

THREE GERMAN DIVISIONS USED TO RETAKE FRESNOY

Foe Paid a Terrible Price for the Place Taken From the British

35 Hun Divisions Wasted on This Front Since First of April.

(By Perry Robinson.)
 British Headquarters in France, Cable—The loss of Fresnoy yesterday is, I believe, the first instance in the battles either on the Somme or Arras that any village, after being firmly in our hands, for 24 hours, had been won back by the Germans, but such a thing was bound to happen sooner or later, provided the enemy was willing to use troops enough. Though it may sound absurd to say it, perhaps it is just as well it happened. A glance at the map will show that, as the enemy held the trench lines north and northwest of Fresnoy on the front from Acherville to Mericourt, as well as the Oppy part of the trenches north of that point, Fresnoy was a dangerously exposed position.

The German attacks were made with a vastly greater weight of men than we ever use. The troops normally holding the German line at Fresnoy were the 15th Reserve division and the 4th Guard division on the right of Acherville. The first attack, made early in the morning, was preceded by a heavy bombardment, ordinary and gas shells being used. Then a joint attack was made by the 15th Reserve and 4th Guard divisions, which latter had been slipped down from Acherville. Apparently both bodies, but certainly the Guards, came on in solid masses. Their losses were tremendous. By weight of numbers they reached our trenches, only to be immediately driven out, what was left of them suffered badly from our guns and machine guns in retiring.

Meanwhile, besides these two divisions, Germans brought a third, namely, the 5th Bavarian division, which had been kept in reserve. The second attack was delivered by this entirely fresh division, which again came in solid formation. Our men, worn out, were compelled to give ground before the enemy's overwhelming strength. But it was these same tired men who a few hours later recovered a large part of the ground yielded. The enemy losses were so heavy that if we had used up every man we had in the field we should not have approached them. If operations could be given before the enemy's overwhelming strength. But it was these same tired men who a few hours later recovered a large part of the ground yielded. The enemy losses were so heavy that if we had used up every man we had in the field we should not have approached them.

HUGE ENEMY LOSSES
 London Cable—The Reuter correspondent at British headquarters in France sends the following:
 "From north of Fresnoy to the windmill at Gravelle, Germans have made prodigious use of their reserves in the last 24 hours in an endeavor to break us back, but their attempts were broken up by our intense artillery fire, mostly before they got within bombing distance of our positions."
 "Some idea of what this fighting is costing the enemy may be gained from the fact that since April 1 it would appear that over 35 German divisions have been withdrawn on this front exhausted. It is understood that the existing strength of the German army on the western front is 157 divisions. In comparison their total strength here is about three-quarters of the enemy divisions now consist of only three regiments or about 9,000 rifles."

BRITISH REPORT
 London Cable—The official communication issued this evening says: "There was a heavy fighting during the day in the neighborhood of Bricecourt in the course of which a party of the enemy, while attempting to advance to the attack across the open, was caught by our machine gun fire and suffered heavy casualties."
 "There has been considerable artillery activity on both sides at intervals during the day north-west of St. Quentin and in the neighborhood of Bullecourt, Valenciennes and Arras."
 "An earlier report reads:
 "Last night our troops advanced their position slightly north-east of Hargicourt."
 "Yesterday evening the enemy attacked our positions north-east of the Gravelle village. The attack was broken up by our barrage and machine gun fire and completely repulsed."
 "At the same time hostile forces concentrating for an attack north of Fresnoy were dispersed by our artillery fire."
 "West of Fresnoy we improved our position during the night by a counter-attack. A portion of the ground lost yesterday morning has been regained. Early this morning an enemy raiding party was driven off east of Arras by our troops on the Franco-Belgian border."

