

SOLDIER ESCAPED FROM SIBERIA AND WORKED WAY TO NEW YORK

In the district of Ungvar, which bears the high tide mark of the Russian invasion of Hungary, one of the thousands who were called to the Austro-Hungarian colors on July 30 of last year was a tall, young forester named Ludwig Wittich. With his fellow conscripts he was told the army was about to march triumphantly against the Serbs, who were to be subjugated for their sins against the Dual Monarchy. To the strong and intelligent forester the prospect of winning honors in battle and perhaps distinction was indeed a rosy one.

A few days ago the same young man arrived in New York city. He is crippled and broken in health from a series of experiences which took him over four-fifths of the earth's circumference. Instead of marching against the Serbs, the Sixth Army Corps, of which he was a unit, was shattered to a fragment in Austria's abortive invasion of Russia. Wittich is one of the few that remained of his comrades in the Fifteenth troop division of the Imperial army were left captives in the hands of the Russians.

Wittich's own story of his experiences, one of the most remarkable yet produced from the war, he related recently. Although an obscure private of infantry, his escape from a military prison in Siberia is one of the most stirring of history's shackle-breaking exploits, and the hardships which he endured afterward would appear to set a new mark upon the limits of human endurance. Here is Wittich's story, which is corroborated by previous reports and also by documents which he has with him.

"I was enrolled on July 30, 1914, a private in the Sixty-sixth regiment of infantry. I already had served with the colors and therefore was a soldier of experience in the manual of arms and infantry. On August 1, and those of us who were in the district of Ungvar were transported by rail to Permysh and there attached to the Fifteenth troop division of the Sixth army corps. We were very enthusiastic and felt sure that our arms were irresistible.

was futile. Whole lines of our infantry that dashed forward at the charge were withered by the hell of fire. All we could do was to hold on to the position we occupied. That is, so far as my regiment was concerned. I do not know what happened to the remainder of our army but I know that the Fifteenth Troop Division was almost annihilated.

FLEES FROM PRISON CAMP

"I received a bullet wound in my left leg, a shrapnel and two bayonet wounds on my hands. That was when the Russians charged our trenches. We were on the aggressive all the time, and never retreated. They outnumbered us three to one, and when most of our men were killed we were taken prisoners of war.

"Several of our own army surgeons were made captive and our wounds were attended by them. The next day—that was on August 28—the few that were left of the Sixty-sixth infantry were taken to a prison camp in the Lublin forest. It was not difficult for me to get away from the camp, for I am a forester and am able to find my way about in the woods, with my hicksa (forester's knife) I cut two long staves and another Hungarian soldier and I made our escape.

"We walked three kilometres in search of the Austrian lines, but were overtaken by a Cossack patrol. My wound had become very painful, and I was unable to move quickly. They asked us where we were going, and we told the best story we could under the circumstances. We said we were prisoners of war and that we had wandered away from the others.

"One of the Cossacks was very kind to me. He dismounted and let me ride and in this manner I returned to the prison camp. As soon as my wound had partly healed, we were taken to the railroad station at Dorogost and there our long and tedious railroad journey began. For years it seemed we were doomed to live on trains which never seemed to make any progress at all. It was twenty-one days after we left Dorogost that we passed through Moscow. There was less congestion on the railways then, as by that time, I suppose, the concentration of Russian troops towards the frontier had left the way open for our transportation. We did not know where we were going, but I knew the names of the places we passed through for I speak the Slav language.

"We were four weeks in Tobolsk where began our journey that was to lead all the way across Asia. We lost count of time, for we were held for weeks sometimes at various army posts and encampments. One of our halts was made at Irkutsk, which is near to Lake Baikal.

"Winter had begun to make things very uncomfortable by the time we reached Vladivostok, where we were to be imprisoned for the duration of the war. There were many of us there, Austrians, Germans and Hungarians, and although the food which was served us was not good we were permitted to purchase anything that was salable. Our place of detention was not a prison but a series of cantonments and barracks, and because the possibility of escape appeared so remote the movements of many of us were not seriously restricted.

"My knowledge of the Slav languages caused the Russian military authorities to use me as an interpreter,

and I was permitted to go about the village of Rozdolyna, where our prison was."

When asked concerning the treatment of prisoners by the Russian military authorities, Wittich said: "There was no restriction upon our mail. Apparently none of my letters was censored, and I received many from home. Also money was sent to me and we were never asked regarding its disposition, and so far as I know, no one of us ever lost any through theft. The prison was really an army post on the Manchurian frontier, and many Chinese came and went each day.

CHINESE AID ESCAPE.

"It was my duty when on certain details to board trains which arrived from Manchuria, and while talking with a Chinese who spoke some Russian I ascertained that escape from our prison was not outside the bounds of possibility. The Chinese seemed to be willing to do anything for us if we paid him, so I consulted several officers who were prisoners also. It was by their direction that and Chinese and I worked out the scheme to escape.

