

# BRANTFORD DAILY COURIER

FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR

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TWO CENTS

## JAMES W. GERARD AND LEGATION REACH SWITZERLAND

### Two British Vessels the Prey of Hun Submarines; Americans Aboard Saved

#### AMBASSADOR GERARD AND HIS PARTY CROSS GERMAN BORDER INTO SWITZERLAND SAFELY

American Legation, Detained in Berlin Until Safety of Von Bernstorff Was Assured, Now Takes Its Departure

RELATIONS WERE STRAINED During the Past Week, Gerard Being Practically a Prisoner; Will Say Nothing on the Situation

By Courier Leased Wire. Zurich, Feb. 11.—via Paris, Feb. 12.—Most of the members of Ambassador Gerard's large party gave a genuine sigh of relief this afternoon when the Swiss border was reached, for the strain of the last few days had told more or less on the majority of the travelers. Ambassador Gerard met cordially the herds of newspapermen who crowded about him on his arrival at Zurich; clamoring for interviews for papers all over the civilized world, but he kept rigidly to his determination not to speak for publication until he has reported to President Wilson in Washington.

Was a Prisoner. The strain of the situation for the Americans in Berlin had been heightened towards the end by the efforts of the German authorities to induce Mr. Gerard to open negotiations for an amendment to the Prussian-American trade treaty of 1906. At the same time the German newspapers were flooded with reports of the seizure of German ships by America and with stories of difficulties and indignities encountered by Count von Bernstorff. Ambassador Gerard was refused permission to communicate in cipher with Washington and the authorities ignored all denials of the stories printed in the German papers until an official message received through the Spanish embassy made it clear that the stories were false. Prior to this Ambassador Gerard's telephone wires were cut, his mail and telegraphic privileges, so that he could not even instruct the American consuls, and

he was, in his own words, "a prisoner."

Strain Resulted. The continued result was uncertainty and petty friction which was only increased when the foreign office and military authorities shifted the responsibility for the delay in Mr. Gerard's departure from one to another. No American, least of all Ambassador Gerard, could obtain any definite information. It was pointed out to the officials in vain that their measures were only applicable to actual war and that the admirable self restraint and politeness of the German people, with the resultant good effect, was being jeopardized.

Delay followed delay and one excuse was made after another until Friday night when the foreign office suddenly announced its willingness to permit Mr. Gerard to depart at the station the following day. The names of correspondents and other persons were added to the lists. But even then petty delays and uncertainties followed until Saturday morning, when the train was boarded.

Farewell. Mr. Gerard's farewells were said in a friendly though formal manner. Many Germans were in the throng at the station, which consisted partly of Americans who had not received permission to depart on the embassy train and must await the police routine before being allowed to leave.

The Gerard party was accompanied by two representatives of the foreign office and guarded carefully by men from the secret service. The customs inspection and other inspection at the border were relaxed to a mere formality.

#### BRITISH TAKE ENEMY TRENCHES

Strong System of Fortifications Captured on Wide Front

MANY PRISONERS Are Captured by British and Heavy Casualties Inflicted on the foe

London, Feb. 11.—British troops last night captured German trenches on a front of more than three-quarters of a mile in the Somme line, constituting what is characterized as a "strong system," lying to the north of Beaumont-Hamel. The official statement, reporting this operation, reads:

"Another highly successful local operation was carried out last night. A strong system of hostile trenches lying on the southern front of Serre Hill (north of Beaumont-Hamel) was attacked and captured on a front of over three-quarters of a mile. We captured 215 prisoners, a number considerably exceeding our casualties."

Raid Teuton Trenches. "We repulsed this morning by our fire an enemy attempt to approach our lines south of Sally-Sailly. We entered enemy trenches during the night in the neighborhood of Pys, southwest of La Bassée, northeast of Neuve Chapelle and south of Fauquissart. Many casualties were inflicted on the enemy and his dugouts destroyed. A number of prisoners were secured."

"We effectively bombarded the enemy's positions today at a number of places along our front. Our airplanes carried out bombing operations with good results on Friday night and Saturday. One German machine was driven down in the air fighting."

German Attacks Repulsed. On Saturday night German attacks against the new British positions east of Sally-Sailly, on the Somme front, were unsuccessful. Friday bombs were dropped on a number of places of military importance and considerable damage was done to an enemy aerodrome. One German airplane was destroyed in an aerial fight and another was brought down by anti-aircraft guns.

#### China is For the Entente

By Courier Leased Wire. Tokio, Feb. 12.—Viscount Motono, Japanese Minister of foreign affairs, at a conference with the Chinese minister yesterday approved the attitude of China towards Germany as it has been expressed in China's reply to the German note on unrestricted submarine warfare, according to the newspapers to-day. The approval, it is said, was on the ground that the position taken by China would aid in uprooting German influence in the Far East and be of benefit to the Entente.

