

Enemy Fail To Break Through British Defence

BRITISH ARTILLERY'S SPLENDID SACRIFICE

Covered the Infantry Retreat Till the Very Last--The British Are Now Counter-Attacking--Enemy Depends on Sheer Weight of Numbers.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The British in their retreat defended every hill, ridge and fortification with the greatest stubbornness, messages from German war correspondents on the western fronts say. The British artillery, it is added, splendidly sacrificed itself in covering the retreat, batteries only breaking up when the German storming troops arrived within a hundred yards of the positions. The British gunners then fired their last ammunition and retired.

British Counter-Attacking. (Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The British this morning were counter-attacking between Neule and Ham, a Reuter's correspondent at British headquarters reports. The French also were in action. North of Bapaume, he states the Germans were attacking in considerable force at dawn but did not get through the British barrage. The Germans, says the correspondent, are relying on the sheer weight of numbers in their heavy attacks on British lines, relieving their tired troops by fresh divisions which press forward without waiting for artillery support. The enemy all day yesterday and through the moonlight last night, kept up his hammering of British positions. The message states the British troops are resisting with valiant stubbornness. The Germans are employing small bodies of Uhlans mainly as scouting patrols, it is added.

A further advance late yesterday by the Germans at some points along the battle front is recorded. Wilson Congratulates Haig. (Canadian Press Despatch.) Washington, March 25.—President Wilson today eulogized Field Marshal Haig, congratulating him on the British stand against the German offensive and predicting a final Allied victory.

King George's Appreciation. (Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—King George, has sent Field Marshal Haig a telegram of encouragement and appreciation of the gallant work of the troops under his command.

Contesting Bitterly. (Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The Germans have been pushing forward by sheer weight of numbers with the assistance of little artillery in the region between Bapaume and Peronne. The British fell back again somewhat in the fighting late on Sunday. This marked the main success of the enemy, whose progress is being contested bitterly step by step.

Bapaume Taken, Says Berlin. (Canadian Press Despatch.) Berlin, March 25.—The Germans are now standing to the north of the Somme in the middle of the former Somme battlefield. Bapaume was taken in the night. In the evening Neule was taken by storm, the official statement adds. British, Americans and French were thrown back through a pathless wooded country. More than 45,000 prisoners and more than 400 guns have now been captured, the statement says.

Kaiser Visits Peronne. (Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—Emperor William and Field Marshal von Hindenburg visited Peronne on Sunday evening, according to Berlin advices forwarded from Amsterdam. The German losses in the battle of Bapaume are described as "comparatively heavy."

British Retired Methodically. London, March 25.—Philip Gibbs

- WEEK COMMENT 1-British Sacrificed Splendidly; Fighting on Paris; Big German Casualties. 2-Carried a Bible; Incidents of the Day. 3-The Cash Contributions; Officers and Men; Social Work of Church. 4-Editorial: Rippling Rhymes. 5-Kingston T.M.C.A. Wins; Plant Sold; The Firm. 6-Eastern Ontario News. 7-The Forum; Amusements; Announcements. 8-Military: Eminent. 9-Premier Clemenceau; Sketched; Letters to the Editor. 10-The Women Who Changed. 11-Spent Break; Colts; Another Boia Arrested. 12-In the Field of Sport; Matt and Joe.

report says: The British have inflicted severe losses at every part of the battle line, so that where the enemy advanced he passed through thousands of his own dead and wounded. In accordance with the general plan of action in our defensive system here and there, and thus securing a vantage ground on our first line of defence, our divisions have fallen back to new defensive positions. They have done this methodically and in continuous and increasing pressure of the Germans. Along many parts of the line their movement has been covered by reguard actions of the most glorious heroism, small bodies of men sometimes sacrificing themselves to the last man in order to gain time for their comrades. Though entirely surrounded in some cases by German storm troops, they have defended redoubts and outposts for many hours afterwards, pouring out machine-gun fire upon the advancing waves and raking their ranks.

How Wire Was Destroyed. The enemy's gunfire with quick-time fuse destroyed much of our wire, and the rest was forced by the sheer weight of human bodies. Our front and support lines were smashed into a chaos of earth and the German storm troops took them without much delay. They were lightly held and the English and Scottish battalions fell back in good order.

