

ENEMY WEAKENS ON PIAVE FRONT

Austrian Forces Decimated by Italian Gunfire and Counter Blows

CORPSES HIDE RAILWAY

By AUSTIN WEST Special Cable to Evening Public Ledger Copyright, 1918, by New York Times Co. Italian Zone of War, June 20.

Battled in his larger hope of a vast encircling movement around Treviso and by way of the Brenta valley, with his first halt at Bassano, the enemy, while maintaining his pressure on the mountain front and Montello district, without, however, risking fresh infantry attacks, is redoubling his efforts along the Piave, more especially west of San Dona.

The latest dispatch announces that the Austrian hold of the last-named vicinity, also in the Zenon Bend and at St. Andrea, southeast of Montello, is being considerably weakened by the Italian artillery fire and constant counter-attacks.

St. Andrea itself, with the adjacent villages of Vlavera, Bavaria and So-ville; has changed hands ten times over. The railroad running thence toward Monte Belluna is hidden under a litter of dead bodies for a length of several kilometers. The haul of prisoners has risen from 6000 to 9000, General Diaz announced last night—an almost unique fact in an offensive of this nature and undoubtedly the fruit of Italy's immediate readiness for an energetic reaction.

Stupendous acts of heroism are recorded. Gunners of an Alpine regiment stationed at the foot of Montello Hill, after being twice driven from their batteries, united themselves to some storm troops, fought the foe in a hand-to-hand encounter with diggers, and, recovering the cannon, readjusted the breach locks, which they had taken away with them, and then fired point-blank into the adversary's ranks.

NEW AUSTRIAN DRIVE 'HUNGER OFFENSIVE'

London, June 20.—Austria's offensive against Italy, which began last Saturday morning, was launched for internal and political reasons, according to captured documents, said a dispatch from Rome today quoting a semi-official statement which had been issued there.

The prisoners call the new drive a "hunger offensive." "The enemy is launching his great attack responded to two strong impulses," said the semi-official statement. "First there was the political necessity of obtaining a military success, due to the internal situation in Austria-Hungary; second, the necessity of obtaining supplies and raw material to meet the wants of the population and the army."

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GERMAN MASS ATTACKS ACME OF STOLIDITY

