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BRITISH TROOPS IMPROVED POSITIONS NEWLY CAPTURED

London cable says: The report from Field Marshal Haig to-day... only briefly to the operations of to-day in Flanders. On the previous day seven powerful hostile counter-attacks, it says, were repulsed with heavy losses, and 1,614 Germans were taken prisoner.

During Wednesday's fighting large numbers of British aeroplanes and the infantrymen attacking the Germans from low altitudes with great effect. The German airmen put up strong opposition and as a result the casualties among the flyers were high. Fifteen German machines were accounted for, but thirteen of the British planes failed to return to the base. The text of the report reads: "After all our objectives have been gained yesterday seven powerful hostile counter-attacks were made during the afternoon and evening. All were repulsed with heavy loss to the enemy."

"The total number of prisoners captured in yesterday's offensive operation was 1,614, including 48 officers. Our casualties were again light. On the battlefield today we improved our positions slightly south of Polygon Wood. There has been considerable artillery activity on both sides at intervals throughout the day. The weather was misty Wednesday morning and later the day was overcast, with a strong west wind. In spite of this our aeroplanes were extremely active in co-operation with the infantry. The enemy's troops on the fighting line and his reserves in the rear were harassed with machine gun fire throughout the day. Some thirty thousand rounds were fired from altitudes of one hundred feet and upwards, and many parties of German infantry were dispersed with casualties. On one occasion three of the enemy's guns were fired on while moving. The teams of two of the guns bolted and the third gun was overturned. "Strong opposition was encountered from the enemy's fighting machines, and a very large number of combats occurred at low altitudes. Heavy casualties on both sides resulted, owing to the difficulty of regaining control of damaged machines when flying near the ground. "The weather prevented any extensive bombing operations during the daytime, but at night over two tons of bombs were dropped on the enemy's reserves near the battle front. "Seven hostile machines were brought down at air fighting, three were driven down out of control and five others were brought down by infantry fire. Thirteen of our machines are missing."

LYING GERMAN COMMUNIQUE. A British official statement was issued to-night with reference to statements contained in the German communication. "To-day's German official communication states that the British troops gained less territory on the 26th than on the 25th. This is perfectly true. The attacking troops gained all their objectives on both days, but the objectives set for the operations of yesterday were smaller than those for the 26th."

HEAVY BRITISH GAINS UPON 6-MILE FRONT IN FLANDERS

Berlin cable: The British forces in their new offensive in Flanders have penetrated German positions to the depth of about two-thirds of a mile at several places, according to the German official communication issued to-night. The fighting, which is of a desperate character, is continuing. The communication follows: "The battle in Flanders between Langemarck and Hollebeke—a front of 15 kilometres—still continues. The enemy has succeeded at places in penetrating as far as one kilometre deep into our fighting zone, where desperate fighting is proceeding."

London cable says: In an attack along a six-mile front to-day the British troops captured an important position around Tower Hamlets and strong German field works, according to the official report from Field Marshal Haig to-night. Powerful resistance was offered by the Germans throughout the day and they delivered many strong counter-attacks. "But," says the British commander, "our operations were entirely successful." More than 1,000 prisoners were taken and large numbers of German dead were found on the captured ground.

Probably the most significant gain of the British was near Zonnebeke, to within a few hundred yards of the western outskirts of which village they penetrated, placing them about six miles distant from the railway running from Ostend through Roulers and Roubaix to Lille. The cutting of this line, which seems to be the objective of Field Marshal Haig, would seriously affect the transport of the Germans from their naval base at Ostend and Zebrugge to the south. Prior to the land attack British naval forces heavily shelled Ostend, and again Wednesday afternoon they repeated the bombardment. Meanwhile naval aeroplanes dropped bombs on towns in Northern Belgium, with visibly effective results.