NOT HERE YET. No further word has been received by the local branch of the Soldiers' Aid Commission of the expected arrival of Private O. Hamilton, who has reached Toronto, without in the knowledge of the officials of the Commission. It is thought that he has been retained at the military hospital in Toronto, to undergo another examination before being allowed to proceed home.

#### Uncle Sam Prepares to Take an Ocean Trip



#### COAL CRISIS UNABATED

Quantity Arrived in City Yesterday but Need for More is Felt

CLASSES CLOSED At Central School Because of Cold—Felt in Other Places

The coal situation in Brantford is still an acute issue concerning which considerable anxiety is felt by the public at large. Although a quantity of coal arrived in the city yesterday via G. T. R., the demand continues unabated today. The dealers are emphatic in their statements that there is no cause for alarm, and no real danger of a serious scarcity of coal, as long as the public is patient and contented to purchase small quantities at a time but "watchful waiting" will not "keep the home fires burning," and many in the city have already felt the pinch of King Winter during the present record cold spell. Discomfort has been experienced in many parts of the city, the schools being put to a great deal of inconvenience in the matter of heating, until this morning it was found necessary to close some five classes at Central school with the prospect of others following until relief is obtained.

In the early hours of Sunday morning the mercury dropped to 10 below zero and the highest point reached during the twenty-four hours was 7 above. Early this morning 14 below zero was recorded and the highest point noticed was 6 above.

Several other thermometers caught it at more than the above but the figures given are those officially recorded at the Mohawk Institute. At the Coburn St. Station at 6 a.m. the reading was 20 below.

Hard Time in Hamilton. In Hamilton the residents have been having an exceptionally hard time. Many people there without coal who were depending on natural gas for heating purposes, suffered greatly, as the Mayor ordered Tilbury gas to be cut off on Friday night and the company's water gas plant was also out of business.

The Mayor has since ordered Tilbury gas on again.

Accident to Local Soldier

#### Pte. John J. Jones, of Frontier Guard Killed at St. Catharines

WAS SHOT

Accidentally During Course of a Machine Gun Lecture

St. Catharines, Feb. 11.—A most unfortunate accident happened yesterday, resulting in the death of Private John J. Jones, of the Frontier Guard. Sergeant Joseph Frost was demonstrating to a class of about a dozen soldiers of the guard the use of the machine gun in the little building used by the military men near the lower bridge. Sergeant Frost picked up some ammunition from the table, and showed the men how to place it in the machine gun. Then he proceeded to demonstrate how to fire. The barrel of the gun was in line with the head of Private Jones, who was seated upon a bunk, an interested spectator. Immediately there was a tremendous report, and Jones was seen to drop over, blood spurting from a horrible hole in his head, the full charge having lodged there. The comrades of the unfortunate man, after they recovered a little from the shock, carried Jones outside, but seeing he was dying took him back and laid him on the bunk. In their excitement they scarcely knew what they did. Doctor Mahoney was summoned, but immediately upon seeing the unconscious man decided there was no hope, and that he was dying. Jones passed away a few minutes later without regaining consciousness. He came here from Brantford, and was unmarried, forty-five years of age. A most rigid inquiry will be made by the military authorities to ascertain how live ammunition happened to be used instead of blank, and there will also be a civil inquest to inquire fully into the facts. Sergeant Frost is also a Brantford man.

#### AMERICAN MERCHANT VESSELS TO ARM THEMSELVES AGAINST SUBMARINE RAIDS

#### SUCCESS AGAINST TURKS IS SCORED

British Forces in Mesopotamia Advance on Three Mile Front

TRENCHES ENTERED

And Turkish Lines Penetrated to Depth of 1,200 Yards

London, Feb. 12.—An official report issued yesterday describes briefly a British success against the Turks in Mesopotamia, a new line being occupied by the British about three and a half miles to a depth of more than half a mile. The text of the statement reads:

"The British offensive south of Kut-el-Amara was resumed Friday. Under cover of a heavy bombardment a portion of the new Turkish front line west of the Hal River was secured and consolidated in the face of two counter attacks and two bombing attacks. Further west, the statement adds, "Turkish trenches were penetrated, and by successful bombing work were secured and consolidated along a front of 1,200 yards."

"During Friday night and Saturday four Turkish attacks on the British lines were repulsed. The British hold on the enemy trenches on the left was rapidly extended by bombing attacks."

"Later, after a heavy bombardment, a successful assault was undertaken against trenches west of the Ilceorice factory, which General Townshend held throughout the siege of Kut, whereby we secured the factory and 500 yards of enemy trenches."

As a result of these operations a new line has been occupied on a frontage of over 6,000 yards, and the enemy pushed back for a depth varying from 800 to 1,200 yards. All the evidence shows that the Turks suffered heavily."