On the main battle line the enemy's waves still came on and were mowed down by our machine-guns at short range, and by our field artillery firing with open sights. Their dead and wounded were piled up in heaps, but this did not check for further sacrifice. There was intense fighting round Logincourt and Demicourt, the last two villages on this line to hold out, and the Highlanders of the 51st Division fought with immortal heroism. When their flank on the right was exposed a battalion of Seaforth's covered the withdrawal of the other troops regardless of their own lives against hordes of the enemy. They held the position even when the enemy brought up two field guns and fired into them at point-blank range. This last stand of the Seaforth's enabled our men on the right to gain their defensive line, and only a few came back after that deed of glorious endurance.

Dead Crowded on Dead. Heavy German attacks were launched all day against our reserve line in this sector, and the dead were crowded upon the dead before they could force our troops to a further withdrawal. First to Vaux, Morchies and Beaumetz, and on Friday to the neighborhood of the old German line. Yesterday we were strong attacks again all along this line, but the enemy made no progress, and bled his foremost troops to death against our defence. There was continuous fighting in and out of the village of Mory all last night, and, as on the preceding day, the enemy was endeavoring to get this place, in order to drive road. Mory was lost, but retaken several times. A battalion of the Leicesters was surrounded there, and fought its way out with extraordinary valor. Afterwards the enemy was surrounded in the village, and many were killed, and last night Highlanders and Lowlanders swept through the village and recaptured trenches east of it.

Hacked Their Way Through. A company of the Leicesters held Voucellette Farm, near Epehy, though entirely surrounded, and would not surrender, so they were either killed or captured. Another battalion was surrounded at Fezereux, and, after fighting all day and sweeping the enemy with machine-gun fire, made a gallant effort to fight a way through two lines of Germans. Some of them succeeded and hacked their way back to our lines.

Meanwhile, on the left of the battle-line, between Monehy and Bullecourt, there was desperate fighting, the enemy finding in new reserves and passing regiment through regiment to force his way forward at any cost.

Foiled Poe Artillery. The position of some of our batteries was slightly changed to avoid the German bombardment at dawn. (Continued on Page 6.)

British May Have To Retire Further

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The text of newspaper comment on the great battle to-day is that the hour is one for courage and standing firm at home as much as at the front. The writers agree that this is a time when all political questions and all differences of opinion over the management of the war must be forgotten.

BIG GAS ATTACK BY CANADIANS

Over 5,000 Drums of Lethal Gas Discharged at the Germans.

PAID ENEMY WITH INTEREST

THE HUN LOSSES MUST HAVE BEEN ENORMOUS.

As He Was Caught By Both Canadian Gas and Artillery—A German Raid on Hill Seventy Falls. Canadian Headquarters in France, March 25.—While German and British troops were struggling, far to the south, in the opening clash of the spring campaign, the greatest projector gas bombardment in the world's history was carried out by the Canadians Thursday night against the enemy positions between Lens and Hill 70. Sharply at 11 o'clock a signal rocket gave notice of its beginning. A moment later over 5,000 drums of lethal gas, simultaneously released from projectors, were hurled into enemy territory from the outskirts of Lens to Cite St. Auguste and Bois de Dix Huit. From his front lines and strong points, favoring winds carried the poisonous clouds back upon the enemy's dug-outs, supports, reserves, and assembly areas. The whole front was lit up with enemy flares, which could be dimly seen through the heavy mist while the men in our lines could hear the enemy's gas alarm and cries of distress from the hostile trenches.

Caught by Gas and Artillery. Nine minutes later our field artillery, supported by heavy guns and trench mortars, opened up with a slow bombardment, increasing in violence until, forty minutes later, the enemy positions were swept with a short, intensive, creeping barrage, which raked his forward and rear areas with high explosives.

The Germans are making their big effort near St. Quentin in order to try and divide the British and French lines. The Archbishop of Canterbury asked that all churches in the Empire offer special prayers for the Allies' cause. The German official announcement states that Emperor William is in command of the western front. There were 134 German airplanes shot down on the western and Italian fronts in the last three days. The Allies lost only eleven.