"Eleven of us decided to take the risk of being shot for making the attempt, and for 330 roubles, or 30 rubles a head, the Chinese decided to guide us as far as Zsanko, which was across the border in Chinese Manchuria. Accordingly, on the night of January 12 the Chinese, who had a confederate with him, came to the vicinity of the prison. It was intensely cold, the temperature being forty below zero, and our scheme was for one of us to go with the Chinese and the ten others to follow at intervals of fifteen minutes. We arranged to mark our trail in the snow, which was crusted over by the frost.

"Those who started with me from the cantonments, where the sentries were all busy seeking warmth and shelter, were Lieutenant Zsanko, of a Hungarian hussar regiment; Lieutenant Bantz, a German aviation officer; Captain Gruner, a German; Lieutenant Count Zselatin, of Hungarian; hussars; Sergeant Witz, a Hungarian; Lieutenant Versal, a Hungarian; Captain Georgowich, of Hungarian hussars, and Lieutenant Stauffeld, a German.

"Physical escape from the cantonments was not difficult. Our endeavor was an old brickyard that I had found by the aid of the Chinese guides three miles from the prison. They all came to the brickyard one by one at regular intervals, all save Lieutenant Lanyi and Lieutenant Bantz, who were caught. I do not know what happened to them afterward.

FOUR KILLED BY INTENSE COLD.

"Then we set forth in the snow. I had purchased in the Russian great coat and hat, for my relatives had sent me 4,000 crowns from home. We had brought cans of prepared bread, but it was not long before the tremendous grip of the frost laid hold of us, and we were unable to open the cans. It was so cold that death would have been welcome out there in the woods. Even the Chinese, who were suffering greatly.

"For three days, starving and almost insane from the acute bite of the frost we staggered on and on. On January 15 Count Zselatin and Sergt. Witz fell in the snow, and when we examined them we found them dead. The frost had taken its first two victims. The following day, Captain Gruner and Lieutenant Steinberg also succumbed.

The five of us that remained only barely alive stumbled forward after the two guides. I for one was rather weak and had not much strength left. I had lost all sensation of feeling in my feet and I moved along methodically, I can just barely remember being dragged along the snow covered streets of Zsanko by my comrades, and some Chinese frontier policemen giving us stimulants and food.

"Captain Georgowich and I were suffering from severe frostbite in our feet and we were taken to a little place that did duty for a hospital. There, we heard that a squadron of Cossacks had traced us and had questioned our extradiitor. The Chinese authorities denied their requests because we were not charged with crime and so stricken that as combatants we could not be seriously considered, under the circumstances.

TOES ARE AMPUTATED

"As soon as we were able to sharpen our thoughts again, after they, with our limbs, had long been benumbed, we wrote to the Austro-Hungarian Consulate in Peking asking for aid.

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With Captain Georgowich I was taken to a hospital in a town not far distant, and there our feet were operated on. All of the toes were amputated from my right foot, and four of the toes from my left foot.

"The other three of our party left us, and when we recovered partly, Captain Georgowich and I purchased two horses, for winter had by this time passed away, and the roads were clear of snow, and we set out on a long ride to Mukden. We were in the saddle daily for almost two months before we reached Mukden. From there we went to Toentsin by rail, and on August 16 I was taken to a German hospital there. It was found that removing the part of my right foot which had been frost-bitten the work had not been made complete, so a further operation was necessary.

"Captain Georgowich meanwhile had left for the United States. When I recovered I went to Shanghai and by aid of the Consul General of Austria-Hungary I obtained passage on board the Panama Pacific Mail steamship Manchuria for San Francisco. I was on board when she left from Shanghai, on Sept. 16. When the vessel anchored at Yokohama Japanese officers boarded her. I told them frankly I was a Hungarian, but mentioned nothing about having served in the army or having escaped from Vladivostok. They saw that I was crippled and did not interfere with me.

"I arrived in San Francisco on October 13 and came to New York City last Friday. I want to go back to Hungary, because that is where my friends are. I am not any good for service in the army again, so why should I not be permitted to return?"

Ludwig Wittich is living with Hungarian family named Kugler, at Linden, N.J. He has credentials from the Austro-Hungarian Consul General at Shanghai.

STILL SPECULATING AS TO ROUMANIA

London, Nov. 23.—Roumania finds herself in much the same position as Greece, with both the Entente allies and the Central powers bringing pressure to bear upon her. The Germans it is said, are asking Roumania to give assurances of her continued neutrality and also are offering her concessions if she intervenes in the war on the side of the Teutonic allies. With a big Russian army in Bessarabia, however, it is believed in military circles here hardly likely that Roumania will accept the second alternative. On the whole, it is expected here that the firm attitude of the Entente powers towards Greece will clear the Balkan situation before very long.

