

La Grande Evening Observer

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER -- PRINTS THE NEWS THE DAY IT HAPPENS

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NUMBER 171

BATTLES RAGE ON CHRISTMAS EVE IN FRANCE

CANNONADING UNUSUALLY
HEAVY AS YULTIDE DAY
DRAWS NEAR.

ENGLAND BARS ALL WAR NEWS UNTIL TOMORROW

Transports Carrying Gifts to Fighters
Reach French Side of Channel To-
day and That is About the Only
Touch of the Holidays That is Seen
—Holiday in England is Strict.

Paris, Dec. 24.—On Christmas Eve extremely heavy cannonading is in progress throughout the front in France and Belgium. It is apparent that even on Christmas day the battles will continue. A slight touch of Christmas, however, was given to-day when British transports laden with gifts for the troops in the field, reached this side of the channel. Despite the approach of Christmas the firing is brisk.

London, Dec. 24.—For 31 hours, beginning at 2:00 o'clock this afternoon, England will turn its attention to the celebration of Christmas, receiving no war news whatever. The official military information bureau was closed promptly on the stroke of 2:00 announcing that it would have nothing more to give out until 9:00 p. m. Friday. The censorship office remained open permitting the transmission of such unofficial information as it sees fit to approve, together with any official statements from other belligerent nations.

Russians Fall Back.
Petrograd, Dec. 24.—Russian troops have been rushed to a line extending from Kielec to Radom as well as Southward, in an effort to check the German advance which forced the Slav forces to retire from the Cracow region yesterday.

The war office has admitted that German and Austrian military movements in the Pietrakow region threatened Cracow and the army's line of communication and compelled a withdrawal.

Promoting Phone Line.

Baker, Dec. 23.—A number of residents of Medical Springs and vicinity were in the city yesterday consulting Attorney S. O. Correll, who is drawing up for them articles of incorporation of the Medical Springs Telephone company, which proposes to build a new line to connect that section with the county seat, the only service at the present time being by way of La Grande.

The matter has been under consideration for some time and the initial steps were taken to promote the enterprise at a meeting at the Washington school house Sunday afternoon, when a temporary organization was formed, which will be made permanent after the articles of incorporation are filed. The board of directors named consists of G. W. South, F. A. Phillips, R. G. Sellers, James Wirth and Perry Blackburn. Forest Supervisor Barnes was present at the meeting and will cooperate with the promoters. An agreement has been reached whereby the forestry reserve lines, us of which are open to the public, can connect with the new line. Negotiations are under way for establishing a connection at the local exchange of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph company and some assistance will be sought locally in financing the project.

The Baker Commercial club will be asked to lend its support to the plan, which is of such merit that its successful consummation is assured. The new line will afford a connection with the old line running to the Lower Powder country, which, however, has of late fallen into disuse and is of little service.

Much Good Ice at Union.

J. L. Maxwell has a crew of men at work this week cutting ice on his pond west of town and filling ice boxes for different people in town. The continued cold weather with little snow makes the ice clear and of good quality, being about 9 inches thick. He will have approximately 25,000 cubic feet and will have plenty for all who want it.—Union Scout.

CLIMATIC DATA.
Temperature at 12:30 today, 38.
Climatic data, based on readings for 24 hours ending last night at 6 o'clock:
Maximum, 31; Minimum, 11.

WAR AGAINST DRY MEASURE IS JOLTED

ARIZONA PROHIBITION FIGHT
WILL BE TAKEN TO THE
HIGHEST TRIBUNAL.

DISTRICT COURT FINDS NO REASON TO ENJOIN

Efforts of Certain Interests in Arizona Temporarily Foiled.

Los Angeles, Dec. 24.—The United States district court has denied the petition of certain Arizona interests for an injunction restraining operation of the Arizona prohibition amendment.

An appeal will be taken to the Supreme court, it was announced and the action was allowed by the court. The court's decision asserted there was no evidence presented to cause the granting of an interlocutory injunction.

War's Fortune Bring Paintings.

San Francisco, Dec. 24.—By an odd turn of events the European war will draw into unofficial participation, in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, it was announced today, by three European countries which otherwise would not have been represented. With the beginning of hostilities the annual International Art Exhibition at Venice was closed, making available for the exposition, paintings from all the belligerent countries. Among these were Serbia, Poland and Belgium. Canvases from these countries, none of which would have participated, will be sent to San Francisco.

VILLA'S FORCE SUFFERS LOSS

THREE DEFEATS ADMINISTERED BY REGULARS.

Three Hundred Dead Left on One of the Battlefields.

San Antonio, Dec. 24.—Dispatches received by Mexican Constitutionalists here, reported Carranza has won three engagements against Villistas. The Villistas, the dispatches said, left 300 dead on the battlefield at Tuxpam.

At Irapuato, or near there, a force of Zapatistas were retreating after meeting defeat by Carranzistas commanded by General Gavira.

A Brigade under General Di ruez have defeated 600 Villistas at Colima, the dispatches further state.

