

BERLIN ADMITS THE BRITISH AND FRENCH GAIN GROUND

The Allied Armies Launch Strong Attack Between Roads Leading from Bapaume to Croisilles and Bapaume to Cambrai, As Well As on Both Banks of Somme.

Berlin, April 2.—The German official statement follows:
"Western front: Between Arras and the Aisne, yesterday and again this morning, engagements developed, notably between the roads leading from Bapaume to Croisilles and Bapaume to Cambrai, as well as on both banks of the Somme west of the St. Quentin. The British and the French launched strong forces, which because of the effect of our artillery fire forced back several times and which only after considerable losses, which included fifty prisoners and some machine guns, gained ground because of our troops giving way, as had been ordered."
"On both sides of the Oise-Aisne Canal also, and on the highlands of Vregny, French attacks only resulted in a small advance, with heavy losses because of the full efficiency of our artillery, which was absolutely familiar with the details of the terrain."
"In the Champagne, the annihilating fire of our artillery upon trenches for troops ready for attack, held down an attack by the French against the heights south of Ripont."
"Regarding operations on the eastern front the statement reads:

"Eastern front: Front of Prince Leopold: On the Dvina Russian advances were frustrated by our fire."
"West of Lutsk near Svinichy our storming detachments brought several prisoners from hostile trenches."

In Carpathians.
"Front of Archduke Joseph: On the Ludova, in the wooded Carpathians, our reconnoitering troops destroyed by blasting operations one of the numerous mine fields established by the enemy."

"The Russians, after strong artillery preparation, began an attack on a front of seven kilometres against the Ustil Valley. Their waves broke down under our fire, at one point in hand-to-hand fighting. Minor advances on both sides of the field of the main attack equally failed."

"Army group of Field Marshal Von Mackensen: There is nothing new to report."
"Macedonian front: In the Lake Narrows hostile reconnoitering advances were resultless. Southwest of Lake Doiran a storming detachment entered a British position, killed a part of the garrison and returned with several prisoners."

1916-17 A YEAR RECORD IN CUSTOMS COLLECTIONS

An Increase at Local Office of Over Half a Million Dollars—March Was the Largest Single Month in the History of the City of St. John.

A fair criterion of the vast increase in business handled through the City of St. John is afforded by the official statement of the customs receipts for the fiscal year ending March 31st last. The statement as made public yesterday afternoon by Collector of Customs C. B. Lockhart shows that the year was the greatest in the history of the city, no less than \$3,256,689.57 being received by the customs department here during the year as compared with \$2,707,080.06 collected for the year 1915-16. This represents an increase last year of \$549,609.51 over 1915-16, and is all the more gratifying in view of the fact that last year was the record year up till that time.

Not only was the past year the greatest in the history of the department from the standpoint of collections, but the month of March which has just closed was the largest single month since the establishment of the local office, at least so far as there is any record of transactions. The total receipts for March were \$358,767.59 as compared with total receipts for March, 1916, of \$204,568.89, an increase of \$154,198.70.

Of the receipts for the past year from all sources, no less than \$3,242,097.61 were received from duties alone

as compared with \$2,705,243.00 from this source during the previous year. Collector Lockhart and his assistants are naturally pleased with this new record. The increased value of the various articles on which duty is collectable has operated to boost the returns, while the general business has also exceeded that of former years. From other parts of Canada come reports of satisfactory increases in the customs returns. Advice from Ottawa are to the effect that the total collections for the year in the Dominion amounted to \$145,949,107 against \$102,609,621, collected during the previous twelve months, an increase of \$43,339,486.

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