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W. H. THOMPSON EDITOR

Great Bravery Of Pte. Holmes

Details of How He Won His Victoria Cross

A more detailed account of how Pte. T. Holmes of Owen Sound won his V.C. has been supplied by Lieut. J. M. Dobie, and deserves to be printed in every newspaper in Canada, just to let the nation know what fighting material Grey County has produced. Following is Lieut. Dobie's account of the brave deed:

The morning of the attack the first "wave" consisting of two companies of the battalion had gone forward, had captured their objective and were consolidating in the captured position. While they were still making their position secure, the second "wave" went through them, moving up the slope to the second objective, which was the crest of the ridge. This wave included "A" Co. in which was Tommy Holmes. Ploughing through the mud and water, plunging from shell hole to shell hole, advancing over ground swept by a relentless fire from rifle and machine gun, they went forward, but that death dealing hail of bullets was taking an awful toll. Finally, in order to save themselves from what seemingly was going to be complete annihilation, they were forced to take cover in convenient shell holes. Unceasingly the enemy fire raked the ground where they were and over which they had to pass in order to reach the position that had been assigned to them to take.

It was during this halt that Holmes noticed that the fire which was holding up his company came from a concrete "pill box" fort on their right flank. Inside the pill box the Hun snipers and sharpshooters were keeping up a steady fire from the loop holes while just beside the "pill box," two machine gun crews with their guns had taken up a position and it was quite apparent that it was the fire from these guns that had temporarily checked "A" company's advance.

Armed with only a Mill's bomb, and without waiting for an order from anyone his comrades crouching in the shell holes saw Holmes rush forward, through the hail of bullets, and spring into a shell hole some yards ahead of the company. A moment later he appeared and on he rushed again and again disappeared. He did this several times, each little spurt bringing him closer to the Hun machine guns. The sight of the lad's slight figure making straight for the guns, held the men behind, who were watching him, spell bound. "He'll be killed, sure," thought they. For he cannot possibly get through that terrific fire." Every time he showed himself, the fire grew more intense and the bullets spattered around him and tore up the mud and dirt but apparently he bore a charmed life.

As Holmes got nearer to the guns, he noticed that occasionally there was a lull of a few seconds in the firing of one or the other of the guns and he knew that each pause indicated that the crews were changing the belts, in other words reloading their guns. Suddenly, there came a moment when both guns ceased firing simultaneously. Holmes knew what it meant. It meant that the crews of both guns were reloading at the same instant! It was his opportunity and quick as a flash before the Hun machine gunners could get their guns working, he rushed forward to within about fifteen yards of them, just in time to take cover in a shell hole before the hail of bullets from both guns opened on him again. But he was within bombing distance now, and pulling the pin of the grenade he carried, he hurled it with unerring accuracy into the midst of the Hun machine gunners, then crouched and waited. He had not long to wait. "Ping!" sang out the bomb, at the same instant the firing from both guns ceased and the groans and shrieks of the wounded and dying Huns, told of the havoc the bomb had wrought.

But there was still work to be done for the pill box remained full of Hun riflemen. Without hesitating a moment and again risking his life, back Holmes went toward his company, some of whom were beginning to advance again, from the foremost of his comrades, he secured another bomb, then turned around and ran straight for the pill box. Through the entrance at the rear he threw the bomb, there was another explosion and those of the Hun garrison that survived—nineteen in number—came out with their hands up, terrified, shouting "Mercy, Kamerad" and surrendered to their youthful caytor, who was standing outside the pill box, all alone.

But by this time the company was coming forward, for the Hun resistance in that particular place had been overcome and that part of the ridge was in the hands of the Canadians—thanks to the heroism of the young Owen Sounder. Through the remainder of the attack, he carried on in the same gallant manner and when it was over and his recommendation for a decoration was sent in there was not a more popular award in the battalion, for those who saw what he did unanimously said he deserved the honor a hundred time over.