FRENCH REPORT
 Paris Cable—The official communication issued Wednesday night by the War Office reads:
 "South of the Oise our artillery carried out effective fire on the organizations and batteries of the Germans in the St. Gomma forest. The Germans were spirited artillery activity. On the Cerny-Hartebise front, in the region of Crevin, our troops have organized the conquered ground and repulsed several enemy counterattacks. The

number of prisoners made in the course of yesterday's action has reached 200.
 "To the north-west of Rheims we carried out a detailed operation which enabled us to carry a German trench on a front of 400 metres and take 100 prisoners, including two officers. These prisoners belonged to four different regiments."

FREED 300,000 HUNS FOR WEST

That is Result of Russ Troops' Fraternalizing

With German Soldiers On the Front.

Petrograd Cable—It is reported that at least twenty German divisions (about 300,000 men) have been transferred from the eastern to the western front as the result of the fraternizing of the soldiers of the two armies. During the Russian Easter it is stated, a dance was held between trenches to gramophone music, at one part of the front.
 It is necessary to have an exact understanding of the spirit that animates this fraternizing and of the extent to which it prevails. To estimate its exact importance it must be accounted as the newest angle the war has taken on.
 The fact exists and every indication goes to show that this fraternizing of opposing troops at the front is extensive—the Russians have proved in every phase of the revolution that they are quick at seizing any unexploited idea. Herons state there has been no firing on long stretches at the front for more than a week. But this is not true on parts of the front.
 The proof of this is the appeal of the Eighth Artillery Brigade to be attached to the infantry, which declares:
 "We have fired, and always will fire, on the enemy, even on those advancing toward us in the attempt to fraternize. We consider any other attitude toward the enemy to be cowardly and treacherous. We will not fire on our own men who go to fraternize with the enemy, because every Russian soldier is needed. Those who wish to fraternize are not traitors; they are only weak, undecided, and overconfident."
 This appeal proves that many soldiers regard the Germans as "false brothers," and think their attempts to fraternize with the Russians are despicable. The whole spirit of the appeal shows that fraternizing is not altogether general at the front. There are some points at least where the Russian artillery is active.
 Opinion is divided as to whether an attempt should be made to suppress this fraternization because its extent makes the outcome of the war doubtful, or to take advantage of it and so spread disension in the German armies. If the Germans are really affected by the desire to fraternize, the latter course is considered possible and is acceptable from a military point of view. But the public is still grasping for accurate knowledge of the extent to which the Russian soldiers are meeting the enemy as brothers. The public fears the Germans are only pretending friendship, as indicated by General Gucco and told in these despatches. Less conspicuous incidents, similar in character to the fraternizing, have occurred on many parts of the front.

NO FEAR OF STARVATION

Lloyd George Addresses House Secret Session.

Britain to Be Self-Supporting in 1918.

London Cable says—The secret session of the British Commons today has begun after the question had been asked, the galleries being cleared. There is a simple rule under which the House may be cleared of strangers. A member of the Government rises in his place and utters the formula "I spy strangers," whereupon officials clear the galleries and seal the doors. Strangers also are asked to leave the lobbies and precincts of the House. Members do not take any oath of secrecy, but could be proceeded against under the Defence of the Realm Act should they disclose secrets.
 The attendance of members at today's session was very large.
 The official report of the secret session issued to-night says that Winston Spencer Churchill opened the debate and dealt with the general military situation, with special reference

to the position in Russia, the development of the struggle on the western front, the strength of the United States and the questions arising out of the submarine attacks.
 "The losses of personnel and material," the statement continues, "was commented on and the general diplomatic situation in the Balkans discussed. Suggestions were made for meeting the submarine danger, and further information was asked concerning marine losses and food supplies."
 "General Henry Page Croft and George James Wardle continued the debate."
 "The Premier dealt seriatim and fully with the points Mr. Churchill raised. He commented upon the internal situation in Austria, and the military position of Germany, in respect to her reserves, contrasting it unfavorably with our own. He cited opinions of the British and French military chiefs in satisfaction at the results of the recent combined operations on the western front."
 "The Premier then explained how it was proposed to satisfy the War Office demands for further reserves and also gave figures of the British tonnage sunk month by month since last August, and gave an encouraging account of the methods adopted to meet the submarine attacks. He announced the figures of the new tonnage, which could and would be built during the next twelve months."
 "Upon the food question the Premier pointed out that with judicious economy in consumption and increased productivity in home supplies, there need be no alarm as to starvation, and that in 1918 we should be self-supporting. There appeared to him no necessity to restate the allies' war aims, which were well known and were being steadily worked out. He stated during the last two years."
 "Herbert H. Asquith (the former Premier), who followed Mr. Lloyd George, expressed his full agreement with the Premier, but deprecated the secrecy of the sitting of the House. He affirmed that anything had been said which could not have been said openly. He concluded by inviting the Premier to publish to the country the greater part of his speech."

