



ARMIES CLASH FOR BIG BATTLE OF WAR

THUNDER OF GUNS MARKS OPENING OF GREAT NEW ATTACK

Main Forces of French and German Legions Clash For Opening Struggle of What Promises to Be One of World's Decisive Battles; Paris Has Hope Hindenburg's Plan Has Been Killed By Forcing of Wedge Into New Front; Teuton Retreat Stopped at Line Prepared in Advance

By Associated Press

French troops are in contact with the main German army and what may prove to be the initial stage of the greatest battle of history has opened before the gates of La Fere. For the first time since the great German retreat began patrol and rear guard fighting has given way to the thunder of artillery and the clash of major forces. The Germans are making a stand on a line running north and south of La Fere, from St. Simon to the forest of Coucy, a distance, roughly estimated, at about twenty miles.

The position selected by the Germans is protected by the Crozat canal and the Ailette river, a tributary of the Oise, but in this line the French have driven a great wedge directly in front of La Fere and reaching to within two miles of that important town. On this wedge is based the hopes of French military critics that General Nivelle has outmaneuvered Field Marshal Von Hindenburg and that La Fere is doomed and with it the whole of the famous Hindenburg line.

Paris believes that the extraordinary speed with which the French have advanced has disconcerted the German plans and renders probable a continuation of the retirement to the Belgian frontier. The official Berlin reports throw no light on the situation, but it seems certain that a few days or even hours must decide the fate of La Fere.

The situation on the British front is somewhat more obscure owing to the rather vague character of the British official reports. The latest reports from London say that General Haig has pushed ten miles east of the Somme at some points. Measured from Peronne this would place the British within four or five miles from the vital point of St. Quentin and this estimate is supported by unofficial dispatches from the front.

The German retirement is pivoting from their positions east of Arras and in this pivotal region General Haig reports steady progress but no localities are mentioned which might give a clue to the relative importance of the advance.

Apparently the spasmodic fighting in the Champagne and Verdun sections has ceased, for the time being at least, but important news comes from another and far distant field of the world war. The Russians, driving forward from Persia, have crossed the Mesopotamian border at one point while a second army is continuing its advance from Kermanshah in support of the British advance from Bagdad. This means that the retreating Turks are being menaced from three sides, and according to allied military observers,

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Cavalry in Action For First Time Since 1914

Berlin, Tuesday, March 20 (by wireless to the Associated Press via Sayville, March 22).—German cavalry is now in touch with the French and British mounted troops which have been in action for several days in the territory evacuated by the Germans, so that for the first time since the fall of 1914 cavalry on both sides is being employed on the western front. This is regarded here as an indication that great events are taking place and that a great battle is in prospect, trench warfare being over for the time on this part of the front.

The French and British attempted to use cavalry on the Somme last year, as well as at the time of the Champagne offensive, but the employment of these forces in the face of entrenched troops with machine guns resulted in very heavy losses. The present situation is a different one because neither side is now protected by trenches.

THE WEATHER

For Harrisburg and vicinity: Fair and warmer to-night and Friday; lowest temperature to-night about 36 degrees.
For Eastern Pennsylvania: Fair, warmer to-night and Friday; gentle to moderate shifting winds.
River
The North Branch will rise slightly. Other streams of the system will fall slowly or remain nearly stationary. A stage of about 5.8 feet is indicated for Harrisburg Friday morning.

General Conditions
The moderate disturbance that was central over the Ohio Valley, Wednesday morning, has moved off the Virginia coast. It caused light rains in the last twenty-four hours generally south and east of the Ohio river, including Pennsylvania. The disturbance from the Far Northwest has been divided by an area of high pressure from the Pacific ocean, one center being located over Western Kansas and the other over Alberta.

Temperature: 8 a. m., 36 degrees above zero.
Sun: Rises, 6:03 a. m.
Moon: New moon, March 22.
River Stage: 6.0 feet above low-water mark.
Yesterday's Weather
Highest temperature, 43.
Lowest temperature, 34.
Mean temperature, 38.
Normal temperature, 40.

GERMANS REACH VON HINDENBURG LINE OF DEFENSE

British Join French in Pressing Close to Teuton's Heels

By Associated Press

Paris, March 22.—The German retreat to the Arras-St. Quentin-La Fere line is now practically complete, since the French are now within artillery range of St. Quentin and La Fere. The movement has been carried out by echelons, according to approved principles, one section holding firm while the next fell back. The allied operations are now concerned with driving in the last of these sections which are still resisting. They are situated, respectively, south of Arras, southeast and east of Peronne, east of Ham and the valley of the Ailette and north of Soissons.

Just in the middle of the line, east of Peronne and between the plain of Cambrai to the north and the plain of the Somme to the south, is one of the few positions of defensive value running to the east of Reisel and Vermand. The Germans showed signs of intending to cling to this salient, but it is now, too, gone, the British being close to both Reisel and Vermand. Another strong section which is still holding out occupies a formidable defensive position formed by the forest of Coucy, but, from the signs of destruction in the rear of the defenders, apparently resistance is only being made to secure the retreat to the principal line at St. Gobain.

