

BRITONS IN NIGHT RAID SURPRISE FOE'S LINE

First Teuton Division to Enter Belgium at Beginning of War Punished in Attack and Put to Rout

By PHILIP GIBBS

Special Cable to Evening Public Ledger

War Correspondents' Headquarters on the Western Front, June 17.

Late Friday night and in the small hours of Saturday some English and Scottish troops beyond the La Bassée Canal, in front of Hinges, made a very daring attack on the enemy's outpost line on a front of about two miles and captured a long strip of ground, with 200 prisoners and about twenty-five machine guns.

The exact locality of this operation was between a place called La Panerrie, on the left, and Les Choquez, on the right, in the low flats of the mining country above Bethune, with black slag heaps high and conical among the miners' villages and the steel works of pit heads, all broken now by years of shell fire, which became most violent last April, when the enemy drove across the line, came closer to Bethune and flung shells about all this countryside, killing women and children behind the lines, razing the villages and burning and completing the ruin of villages like Hinges.

Since that fighting on the Lys the German troops have not been living in nice places, but rather in a hell of own making, and as the British still held observation over their positions they could not make a trench system without having it blown to bits. The prisoners have described very ruffly, in many cases, how the new German system of defense from outpost lines is based on linked shell craters and scattered gun posts rather than in the old-fashioned lines with machine guns and other weapons in the background.

There are wild roses in the hedge rows and the gardens of ruined towns like Arras, and the scent of the elder bloom is heavy on the air near the battle line.

German Defense Positions on Mery-Belloy Line "Steam Rolled"

With the French Army, June 17. Tanks paved the way for a French victory in the Mery-Belloy wood sector of the Montdidier-Oise front. The story of how these traveling land forts demolished German positions as they rolled forward was told at tank headquarters after the fighting.

In the Bery zone tanks advanced ahead of the infantry, firing a frontal barrage while artillery concentrated up ahead on the tank positions. As the monsters advanced the success of the tanks on Mery and beyond the deadly have wrought by the guns could be seen. Heads of dead were everywhere. The tanks were getting very quiet and were satisfied with the quietude of the British line. It was very quiet there, but there were men waiting for the moment when they were to follow to the front with their explosives and go out upon a dark adventure. Among them were some Suffolk and Grenads and others. Some of their officers were young men who were in years and war, but the proof of their quality is in what they did.

It was a difficult thing, this attack in the dark, but they had trained hard for it and knew exactly what to do. Instinct, and were certain before they went off that they would make a success of it. The attack began with a shout but instead of field artillery, while the "bosses" held their own over the enemy's positions in the rear and kept his guns quiet. Then the men got away, and each had to keep his sense of direction without any light to guide him except the flash of gunfire and bursting shells. They knew their objective, and little groups of them went on to the German machine-gun posts as unerringly as though in broad daylight.

The Germans were utterly surprised and aghast at the rapidity of this attack which they had never dreamed of.

Many were taken prisoners before they got to arms, but others had time and made the most of it. It is possible that the German position went past some of the machine-gun posts without stopping them up. Any how, both the tanks and the Suffolk and Grenads had fierce fighting all night and routing of enemy machine guns, which kept up a fire upon them until they rushed them at close quarters.

The Germans fought bravely there, from shell craters and sniper posts held out until they were killed or forced to surrender at the point of the bayonet. It was not until dawn that the fight was over and the German positions were left in the hands of the British.

Planned to Take Prisoners. Twelve German prisoners said the object of the raid was to take American prisoners. They didn't do it. The regiment from which the raiders were picked is reported to have been brought here recently from Picardy. It is composed of some of the Kaiser's best troops. A number of the assaulting party carried their rifles to bed. It is believed from this that they intended to hold Xivray permanently. The McIntyre sisters—Irene and Gladys, of Mount Vernon, N. Y., were again used in this attack. Prisoners' reports show that the Germans were trained for this attack more than a week. Snare screens were used to hide their activities from American observers. Of the German officers among the six prisoners taken one showed fight and was wounded. A small party of Germans tried to rush our troops, but every one of them was wiped out. While the street fighting was going on two Germans seized a wounded American and tried to carry him off. Lieutenant Dowd intercepted them and drove off both boches, who dropped the wounded American in his flight.

Captor Becomes Captive. Another wounded American captured by the Germans was turned over to one boche who led him to a German barbed wire. There the wounded man suddenly drew a pistol and forced the Hun to right about face to the American line.

passion, just as grimy as one of the Gordon Highlanders spoke to a medical officer, who said to him: "Well, you've got a 'blighty' wound this time. You will soon be home."

"I don't want to go home," said the man, "I want to make these boys see 'em—and by 'these people' he meant the enemy over the way."

Apart from the shelling around Hinges some intense bombardment around Dikebusch and Scherpenberg, the front is still abnormally quiet, and after the experience of March 21, which followed similar quietude, it does not inspire one with a simple faith in the enemy's peaceful intentions. Behind the line from Flanders to the Somme, Princes Rupprecht, Bavaria holds his group of armies almost intact, and in a great and formidable striking force that is a menace to us every day so long as it is not drawn into the battle furthest west.

Meanwhile the weather still favors the enemy. In spite of the storm clouds which have been gathering off the lines and the sudden hard showers, not much rain has fallen, and the ground is dry after a phenomenally long spell of sunshine.

