

TOLL OF DEATH REACHES 2,000

HALIFAX VAST FUNERAL PYRE, HORROR CITY

Scores of Bodies Incinerated in Burning Ruins.

Destruction, Chaos, Untold Misery Everywhere Apparent.

U. S. NAVY ESTIMATE, 5,000

Officer Witnessed Halifax Disaster 52 Miles Away.

Later Proceeded to Scene to Render Aid in Stricken City.

3,000 TONS OF EXPLOSIVES

Benzine in Munition Cargo Helped Scatter Flames.

Practically All of North Halifax Is in Ashes Today.

PITIFUL SCENES EVERYWHERE

All Public Buildings Filled with Dead and Wounded.

Richmond, Suburb of Halifax, Is Totally Wiped Out.

BRING DEAD IN WAGON LOADS

25 Heaped Up Loads of Corpses Reach Improvised Morgue.

Great Industrial Plants Collapsed, Burying Workers.

Halifax, Dec. 7.—North Halifax is a vast funeral pyre today. Many bodies are incinerated in the burning ruins of this city.

Snow is mantling with a cloak of white great blackened areas where the flames have swept, hiding unknown horrors beneath. Hospitals are crowded with moaning wounded. A bitter wind is sweeping through shattered windows and ruined houses.

The police estimate of 2,000 dead is the latest statement of the death toll. An equal amount of seriously injured are being cared for. A United States war officer placed the estimate at 5,000 dead.

Exhausted relief parties are digging desperately in the confusion of debris, hoping to find among those buried, some still breathing. Many of the rescuers have called themselves "the angels of death" since yesterday morning when the French munitions ship, Mont Blanc, blew up after colliding with a Belgian steamer and its exploding cargo of T. N. T. spread death broadcast.

Stories of Terrible Experiences. Amid the chaos of destruction, grief, pain and sorrow, which is sweeping the city, a few episodes more horrible than the rest stand out in all their frightfulness.

Beneath one pile of wreckage lay a girl, apparently dead, but with a moan. The rescuers worked feverishly to reach her, but her last timber lifted, the girl was dead.

Five little children were tenderly into one of the hospitals. A short time later five little corpses were borne out.

A woman wandered among the dead. She peered at faces after faces. When she found the one she sought she lay down beside the body. All she wanted was to stay there and die beside her loved one.

Relief Workers Swamped. Word was received here today that all the hospital resources of the military establishment of Canada had been placed at the disposal of the shattered city. Tents, blankets, coats, and all the necessities that have been assembled for the Dominion's wounded soldiers may be drawn upon for the Halifax sufferers. Great quantities of these supplies are being rushed here and the Canadian Red Cross is to take charge.

The surgical workers here are overwhelmed. Halifax faces another appalling night of darkness and terror. Added to this is the storm. Houses which remain standing are crowded with shelterless.

Many people, their faces grim masks of grief, are wandering about the streets of clamoring about the wreckage hunting friends.

Washington, Dec. 7.—Five thousand are believed to have been killed in the explosion in Halifax harbor and the fire which swept North Halifax and Dartmouth, N. S., according to advices from a naval commander receiving the navy department early today. The navy dispatch said these figures had not been verified, however.

The report, which came from a naval commander who witnessed the explosion from a point fifty-two miles off Halifax and later proceeded to the harbor to render aid, said that all of North Halifax was destroyed, three ships sunk and many others damaged. "The ruins of buildings are now burn-

RELIEF TRAINS TO HALIFAX BY U. S. RED CROSS

Three Specials Already Dispatched; More if Needed.

Carry Doctors, Nurses, Food and Relief Supplies.

RESCUERS WORK THRU NIGHT

Relief Work Handicapped Today by Heavy Snow Storm.

Neighboring Towns Send Food, Blankets and Clothing.

U. S. SAILORS AMONG DEAD

Report Seeing Bodies Wearing American Navy Uniforms.

Hundreds of Injured to Nearby Towns in Special Trains.

Washington, Dec. 7.—Promptly responding to the cry of human suffering from horror stricken Halifax, the American Red Cross already has dispatched three special trains—two from Boston and one from New York.

The following quantities of supplies were offered to the authorities and the following learned concerning the circumstances leading up to the explosion.

"A Belgian relief ship collided with a French munitions vessel, loaded with three thousand tons of T. N. T. and large quantities of benzine. Due to the collision the benzine caught on fire and as soon as the fire started the explosion occurred, the ship, reaching the shore before the explosion took place.