As the result of Wednesday's operations the British line is now level with the French which runs along the Crozat canal from St. Simon to Perrier. At the latter point the French positions are less than two and a half miles from La Fere. Part of the road from Ourcamp to Noyon, which was paved with granite, has been unpaved by the Germans, but in less than a day the French engineer corps had repaired the road, rebuilt bridges and put the railroad in working order as far as Ourcamp.

Teuton Retreat Releases Homes of Many Frenchmen

By Associated Press

Paris, March 22.—The total amount of French territory liberated from the German invaders by the Somme offensive up to March 21 is 853 square miles, situated in the four departments of Pas-de-Calais, Oise, Aisne and Somme. It includes 366 towns and villages, the homes of 181,935 Frenchmen. The Germans are still in possession of 7,126 square miles of France.

Dr. Henri de Rothschild has given 100,000 francs for the relief of the inhabitants in the liberated sections of Picardy.

FRENCH JOYOUS AT RELEASE FROM GERMAN BONDAGE

Others Show Spirit Broken at Hardship Suffered Behind Lines

War Correspondents' Headquarters with the British Armies in France, March 21.—(From a Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press)—"We would have starved if it had not been for the American Relief Commission," declared a French woman in the city

Girl Knocked Down and Dragged by Automobile in Serious Condition

Miss Bessie Jackson, 647 Boyd street, an employe of Wilson's Confectionery Store, Third street, who was struck Tuesday night by an automobile at Reilly and Sixth street, is still in a serious condition.

Miss Jackson was severely cut and bruised about the body, several ribs broken and the skin stripped from parts of her body when she was dragged along the concrete street. The driver of the machine is unknown to the police.

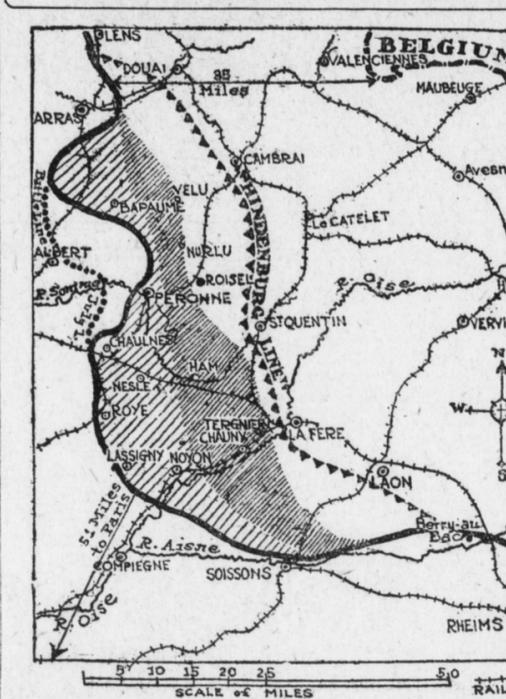
In a crash at Third and Boas streets last night between a taxi and a touring car one driver, Harvey Fortney, of Whitehall was cut about the body. Both cars are wrecks. J. Coulter, driver of the taxicab was uninjured. According to the story told the police one car was coming down Third street and another going up. Neither one turned out but ploughed together head on.

An automobile badly wrecked was discovered this morning at Division and Second streets. It had been hit by a street car. The owner had not returned for the machine and he is unknown to the police.

Swaps Stones For Potatoes, But Read the Story

"Potatoes are much too high to buy stones instead," said Mrs. G. W. Carpenter, 1139 Melrose street, when she returned three perfectly good stones to a farmer at market and demanded potatoes in return.

GROUND GAINED BY ALLIES IN FRANCE



This map shows the extent of the allied advance following the German retreat in France. The lighter shading shows the progress made by the British (north of Ham, roughly) and French troops on the first day of the general retirement; the darker shading shows the advance reported on the second and third days of the withdrawal.

WHOLE STATE BEING PLACED ON WAR BASIS

Preparedness plans moved forward in the State capital to-day when legislation to provide for quarters for organizations of the National Guard and to save positions of men connected with State, county or city governments who might enter the service of the country was presented in the Legislature; an inventory of all military stores to ascertain just what the National Guard requires to fit it for active service was started and Governor Brumbaugh called upon the men appointed to the State-wide committee on safety and defense to organize as speedily as possible and begin the work for which they were appointed.

Many telegrams accepting places on the Governor's committee were received at the Capitol during the day and the co-operation of the State governmental departments was formally tendered, while the Governor suggested that the new committee get into prompt communication with the national defense organizations.