#### GERMAN OVERTURES TO U. S. ARE NOT FAVORED

Suggestions as to Modification of Submarine Warfare Are Too Vague—A Statement of What the U. S. Demands

By Courier Leased Wire. New York, Feb. 12.—Washington dispatches published here to-day indicate that the German overtures to the United States, which have been conveyed through the Swiss minister as so nebulous that there is not the slightest chance of their success. The belief is expressed that these overtures were the result of an organized propaganda now being engineered in this country.

The New York Times in tracing the origin of the alleged proposals quotes a despatch sent by the Washington correspondent of The Cologne Gazette in evident furtherance of this effort. It reads in part: "General opinion is the president could do nothing else than sever relations to make good former note. Now it is up to Germany to provide to avoid everything which makes maintenance of friendly relations impossible. Refrain from destruction of American ships, but make clear that terms of the German note are misunderstood, that no unrestricted submarine warfare is contemplated, but only blockade, confined within the narrowest limits compatible with the necessary military aims."

When within these limits, greatest care taken not to interfere with innocent American commerce and every precaution taken to limit destruction of neutral ships to those carrying contraband, and destruction of enemy vessels to ships and cargo, but safeguarding wherever possible the lives of passengers and crews as was the recent practice. Then propose

U. S. Government Can Have No Diplomatic Dealings With Germany Until Present Campaign of Ruthless Warfare is Abandoned

FEWER SHIPS WERE SUNK Yesterday Than During Past Week—Hoped That Campaign May Yet Prove to be a Failure

By Courier Leased Wire. Washington, Feb. 12.—Within a few days the government will find a way whereby American merchant vessels now held in port by fear of German submarines may arm themselves and resume their sailings, it was intimated by officials to-day. This will be accomplished by private means. The government will not supply guns or gunners direct, nor even formally advise arming. Ship owners have stated that heretofore they have been unable to obtain either guns or gun crews.

Officials to-day were still inclined to regard the latest offer of Germany to discuss means of preventing war presented through the Swiss minister Saturday only as an effort to cast on the United States the appearance of being belligerent. The official attitude seemed to be that the United States and German government can have no diplomatic dealings until Germany abandons her program of unrestricted submarine warfare and that any other advance meanwhile will only tend to belabor the issue of American rights. It is not certain whether any answer will be made to the suggestion. Officials noted with interest to-day that the submarines toll of ships yesterday had sunk to the lowest level since the new campaign was inaugurated.

Paris, Feb. 12.—The possibility of the appearance of United States naval vessels in European waters to protect American shipping from submarines is discussed and it is pointed out that torpedo boats, destroyers or other craft assigned to this task would require the co-operation of hydro aeroplanes as scouts to locate the underwater boats. The efficacy of this style of hunting submarines has been demonstrated. One of the organizers of the Lafayette conference to which we are daily exposed."

service of the French army, according to the Paris Herald has received many letters from volunteers in training in France offering their services in this work on conditions that arrangements could be made with the French military authorities to assign them to that duty. As an encouragement to volunteer aviators, a committee of a flying corps organization makes a standing offer of the following prizes:

\$500 to every man winning the war cross; \$1,000 to the recipient of the military medal; \$1,500 to the man who receives the Cross of the Legion of Honor. An award of \$250 extra will be made for each mention in despatches.

Berlin, Feb. 11.—via London.—The Berlin press is confining itself to the most perfunctory references to the court-martial of General von Gronow and the American embassy staff. The Lokai, Anzeiger, the only newspaper printing editorial comment, says:

"It can hardly be said that in the person of the representative of the United States, who left yesterday, a popular figure disappears from Berlin. The assertion that he was a pronounced opponent of Germany is stretching the case a bit, yet he surely was no friend of Germany and it may be herein set down that the relations of the United States and Germany would have reached a far less deplorable state if the transatlantic reprieve had been represented in Berlin in the person of a man who possessed a greater appreciation of the difficulties and peculiarities of our position, and who further, had been inclined to keep his government informed correctly with respect to the campaign of lies and vilifications to which we are daily exposed."

#### Sinking of British Ship

By Courier Leased Wire. London, Feb. 12.—The sinking of the British Steamship Netherlee is reported by Lloyd's.

The Netherlee, 4,127 tons gross, was last reported on her departure from Philadelphia, January 21, for Dunkirk, France.

STORY HOUR. "With the Black Prince," an interesting tale, by William Stoddard, will be the subject of the story at the public library on Tuesday afternoon.

AUDITING. Messrs. Percy Button, Scotland, and J. H. H. Day, Cambridge, county auditors, were at the Court House today engaged in conducting an audit of the county finances.



Weather Bulletin Toronto, Feb. 12.—A pronounced area of high pressure is centered over the Great Lakes and very cold weather prevails from Ontario to the Maritime provinces. The temperature has risen a little in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Fair and decidedly cold today, rising temperature on Tuesday.