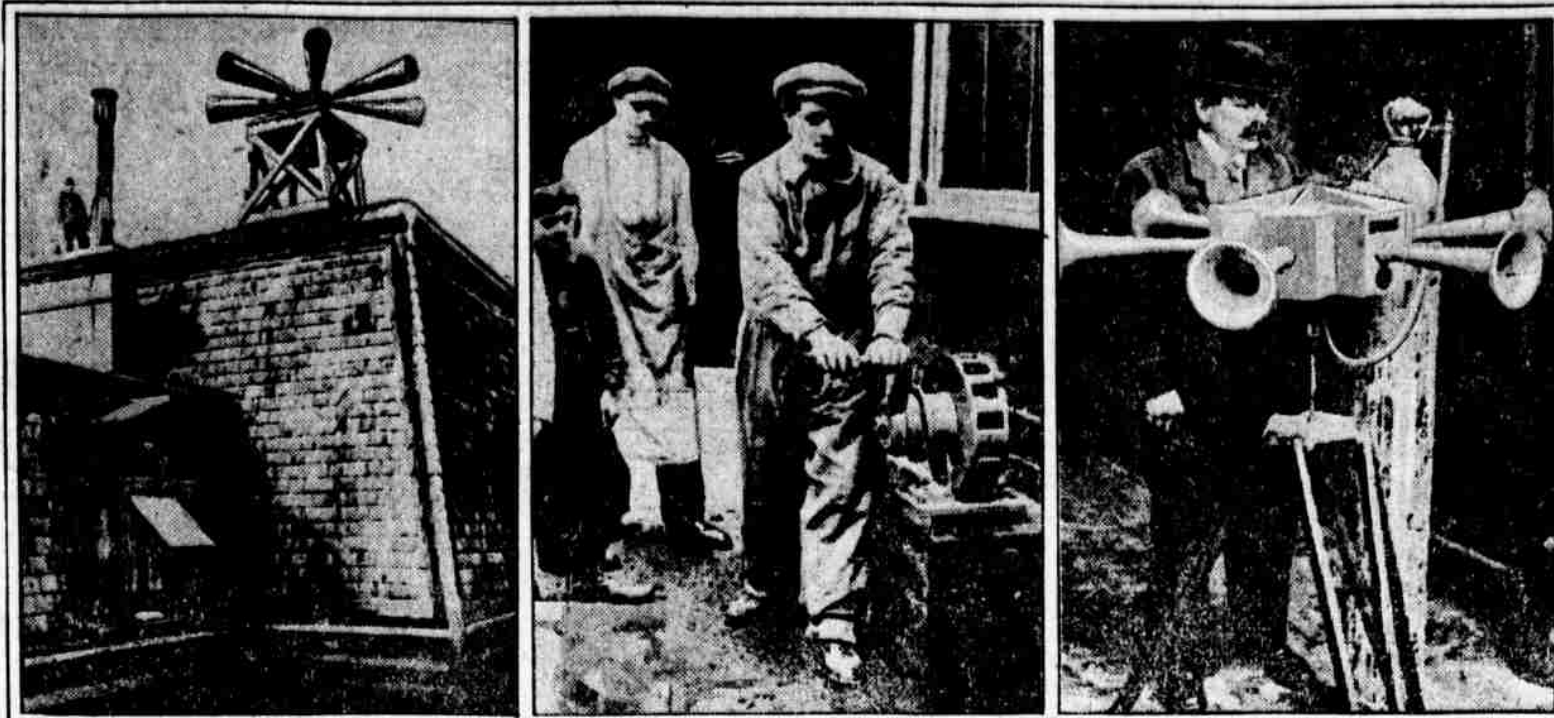
Liverpool Officer Says Most of Men Do Not Even Fix Bayonets

Liverpool, April 11.—A Liverpool officer, in a letter from the front, writes of the German mass attack.

YOUTHS DROWN IN LAKE

Oas Drags Would-Be Rescuer to Death at Browns Mills

HOW PARIS WARNS ITS CITIZENS OF IMPENDING AIR RAIDS



A SIX-HORN SIREN... SIREN WORKED BY A HANDLE... A SIX-HORN COMPRESSED-AIR SIREN

Rain May Hinder Blow at British

Continued from Page One other things not written in the book of nature. Meanwhile, it is fair and pleasant in France during this time between battles, and one forgets some of the grimmest side of the business when one sees the British in the camps behind the lines under the full foliage of the trees or watering their horses by streams where many flowers grow in the tall grass or taking a rest on a march in the forests, where the sunlight is getting down the glades.

British, French and American soldiers are wonderfully intermingled now, so that one finds three Allies in the same village and on the same road and seated at table in the same wayside inns.

Americans Attract Attention Most inquisitive eyes are for the Americans, who are the latest types to enter this arena where the battles of the world's destiny are being fought. The intonation of their voices is a new note in the villages through which one passes, and there is a sense of a new chapter of history having been opened when one asks the way from one of their traffic men or gets a salute in American style or meets a column of lads on the march, with long pacific down the middle of their backs and a ragtime tune on their lips.

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the day, as the British armies did in the summer of 1914.

I saw an American soldier yesterday squatting at the roadside with his back to a wall and a French child by his side. Her head was on his shoulder and he had a look in his hand. He pointed to a word which the child read and he repeated. He was taking his first French lesson.

