by the Engadine, which bore down and offered assistance. The total number of killed was 66, badly wounded 30 and slightly wounded 6. All these were transferred to the rescuing ship. While in the act of transference, a badly wounded sailor on board the Engadine, whose leg was amputated the night previous, the ship giving a heavy roll, fell between the two ships. It was considered madness to attempt to rescue the man as it only meant another life lost, and the captain refused to let any of his crew attempt the rescue. But suddenly a young lieutenant of the Engadine dived over the side of his ship and succeeded in rescuing the poor sailor, who, however, died one hour afterwards. His last words were, "Thank you."

A very pleasing feature of the evening was the presentation of an address to Mr. F. A. Jago, band master of H.M.S. Briton, who leaves shortly for the Old Country. The address was signed by Lady Davidson and a number of other patriotic workers who highly appreciate the excellency of the Briton's string band, under the management of Mr. Jago, who at all times and often at a great personal sacrifice, has given so freely of his services by assisting at various patriotic entertainments. Messrs. Thomas Peel and Stephen March spoke highly of the British Navy. The former has a son-in-law at present serving the colors in the person of Gunner McCarthy, who was reported as being saved from the ill-fated ship Cornwallis, while the latter is an uncle of Capt. Wes. March, M.C.

A highly interesting and enjoyable evening was brought to a close by the singing of "The Fighting Navy" and "God Save the King." Shortly before the close, Mr. Geo. Cranford, who for 11 years has been a member of the St. Mary's Choir, and has recently been married, was presented with a beautiful framed wall picture.

Cthe dral Finance Committee.

The annual meeting of the Cathedral Finance Committee was held last evening at the Palace, His Grace, the Archbishop, presiding. The following gentlemen were present: Rt. Rev. Mgr. McDermott, V. G.; Rev. H. T. Renouf, R. Hon. Sir E. P. Morris, Mr. Justice Kent, the Hons. M. P. Cahlin, J. D. Ryan, Messrs. J. F. Parker, George Shea, J. J. Tobin, J. V. O'Dea, W. J. Ellis, M. J. Kennedy, John Barron and C. O'N. Conroy.

The accounts were submitted by the Archbishop who gave a lengthy and detailed financial review of the past year, dealing with the Church collections and the disbursements under the Corporation loan of 1916. It was announced that the second issue of Corporation Debentures to the extent of \$50,000.00 had been considerably oversubscribed and all matters in connection with the issue were finalised. The Archbishop also informed the Committee that the matter of the new central Parish was receiving immediate attention, and he intimated that the Committee would be called together again at an early date to discuss the matter more fully. After some discussion on the report of the sub-committee recently appointed to consider the question of insurance the meeting adjourned.

Obituary.

MARY MONICA JACKMAN.

The many friends of Mrs. James Jackman, whose husband died a few years ago, will sympathize with her in the death of her daughter, Mary Monica, at the age of 16 years. Mary Monica was one of the brightest pupils of the Mercy Convent, and was beloved by the Sisters and pupils alike. All who knew this talented child loved her and admired her, her disposition being such as to draw friends from every side. We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Jackman and the Jackman family in their bereavement.

ANON.

Manslaughter Charge Inquiry.

A resumption of the preliminary inquiry into the charge of manslaughter preferred against James and Elizabeth Goss, took place before Mr. Hutchings, K.C., J.P., to-day. An adjournment was taken until Saturday next when proceedings in the Magistrate's Court will probably conclude. We understand that it is not unlikely that the accused parties will be committed for trial to the Supreme Court.

Hockey Notes.

Someone has said that laziness and indifference characterize the League hockey teams this season. The schedule of games has been already drawn up, but the various clubs have not yet started to practise and apparently are not thinking of doing so. It is time they got their line-ups ready and get in trim in order to be able to meet the regimental team, who will play a picked seven from the city. This game, it is hoped, will be run off one night next week for the benefit of the W.P.A. funds. The regimental aggregation is a particularly strong one so that the city will need all the practice they can get.

Must Support Wife.

At the instances of his wife, a seaman was summoned to Court to-day for neglecting to support her. He claimed that he was sick and had no means, but this excuse did not hold water with Mr. Hutchings, who presided and who ordered that hubby was to provide for his better-half in future and give a bond as a guarantee that he would do so or go to jail for a month. He selected the former course, and the police have arranged a job for him on a foreign going vessel.

WARD'S LINIMENT USED BY PHYSICIANS