

# Hearty Cheer For Soldiers at the Front

## Christmas Carol Did Not Muffle Roar of Angry Guns in France, But it Was a Christmas of Plenty for the Allied Armies

With the British Armies in France (via London), Dec. 25.—From a staff correspondent of The Associated Press—Christmas has sent a thrill of good cheer to all the British armies in the battle lines of France, and wherever a British soldier ate his Christmas dinner today, whether in the front fire trenches or in the secluded security of the British camps, enthusiastic toasts were offered to King and empire and to the coming new year, which Britons confidently believe will bring victory to the allied cause.

The soldiers from overseas, the Canadians, New Zealanders and South Africans, drank somewhat wistfully to the folks at home, but soon shook away any tendency to homesickness in the sturdy work of war, for war grim and stern as it went forward today as relentlessly as yesterday and as it will tomorrow.

**Guns Roar On.**  
The Christmas carols, which rose up from all parts of the world, were not far-reaching enough this year to muffle the roar of angry guns or shut out the unceasing song of flying shells.

It was a Christmas of bounteous plenty along the British front and the soldiers in the field were joyously immune from the three-course dinners prescribed for the British Isles. Each individual company of the vast army organization had a jubilant Christmas spread and there was much rivalry in the elaborateness of the camp menus.

The members of the various companies pooled their assets, both edible and monetary, and the canteens and small French shops, which persist and prosper in the war zone, were splendidly decorated, in many instances with holly and mistletoe and paper flowers, made by the soldiers themselves, and the flowers being worked into Christmas mottoes.

**Bands Play**  
At various places along the lines bands visited the mess halls, giving concerts for the soldiers. The Young Men's Christian Association and other organizations arranged countless entertainments and special programmes prevailed in the mess halls, and the soldiers, many of them, most of the latter being battered French bards, with shell holes barricaded against the wintry blasts and the noises of battle waging not far away.

Every British soldier had his individual plum pudding, this particularly indispensable item of the Christmas bill of fare having been looked after by the London newspapers, which raised in the neighborhood of \$500,000 for their purchase.

Where conditions permitted as of the men as possible were remanned in the mid-ditches of the Somme and in other sectors Christmas dinner, steaming hot, was carried up through the communication trenches, sometimes under the pelting of shells, to the men held by duty at the outposts of war.

**Messages to Fritz**  
Some of the men serving the big guns chanted satirical greetings on the shells before firing them. "It's the dead shell and doesn't explode," explained a gunner, "Brother Boche can read what we think of him. On the other hand, if it does its duty, he'll know without reading."

This third Christmas of the British armies in France was vastly different from its two predecessors, especially the first, when only a pitiful handful of the original expeditionary force was left to form a thin khaki line against the gray clad enemy. The field army was then so small that King George personally sent a Christmas package to everyone. The multiplication of this army of tens of thousands into a present force of so many millions has somewhat altered the situation.

The news of President Wilson's peace note had percolated throughout the army by to-day, but it cannot be said to have been favorably received. While it can truthfully be said that officers and men alike realize the hardships of the coming winter, all appear eager for a new offensive in the spring and say they can make that offensive decisive.

Ottawa, Dec. 26.—Christmas greetings to Canadian soldiers at the front and training in England or at convalescent homes or hospitals there were conveyed by Sir Robert Borden and Sir George Parley, the Prime Minister and the Canadian Expeditionary Force in England.

"On behalf of the Canadian people I send Christmas greetings to the Canadian expeditionary force in England and earnestly wish that their



"USE IS EVERYTHING"—EVEN IN ZEPPELIN RAIDS. This splendid photograph of a group of people gazing upwards at Zeppelin hovering overhead, was taken in the heart of London. It shows well the amazing sang-froid of the British, who have now become thoroughly hardened to the sight of these monstrous air structures. Only curious interest and not fear is visible on the countenances of these people.

efforts during the coming year may be crowned with the highest success. Those who are now completing their training in England may soon be called to the front, where their record will be as splendid and inspiring as that of the Canadians now in the battle-line. The Canadian people are resolved to spare no effort and shrink from no sacrifice to support the cause for which you have taken up arms on behalf of your country."