Three Ships Were Sunk. "Practically all of North Halifax was destroyed and all of the windows and doors in Halifax and Dartmouth were demolished.

"It is believed here that 5,000 are dead, but these figures cannot be confirmed. The explosion sank three ships and badly damaged many others. The ruins of the buildings are now burning fiercely in North Halifax."

Worst Disaster on Continent. Halifax, Dec. 7.—Smoldering ruins and piles of debris of demolished houses continued today to give up their dead victims of yesterday's explosion. The French liner munitions-laden steamer, Mont Blanc, following a collision in the narrows (Continued on Page Two.)

AMERICAN GIRLS ESCAPE

Academy Students Describe Horrible Scenes Following Explosion.

St. John, N. B., Dec. 7.—First refugees from the Halifax disaster arrived here today.

The party included Miss Catherine White and Miss Dorothy McKenzie, both of Boston. They were in their class at the Y. M. C. A. academy when the Mont Blanc blew up in the harbor.

The young women were uninjured. In a brief account of the explosion, she had witnessed still engraved on her mind.

"When the explosion occurred, we were in our class room and all of a sudden there came an awful noise. The building shook like a leaf.

"We thought some powder plant had exploded. About a minute later the full force of the explosion hit us and every window in the building crumbled to nothing but powder.

Fled to the Woods. "Then came the awful screams and agonized means of the stricken. We were ordered to leave the building as the sisters in charge thought a magazine which was situated near us would explode. We all hurried to the woods in the rear of our school.

About noon, we returned to the academy. At that time there was a mass of flames. Men came to us and begged for cloth for bandages.

"We frantically tore up sheets and gave them to the men in the place which would be of any use.

"By this time loads of dying and injured were being brought to us in wagons and ambulances to assist in dressing their wounds.

"Men broke down and sobbed and women, shrieking and moaning, were soon clustered in our damaged but still intact buildings.

"Many were horribly cut. Women, clasping babies to their breasts, begged for help."

Naval Ships Escape. Ottawa, Ont., Dec. 7.—Naval vessels in the harbor of Halifax were not damaged in the explosion of the French munitions ship, Mont Blanc, according to official messages received here today.

The Russian army in the danger zone but only three of the cadets were injured. The building was not destroyed.

RUSS IN ROMANIA QUIET

Slav-Armies Engage For Armistice Fraternize With German Enemy.

London, Dec. 7.—The Bolshevik committee control a majority of the Russian army in Rumania, according to word received here today.

One division of the sixth army, it was stated, had already signed an armistice. The Russian army in Moldavia and Bukovina on Saturday openly fraternized with their German opponents. German officers even fraternized with Russian officers.

N. Y. Train of 5 Cars Leaves. New York, Dec. 7.—A Red Cross relief train, bearing medical supplies, food and clothing and a corps of nurses left New York at noon today for Halifax to aid in the rescue work there. The train was made up of five cars.

DESTROYED SECTION OF HALIFAX



View of buildings facing Halifax harbor. These structures were totally destroyed by the terrible explosion yesterday. The street depicted was filled with dead bodies.

BYNG PREPARES FOR GERMANY'S GREATEST BLOW

British Seek Secure Footing to Withstand Shock.

With Russian Armistice Kaiser at Zenith of Strength.

WIN BEFORE U. S. COMES!

That Apparently Is Teutonic Aim in New Offensives.

Boches Shell Vacated Positions Long After British Retreat.

BY WILLIAM PHILIP SIMMS.

With the British Army in the Field, Dec. 7.—The British army expects Germany's biggest—and perhaps its final—effort of the war shortly.

General Byng's retirement from Bourlon was regarded today as the first prime precautionary measure for the British to withstand such a shock.

As the British see it, Germany is now at the zenith of her military power. With Russia out of the war, Germany is enabled to draw on increased man-power, heretofore held along the Russian lines. She is apparently preparing to throw every ounce of her strength into a supreme attempt at a military victory before arrival of American troops on the fighting line.

Nothing to Do But Step Back. In the Bourlon sector there were only two alternatives open to General Byng. One was to push ahead and the other was to step backward to a more secure footing. With the Russian situation permitting the enemy to follow a hurricane barrage, then they attacked with dense masses. Their storming waves found the forest of Bourlon garrisoned only with the dead.