Everywhere in France and Flanders the country is full of color and beauty, and even on the old battlefields, and up to the edge of them, where the soil is still in the hands of the enemy, there are sparkling even than the precious metal, and great sweeps of scarlet where poppies grow, and long strips of ground where the yellow and black of a Joseph's coat of many colors, where there is clover and the bright blue of French chrysanthemums and white marmosets and yellow chariots and thousands of other flowers in the background.

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Probably there were men left who belonged to the division of von Kluck; but an American who went to see the prisoners taken yesterday remarked, after profound meditation: "Well, I guess you're going to have a most dismal cast of countenance."

I confess that those I saw today seemed no better and no worse than most of the prisoners we take and two of them sat at a table in a little mining cottage and were extremely polite to one of the British officers.

The Prussians, Wurtembergers and Mecklenburgers, of the Eighteenth reserve division, did not expect the attack and they were taken yesterday night. It was very quiet there, but there were men waiting for the moment when they were to follow to the front with their explosives and go out upon a dark adventure. Among them were some Suffolk and Grenads and others. Some of their officers were young men who were in years and war, but the proof of their quality is in what they did.

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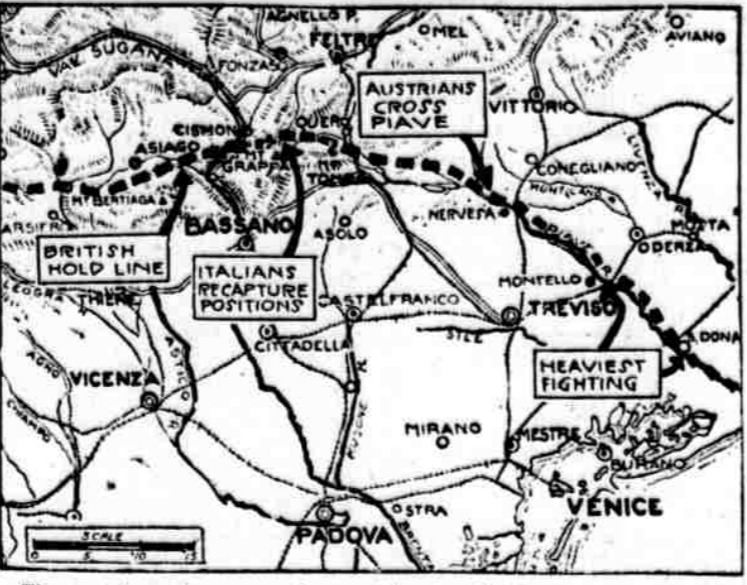
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WHERE ITALIANS HOLD AUSTRILIANS



The map shows the present theatre of heaviest fighting in the new drive which the Austrians have begun in Italy, and also the points at which the armies of the Allies have forced the enemy back from advance positions.

ALLIES HALT AUSTRILIANS' NEW ASSAULTS ON ITALIAN FRONT

Continued from Page One. Seems to be a disappointment to the enemy in its early stages.

Battle Unabated. Along the 100-mile front, from the Asiago Plateau among the mountains, to the Adriatic Sea, the battle continues unabated. A succession of desperate enemy efforts have broken against the Allied positions.

Territory Regained. The Italian War Office announces that all the territory around Mount Solorola and Asolone (also between the two rivers, which had been lost, has been regained).

Enemy Troops Succeeded in Crossing the Piave at three points on the Venetian Plain near Nervesa, Fagnano and Musile. At no place, however, were they able to follow up their advantage.

Opening of Offensive. Reuter's correspondent with the British army in Italy describes the opening of the offensive as follows: "The Austrians opened a heavy bombardment at once in the morning and attacked the British positions on the Asiago Plateau at 7:30 with a division composed of Austro-Germans and Bohemian troops."

Italians Anticipated Teutons' Offensive. "The morning of the attack was more than usually misty and the bulk of the enemy troops advanced along the line in an irregular fashion, and thickly wooded parts of the line were obscured."

Heavy Artillery Effort. "The Austrian effort is the greatest since the beginning of the war," the Corriere della Sera declared today. "Its principal aim is to break through the British Valley by overwhelming the Italian defenses in the narrow Frenzel Valley, enabling the enemy to debouch into Valstagna."

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L'EROICA RESISTENZA DEI SOLDATI D'ITALIA

L'odiato Nemico Arrestato Nell'Offensiva Contro il Fronte Italiano.

Roma, 17 giugno. Un comunicato del Ministero della Guerra in Roma, pubblicato la scorsa notte, annunzia che le forze austriache hanno rinnovato i loro attacchi contro le truppe italiane, fiancaci ed inglesi nelle regioni di Asiago e di Monte Grappa.

Parigi, 17 giugno. French troops improve position on the western portion of the Marne front, the French War Office announced today. The German raids in the Vosges were repulsed.

Washington, June 17. Private W. J. Guyton received the Croix de Guerre as the first American to die in German hands, according to reports in his supplemental communique today.

Between the Oise and the Aisne, northwest of Hautbray, a detail operation allowed the French to widen their positions and take a hundred prisoners and a number of machine guns, the communique said.

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South of the Aisne increased fighting activity continued. Strong French attacks at Domiers were frustrated by a heavy enemy counter-attack.

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The Austrians followed the German tactics of rushing up men in the last hours before the attack. Great openings in the German lines were made.

Heavy artillery effort. The Austrian effort is the greatest since the beginning of the war.

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