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The Toronto World

FRIDAY MORNING APRIL 26 1918—TWELVE PAGES

VOL. XXXVIII.—No. 13,680 TWO CENTS

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PROBS— Fresh easterly winds; some showers near Lake Erie, but mostly fair and cool.

LATEST DEFEAT FOR GERMANS SINCE 1914

English and Australian Troops Drive the Enemy From Villers-Bretonneux, Inflicting Terrific Casualties in Desperate Fighting

"May We Give the Dragon's Tail a Damned Good Twist"

—Reply of Vindictive to Admiral Keyes before starting on dash for Zebrugge.

LOSSES IN WAR MATERIAL BY BRITISH FULLY RESTORED

Winston Churchill Declares Army Has Sufficient Supply for Heavy Fighting Season—Enough Guns for Shells Provided—More Airplanes Than Aviators—Previous Year's Output Multiplied.

London, April 25.—Winston Spencer Churchill, introducing in the house of commons today the estimates for the ministry of munitions of which he is the head, said that during the five weeks since the battle in France has opened there had been passing thru the greatest strain regarding the supply of war material that had occurred in the experience of the ministry. Not only had the consumption and destruction of munitions of all kinds, but there were also very great losses by capture by the enemy. "We lost," the minister said, "nearly a thousand guns by shell fire or capture between four thousand and five thousand machine guns have been lost or destroyed, and the quantity of ammunition, apart from that which has been fired and that which has been lost in the dumps, amounted to something between one and three weeks' total of manufacture.

Lesses Restored. "Other war materials have been used or lost in a great variety of classes and on a similar scale, but by the end of last week all in many cases more than made good.

"Vast quantities of small arm ammunition have been lost or left behind, but the expenditure in the past month did not exceed the maximum potential capacity of the enormous reserves which had accumulated against such a contingency. The wastage of rifles was very great, but the weapons were quite easily and promptly made good.

"Our preparations had contemplated a period of supreme battle intensity from the third week of February to the end of the month of March, and we are at present from one to three so weeks in advance of the calculations made to the good. Those calculations showed the artillery to fire during the whole of the fighting season, and a considerable volume of shells than was expected weekly during the most intense period of last year and more than double the volume of shells fired during the terrific bombardment which characterized the Somme offensive in 1916. They also provided for the carrying forward into 1917 of sufficient reserves to allow the British to take to one step higher than in 1916, and to intensify.

Plenty of Munitions. "In fact, barring unforeseen circumstances, we are able to carry on a battle with the same intensity as we did at the supreme pitch of intensity during the winter without compromise, and the requirement for 1917 is taken care of by the fact that 1,000,000 men were in front munition factories for service in the army.

"We are making in a single week more airplanes in a single month than we made in the whole of 1916; in three months more than we made in the whole of 1915, and we made in the whole of this year several times what we made last year." Mr. Churchill said that owing to the tonnage required for transportation to this country, and the assistance which England had to give for the transportation of the American army, he had to accept a considerable reduction in the tonnage budget, upon which he had hoped to build his plans. But, he added: "Enough's as good as a feast."

Tribute to Workers. He paid tribute to the workers, saying that latterly less than one-sixth the total of the time worked while labor thru the Easter holidays had more than wiped this out. Another explanation of the ministry's success was that more than three-quarters of a million women were employed in the munitions factories. More than nine-tenths of the whole manufacture of shells was due to the labor of women who before the war had never seen a lathe.

While every demand for steel plate had been met, the minister hoped this year to beat all records in its production. Turning to the chemical sphere, Mr. Churchill announced that the government had embarked upon the task of extracting nitrate from the air on a considerable scale and that officers had informed him that the British had killed more German than their gas than the Germans had killed British by this means, although the Germans had caused more transient casualties with their irritants.

Sufficient Guns This Year. "Just as last year we had more ammunition than the guns could fire, we continue this year we shall have sufficient guns to fire all and more than all the ammunition which the tonnage, and tonnage alone, can be carried by sea.

AND THEY DID!

London, April 25. — (Via Reuter's Ottawa Agency).—Captain Carpenter, of the Vindictive, states that before starting on his dash for Zebrugge, Admiral Keyes signalled: "St. George for England."

The Vindictive replied: "MAY WE GIVE THE DRAGON'S TAIL A DAMNED GOOD TWIST!"

great armies in the later stages of this campaign will be fully supplied with guns and shells, but the gunners will be the limiting factor in artillery development.