Left Nothing Behind. Patrols from the enemy lines were cautiously worming their way to the British lines, and the British were approaching a suspicious bit of cheese. One dash of British shrapnel sent them scurrying back. Then came a thick wave of more German "shock troops" charging over the crest and upon both sides of Bourlon. They were charging positions occupied at that moment only by retreating men.

When the boches got there and were trying to puzzle out the withdrawal, British snipers were firing closely packed masses with shells.

The British did not leave a single piece of material in the evacuated sections. Every man and every pack were rolled up and taken away. Every dugout was destroyed.

Today the German army were trying to force cold days of early December. It is with regret that Byng's lines of retirement.

Many Breaks in Pipe Line Partly Responsible.

Blaze Does Small Damage in McEntire Mattress Plant Today.

Fire, cause unknown, broke out shortly before 11 o'clock this morning in the excelsior room of the McEntire Bros. spring, bed and mattress factory at 27 S. Quincy streets.

C. L. Franklin, manager, asserted that the blaze was checked before material damage was done. The fire today was the third or fourth at the factory in the last year, officials of the firm said.

JUST AS HE LIVED

Scott Hopkins Was Laid to Rest by Friends in All Simplicity.

A very simple funeral marked the passing of Scott Hopkins, prominent Topeka banker, who died a few days ago. He was buried in Mt. Hope cemetery. Dr. S. S. Estey of the First Presbyterian church was in charge of the funeral and he delivered the general address, to a gathering of hundreds of Hopkins' friends.

Among the most notable floral offerings were pieces from the Bank of Topeka, the Scottish Rite Masons and the Rotary club.

Aviator Dies of Injuries. Dallas, Dec. 7.—Serg. F. G. Hill, aviator of the Royal Flying corps, stationed at Fort Worth, who was injured Wednesday in a fall in an airplane at Duncannon, died in a local hospital this morning. Physicians say that he died of injuries sustained in the same accident, likely will recover.

ORDERED TO REPORT

Captain Congdon Goes to Washington, Captain Strickler to Louisiana.

Two Topeka army officers have received instructions to report at once for duty. Capt. Leon G. Congdon, formerly state hotel commissioner, has already left for Washington, where he will serve on the general staff of the surgeon general of the sanitary department.

Capt. T. J. Strickler has been ordered to report at Camp Beauregard, Louisiana, not later than Monday. Before entering the army he was engineer for the state public utilities commission. He is attached to the 114th engineers.

OFFICIAL WAR STATEMENTS

GERMAN. Berlin, via London, Dec. 7.—German troops penetrated Bourlon for a time but were thrown back by counter-attack. Berlin, via London, Dec. 7.—Captains of Montesele and taking of 4,000 additional Italian prisoners, making the total captured in the Settembrino region 15,000, was announced by the war office today.

North of La Vaquele, the German troops maintained their position. The Russian front was quiet today. The Russian war office statement, received here, stated that where Russian commandments had proposed an armistice on fronts held in part by Rumanians, the Rumanians should be associated with their allies in the armistice.

Paris, Dec. 7.—Repulse of two German attacking waves which followed a Russian counter-attack at Besouvan and Beaumont, on the right bank of the Meuse, was announced in today's official statement. The attackers were thrown back in fierce French defensive fire.

The artillery was reported along the Rhine-Ruhr canal region. The Rumanian war office statement, received here, stated that where Rumanian commandments had proposed an armistice on fronts held in part by Rumanians, the Rumanians should be associated with their allies in the armistice.

Washington, Dec. 7.—Steps further to purge this country of spies and traitors, based on President Wilson's recommendations to congress, were taken by Attorney General Gregory in his annual report today.

Gregory recommended laws to hobble the entrance and exit of aliens, to make violation of the president's alien enemy regulations a "crime at hard labor" instead of an "interment camp and a nice soft berth affair."

The vast extent and completeness of the spy and traitor traps the department of justice has built up in this country since war was declared was revealed in the report for the first time. Gregory declared that hundreds of expert secret service agents from every other department of the government have been mobilized on duty to meet the situation.

Praises Secret Service. The attorney general paid high tribute to the "brave and effective work" of the volunteer spy and traitor detecting organizations that have sprung up over the country to help the government wipe out that menace. He mentioned especially the American Protective league, which he said had proven invaluable.

"Which is carefully guarded, includes leading men in various localities who have volunteered their services in securing any kind of information of value to the nation."

Gregory also commended the local district draft boards and the drafted men, declaring the number of defections from duty in all three groups has been "very small."

