

THRILLING STORIES OF AERIAL WAR

Boysish British Fliers Dare Much to Blind German Gunners.

TAKE BIG ODDS And Usually Come Out Best in Vivid Combats.

(By Philip Gibbs.)

War Correspondents' Headquarters in France, Cable.—In the daily official reports a brief picture has been given of the battle which has raged in the skies while the earthen men have been struggling below.

Truly, during these last few days our air service has fought very wonderfully, and some day one of these young men who go flying out to engage the enemy in the clouds or to search out and signal the position of hostile batteries or to stoop low and scatter infantry and machine-guns with a shower of bullets, must write the tale of it all. There have been hours when I have heard overhead the continual tattoo of Lewis guns, and when a great sweep of sky has been tracked out with white shrapnel clouds, following our flying squadrons, engaged hotly with hostile machines. One cannot follow the progress of these aerial battles. It is only rarely that one can distinguish the enemy machine from ours except by the clouds of our anti-aircraft barrage, but far and high one sees daring specks chasing through the blue of the sky, touched sometimes by sunlight, so that for a moment they are all golden or glistening or white as snowflakes, and now and then the loud droning of the engines and the little hammerlocks of the Lewis machine guns. Our soldiers on march stare up at the war above their heads so aloof from them, so dream-like, and the men on the supply columns get their glasses out and laugh when one of our flying machines is seen suddenly with great haste. "Old Rupert has got the wind up," they say. "A Boche plane must be sneaking around."

It is no joke when a German airman descends out of a cloud and covers over a battery signalling back to his guns. I was in such a situation the other day and had to crouch with the gunners below a bank while shrapnel bullets from our own "Archies" whirled the air about the red wings that have come into the sky for the new German fighting machines have crimson planes so that they look like butterflies when the sun is on them.

Enemy airmen have been trying to compete with our own by swooping low above marching troops and gun teams, and using their machine guns in a way which adds to the danger of war, but though they fight behind their own lines with great skill and courage they do not come over our country in any such numbers as our men invade theirs. This is not a prejudiced statement, but the strict truth and our airmen do daily far better than across the German lines taking thousands of photographs, engaging enemy squadrons so that they are held back from the line of battle, and dropping tons of explosives upon ammunition dumps, railways and transport.

The boys, as they are called, young in average age, take all these deadly risks and do all this work of terror with the same spirit as the young gentlemen of England who rode out with Sir John Chandos and Sir Walter Manny to seek combat with French Knights many hundred years ago along the roads where our modern men at arms go marching to-day.

During this recent fighting one of them challenged a German Albatross, who accepted fight, and for an hour they did every trick known to flying—skipping banking side slipping banking looping—in order to get in the first shot. It was the German who fired first, though he showed himself the master of his machine. There are boys in our air service who have killed six or seven Germans in a single combat, a few have accounts for many more and go off again for a morning's hunting of men as though on a good adventure. Yet they know the risks and the fortune of war. They cannot have all the luck all the time. When the turn comes it is quick to the end, or it hit and left alive, they do amazing things up there in the high skies to save a final crash.

A few evenings ago two of our young officers were attacked by five hostile aircraft and both were wounded, one in seven places, but they destroyed one of the German aeroplanes and landed safely, though their own machine was pierced by many bullets. On another evening of the battle of Arras two hostile aircraft were engaged by one of ours and forced to land, though one of our officers had his collarbone broken by a machine-gun bullet.

Every day these episodes are reported and the machines of the officers do not come home, but when another dawn comes our air squadrons rise again and fly over the storm of the battlefield. As I see them in the wing over Arras and away there is no romance except when a tale is told in the night of bombing raids. There is no exultant joy in struggling through a snowstorm to drop high explosives on a distant town. During this battle of Arras our airmen have made thousands of flights over the enemy lines, have engaged in hundreds of combats with hostile squadrons, and at the cost of their own lives in many cases have saved our infantry great losses by keeping down the fire of the German batteries, de-

stroying their kite balloons, signalling preparations for the German counter-attacks, photographing the enemy's trenches and positions, and blinding his own power of observation to some extent at least by chasing his aeroplanes away from the lines on a day when the British infantry is not hard pressed.

It is good to pay this tribute to the flying men, whose exploits are not much recorded, though they are always overhead, and though the droning song of their engines is always the accompaniment of battle down below.

IN BULGAR HANDS. Canadian Airman a Prisoner—Burned His Machine.

(By R. T. Small, Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press.)