"If that conclusion should prove true it will afford us some ground for thinking that the great capture of guns which the Germans made in Russia, in addition to their own supply, will not be of so much service to them as some people seem to think."

C. L. DENISON WAS CIVIL WAR VETERAN

Uncle of Police-Magistrate, Col. George T. Denison, is Dead.

SERVED WITH GEN. LEE

Was for Some Time a Member of the City Council for Brockton.

Charles Leslie Denison of "Bellevue," 640 Dufferin street, died yesterday at the age of 78. His life was full of activity, the story of his early years reading like a romance. In '68 he began his military career as a cornet in the bodyguards, being gazetted a lieutenant in '61. In 1862 he journeyed south, and managing to get thru the lines of the northern army joined the confederate army as a private in a cavalry regiment. He won his captaincy while fighting with Lee's army, and was with him when he surrendered in 1865. He, with the cavalry, managed to escape to the south. He led a life of hardship for some time, partly in Mexico.

The late Mr. Denison eventually came back to Canada and served for several years as alderman in the City of Toronto for Brockton. He was fond of horse racing and owned a race track, which was situated near Gladstone avenue and Dundas street. At the time of his death he was the owner of the Dufferin race track, which he had leased for some years to the racing association.

The late Mr. Denison is survived by his widow and daughter and two sons, John Denison, Preston, and Leslie Denison, Toronto. Lieut-Col. Clarence A. Denison and Col. George T. Denison, police magistrate, are nephews.

LORD READING COMING TO OPEN EXHIBITION

Reception to Returned Soldiers Will Be Another Feature of the Opening Day.

The opening day of this year's Canadian National Exhibition will be doubly interesting in that Viscount Reading will be present to open the fair, and the reception to the returned soldiers will be held on that date. At a meeting yesterday afternoon of the committee in charge of the reception to the first contingent men now home on furlough, it was decided to postpone the event indefinitely. It was practically decided yesterday to all day of the fair a reception to all returned soldiers in Toronto would be held. In the meantime, a box of cigars will be presented to each of the returned soldiers.

Toronto

Local unit of tank battalion has practically filled its ranks.

Controller McBride demands judicial investigation into public health department methods.

Charles Leslie Denison, 640 Dufferin street, a veteran of the American Civil War, is dead.

Canadians must buy all their own securities this year, Sir Edmund Walker tells Empire Club.

The reception to returned soldiers postponed until opening day of Exhibition, when Lord Reading will be present.

War News

British recapture Villers-Bretonneux. Churchill promises an adequate supply of munitions for this year and next year.

British aviators, despite the mist, inflict severe losses on attacking German troops.

British Admiralty reports the recent raid against Zebrugge to be a complete success.

Heavy fighting proceeds from the Lys to Mount Kemmel, with the enemy making small gains.

French troops, the pressed back, still hold Kemmel Village and all the high ground south of Ypres.

After the loss of Hangard Village by the French on the Avre, the infantry fighting ceased.

Winston Churchill says that all the munitions lost, including 9000 guns smashed or captured by the enemy, have been made good to the British army.

BORDEN AND MACLEAN LEAVE FOR NEW YORK

Will Be Joined by Sir Thomas White to Establish British Credits.

By Staff Reporter. Ottawa, April 25.—Sir Robert Borden and Hon. A. K. Maclean left this evening for New York where they will probably be joined by Sir Thomas White. The purpose of the visit is said to be in connection with the British, American and Canadian authorities for the establishment of British credits in Canada for the purchase of food and munitions, and incidentally to stabilize the rate of exchange between Canada and the United States.

VILLERS-BRETONNEUX RETAKEN IN SPLENDID COUNTER-ATTACK

Official Report of British Success

London, April 25.—Australian and English troops have recaptured Villers-Bretonneux and taken more than six hundred prisoners in that region. Field Marshal Haig reports from headquarters tonight. Further to the north on a line from Bailleul to Wytschate there has been very heavy fighting and the allied troops were obliged to withdraw from their positions. The statement says: "The French and British positions from north of Bailleul to east of Wytschate have been heavily attacked all day. There was fighting of great severity on the whole of this front, particularly in the neighborhood of Drautour, Kemmel and Vestrinat. "In the course of repeated attacks and counter-attacks the allied troops have been compelled to withdraw from the positions they held this morning, and the fighting continues. "South of the Somme several counter-attacks launched by Australian and English troops last night against the positions gained by the enemy yesterday in and around Villers-Bretonneux carried our line onward to within a short distance of our former front and resulted in the capture of over six hundred prisoners. The village is now in our hands. "The enemy's attack yesterday morning on this front was made by at least four divisions, and his objectives were not reached at any point. The number of German dead found in the positions recaptured by our troops shows that the losses of the enemy were very heavy."