The text of Field Marshal Haig's report reads: "An attack this morning was delivered on a total front of nearly six miles, from south of Tower Hamlets to east of St. Julien. Our operations were entirely successful. "Later in the day the enemy delivered a series of heavy counter-attacks along our new front, resulting in hard fighting, which is still continuing at certain points. "South of the Ypres-Menin road an attack carried out by English troops successfully completed the capture of the Tower Hamlets spur and regained possession of strong German field works on its eastern slopes, which formed our objectives. "A powerful counter-attack in the direction of Gheluvelt was repulsed. "AN ALL-DAY STRUGGLE. "On the right of our main attack north of the Ypres-Menin road, our troops met obstinate resistance and heavy fighting took place in the area across which the enemy counter-attacked yesterday. After a severe struggle lasting throughout the greater part of the day, English and Scottish battalions drove the enemy from his positions and accomplished the task allotted to them of securing the flank of our principal attack. "In their advance our troops relieved two companies of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who had held out with great gallantry during the night in a forward position, in which they had been isolated by the enemy's attack yesterday morning. "In the afternoon the enemy delivered another counter-attack in great strength in this sector, where fierce fighting is still continuing. "Further north Australian troops cleared the remainder of Polygon Wood and captured a German trench system to the east of it, which formed their objectives for the day. "On the left, English, Scottish and Welsh battalions penetrated the enemy's defence to a depth of nearly a mile, stormed Zonnebeke and gained the line of their objectives. "During the afternoon a counter-attack directed against our new positions east of Polygon Wood was repulsed. "THOUSAND PRISONERS TAKEN. "On the left of our attack, North Midland and London Territorials, attacking on both sides of the Wiltje-Gravenstafel, St. Julien-Gravenstafel roads, also captured their objectives and beat off a counter-attack. In this area our line has been advanced to a depth of half a mile across a country defended by a large number of fortified farms and concrete redoubts. "Early in the afternoon the Ger-

man delivered a second counter-attack with large forces and succeeded in pressing back our line a short distance on a narrow front. Our troops, counter-attacking in turn, at once recaptured the greater part of the lost ground. "Over one thousand prisoners have been taken in these operations. A very large number of German dead have been found on the ground captured, and the enemy's losses, both killed and wounded, were very heavy. "A successful raid was carried out during the night east of Gouzeaucourt (north-east of Peronne) by Suffolk troops in the face of strong opposition. Two occupied dugouts were destroyed and many German were killed with the bayonet. We captured a few prisoners and a machine gun."

GERMAN REPORT. Berlin cable says: Thursday's War Office report said: "Army of Crown Prince Rupprecht—The battle in Flanders yesterday raged uninterrupted from early morning until far into the night, and continued until morning in finer engagements. The battle-tryed fourth army again withstood the British assault. Troops belonging to every German province shared in the success of the day, which brought the enemy even less gain of territory than the battle of Sept. 20th. "Drumfire of unprecedented intensity preceded the attacks. Behind a wall of dust and smoke the English infantry broke forward between Mangelaars and Hollebeke, often accompanied by tanks. The enemy, assaulting repeatedly on both sides of Langemarck, was repulsed every time by our fire and in hand-to-hand fighting. "From the region to the east of St. Julien to the Menin-Ypres road the English succeeded in breaking into our defensive zone to a depth of one kilometre, where afterwards bitter and varying battle took place throughout the day. "By shifting his massed artillery effect the enemy attempted to check the advance and interference of our reserves. The iron will of our regiments broke through the violence of the enemy's fire and the enemy was driven back at many points in fresh assaults. "Especially stubborn fighting took place at the roads radiating from Zonnebeke westward yesterday and last evening for the possession of Gheluvelt. The village remained in our possession. Further south of the Comines-Ypres Canal repeated assaults by the English broke down without results and with heavy losses. The enemy has not renewed his attack up to the present. At least 12 English divisions have been employed at the front. They have not shaken the firmness of our defence. "On other sectors of the Flanders front and in Artois the artillery activity increased only temporarily. "The bombardment of Ostend Tuesday night, apart from the damage done to buildings, demanded sacrifices from the population. 14 Belgians having been killed and 25 seriously wounded. "Army of the German Crown Prince: Northeast of Soissons, the centre of the sectors of the Chemin des Dames, and on the eastern bank of the Meuse, the artillery activity has been lively. Only local foreign engagements developed. "Seventeen enemy aeroplanes were brought down yesterday. "Eastern theatre: Near Dunaberg, on Lake Narocz, to the southeast of Lulsk on parts of the Carpathian front, on the Rumanian plain, and along the Lower Danube, the artillery activity has been revived. "Macedonian front: There is nothing important to report."