Holmes is going to Blighty soon, where the King will pin the coveted medal on and then he will go to Canada on a three months' furlough. I know that when he reaches home, he will get such a reception as Owen Sound alone can give. Besides his decoration, he has a little souvenir of the Vimy Ridge battle in the shape of a "wounded" stripe for he was wounded in that engagement and got back to France just in time to take part in the action in which he won the V.C.

HANGED THE PRINCESS.

Fate of a Russian Heiress Who Worked For the Revolution.

What is said to be the true story of the hanging of Princess Olga Engalicheff, daughter of the richest man in Russia, in the prison of Tomsk on Jan. 15, 1916, is told in a New York society magazine. The story is signed by Boris de Tangko, a name which, the magazine asserts, is the nom de plume of a Russian nobleman who fled to New York when the recent Russian imperial government set a price on his head as a revolutionist.

The story depicts the Russian princess bravely facing death as she predicted the very culmination of Russia's troubles.

According to the story of Boris de Tangko, the governor of Kiev was assassinated in the home of the princess. Her father sensed at once her connection with the murder, and shortly after he had given his daughter fair warning that he intended to remain true to the emperor she was arrested and exiled to Siberia.

After five years spent in prison there she escaped and went to Paris, where she became a power in social and political circles. In 1915, following the death at the front of Dimitri Dashkow, a fellow revolutionist, whose acquaintance she had formed while both were exiles in Siberia, she decided to return to Russia. Three months later she was arrested.

Influential friends begged that they be allowed to appeal to the czar for a pardon, but she refused to allow them to speak in her behalf. Two days before her execution she managed to send several letters to her friends in Paris, in all of which she wrote: "When this letter reaches you I shall be dead. But our work will continue. Our nation will soon be free."

HANDY WITH THEIR FEET.

Many Animals Use Them Cleverly In Taking Their Food.

Kangaroos use their hands very readily to hold food in and to put it into their mouths. As their fore legs are so short that they have to browse in a stooping position, they seem pleased when able to secure a large bunch of cabbage or other vegetable provender and to hold it in their hands to eat. Sometimes the young kangaroo, looking out of its mother's pouch, catches one or two of the leaves which the old one drops, and the pair may be seen each nibbling at the salad held in their hands, one, so to speak, "one floor" above the other.

The slow, deliberate clasping and unclasping of a chameleon's feet look like the movements which the hands of a sleepwalker might make were he trying to creep downstairs. The chameleon's are almost deformed hands, yet they have a superficial resemblance to the feet of parrots, which more than other birds use their feet for many of the purposes of a hand when feeding. To see many of the smaller rodents—ground squirrels, prairie dogs and marmots—hold food, usually in both paws, is to learn a lesson in the dextrous use of hands without thumbs.

Nothing more readily suggests the momentary impression that a pretty little monkey is "a man and a brother" than when he stretches out his neat little palm, fingers and thumb and, with all the movements proper to the civilized mode of greeting, insists on shaking hands.—London Graphic.

Battleships and Paint.

Our battleships literally eat paint. The initial color requirements for a new battleship cost about $25,000, which is the price of about a hundred tons of the kind of paint the navy uses. In addition to this, according to the Popular Science Monthly, it is customary to repaint the different parts of a ship two or three times a year, so the annual upkeep probably exceeds this sum. This brings the annual outlay in paint for the entire fleet to $1,000,000. The most important coating a vessel receives is the paint applied to the submerged parts of the hull to protect it from corrosion or barnacles.

The Lesser Evil.

"If you were compelled to engage in conversation with one or the other for an hour which would you choose, a woman with a mission or one who thinks she is misunderstood?"

"The woman with a mission."

"Why?"

"She would do most of the talking. A woman who thinks she is misunderstood usually wants a little confidential advice."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

THE PRESIDENT'S MAIL.

It Takes a Corps of Trained Clerks to Handle the Letters.