U. S. MINISTER REPORTS UPON ATROCITIES
 Brand Whitlock, Minister to Belgium, Exposes Real German Spirit.

GERMAN BRUTALITY
 Has Led to a Great Many Blunders and to Great Bitterness.

The following despatch from Brand Whitlock, American Minister to Belgium, written in January, has been issued for publication by the U. S. department of State at Washington.
 In order to fully understand the situation it is necessary to go back to the autumn of 1914. At the time we were organizing the relief work, the Comité National—the Belgian relief organization that collaborates with the commission for relief in Belgium—proposed an arrangement by which the Belgian Government should pay to its own employees left in Belgium, and other unemployed men besides, the wages they had been accustomed to receive. The Belgians wished to do this both for humanitarian and patriotic purposes; they wished to provide the unemployed with the means of livelihood, and, at the same time, to prevent their working for the Germans. The policy was adopted, and has been continued in practice, and the rolls of the Comité National have been borne the names of hundreds of thousands—some 700,000, I believe of idle men receiving this dole, distributed through the committees.
 The presence of these unemployed men, however, was a constant temptation to German cupidities. Many times they sought to obtain the lists of the committees, but were always foiled by the claim that under the guarantee covering the relief work the records of the Comité National and its various branches were confidential. But rather than risk any interruption of the relief work, which would mean to own an obligation to America, the Germans have always been gratified since it has had the effect of swelling the population list, the authorities never reveal the names of the unemployed, but the military police, by a hardy and with an astounding ignorance of public opinion and of moral sentiment, determined to put these lists into the hands of the German army.
 In August, von Hindenburg was appointed to the supreme command. He is said to have criticized von Besenow's policy as to the relief work, and von Besenow, who was sent to Berlin to protect himself, returned, and a German official here said that Belgium would now be subjected to a more terrible regime, would learn what war was. The prophecy has been fulfilled.
 The deportations began in October, in the Eclap, at Ghent and at Bruges. The police searched the railway stations, districts of Brabant, the mines and steel works about Charleroi were next attacked, now they are seizing men in Brabant, even in Brussels, despite some indication and even predictions of the civil authorities, that the policy was about to be abandoned.
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 The rage, the terror and despair excited by this measure, all over Belgium were beyond anything we had witnessed since the day the Germans poured into Brussels. The delegates of the commission of relief in Belgium, returning to Brussels, told the most distressing stories of the scenes of cruelty and sorrow attending the seizure of this measure. All over Belgium, and daily hourly almost, since that time, appalling stories have been related by Belgians coming to the legation. It is impossible for us to verify them, first, because it is necessary for

LIKE MORE OF SAME DEFEATS

Says Gen. Maurice About German Claims.

In His Weekly Summary of Conditions.