CANADIAN PACIFIC NEW DAY SERVICE BETWEEN TORONTO AND OTTAWA

With the usual aim of catering to the needs of the travelling public, the inauguration of a day service between Toronto and Ottawa by the Canadian Pacific Railway will be a most popular move. This service will be maintained Eastbound by train No. 38 "The Rideau," leaving Toronto Union Station at 1.45 p.m. daily except Sunday, arriving Ottawa, Central Station 10.00 p.m., and Westbound by train No. 37 "The York," leaving Ottawa 1.15 p.m., daily except Sunday, arriving Toronto Union Station at 9.30 p.m. The route covered by this service will be via the New Lake Ontario Shore Line, passing through the lake shore towns of Whitby, Oshawa, Bowmanville, Port Hope, Cobourg, Trenton, Belleville, etc.

The equipment is of the usual standard maintained on Canadian Pacific high class trains; first class coaches, cafe parlor cars, also library, observation, parlor cars, in which the latest issues of current periodicals are displayed for passengers.

This service will prove a decided advantage to the business man, as it will allow reasonable time in the capital and mean only one night away from home.

Excellent connections from Western Ontario points are made at Toronto with "The Rideau."

All particulars may be had on application to Canadian Pacific Agents, or by writing M. G. Murphy, District Passenger Agent, Toronto, or W. Lahy, 118 Dalhousie street, Brantford.

LOCAL OPTION Bulletin

THE FIGHT IS ON. By an unanimous vote the City Council decided to submit a Local Option By-Law on Jan. 3, 1916.

You can close every bar-room and Liquor Shop in Brantford. The responsibility is now on YOUR shoulders. In the greatest crisis in our history let the people speak in a decisive manner.

YOUR NAME— Is it in the Voters List?

WOMEN WHO CAN VOTE

All unmarried women or widows living in the city, who own property in the city, assessed for \$400 or more, or who are tenants and pay \$4.00 per month or more, or who have an income of over \$400 per year and is now paying or is willing to pay taxes on an assessment of \$400, are entitled to vote.

Get in Touch With Your Ward Committee!

THE FIGHT IS ON—WHAT SHARE WILL YOU HAVE IN IT?

(Signed) THE COMMITTEE

PRISONERS OF WAR EXCHANGED

Preparations Made for Transfer of Them Between Russia and Germany.

Sweden is Medium Through Which Transaction is Effected.

Stockholm, Sweden, Nov. 23.—(Correspondence of The Associated Press)

Preparations have been completed for the resumption of the exchange of wounded prisoners between Russia and Germany. The transfer will be carried on as before without any modification of the original plan, but several innovations have been introduced which will make the long journey more comfortable for the wounded and additional sanitary precautions have been taken. One of these is a new disinfecting station at Haparanda where all arrivals will receive a steam bath, while their clothes are washed and disinfected. Since it has been found that the locomotives and steam heater can only supply enough heat for two cars, the cars carrying the cold weather will be cut down to that length. Large numbers of blankets have been provided, and the wounded will have no difficulty in keeping warm in their excursion northward which carries them almost into the arctic circle.

The exchange will continue through November, but it will be briefly interrupted in December, when all the Swedish trains will be needed to take care of the Christmas traffic, which in Sweden is always extraordinarily heavy. The sanitary arrangements have been found to be perfectly satisfactory. The doctors in charge state that no infection of a serious character has occurred, and only one nurse has been taken ill.

ELEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS COLLECTED FROM MITE BOXES

Such is Splendid Results Obtained by Children in Colborne Street Church.

The Mite Box concert held last evening in Colborne street Methodist Church, was preceded by a splendid array of refreshments, which were served from 6.30 to 8 o'clock. This concert is held annually, for the purpose of collecting the mite boxes, which have been out all year.

Shortly after eight o'clock, the real programme was started. The first number was a piano duet beautifully rendered by Miss Burtis and Mr. Geo. C. White. A solo by Mr. W. S. Burton was the next selection and like the reading by Miss Berry, was well received by the audience. The trio of singers, Messrs. Farley, Liddell and White rendered two selections and had to respond to encores.

The chairman, Rev. T. Baker, then took the floor for a few minutes and made some interesting remarks about the mite box proceeds, which amounted to \$1100.00 this year.

Another splendid reading by Miss Berry followed. Misses Edna May and Taylor, both rendered pleasing solos, and the programme was concluded with "God Save the King."

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1 MORRIS PIANO Walnut case, Higel action, ivory keys, 7 1-3 octave. Factory price \$350.00. Sale price, \$195.00	1 BELL PIANO Walnut case, illuminable repeating action. Original price \$475. Sale price, \$285.00	1 DOMINION PIANO Mahogany case, colonial design, 7 1-3 octave. Price, \$200.00	1 DOMINION UPRIGHT Ebony case, 7 1-3 octave. Price, \$125.00
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