SHELL STRUCK A CHURCH

And Several Persons Killed While Attending Service.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Paris, March 25.—The Matin says one of the shells fired in the direction of Paris yesterday by the Germans struck a church in the suburbs. Several persons, who were attending the Palm Sunday service, were killed. Le Petit Journal says that Jules Verne had foreseen this gun, and it declares, moreover, that it is a French invention. "More than a year ago," it adds, "we discovered the secret of firing our cannon more than 100 kilometres. The secret lies in the greater suppression of the atmospheric resistance." The Echo de Paris declares that the bombardment is designed to give the impression that Paris is within range of the German guns. "It is a political cannon," the newspaper says.

Helligoland, to command the commerce of the Black Sea, is to be constructed by Germany on Snake Island, about 25 miles from the mouth of the Danube. The new Rumanian Premier, Alexander Marghiloman, is striving for an alliance between Rumania and the Central Powers. The Spanish steamer Beyona IV, of Bilbao, has been torpedoed by a submarine.

LONG RANGE GUN FIRES ON PARIS

It Was Located Seventy-Two Miles From the French Capital.

MYSTERIOUS BOMBARDMENT OF THE CITY WAS SOLVED BY THIS DISCOVERY

The Calibre of the Shells Reaching Paris Equivalent to Nine and a Half Inches. (Canadian Press Despatch.) Paris, March 25.—The Germans have been firing on Paris with a long range gun since eight o'clock Saturday morning. Shells of 240 millimetres reached the capital and suburbs at intervals of a quarter of an hour killing and wounding a number of people. The shortest distance from Paris to the front is over thirty-two miles. Measures for counter attacking the enemy's cannon were undertaken.

The most powerful guns in action heretofore have been able to hurl their projectiles only twenty miles or thereabouts. The calibre of shells reaching Paris is equivalent to about 9 1/2 inches. It was thought that the gun fired some new aerial torpedo.

An Aerial Torpedo. (Canadian Press Despatch.) Ottawa, March 25.—One of the highest officers in the military ordnance department here stated that the weapon which is bombarding Paris is not really an artillery gun but is the projector of an aerial torpedo which is valuable more for its moral effect on the people rather than as a weapon of actual destruction. He said the Allies had been working on this invention with more or less results.

Paris Attacked from the Air. (Canadian Press Despatch.) Paris, March 25.—An official statement says several airplanes attacked Paris Friday night dropping a number of bombs. There were some casualties. This city had its third air raid in twenty-four hours Saturday night. It lasted several hours and there were some casualties.

War Tidings. The Archbishop of Canterbury asked that all churches in the Empire offer special prayers for the Allies' cause. The German official announcement states that Emperor William is in command of the western front. There were 134 German airplanes shot down on the western and Italian fronts in the last three days. The Allies lost only eleven.

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CAIRO IS AWAITING A ZEPPELIN ATTACK.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Cairo, Egypt, March 25.—Zepplins have been observed flying over the Island of Crete in the Mediterranean and all the inhabitants of this city have been ordered to take shelter from air bombs when the alarm is given. A bombardment is expected here.

AMERICAN STEAMSHIP SUNK.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The Admiralty announces that the American steamship Chattochee, 5,088 tons, has been sunk by a German submarine off the English coast. Her crew of seventy-eight was landed safely.

FAMOUS ACTRESS DEAD.

New York, March 25.—Maggie Mitchell, one of the most famous of American actresses, died at her home in this city at the age of eighty-six.

CANADIANS LAUNCHED GREAT GAS ATTACK.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The Canadians on Friday night, while the English troops were battling further south, launched the greatest gas bombardment in history toward the German front between Lens and Hill Seventy.

WHAT 4 DAYS' FIGHTING GAVE THE GERMANS.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The situation on the battle front last night was that half the territory wrested from or given up by the Germans since July, 1916, is again in the hands of the enemy as the result of four days' fighting.

The Germans made use of 1,464,000 men against the British.

Gen. Haig admits the crossing of the Somme by the Germans. The enemy has sustained huge losses in this sector.