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Australian and English Troops Drive Germans From Village and Take Foe Prisoners—Bitter and Prolonged Fighting is Expected in the Kemmel District.

British Headquarters in France, April 25.—Our success at Villers-Bretonneux, beginning with the splendid counter-attack of last night, has been a great performance. It cost the Germans terribly dear to get a footing in the village. It will be scarcely less expensive if they have been cleared out, as seems likely. We have without doubt re-established our line east of that place. The German tanks did not particularly distinguish themselves, the whole five concentrating upon a single "female." On the arrival of a "male" tank the quietest made off. It was two of our light tanks of a small mobile pattern which did fearful execution among a fresh enemy division which had not yet entered the battle since arriving on the western front. These tanks charged the massed troops again and again, looking on returning as if they had been mowing in a vast shambles. A unconfirmed report this morning states that the Germans reached the crest of Mont Kemmel, but later reports indicate that it is improbable the allies lost any high ground. During the last two nights the enemy attacked the French around Drautour with a strength of six battalions and gained a temporary advantage, but were driven back by counter-attacks. This morning a much heavier assault was delivered by four to six divisions over a front of seven miles on the line Meteren-Bailleul-Wytschate. The Alpine corps, 11th Bavarians and the 117th divisions, consisting of mountain troops, were engaged, Jaeger regiments being in support, and an entirely fresh division, the 58th, was identified. The attack overlapped on our front on the right flank of the French. Reports indicate that the full-rushing tactics of the enemy masses carried them thru our defensive line in places and possibly some German parties progressed towards the crest of Mont Kemmel, but I am told this afternoon that the French held both Kemmel Village and the hill, so it seems the danger to this important strategic key position has been averted. The Germans appreciate the importance of Kemmel so fully that bitter and prolonged fighting in this zone is anticipated. The latest reports from Villers-Bretonneux is that the Germans are believed to be practically all mopped up there. I expect we will fully hold by sunset. The Germans have suffered another defeat which ranks only second to the tremendous repulse he encountered in Flanders in 1914, and a smaller scale reminiscent of his reverse at Arras.

Germans Are Swept Back In a Most Terrific Struggle

Enemy Forced to Retire Almost to Lines Held Before the Present Fighting Began—French Driven Out of Hangard.

Associated Press War Summary. The great double German drive in the Somme and Armentieres sectors, which began on Wednesday morning, has developed into a terrific struggle. The tide of battle has surged to and fro during the past two days, with the decision still in the balance. The British, having been forced back out of Villers-Bretonneux, launched a counter-attack and swept the Germans back almost to the lines which were held before the present fighting began. The French have been driven back out of Hangard-en-Santerre, but are holding their positions close by, while on the line southwest of Ypres the British have been compelled to withdraw slightly before furious attacks along the Meteren-Bailleul-Wytschate line. Notwithstanding the frantic preparations made by the Germans for a continuance of their drive towards Amiens, and the extreme violence of the fighting, the gains thus far in that region have been very small. Along the line from Albert south to Cassel, except at Hangard-en-Santerre, the German assaults have been hurled back by the allied forces, which are strongly posted on the higher ground to which they retired during the last days of the German drive in Picardy.

Large Force Employed. It is unofficially reported that from four to six German divisions, or from 48,000 to 72,000 men, have been hurled against the British and French lines near Ypres. The retirement of the British in this sector must have been small, for there are no great gains reported by Berlin so far. It was reported on Thursday that Mont Kemmel, a dominating height north of Wulverghem, had been taken by the enemy, but this has not been confirmed.

That only slight gains have been made anywhere along the two fronts which have been subjected to attack is reported by Berlin as being prepared to defend their positions. In the past three weeks, the Germans have been hurled by heavy cannon and which have marched many fresh divisions to the points where they have been held for the moment of attack. Their failure to gain almost insignificant bits of ground is one of the most encouraging features of the fighting.

Raiding operations are reported along the French lines east of Montdidier. It is officially announced that the Hague that the negotiations between Germany and Holland are "not progressing satisfactorily." The Dutch foreign minister has declined to give the details of the situation between the two countries, which is admittedly quite delicate.

A COMPLETE SUCCESS

In Addition to Damage Done at Zebrugge, the Channel is Blocked by Cement Ships.