Spirit is Wonderful Well, they are coming over fast, those lads, and all the British officers who have been with them tell me that they are keen and quick to learn any little tricks the British can teach them by old experience. The spirit of the latest divisions arriving is as good as that which has been proved already on the battlefields, and that is wonderful. They are a little homesick, I am told, because of the strangeness of everything in France, and I am glad of that, because the more they love their homes the quicker they will help finish this war, and the quicker the better for all this world of homesick men.

The new British drafts are splendid, too, and it is a very moving thing to see these lads who come out with the volunteer classes to fill up the gaps in the ranks of older men. Some of them look very young, but have an air, as they go swinging by with their rifles slung, the future heroes of battles that aim, must be fought before the end comes.

FRENCH HOLD AMERICAN

Jacob J. Stern Accused of Commerce With the Enemy

Paris, June 20.—Charged with having engaged in commerce with the enemy, Jacob Julius Stern, a silk merchant of New York, has been arrested.

He was born in Germany in 1852 and thirty years ago went to the United States, where he founded the business firm of Stern & Stern, with his brother Emil, who is now in the United States army.

Stern's American naturalization was mentioned by the French authorities in 1915. He took the matter into the court and obtained recognition of his American citizenship and an order of sequestration against his property was lifted.

Mr. Stern is a very wealthy resident of the fashionable Place Vendôme, where he owns a fine home, which was transformed into a military hospital at the beginning of the war.

He was arrested in a rooming house at the time of his sentencing. He was held in the Municipal Court by attempting to batter his way out, and at the same time his wife, becoming hysterical, caused clerks in the office in the building to rush from their work at the sound of her screams.

OPERATION REMOVES CRIMINAL TENDENCY

Cracked Bones Pressing on Brain Caused Wicked Inclinations

Milwaukee, June 17.—Judge Backus has placed Charles Denker, twenty, on probation for one year, after he had been brought from the House of Correction, where he was serving an eighteen months' sentence, imposed by Judge Backus May 4, after Denker had been convicted of obtaining money under false pretenses.

Thomas Leahy, who represented Denker, offered in evidence a piece of Denker's skull that, according to Mr. Leahy, were removed by Doctor Hervey on May 29.

After the operation the doctors found that Denker had changed completely in his actions and the physicians tell me that the skull bone pressing on his brain was responsible for his criminal inclinations," said Mr. Leahy.

Asked by Judge Backus how he now felt, Denker replied that the headaches which he formerly suffered from were entirely gone since the operation.

"Very well, I am going to place you on probation for one year, and you can go back to your wife and support her," said Judge Backus.

Denker was arrested after he had obtained \$15 from Polly Magawieski, 727 Park street, after telling her that her friend, John Barczak, 319 Ninth avenue, was under arrest for speeding in Waukegan. Barczak had not been arrested. At the time of his sentencing Denker, created in evidence a piece of his skull that, according to Mr. Leahy, were removed by Doctor Hervey on May 29.

ITALIANS STRONGLY HOLD FOE ON LOWER PIAVE RIVER FRONT

Continued from Page One about eight miles behind the lines. Bassano is on the Brenta River, south of Mount Grappa, and about the same distance behind the lines. Treviso is on the Sile River, about nine miles west of the Piave.)

TREACHEROUS TACTICS USED BY AUSTRIANS AGAINST ALLIED LINE

By WARD PRICE Special Cable to Evening Public Ledger Copyright, 1918, by New York Times Co. Italian Headquarters, June 20.

Some of the heaviest fighting has been round the Austrian bridgehead on the lower Piave, from which they are trying to strike out to reach Mestre, five miles north of Venice. What the Austrians now hold here is a shelf of the west bank, which stretches southward from Maserda to Fossalta and then round Scardona. The ground they occupy is shaped like a tobacco pipe, with the bowl turned into the Italian army's direction.

The breadth of the stem of this pipe was reduced by a counter-attack delivered by troops which had been fighting since the offensive began. These troops, though dead beat, wanted to improve the position before they left and undertook it on their own initiative.