The Canadians discharged over 5,000 drums of lethal gas, following this up with artillery and bombs.

The Times says the real test of the offensive has yet to come.

ASQUITH DECLARES HE IS STILL LEADER

And Has No Intention of Relinquishing That Office.



RIGHT HON. H. ASQUITH

London, March 25.—Herbert H. Asquith, former Premier, made it plain he does not consider that Premier David Lloyd George succeeded him to the leadership of the Liberal party. This statement was made in the course of a strong speech before a gathering of Liberal's at Derby, in which constituency Mr. Asquith's son, Raymond Asquith, was a candidate for the House of Commons when killed in action, September 15th, 1917.

"It is ten years since, by your free choice, I was nominated leader of the Liberal party," said the former Premier. "I have not resigned that position, and I am not aware that I have been deposed. Until the time comes when my natural faculties desert me, of which event I will, no doubt, receive timely warning from my candid friends, I have no intention of relinquishing the leadership of the party."

ADVANCING ENEMY FOUGHT BY AIRMEN

British Aviators, Flying Low, Pour Rounds Into Attacking Germans.

London, March 25.—British airmen, during the fighting along the front in France, aided materially the infantry forces below, killing or wounding many Germans with their machine guns while flying at low altitudes, according to a British official statement dealing with aviation. In addition, British airmen bombed important military positions behind the line and aviators accounted for numerous German airmen in battles in the air.

GOVERNMENT ACTION.

It Will Not Interfere With Lord's Day Act. Ottawa, March 25.—From the number of letters and telegrams reaching the Prime Minister's office, it would appear that an impression has gone abroad that it is the intention of the Government to amend the Lord's Day Act in the interests of greater production. It is authoritatively stated that there is no intention on the part of the Government either to amend the Act or to interfere with its operation. As a matter of fact, under the provisions of the Act its enforcement is largely a matter of provincial administration.

The Germans have already established through railway connections between the Russian districts they have occupied and Berlin and are flooding the occupied towns with German goods, especially clothing and jewelry. Special services of intercession have been ordered in all churches under the Archbishop of Munich for the success of the German operations on the western front.

THE GERMAN CASUALTIES ARE AT LEAST 150,000

No Weakness In Anglo-French Junction Yet Disclosed — The Enemy Is Attacking Around Bapaume — May Aim at Channel Ports.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—Commenting on the results of the German offensive, the Daily Chronicle says: "Assuming that the German losses are at least 150,000, the enemy has sustained a reverse, for he has not obtained a strategical success directly conducing to a decision while he has lost from eight to ten per cent of his effectiveness without similarly lowering the efficiency of the Allies. This matter is of the greatest importance, for Germany at the present is at a critical moment when the man-power pendulum is swinging in favor of the Allies. No weakness at the Anglo-French junction has been yet disclosed and the task before the enemy in the next few days of the battle is more formidable than that already accomplished."

Aim At Amiens.

The ultimate object of this rapid enemy advance is clearly the great strategic point of Amiens, says the Times, "and though it is still remote the situation is sufficiently serious to warrant the contemplation of catastrophe. The fall of Amiens might have three-fold consequences. It would bring the enemy to a point from which to threaten our northern line, it would assist them to strike at the Channel ports and it would endanger seriously the safety of Paris."

The Times advises the British people to take seriously the long-range gun which has bombarded Paris, and adds: "We may be quite certain that our own inviolate shores will soon learn what the new gun can do."

Attacking Around Bapaume.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—Fresh attacks by Germans have developed northward and southward of Bapaume, the War Office announces. The British repulsed powerful attacks yesterday afternoon northward of Bapaume.

Old Methods Of Attack.

London, March 25.—Lack of German innovations in strategy and weapons in the offensive renders the British extremely cautious. They still believe the enemy may try a surprise attack on the north (against the Channel ports of Dunkirk and Calais), when the British reserves are diverted against the present centre of the German advance in the Cambrai sector.

It is pointed out that the Germans are attacking positions which they once abandoned themselves, retaining each foot at infinitely greater cost than the advance is worth, unless they succeed in smashing through. Col. Regington, military expert of the Morning Post, warns of the possibility of a Grand Fleet action in conjunction with the offensive.