With the British Armies in France, Cable.—Despite all the wondrous war weapons modern science has created, the cold steel of the bayonet has asserted itself anew in much of the recent bitter fighting as the arm of last appeal. As already related, the struggles about Moncay-le-Preux since Monday have attained an intensity unequalled by any of the fighting in the Somme campaign last year.

Overhead, shells were droning, and back of the lines guns could be heard. But it was only a desultory bombardment going on, and there were fleeting intervals of strange quiet, just as the dawn broke over the British troops were approaching their unsuspecting gray-lad foes.

Four unsuccessfull daylight assaults had left a touch of chagrin which was to be wiped out in this "getting." There is little more to tell. The sound of the fighting in the trenches was lost in the British barrage which closed down some distance behind the German position immediately the British signalled they had entered the position. The barrage cut off any German who attempted to flee from the bayonet charge.

ALL OVER IN TEN MINUTES. Thus in ten minutes with the silent bayonet was secured a position which had held out for two days.

The bayonet also has come in effectively in dealing with the ever troublesome machine gun attacking in the night, has been able to accomplish much.

Several British battalions have reported in the past few days that the Germans are again employing the old "kammerd" pose, suddenly standing upright, their hands and shouting across to their opponents that they would surrender. Two battalions, believing the sincerity of this proposal, started across to bring in the prisoners, but were immediately attacked.

Incidents like this have helped materially to give the element of bitterness to the fighting to a degree which has startled even those men who have been in the battles since the first German rush through Belgium.

The British have given unceasing attention to the bayonet training drill in the past two years. The month of training in England has been supplemented by post-graduate courses in the great training camps in France, and continued as the units passed down through the corps into divisions, brigades and battalions. The night before the Arras attack some sergeants could be heard giving their platoons last instructions. One of these groups formed a curious picture in the moonlight, where all the air was electric with preparations for the coming clash of dawn.

Traffic along the choked road leading toward the point of contact with the enemy suddenly stopped because of a temporary block. The throbbing motor engines were throttled down to an almost inaudible purr; the tired, weary, dragging army wagons or artillery limbers stood with the stillness of near-exhaustion. Their drivers' heads dropped limp as they snatched a few moments of sleep. The mystic sort of silence which settled down was broken by the raucous voice with which sergeants always impress their wondering subordinate.

This particular sergeant's men were facing each other for thrust and parry exercise. They were not to take part in the first rushes of the morning, but going in later in the day, to press the attack on the third and fourth lines. And there was yet time to give them final advice.

DEADLY WORK WITH BAYONET DESPITE MODERN ART OF WAR

Britishers With the Cold Steel Take German Position That Held Out.

Four Desperate Assaults Resisted, but Cold Steel Won the Day.

(By R. T. Small, Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press.)

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would be only too glad of an opportunity to see the ship herself. We got into a taxi and it wasn't long before I was looking at the good ship Bremen.

There are a number of interesting details about her capture that I am not at liberty to divulge, but I can tell you that the submarine I saw was the Bremen and that she was captured through becoming entangled in a heavy cable net. She was running submerged at the time and her diving planes near the bow got caught in the mesh of the net.

The submarine probably made frantic efforts to free herself, because when found her stern was far out of the water, both her screws being in the air. I understand that one of the German officers said they pumped their ballast tanks dry with a view of raising a part of the vessel to the surface so that the men could be sent on deck to clear the planes of the net.

That was impossible, as the net was too heavy and too firmly anchored. An accident to the machinery caused gas fumes to fill the engine room and it was necessary to close the water tight doors, seven men losing their lives.

Another story had it that Capt. Schwartzkopf was among the survivors.—New York Star.

U-BOAT TOLL WAS HEAVIER 40 Ships Over 1,600 Tons Sunk in Last Week.

More Vessels Successful in Escaping.

London Cable says.—The weekly statement of vessels sunk as made public this evening shows that 40 vessels of over 1,600 tons each were sent to the bottom by mines or submarines.

Weekly shipping returns: Arrivals, 2,588; sailings, 2,621. Sunk by mine or submarine, over 1,600 tons, 40, including two sunk in the week ending April 15; under 1,600 tons, 15, including one sunk in the week ending April 15. Vessels unsuccessfully attacked, 27, including one attacked the week ending April 8.

Fishing vessels sunk 9, including one sunk the week ending April 15. The above report shows the greatest number of merchant vessels reported sunk by submarine or mines in both categories—1,600 tons and over and under 1,600 tons—made public by the British Government since it has issued its weekly statement of shipping losses. The previous reports were as follows:

Table with 3 columns: Date, Tons, and Status. Rows include February 28, March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28, April 4, April 11, April 18.