To General Byng, head of the Canadians in France, the Premier sent this message:

"On behalf of the Canadian people I wish to you and to all the Canadian expeditionary force in France Christmas greetings and earnest wishes that in the coming year the highest success may crown their efforts."

### CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

#### Sent by King George to Sailors and Soldiers Also to the Sick and the Wounded

London, December 23.—"I send you, my sailors and soldiers, hearty good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. My grateful thoughts are ever with you, for victories gained, for hardships endured, and for your unflinching cheerfulness. Another Christmas has come around and we are still at war. But the Empire, confident in you, remains determined to win. May God bless and protect you."

"George, L.I."  
Also the following cable to the sick and wounded:  
"At this Christmastide the Queen and I are thinking more than ever of the sick and wounded among my sailors and soldiers. From our hearts we wish them strength to bear their sufferings, speedy restoration to health, a peaceful Christmas, and many happier years to come."

"George R.I."  
Although it has been customary to allow the mayors of St. Thomas to have a second term by acclamation, Dr. F. B. Bennett, chairman of the Board of Education, will oppose Mayor Trott.

The Woodstock jury in the case of Alex. Green's charged with causing grievous bodily harm to Constable Moore in a motor accident, found the accused "guilty with a recommendation for mercy."

Morley Vass, farmer living in London Township, was fined \$25 and costs and had a herd of swine valued at several hundred dollars sequestered after being convicted of having fed the animals on dead horses, friends here, for compulsory train-

## Compulsory Service Urged by Sir Sam

### Late Minister of Militia Speaks at Recruiting Meeting in His Home Town—Failure of National Service Commission

Lindsay, Dec. 25.—On Christmas Eve General Sir Sam Hughes, before a large audience in his home town, Lindsay, under the auspices of the Citizens' Recruiting League for Victoria and Hamilton, came out strongly in favor of immediate universal military training for the defense of Canada and compulsory overseas service.

In his remarks Sir Sam made reference to the admitted failure of the National Service Commission, to the fact that four months' valuable time had already been lost, and further, that the present system of recruiting would be saved, a perfectly uniform system, fair to all alike, would be established, and a trained democratic army offered by Canada.

"The nations are at war, and action, prompt and decisive, must be the mandate," said General Hughes.

Militia Act sufficient.  
Following more particularly the lines of his Toronto Empire Club and Metropolitan Church speeches, as well as his letter of October to Sir Robert Borden, all favoring compulsory service, General Hughes, now unfettered by the rules of office, denials the immediate calling out of all single men from 18 to 45 years of age and not accounted under the law, for active service training, under the Canadian Militia Act for the defence of Canada.

This, he stated, can be done under the Act as it now stands. To remove doubt regarding overseas service, the Militia Act should be so amended that the Canadian overseas could be sent by Canada to assist in the great cause of human liberty.

The ex-Minister also gave a summary of the German pre-war preparations and of the non-preparedness of the allies. The aims and aspirations of Germany were also touched on, as well as descriptions of Valenciennes, the sailing of the fleet, the trenches, the soldiers and the various aspects of the war. But the feature of the evening was his declaration that he had proven the value of his training, long well known to his leading friends in the dead horses, friends here, for compulsory train-

ing and service at once. He remarked that under his proposal he would have at least 200,000 to 300,000 men ready for the front, within four months from the inception of the plan.

The audience were impressed by his showing how the present, great national and private expense and personal cost of present systems of recruiting would be saved, a perfectly uniform system, fair to all alike, would be established, and a trained democratic army offered by Canada.

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ever. No Fear About Quebec  
Interviewed after his address, asked how Quebec Province would accept his plans Sir Sam replied quickly. "As I pointed out in my remarks to-night, if the British fleet should suffer disaster and Germany become dominant on the sea, there is nothing to prevent von Hindenburg from landing an army on our eastern coast next spring and practically without serious opposition, crossing to the Pacific, leaving a trail akin to that in Belgium, France and Poland behind him."

"I firmly believe and have reason for the belief," said Sir Sam, "that Quebec Province, in common with all other parts of Canada will loyally respond to the call to arms for universal training at once, and that compulsory overseas service will follow as a matter of course. The people realize how absurd it would be to permit the paying of taxes to be voluntary. So in such a great crisis compulsory service is the only fair plan."