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OPENING OF BATTLE. (By R. T. Small, Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press.) British Front in France and Belgium cable: Another heavy attack was delivered by the British at daybreak against the German positions east of Ypres, and early reports showed that the assaulting troops had pushed the enemy out of many important positions. The offensive immediately started along the major portion of the line that the British reached in last Thursday's battle, extending from east of St. Julien to southwest of Gheluvelt. The Germans are resisting desperately, and along most of about a thousand yards astride the Ypres-Menin road a terrific struggle has been proceeding. The most important points involved in the new offensive, as was the case six days ago, lay directly east of the city of Ypres, between the Ypres-Roulers railway and the Ypres-Menin highway. Here are situated the strongly-held elevations that still remain to the Germans out of the numerous ridges and forests which formed a vital part of their defence in this sector of Belgium. Last Thursday they suffered a crushing blow in the form of such strongholds as Anzac, Nun's Wood, Gloucester Wood and Iverness Copse, and now an ever-rising tide is reaching out for still more. Australian, Scotch and English troops this morning were pushing out into a difficult country, where rain and sleet, sodden from rains and floods, among concrete and steel redoubts heavily armed with machine guns, over elevations and through bits of woods choked with rapid-firers. They might fail in their objective and still have covered their retreat in glory. The Germans undoubtedly knew that the attack was pending and it is probable that their heavy counter-attacks yesterday and last night against the British positions on the ridge east of Ypres, between Polygon Wood and Tower Hamlets were drawn off in an attempt to frustrate the British plan. The battle inaugurated here yesterday continued with great fury all night and it was along this front that the bitterest work was being done this morning. **POUNDED FOR DAYS.** The British artillery had been pounding the whole front of the new offensive for days, but last night a concentrated fire was turned on that section where the counter-attacks were made and the entire front was torn and smashed, together with the men, who, hidden under sparse shelter, were endeavoring to hold this point of vantage. Guns of all calibres came to the assistance of the infantry here, and the bombardment for long periods was maintained with dramatic effect. The Australians, north of Polygon Wood, and the Scotch and the English to the north of the Anzaes, appear to have met with nothing like the opposition encountered in the south. The Germans replied very weakly to the British bombardment prior to the attack north of the Ypres-Roulers railway. The enemy's main offensive early today was directed against the advance to the right of Poesse. His attacks against Tower Hamlet's ridge west of Gheluvelt, have undoubtedly been continued as a protection against a possible attack on Zandvoorde Ridge to the south. For days the Germans have been bringing up reinforcements in anticipation of to-day's attack, and unless all signs fail, much sanguinary fighting is to follow. The attack was to-day started at 5.30 in the morning and again the infantry was preceded by great barrages.

BADLY FLEEED. Swedish Leading People Robbed of Millions. Stockholm, Cable—Losses aggregating twenty million, and possibly thirty million, have been suffered by many of Sweden's best known people as a result of the operations of a "Gothenburg" speculator, Einar Lundstrom, whose body was found a few days ago in the water near the Bohuslän Yacht Club with a bullet in the head. Among the victims is Lieut. Erik Ewartz, son of the Swedish Prime Minister, whose losses are estimated at five million crowns. The investigation that has been going on discloses that ten others have lost from one to five million crowns, and there is a long list including officers, doctors, artists, bank employees, and even house-poor and waiters, whose losses range from trifling amounts up to thirty thousand crowns. "The speculator, Lundstrom, it is believed, kept no books, hence it is difficult to discover what, if any, assets remain. It is, however, that assets will be little for the creditors."

THREE DROWN AT MONTREAL. Montreal, Report—Two men and a woman were drowned last night at the CPK No. 7 wharf, the result of the breaking of one of the ropes which served to secure a large oil tank. The drowned men, Wm. Blatte, aged 25, and J. J. Sorel, aged 30, and the woman, H. M. Hamel, 39 years of age, of St. John, N.E., cook.

Sponge—I think that a street car has just passed. Blotter—How do you know? Sponge—I can see its tracks. —Chaparral.