If the Germans seek a local success for the consumption of the population, they have probably picked the best place, though it is the very worst for a real or strategic victory. Considering the openness of the allied position and the difficulty of building trench fortifications under observation, the Germans will have failed badly if he does not win a local success.

His attack may be a blind to cover an onslaught elsewhere but where ever he attacks the enemy losses will be great. The Germans is returning to his earlier tactics and beginning once again to attack in mass, as he has not done since the days of the first battle of Ypres.

Picked-Hun Divisions.

Responsible quarters are gratified at the magnificent manner in which the British troops are withstanding the ordeal. Not a single division failed or faltered. It is noteworthy that some actual retreats on our front were made only upon orders, after the troops had held the trenches intact through the whole of the first day's violent assault. The first dense waves of Thursday's attacks were frequently held by our wires. The Germans halted and hacked their way through, whilst our riflemen and gunners were making a veritable shambles of the ground. The enemy fought with sturdy valor, for it was picked divisions which were participating.

British Defence Unbroken.

New York, March 25.—(By Associated Press.)—To-day's review of the British position in Flanders says: "Persistent attacks with strong forces of infantry and lavish use of artillery have not enabled the Germans to break through the British defence, and after four days the great offensive blow in Northern France has not yet brought a decision for the attackers. Heavy fighting is in progress around Bapaume near Peronne, and where the French and British fronts join."

Field Marshal Haig's withdrawal, previously planned in case of a heavy enemy attack, has been executed in a manner described as masterly, and great credit for its success is given to small units which sometimes outnumbered by eight or nine to one, clung to their posts and impeded the German advance.

The British have made few counter-attacks, but every one attempted has been successful. British efforts are centred on withdrawing as occasion requires and permitting the enemy to wear himself out before the British defences.

The intensity of the struggle is shown by the official announcement that British aviators on Saturday brought down fifty-four enemy machines. The British lost only nine. In addition to carrying out their work in the fighting zone, British airmen again have dropped bombs successfully on Mannheim, Germany.

American Troop Movements. Berlin claims that Franco-American detachments aided the British in the fighting on Saturday. But the identity of the American units have not been learned. It is possible that American and French troops from Chemin des Dames sector have moved up to the Oise or north of it, but it is more probable that American engineers with British army were concerned.

There has been little except artillery fire activity on the remainder of the British front and on the French and American sectors. German artillery fire has been violent along Chemin des Dames in the Campaigne north-east of Verdun and in Alsace.

French Aid The British.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) Paris, March 25.—The French on Saturday went to the assistance of the British and took over a sector of the battle front. In the region of Noyon and on the right bank of the Oise, heavy fighting with the Germans is in progress.

British Official Statement.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—To-day's official statement follows: "The battle continues with great violence on the whole front. Powerful attacks delivered by the enemy yesterday afternoon and evening north of Bapaume were heavily repulsed. Only at one point did the German infantry reach our trenches, whence they were immediately thrown out. Elsewhere the enemy's attacks were stopped by rifle, machine gun and artillery fire in front of our positions, and his troops were driven back with great loss. During the night and this morning, fresh hostile attacks have again developed in this neighborhood and also to the south of Bapaume. South of Peronne, bodies of German troops, who had crossed the river between Li-court and Briel, were driven back to the east bank by our counter-attacks."

Break In Stocks.

(Canadian Press Despatch.) New York, March 25.—Stocks broke from one to three points at the opening of the market here today on further heavy selling impelled by the war news.

Dutch Cabinet to Refuse?

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—The Dutch Cabinet is said to have decided on Sunday to send the Allied Powers a formal refusal of their offer of grain in return for Dutch ships.

R. E. Wright succeeds T. E. Kinney as manager of the Old H.C. Stead factory, Picton. Mr. Wright will have charge of the three Picton factories of the Dominion Canners, Limited.

British Driving The Germans Back

(Canadian Press Despatch.) London, March 25.—British troops have driven the Germans, who crossed the Somme near Peronne, back over the river at many points.