London Cable—"Bodies of Teutons," said Gen. Maurice in his weekly report, "are continually being sent against the British over open ground without any apparent regard for casualties, but the British have held their line when it might have been expected that they would give way, and have inflicted tremendous losses on the Germans."
 "The Germans have hurled great reserves into the Arras conflict, employing people from Belgium, Poland and other conquered territory to release more Germans for military service. The British have forced the Germans to use up twice as many reserves as were employed in the Somme offensive, which ranks next to the present one in magnitude.
 "The Germans," he continued, "claimed that by their so-called strategic retreat they inflicted a great defeat on the British in respect to their plans and that the Teutons held the situation in their own hands. Let me point again to the fact that the British plans for the Arras offensive were completed in February, before the German retreat began. Despite the German claims, we have continued our offensive according to the plans prepared."
 "During the month since the offensive began, we have taken twice the number of prisoners, four times the amount of ground and five times the number of guns taken in the Somme offensive. The British and French together have captured some 50,000 prisoners and 450 guns. This is the result of a defeat, then, if we are willing to go on being defeated. We have kept on going, and are going to keep on going. The Arras offensive is much bigger than the Somme, and our next offensive will be bigger than the Arras.
 "Regarding the German casualties, it is impossible of course to give figures, but there is no disputing the fact that they have been terrible and incomparably larger than ours."
 Gen. Maurice was asked whether the Germans appeared to have withdrawn from the eastern front for use in the west.
 He replied there was no indication of this. On being asked whether the Russian crisis was causing any uneasiness in Allied military circles, he replied that there must be some uneasiness until the new Government is firmly on its feet. But it must be remembered that even had there been no revolution the Russians could not have started an offensive before this, because of the Russian winter.
 As a matter of fact, conditions are not yet favorable for operations in the east."

SHIPS COLLIDE

One Man Missing in Detroit River Mishap.

Detroit Report—The Wabash railroad ferry that bound down the Detroit river, bound up, off the foot of Third Street, Saturday night. The ferry vessel was so badly damaged that it is believed she cannot now remain afloat.
 The Plankinton was bound up with coal, and in some manner as yet not clear sheered suddenly into the Detroit river, crossing the river from Detroit to Windsor. The impact was terrific, and the Plankinton, which is a vessel of old wooden type, slowly backed away into the stream, her bow broken and the water pouring into her from both sides. She went down in 50 feet of water within a few minutes.
 The Plankinton carried a crew of 28 men, nineteen of whom have been accounted for. The Detroit was not seriously damaged. The sunken craft was 42 1/2 feet long and 25 feet wide.

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 During the last fortnight men have been impressed here in Brussels, but their seizures here are made evidently with much greater care than in the provinces, with more regard for the appearance. There are no public announcements of the intention to deport, but suddenly, about ten days ago, certain men in town, whose names are on the list of chomeurs, received summonses notifying them to report to one of the railway stations on a given day; penalties were fixed for failure to respond to the summons, and there was printed on the card an offer of employment by the German Government either in Germany or Belgium. On the first day, out of about 1,500 men ordered to present themselves at the Gare du Midi, about 750 responded. These were examined by German physicians and 200 were taken. There was no disorder, a large force of mounted Lithuanians kept back the crowds and barring access to the station to all but those who had been summoned to appear. The commission for relief in Belgium had secured permission to give each deported man a loaf of bread, and some of the commissaires provided warm clothing for those who had none, and in addition a small financial allowance. As by one of the ironies of life, the winter has been more excessively cold than Belgium has ever known it and while many of those who presented themselves were adequately protected without overcoats, the men shivering from cold and fear, the parting from weeping wives and children, the barriers of brutal Lithuanians, all this made the scene a pitiable and distressing one.
 It was understood that the seizures would continue here in Brussels, but on Thursday last, a bitterly cold day, those that had been convoked went home without examination. It is supposed that the severe weather has moved the Germans to postpone the deportations.
 The rage, the terror and despair excited by this measure, all over Belgium were beyond anything we had witnessed since the day the Germans poured into Brussels. The delegates of the commission of relief in Belgium, returning to Brussels, told the most distressing stories of the scenes of cruelty and sorrow attending the seizure of this measure. All over Belgium, and daily hourly almost, since that time, appalling stories have been related by Belgians coming to the legation. It is impossible for us to verify them, first, because it is necessary for