TURKS ROUTED IN MESOPOTAMIA

Gen. Maude Strikes Again, and Wins Victory.

Enemy Driven Back Another Ten Miles.

London Cable.—An official statement received to-day from General Maude, commanding the British forces in Mesopotamia, says that the British have driven the Turks from the west bank of the Snuat-el-Adhem to about 17 miles north of its junction with the Tigris.

The German merchant submarine Bremen, sister vessel of the Deutschland, which twice visited this country, is in the hands of the British, according to a special correspondent of the Evening Sun, who returned aboard the St. Louis. Proof that came to him through three sources established to his satisfaction that the undersea craft was captured on her maiden trip, he said during his stay in England.

TO BUILD WOODEN SHIPS. Ottawa, Report.—The Imperial Munitions Board and the United States Shipping Board have been in consultation during the past fortnight with regard to cooperation in the production of wooden ships for the Pacific coast.

MURDER CASE REOPENED. New York Report.—The new government of Russia decided this week to try former Minister of Justice Shchegolev off on charges of having indirectly executed Mendel Belis, the shoemaker of Kiev, for participation in a ritual murder, according to a despatch to the Jewish Daily Forward from its Petrograd correspondent.

EXHAUSTED, THE ENEMY NOW QUIET

All His Furious Counters Failed to Gain Against British.

A FOOLISH CLAIM Was That of Berlin, That Haig Was Trying to Break Through.

(By Perry Robinson.)

Paris Cable.—Vel hints as to a possible reinforcement of the armies here by additional veteran forces are being made.

British Headquarters in France, Cable.—The last 24 hours have been comparatively quiet, except for artillery and aerial activity. There was no infantry operations of importance. Renewed army counter-attacks on Gravelle attempted to develop, but were broken up by our guns. Elsewhere, except for heavy shelling by long range artillery, some cases seem to have exhausted himself. We are busy consolidating the ground.

The comparatively narrow depth of our advance gives a misleading impression on the importance of the success on the 22nd and 24th. It is more valuable to put off of action 50,000 Germans and gain half a mile than to gain five miles and only inflict a loss of 10,000 on the Germans. They can better afford to give ground than men. What our army wants is fighting. The last few days the Germans undoubtedly fought in some cases with great determination. It is necessary to delay us, and they are willing to pay an enormous price in order to move back their guns.

AN ABSURD CLAIM. The absurdity of the German wireless claims that the last operation was an attempt to break through is shown by the fact that the nearest points on the west are still 6,000 yards from the front line. How any commander could be expected to attempt to launch an attack on such line when his men had 6,000 yards to go before reaching it is not easy to understand.

The recent operation was purely for the local purpose of gaining the objectives necessary for a methodical progress towards the front line. The chief of these objectives were the villages of Champepe and Gravelle, which we hold. North of the Scarpe we would gladly have gone further through the village of Rouex but the defences here are so prickly it would be too costly to rush them. There are less expensive ways of getting such positions by a little delay. That the enemy attached supreme importance to the places captured is shown by his desperate efforts to recover them, by which he suffered infinitely greater loss than we declined to incur in order to capture Rouex. Geographically the operation was small, but, interpreted in terms of the damage done to German power, its importance was immense.

THE OFFICIAL REPORTS. The official communication issued this evening says:

"A party of the enemy which attempted to raid one of our crater posts southeast of Ypres early this morning was driven off with losses. There was considerable activity during the day by both sides at a number of points between St. Quentin and Cambrai, and also in the neighborhood of Ypres.

Successful work was carried out by our aeroplanes yesterday, in spite of the less favorable weather. In air fighting two German machines were brought down, one of them falling in our lines. A third was driven down out of control. Three of our machines were missing.

THE GERMAN VANDAL. Again Busy Destroying Rheims Cathedral.

Paris Cable.—Stung by the steady advance on the front from the Germans to-day three fifteen large calibre shells at the Rheims Cathedral, damaging several important parts of the famous monument. Encouraged by their first success, sixteen more heavy shells were thrown upon the vaults and towers. The northern tower of the west front was shelled, and is so badly damaged that its stability may give way at any time.

TURK WAS LATE In Destroying British Water Base in Sinai.

Constantinople Cable.—The War office made the following announcement to-day: "On the Sinai front our airmen landed behind the enemy lines in the midst of the desert and totally destroyed the water supply system which the British had constructed there. The British had constructed the water works built by the British to facilitate their advance across the desert into Palestine probably would not interfere seriously with the operations of the main British force. The British have now advanced to the neighborhood of Gaza on the green plains of Palestine, well out of the desert, and have established a base on the coast.

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