ALL GERMAN DRIVES FAIL TO RECOVER

Desperate Fighting is Continuous but British Hold New Ground. FIGHT FOR HILL 40

Stern Battle Against Enormous Odds by Squad of Scots. (By R. T. Small, Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press.) British Front in France and Belgium cable: Another heavy attack was delivered by the British at daybreak against the German positions east of Ypres, and early reports showed that the assaulting troops had pushed the enemy out of many important positions. The offensive immediately started along the major portion of the line that the British reached in last Thursday's battle, extending from east of St. Julien to southwest of Gheluvelt. The Germans are resisting desperately, and along most of about a thousand yards astride the Ypres-Menin road a terrific struggle has been proceeding. The most important points involved in the new offensive, as was the case six days ago, lay directly east of the city of Ypres, between the Ypres-Roulers railway and the Ypres-Menin highway. Here are situated the strongly-held elevations that still remain to the Germans out of the numerous ridges and forests which formed a vital part of their defence in this sector of Belgium. Last Thursday they suffered a crushing blow in the form of such strongholds as Anzac, Nun's Wood, Gloucester Wood and Iverness Copse, and now an ever-rising tide is reaching out for still more. Australian, Scotch and English troops this morning were pushing out into a difficult country, where rain and sleet, sodden from rains and floods, among concrete and steel redoubts heavily armed with machine guns, over elevations and through bits of woods choked with rapid-firers. They might fail in their objective and still have covered their retreat in glory. The Germans undoubtedly knew that the attack was pending and it is probable that their heavy counter-attacks yesterday and last night against the British positions on the ridge east of Ypres, between Polygon Wood and Tower Hamlets were drawn off in an attempt to frustrate the British plan. The battle inaugurated here yesterday continued with great fury all night and it was along this front that the bitterest work was being done this morning. **POUNDED FOR DAYS.** The British artillery had been pounding the whole front of the new offensive for days, but last night a concentrated fire was turned on that section where the counter-attacks were made and the entire front was torn and smashed, together with the men, who, hidden under sparse shelter, were endeavoring to hold this point of vantage. Guns of all calibres came to the assistance of the infantry here, and the bombardment for long periods was maintained with dramatic effect. The Australians, north of Polygon Wood, and the Scotch and the English to the north of the Anzaes, appear to have met with nothing like the opposition encountered in the south. The Germans replied very weakly to the British bombardment prior to the attack north of the Ypres-Roulers railway. The enemy's main offensive early today was directed against the advance to the right of Poesse. His attacks against Tower Hamlet's ridge west of Gheluvelt, have undoubtedly been continued as a protection against a possible attack on Zandvoorde Ridge to the south. For days the Germans have been bringing up reinforcements in anticipation of to-day's attack, and unless all signs fail, much sanguinary fighting is to follow. The attack was to-day started at 5.30 in the morning and again the infantry was preceded by great barrages.

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HUN REPLY NO GOOD. Asquith Says Restitution Must Be Unqualified.

London cable: "Any peace worth having cannot be found in a cessation of active hostilities followed by a process of territorial bargaining to be embodied in protocols and pacts, and still less in an arrangement imposed either by victors or vanquished which sets at defiance the historic traditions, aspirations and liberties of the peoples affected. Ex-Premier Herbert H. Asquith, who has recently returned from a visit to the western front, made this declaration in addressing a mass meeting at Leeds to-night under the auspices of the War Aims Committee. He described the German reply to the Papal HUNS ESCAPED.

22 German Prisoners in Nottingham Broke Out. London, Cable.—One of the most daring escapes from internment camps was effected yesterday at Kegworth, Nottingham. Twenty-two German prisoners, including Capt. Muller, who commanded the camp, and Lieut. Otto Tholme, disappeared through a tunnel extending from a hut in the camp to a point in the barbed wire fence. How the tunnel was dug is a mystery. How the prisoners were recaptured, including Muller and Lieut. Tholme, is also a mystery. The latter made three previous escapes. With Lieut. Emil Teichmann, another of the recaptured prisoners, he fled from the detention barracks at Chelmsford last May.

KNOWN BEFORE OF U-BOAT WAR. Bernstorff Never in Doubt of Hun Plans. Washington despatch: Further evidence that Count von Bernstorff, former German Ambassador to Washington, knew of his Government's intention to inaugurate a campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare prior to his request for money with which to influence Congress, is in possession of the State Department. Secretary Lansing said to-day that as early as January 19 Count von Bernstorff knew of the plan. Answering enquiries the Secretary made this statement: "In view of enquiries which have been made as to whether Count von Bernstorff knew of the purpose of his Government to renew relentless submarine warfare when he sent his message of January 22, 1917, asking authorization to expend \$50,000, I can state that the Department of State possesses conclusive evidence that on or before January 19 Count von Bernstorff had received and read the Zimmerman telegram to Minister von Eckhardt in Mexico, which contained the proposal: 'We intend to begin on the first of February unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavor in spite of this to keep the United States of America neutral.' "Count von Bernstorff was, therefore, fully advised of the intentions of the Imperial Government at the time when he asked for authority of Berlin to influence Congress for an authorization to influence Congressional action against the continued neutrality of this country."

FAMOUS "ACE'S" LAST AIR FIGHT. Guynemer Ambushed by Cloud of Enemies While Attacking Four at One Time. Paris cable says: The last fight of Capt. Guynemer, France's premier aviator, was credited in the army aviation record with having shot down 53 German aeroplanes and with having destroyed at least 25 that were unaccounted for, is described by a comrade, who is quoted by the Excelsior as follows: "Guynemer sighted five machines of the Albatross type D.3. Without hesitating he bore down on them. At that moment enemy patrolling machines, soaring at a great height, appeared suddenly and fell upon Guynemer. "There were forty enemy machines in the air at this time, including Count von Richtofen and his circus division of machines, painted in diagonal blue and white stripes. Towards Guynemer's right some Belgian machines were in sight, but it was too late. "Guynemer must have