London, April 25.—The Associated Press learns from a high naval source that the Zebrugge operations were a complete success, with the result that the Flanders flotilla will now be obliged to resort to the Ostend route in putting to sea, from which the British forces can more easily handle the German ships. In addition to the damage done, the mole and the German gun, material and shipping, the channel has been blocked by the cement ships, and a German dredger was destroyed. The loss of the dredger, together with the blocking up of the channel, must result in the speedy siltting up of the waterway, and it will take at least several weeks to clear the passage.

BRITISH DRIVE ENEMY BACK TO WOOD'S EDGE

London, April 25.—Heavy fighting continues on the sector east of Amiens, Reuter's correspondent at Amiens, Reuter's correspondent at Amiens reports. The Germans obtained a footing in D'Aquenne Wood, west of Villers-Bretonneux, but the British counter-attacked and drove them back to the fringe of the wood. At several places the British have retaken ground, and their general position has improved considerably. At 2 o'clock this morning the Germans put down an intense gas barrage on the Anglo-French front in Flanders, and two hours later deep waves of infantry delivered an assault.

SUCCESSFUL OPERATION CARRIED OUT BY FRENCH

Enemy Suffered Serious Losses Before Abandoning Ground on the Devol River.

Paris, April 25.—The following official statement was issued tonight: "Eastern theatre, April 24: Late reports confirm the full success of the reconnoitring operation carried out yesterday on the north bank of the Devol River. In the course of their advance our troops established that the enemy had suffered very serious losses before abandoning the ground. They brought back about ten Austrian prisoners. On April 24 British troops carried out a successful raid near Barakel, east of the Struna, and the Vetrnik heights. The Serbian troops have maintained their occupation of the work taken April 21, repulsing new enemy counter-attacks."

BRITISH AIR FORCES ENGAGE IN ACTION

Flying Men Attack German Troops Near Villers-Bretonneux With Bombs and Guns.

London, April 25.—The official statement on aerial operations issued by the war office tonight, reads: "Mist again hampered the work of our aviators on Wednesday. Our air forces engaged the enemy's attacking troops in the neighborhood of Villers-Bretonneux with bombs and machine gun fire from a very low height. Two hostile machines were brought down in aerial combat and another was shot down in our lines by our infantry. Two of our machines are missing. "During the night the southern portion of the front was covered with mist, and our machines were unable to leave the ground. In the north, however, five and a half tons of bombs were dropped on Estaires, Armentieres, Roulers, and th railway stations at Courtrai and Thourout. All our machines returned safely."

FRENCH RE-ESTABLISH LINES N WOEVRÉ

Eject Enemy From Advanced Elements in Kegniville Sector.

Paris, April 25.—The war office announcement tonight reads: "There was great activity on the part of both armies today in the region of Hangard and on both banks of the Avre, but no infantry action. "In the Woevré, after a violent bombardment, the Germans delivered an attack in the Kegniville sector. Our troops ejected the enemy from some advanced elements where he had gained a footing and completely re-established our lines. Prisoners remained in our hands. "The artillery fighting was quite spirited on the left bank of the Meuse and in the Vosges. "On April 22 and 23 seven German airplanes and a captive balloon were brought down by our pilots. Ten other machines, badly damaged, fell inside their own lines. "It is confirmed that two enemy airplanes, reported damaged on April 20, were in reality brought down. Five other German machines and a captive balloon likewise were destroyed on April 21, 22 and 24. Five thousand kilograms of projectiles were dropped by our bombing planes on the railway stations at Neale, Roye and Chaulnes. Our airplanes have carried out numerous machine gun attacks on enemy concentrations."

THE HAT SITUATION.

Something tells us that not every man is fully aware of the hat situation in Toronto. A few words might enlighten them. There is a great scarcity in production. Everything entering in the manufacture of men's hats has gone up in price, and on account of the scarcity of supplies many manufacturers had to withdraw their samples and close their factories. The outlook is not promising for the future. Prices are high enough now, but we don't know what they will be later on. This notice is sent out by the W. & D. Dinson Co. advising men to buy their hats now before prices further advance.

GERMANS SEND CAVALRY TO HOLLAND BORDER

The Hague, April 25.—German cavalry has appeared along the West-Phanlian border, hitherto guarded only by Landsturm. A strong German unit, demanding a quick reply, has arrived. The main demand is for free transportation of materials thru Holland to Belgium. The minister of defence declares the situation renders necessary the maintenance of the maximum age for manufacturers.