President Wilson's mail bag is the largest in the world. Thousands of letters arrive daily, and every one of any importance must have the individual attention of America's first citizen. Of course the president is not able to read all his correspondence himself. This difficulty is overcome by a carefully developed system by which the contents of the White House mail bag of any importance are laid before Mr. Wilson each day.

The work of selection falls upon a corps of confidential clerks, who open the letters and give them a first reading; then they are carefully sorted. Many of them are simply recommendations for office. These, after courteous acknowledgment, are referred to the proper departments and placed on file until the matter can be taken up for consideration.

Hundreds of the missives are purely ormal or contain impossible requests. These are immediately answered by the staff and signed by one of the president's assistant secretaries.

Such communications as the president ought to see are clearly briefed—that is, a slip is pinned at the top of each letter, and on this is a typewritten synopsis of its contents, telling who the writer is and what he has to present. Frequently the president is sufficiently interested by the brief to cause him to read the whole letter. Sometimes the communication is referred to a cabinet officer, in which case the slip is retained at the White House and filed.

Requests for charity are continually pouring in. These, however, are sent to a different department, which goes fully into each case before replying.

When a large number of persons write on the same subject the letters are bunched, and the brief at the top gives the names of those who present one argument, and on another list are given the names of the persons who offer a different view

A NORWEGIAN WORD.

Origin of "Budstikken," Which Means Spreading the News.

This peculiar word is frequently found in Scandinavian communities as the name of a newspaper, such as St. Cloud Budstikken. It is a Norwegian word, 1,200 years old at the least and has a very peculiar origin.

In those days when the coasts of Norway were ravaged by pirates the inhabitants had to resort to all sorts of devices to warn those at a distance of the approach of these piratical craft. When one was seen on the horizon a man went up to the top of a mountain, where he lighted a beacon fire. This could be seen for a long distance and was known to be a warning. When it was seen in the distance another fire was lighted on another hill until all over the country fires blazed from every hilltop and the people prepared to defend themselves.

They also had a system of messengers. The man who first sighted the sail would take an arrow and send it to his neighbors. From town to town this arrow was sent until all were warned. These were rather primitive ways of telegraphing, but were so effectual that in the course of twenty-four hours all Norway knew of the approach of pirates.

This system of spreading the news was called "budstikken," and when there were no more pirates the newspapers became spreaders of the news and so were appropriately styled "budstikken."—Exchange.

String Beans In Brine.

Instead of canning string beans put them up in brine, and in winter they taste like freshly picked beans.

Put a layer of dry salt one-fourth inch thick in the bottom of a crock. Next put a layer of beans one and one-half inches high just as they are picked from the garden without washing.

Next a one-fourth inch layer of salt and so on until the crock is filled. On top invert a plate and put a heavy weight.

When you wish to use them soak an hour or so and then boil like fresh beans.—New York Sun.

Man and the Animals.

The essential difference between men and animals is well stated by Dr. Grasset, an eminent French biologist, quoted by the Scientific American. He says the animal is predestined to obey the laws of its species, while man obeys them only if and when he will. A man may, if he wants to, sustain with energy the pretension that two and two make five, or he may commit suicide.

Quicksands.

Quicksands are not caused by water constantly flowing over sand. It is only where there is an upward current that they are found. Imagine, for instance, a bucket filled with sand. Water poured on that sand does not make it "quick." If, however, the bucket had a hole in its bottom and water was forced through the hole quicksands would be formed.

A Fitting Name.

"Well," was the answer of a little chap who had been asked the name of his cat, "we used to call him William, but he has been having fits lately, so we call him Fitz William now."

Would Be Prepared.

She—Suppose, dear, I find you have not given me enough money? He—Then telegraph for more. She—Have you a telegraph blank?—Exchange.

Promising Candidate.

Editor—Do you know how to run a newspaper? Applicant—No, sir. Editor—Well, I'll try you. I guess you've had experience.—Puck.

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