The Austrians are not by any means fighting clearly in this offensive. The Italian general commanding the Montello sector told me that the enemy had been trying to push forward detachments with the Italian troops. The same thing occurred in the lower Piave, where a number of Austrian spies in civilian clothes, trying to pass themselves off as Italian peasants, have been caught and shot.

All the wounded I have talked to agree that explosive bullets have been freely used by the enemy. Many of the shrapnel injuries to hands and legs which I saw brought in could be due to no other cause. One wounded man even had a machine gun by sending unarmed men ahead pretending to be Italian soldiers.

The Northumberland Fusiliers and the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, two mentioned in the Italian army communiqué today, were both in the line at the point where Austria attacked the headpost. On both flanks of the Oxford and Bucks front the enemy made headway, but the center stood firm. The two wings, though outnumbered, fell back steadily, and facing east and north, the battalions fought a fierce three-sided battle among the dense pine woods on the steep hillside.

Machine guns were not much good for either side amid so much timber, and the fighting was at close quarters with bombs and bayonets.

The Northumberland Fusiliers earned the distinction they gained by skillfully turning their left flank to the enemy and keeping in touch with the hard-pressed Oxford and Bucks, so that they hoped to achieve by surprise and weight of numbers.

It was the Warwick who restored the situation here, counter-attacking from the left and clearing the enemy out of his woods.

The Sherwood Foresters are praised for their initiative in counter-attacking on the extreme right when a small gap had been made there.

ITALIANS REPEL FOE IN BITTER STRUGGLE

Rome, June 20.—The latest Italian War Office statement follows: "On the night of June 17-18 and in the course of Tuesday the enemy did not renew his attack from the Asiago plateau to the Montello height. His partial actions were completely repulsed in the Grappe and Montello regions.

"We carried out thrusts on the Asiago plateau, the Allied detachment capturing many scores of prisoners and two guns.

"With unceasing pressure we shortened the front opened by the enemy south of the Montebelluna railway. Our artillery with deadly concentration of fire did not give truce to the enemy masses waiting along the front of the battle or in movement in the back areas.

"Tuesday morning was calm on the Piave River, but in the afternoon the battle again broke out furiously. "New attempts made by the enemy to cross to the right bank from San Andrea to Candulle in six-mile front east of Treviso were repulsed. On the embankments of the river between Candulle and Fossalta the strenuous defense of our troops tried the enemy sorely and his impetus was broken by our infantry.

"Equally intense was the struggle which raged in the sector of Fossalta, southeast of Meolo and north of Capo Sella.

"The battle is continuing bitterly. The enemy in order to preserve some of the initial advantages gained by his latest successes, has incurred heavy losses which our rifle fire and the guns of our army have been inflicting in the last five days.

VIENNA CLAIMS GAIN ON MONTELO HEIGTS

Vienna, June 20.—Austro-Hungarian troops have crossed the Fossalta Canal to eighteen miles north of Venice at some points, according to the War Office. Further north, it is stated, the Austrians broke through several Italian lines at the southern foot of the Montello height. The official statement follows:

The southern wing of the group of Field Marshal von Bona-vic has made a steady advance and has obtained fresh advantages. The Fossalta Canal has been crossed at some points. The Italians are staking everything in order to stop the advance. In narrow stretches prisoners have been taken from numerous units which have been thrown together.

Violent enemy attacks delivered with the greatest stubbornness, especially on both sides of the Oderzo-Treviso Railway, broke down with heavy losses.

Divisions under Colonel General Archduke Joseph broke through several Italian lines near Sozizza and the southern foot of the Montello height.

The number of prisoners increased. On the mountain front the Austrians advanced. In narrow stretches prisoners have been taken from numerous units which have been thrown together.

On the Tyrolean western front there were artillery duels.

London, June 20.—No progress has been made by the Austrians against the British forces holding an important section of the line on the Italian front, according to a British official communication.

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