Sir Sam's speech is greatly appreciated here as being a masterly and fearless solution of the recruiting problem.

### THE GAS PLEBISCITE

To the Editor Courier:  
In the local papers last week I noticed a statement credited to one of our aldermen that there was a prospect of getting artificial gas from Hamilton and selling it at 45 cents; and also an explanation that if the

gas plebiscite was endorsed in Brantford it did not necessarily mean that the municipal plant would have to be built.

The ratepayers should go slow in this matter. Personally, I think there is no chance of getting artificial gas from Hamilton delivered and sold in Brantford for the price quoted. I know something about the gas situation in Hamilton. The proposal there to build a gas coke plant was held up largely because the company insisted on the right to charge a maximum price of 65 cents. It has the right, under its present charter, to charge 90 cents a thousand for artificial gas. That is not a very promising outlook for 45 cent gas in Brantford from that source.

As to the plebiscite, we all know that while the pre-election talk is that plebiscites are not binding, a final verdict is often accented as a mandate from the people to go ahead and spend their money.

Personally, I am opposed to the expenditure of one dollar on unnecessary work at this time. Thrift is the cry from one end of the empire to the other to-day.

Britain needs every man and dollar to win the war, and economy in everything should be our policy. The calls for patriotic purposes have been great, and will be greater still, and they will doubtless continue to be cheerfully met. But for this very reason, the burden on the small taxpayer should not be unnecessarily increased. Let us win the war and settle our own troubles afterwards.

A TAXPAYER.

Detroit milk dealers refused demands of Michigan producers that they pay \$1 more per hundred pound of milk. The price asked by producers is \$3 per hundred pounds, this being an increase of \$1 over the present rate of \$2, and \$1.32 over the average rate for the year.

Solomon Trache was robbed near Koshquaga, Pa., of \$845 by four forgers, and bound and gagged was left to freeze to death in the snow. The men were woodcutters. Trache was badly beaten up by his assailants, but managed to loosen his bonds and make his way to the nearest house.

Detroit is faced with a power famine on account of coal shortage. Appeals are being made to conserve electricity by cutting out electric signs and all useless displays. One hundred thousand men would be thrown out of employment if the factories close down.

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Then you'll find nothing more acceptable than the special "Ely Ties" that we have selected for Christmas—not sold elsewhere in Brantford. There's not a pattern that the best dressed man in Brantford would not be proud to wear.

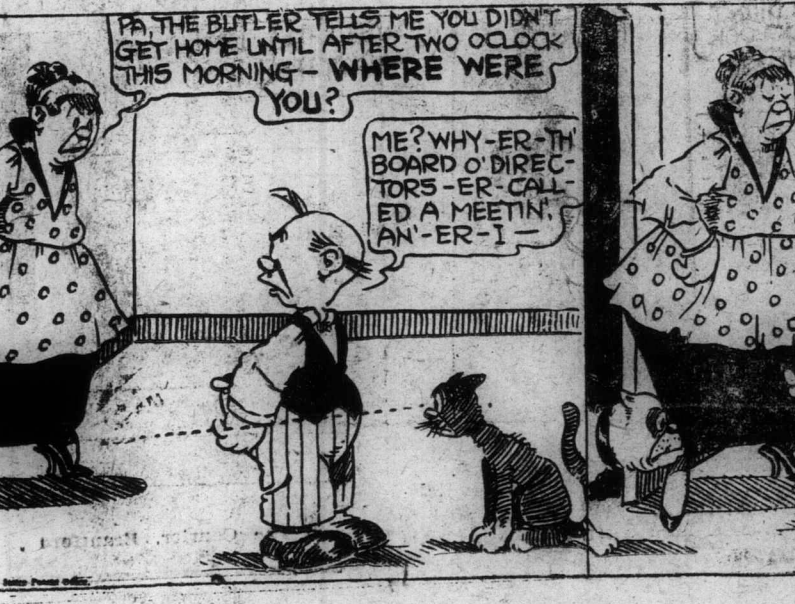
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### That Son-in-law of Pa's