us to exercise all possible tact in dealing with the subjects, at all and secondly, because there is no means of communication between the Occupations Gebiet and the Etappen Gebiet. Transportation everywhere in Belgium is difficult, the vital railways scarcely operating any more because of the lack of oil, while all the horses have been taken. The people who are forced to go from one village to another must do so on foot or in vans drawn by the few miserable horses that are left. The wagons of the breweries, the one institution that the Germans have scrupulously respected, are hauled by oxen.
 The well known tendency of sensational reports to exaggerate themselves, especially in time of war, and in a situation like that existing here, with no newspapers to serve as a daily clearing house for all the rumors that are as avidly believed as they are eagerly repeated, should of course be considered, but even if a modicum of all that is told is true, there still remains enough to stamp this deed as one of the foulest that history records.
 I am constantly in receipt of reports from all over Belgium that tend to bear out the stories one constantly hears of brutality and cruelty. A number of men sent back to Mons are said to be in a dying condition, many of them starving. At Malines and at Antwerp returned men have died, their friends asserting that they have been victims of neglect and cruelty of cold, exposure, of hunger.
 I have had requests from the burgo-masters of ten communes from La Louviere, asking that permission be obtained to send to the deported men in German packages of food similar to those that are being sent to prisoners of war. Thus far the German authorities have refused to permit this except in special instances, and returning Belgians claim that even when such packages are received, they are used by the camp authorities only as another means of coercing them to sign the agreements to work.
 It is said that in spite of the liberal plans promised those who would sign voluntarily no money has as yet been received in Belgium from workmen in Germany.
 One interesting result of the deportations remains to be noted, a result that once more passes in relief the German capacity for blundering. Almost as soon as the German capacity for blundering is noted, a moral blow to our people may be said to have been dealt. In hearing away from people a day here and a day there and brother they have listened a fire of hatred that will never go out, their hearts are set to every heart in the land, in a way that will impress its horror indelibly on the memory of this generation, a realization of what German means to the rest of the world. In the past, the first of war, but by one of these deeds that make the deplorable of the future of the human race, a deed calmly planned, audaciously executed and deliberately and systematically carried out, so cruel that German soldiers are said to have wept in the execution, and so monstrous that the German officers are now said to be ashamed.

U. S. MINISTER REPORTS UPON ATROCITIES

Brand Whitlock, Minister to Belgium, Exposes Real German Spirit.

GERMAN BRUTALITY

Has Led to a Great Many Blunders and to Great Bitterness.

The following despatch from Brand Whitlock, American Minister to Belgium, written in January, has been issued for publication by the U. S. department of State at Washington.
 In order to fully understand the situation it is necessary to go back to the autumn of 1914. At the time we were organizing the relief work, the Comité National—the Belgian relief organization that collaborates with the commission for relief in Belgium—proposed an arrangement by which the Belgian Government should pay to its own employees left in Belgium, and other unemployed men besides, the wages they had been accustomed to receive. The Belgians wished to do this both for humanitarian and patriotic purposes; they wished to provide the unemployed with the means of livelihood, and, at the same time, to prevent their working for the Germans. The policy was adopted, and has been continued in practice, and the rolls of the Comité National have been borne the names of hundreds of thousands—some 700,000, I believe of idle men receiving this dole, distributed through the committees.
 The presence of these unemployed men, however, was a constant temptation to German cupidities. Many times they sought to obtain the lists of the committees, but were always foiled by the claim that under the guarantee covering the relief work the records of the Comité National and its various branches were confidential. But rather than risk any interruption of the relief work, which would mean to own an obligation to America, the Germans have always been gratified since it has had the effect of swelling the population list, the authorities never reveal the names of the unemployed, but the military police, by a hardy and with an astounding ignorance of public opinion and of moral sentiment, determined to put these lists into the hands of the German army.
 In August, von Hindenburg was appointed to the supreme command. He is said to have criticized von Besenow's policy as to the relief work, and von Besenow, who was sent to Berlin to protect himself, returned, and a German official here said that Belgium would now be subjected to a more terrible regime, would learn what war was. The prophecy has been fulfilled.
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