MOTHER AND SON ARE SEPARATED ON WAY TO FUNERAL

Half a hundred policemen of the Pennsylvania railroad are to-day searching for John Sposilone. He disappeared from a train at Johnstown last night. In the meantime a funeral scheduled for to-day at Passaic, N. J., had to be postponed because of John's mysterious disappearance. There is also a brokenhearted mother, Sebrenae

Boy Mysteriously Disappears From Train; Parent Left Penniless

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IN EVENT OF WAR EIGHTH REGIMENT NEEDS MORE MEN

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GERMANY MAY ASK AMERICA TO ARBITRATE

Neutral Nation Plans to Submit Offer From Berlin That War Be Averted; United States Will Not Consider Offer As Long As U-Boats Carry on Ruthless Warfare; Hurry Plans to Get Country's Armed Forces on War Footing

By Associated Press

Washington, March 22.—Offers of mediation to prevent actual war between the United States and Germany are expected among the next developments.

Administration officials heard to-day that a European neutral was contemplating such a plan and they frankly regarded it as another effort backed by Germany to divide sentiment in Congress and embarrass the President.

It was declared authoritatively to-day that no proposals of mediation or for discussion will be considered unless Germany first abandons the campaign of ruthlessness.

All administration officials from the President down take the position that the United States never has, and does not now, desire war with Germany but is being forced into it to protect lives and rights of its citizens against unlawful aggression.

Unless Germany is prepared to completely change her position, it was declared to-day, offers of mediation and discussion are useless. Germany, it was recalled, never accepted former Secretary Bryan's proposal to sign one of his "peace investigation" treaties, which would have bound the United States to inaction for a year, while a commission investigated the situation.

Meanwhile every preparation for an eventuality is being carried forward by the army and navy, and the President is awaiting the assembling of Congress.

Unless there is some great change in the situation before April 2, it is expected he will detail, in his address, how Germany has in fact been making war against the United States by the ruthless operation of her U-boats, and leave it to Congress to declare a state of war existing and vote money and men to protect the interests of the United States.

Rush War Plans
Meanwhile believing that Germany, by the hostile acts of her submarines, actually is making war on the United States and determined that it shall be so recognized, government officials are bending all their energies to meet that condition by putting the nation's armed forces and resources in readiness for any eventuality.

President Wilson is believed to be

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WILL WORRY PRESIDENT CONSTANTLY

New York, March 22.—David Starr Jordan in behalf Emergency Peace Federation will send a telegram to President Wilson daily and nightly asking him to prevent war.

U-BOATS REDUCE FOOD EXPORTS

Washington, March 22.—Food exports from the United States in February were reduced about one-third by Germany's submarine campaign. Shipments fell from \$105,000,000 in January to \$67,000,000 in February.

DANGER POINT NOT PASSED IN RUSSIA

London, March 22.—Andrew Bonar Law, Speaker in the House of Commons, moved a resolution of greeting to the Russian Duma. He added that it is too soon to say that all danger is over in Russia.

U. S. ALARMED OVER CONSULS

Washington, March 22.—Alarm over the fate of four American Consuls ordered from Germany to Turkey on the severance of relations and last reported in Munich, has caused the State Department to inquire about them again through the Spanish Ambassador.

BLOW IN NEW LEAST FURNACE

Steelton.—No. B blast furnace, the second of five large iron producers being installed at the Bethlehem Steel Company Plant, Steelton, was blown in this afternoon. The furnace has a capacity of 500 tons.

THREE HURT BY RUN-AWAY ENGINE

Harrisburg.—Three members of a freight crew were injured to-day in the Pennys yards when a run-away engine crashed into a cabin car. The injured are Harry Silver, conductor; A. M. Fleck and O. G. Nearhood, trainmen.

DR. J. D. ZIMMERMAN DIES

Lebanon, March 22.—Dr. Joseph D. Zimmerman, 341 Cumberland Street, aged 73, died at his home here this morning from an illness of pneumonia. Funeral services will be held Sunday morning at 8.30 o'clock. Burial will be made at Union Deposit. The Masonic lodge will have charge of the services. Dr. Zimmerman was one of the most prominent physicians in this section of the state.

GROCERS HOLD MEETING

A meeting of the Retail Grocers' Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce was held yesterday afternoon. Various questions of interest to the bureau only were discussed.

CANAL BOATMEN STRIKE

Hagerstown, Md., March 22.—About a hundred boatmen on the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, between Cumberland, Md., and Washington, have abandoned their boats and gone out on a strike at the time set for the reopening of the waterway. They demand a fifty-cent rate per ton for hauling coal.

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Jose Zvarnovic and Margeta Krasnet, Steelton.
Frank Kuhns and Rosie Silver, Harrisburg.
Charles Eisinger and Elsie Caroline Shurz, New Kingdon.
Harry J. Sloat, Camp Hill, and Lottie May Lefever, Mechanicsburg.
Howard E. Troutman and Bertha A. Ebersole, Upper Paxton township.