Makes Several Recommendations. Extension of the statute of limitation on bankruptcy cases to three years, appointment of a priority federal judge to do the work of judges over 70 who refuse to resign because the constitution does not compel them to do so, and other measures, Gregory made by themselves; and authority to use any interstate corporation in any completion district.

Leavenworth and Atlanta prisons, payment of prisoners or their families for their work and sale of all products of the government was recommended.

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UNCLE SAM HAS A HARTRIGGER SPY TRAP NOW

Now Add Hard Labor to Alien Enemies Imprisoned in U. S.

Attorney General Urges Ban on Restful Internment Camps.

PURGE NATION OF TRAITORS

Gregory Asks More Stringent Entrance and Exit Laws.

Leading Men in Many Cities Are Secret Service Agents.

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NO GAS TONIGHT!

Kansas Natural Admits Condition Most Serious.

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SNOWS SAVIOR KAN. WHEAT CROP MOHLER ASSERTS

Fields Throat State Greatly in Need of Moisture.

No Other Precipitation as Valuable as Snow.

200 MILLION BU. PROSPECTS

Value of White Blanket Over State Inestimable.

Weather That Stops Fighting Also Aids Allies.

Snow is slowing up the fighting in Europe. Snow in Kansas is helping to win the war against the Kaiser.

J. C. Mohler, secretary of the state board of agriculture, today declared the state-wide snow of incalculable material and psychological value.

With a wheat acreage greater than the combined area of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Delaware, the snow today is the first crop savior. Kansas has a nine and a half million acre wheat crop. Favorable weather conditions will mean 150 to 200 million bushels of wheat, says Mohler.

It means 300 to 400 million dollars to Kansas farmers. It means also that Kansas will do more than meet its own needs for the food demands of the allies.

Dry Fall Retarded Crop. The recent fall has been the driest Kansas has ever known. The dry weather has retarded the growth of wheat prospects. In some of the wheat counties the rainfall of the last three months has been a mere trace.

Other crops, it is more welcome, for the snow is the most profitable moisture. In an informal statement, he said:

"The snow that is reported as falling over the entire state, is providing the one thing that was most needed by the fall-sown wheat—moisture. In no other form is it more welcome, for the moisture thus precipitated will be thoroughly taken up by the soil with a minimum loss of evaporation. Most fields are in such condition that the covering of snow will be held, and particularly in the corn-stalk country, it will be a great benefit."

Value Inestimable. "When one realizes the tremendous consequences contingent on sufficient moisture for the prosperity of our wheat crop, it is not surprising that we can only regard the present snow-fall as a benefaction. It might be truthfully said to be of incalculable value to the farmer. The effect will be worth a great deal, too, for we always feel cheerier and more hopeful when moisture comes to relieve the drought stress."

He recommended: Extension of the statute of limitation on bankruptcy cases to three years, appointment of a priority federal judge to do the work of judges over 70 who refuse to resign because the constitution does not compel them to do so, and other measures, Gregory made by themselves; and authority to use any interstate corporation in any completion district.

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WAR IN AUSTRIA DECLARED BY U. S. CONGRESS UNANIMOUSLY

Senate Votes Unanimously, 74 to 0, for War on Austria.

La Follette, However, Leaves Hall and Doesn't Vote.

HOUSE ALSO PASSED IT TODAY

Socialist London Only House Member to Oppose It.

Congressmen Desert Seats to Avoid Hearing His Speech.

No Reference Made in Debate to Bulgaria or Turkey.

Washington, Dec. 7.—The declaration of war on Austria was passed by both houses of congress today with brief debate. President Wilson's signature is now the only thing required. The house accepted the senate resolution.

Washington, Dec. 7.—With less than one hour's debate the senate today passed the resolution declaring war on Austria-Hungary. The resolution was adopted by the senate unanimously, 74 to 0.

Senators Gronna of North Dakota, Norris of Nebraska and Vandenberg of Mississippi, who voted against the German war declaration, supported the resolutions. Senator La Follette of Wisconsin, a former member of the House, made a dissenting speech and did not cast his vote.

Meanwhile there was every indication that the resolution would pass. After the house acts the two resolutions will be reconciled or one substituted for the other.

No time for a vote on the resolution was set by the house but it was believed that it would be expected before 9 o'clock this evening.

For Unity of Action. Debate on the Austria war resolution began shortly after the senate committee on foreign relations had secured