VACATION STARTS

School Closed Today to Remain Idle Until After Holidays

At noon today school books were laid away until after the holidays. Many of the teachers are leaving the city to spend their holidays with friends and relatives in other cities and states.

A Pig A Year to Help Negroes.

Vicksburg, Miss., Dec. 24.—With the organization of clubs to encourage negroes in the raising of livestock already well under way, the southern negro farmer today is promised further benefit in a proposal by Booker T. Washington that a farm demonstrator, whose duties it shall be to demonstrate scientific farm methods to negroes.

Washington's idea as broached in a letter to the Vicksburg Post prescribes that each county in the south where there is a considerable number of negro farmers engage a scientific farmer as a county officer for the purpose of assisting in the diversification of crops by teaching the negroes how to raise other than cotton. The livestock raising propaganda has resulted in the establishment of numerous clubs in Mississippi counties, the members of which pledge themselves to raise at least one pig a year.

Lack of Snow in Hills Apparent

Baker, Dec. 24.—Pioneers of Baker county declare that not in many years has there been so little snow in the mountains as there is this year. The mountains have but a slight covering and ranchers are beginning to be apprehensive that there will be a scarcity of snow to keep the streams filled for irrigation purposes next spring. A year ago there was four feet of snow along the Sumpter Valley railway in some places while this year the snow is at a depth of but two to four inches. Continued cold weather is holding back the snow in the mountains. The fall rains, which mean snow in the mountains, failed to materialize this year.

DOVER STRUCK BY BOMBS SHOT FROM AIRCRAFT

OFFICIAL STORY SAYS NO DAMAGE WAS DONE; OTHER REPORTS DIFFER.

BRITISH AEROPLANES GIVE CHASE BUT FOG HINDERS

First Real Bombardment of Dover by German Airmen Results in Huge Holes Being Torn in Yards Where Bombs Fall—Missiles Evidently Aimed at Dover Castle—Fort Answers.

London, Dec. 24.—Dover was bombarded in a small way today by German aeroplanes. The Dover forts replied to the arial attack. A British aeroplane pursued for some distance but failed to overtake the war birds. Several reports of bombardment of Dover have been current but this is the first one to get official verification.

An official report says: "One of the enemy's aeroplanes was seen over Dover at 10:30 this morning. It dropped bombs which exploded in such spots as to do no harm. It then flew out to sea and was pursued by British aircraft, but the fog prevented capture."

An unofficial account says one missile did much damage. One struck in a garden and smashed windows in the vicinity. It is said the bomb was evidently aimed at the Dover castle, and actually struck within 400 yards of it.

Submarine is Sunk.
Amsterdam, Dec. 24.—An Austrian battery has sunk one of the Allies' submarines according to claims of German newspapers. Where it occurred was not stated.

Big Business on Branch.

The Joseph branch has been handling an enormous amount of passenger traffic the past two days, the peak of the holiday travel. The passenger yesterday evening was crowded with Wallowa county people who were bound for main line points to spend the holidays, and this morning Conductor Wade's train carried as many more back into the Wallowa country from all parts of the Northwest to spend the holidays with home folks and friends at Joseph, Enterprise, Wallowa and other branch line points.

Ten Boys Get Free Education.

Cleveland, O., Dec. 24.—The Rotary Club of Cleveland an organization of business and professional men, proposes to make a Christmas present of an education and start in life to ten Cleveland boys, officers of the club started today.

After each boy has completed high school he will be given his choice of fitting himself for a trade or going to College. It is further planned that the club shall see that the boys secure good positions. The names of the boys are to be kept secret.

POSTOFFICE RECORDS BROKEN BY FLOOD OF CHRISTMAS MAIL

More mail was handled in La Grande yesterday than has ever passed through the local station before, conservative estimates placing the total of incoming and outgoing mail at over 500 sacks for the day. The largest consignment of incoming mail was received on No. 5 which came in just at noon, when over 200 sacks were unloaded, filling five large trucks as high as the sacks could be piled. As soon as the train reached the station platform the mail clerks began unloading, stringing pouches along the platform.

Five hundred sacks reduced to pounds is some mail as the sacks will easily average 30 pounds making a total for the day of over 15,000 pounds, or approximately eight tons of mail. Monday and Tuesday the consignments ran only slightly under yesterday so that during the three days over 2,000 sacks or about 25 tons of mail have been handled here. All of this mail must be handled through the local baggage room, and as a great deal of it is transfer mail it does not reach the local post-office at all. The baggage room for the past few days taking care of this extra rush of mail on top of their regular duties.

This morning's branch line carried over 150 sacks to Northern Union and

La Grande in the Midst of an Elaborate Reception to Santa

La Grande is celebrating Christmas week with vigor. Commencing Saturday the holiday shopping took on new life and department stores, book shops, notions and toylands have had a busy run. There is no perceptible difference in the amount of shopping done this year, it seems, over former years, though the purchases usually run to useful articles rather than to mere fineries. The homes, the churches and the lodges have been striving to find needy children, and it is a safe assertion that the homes tomorrow where Santa Claus does not enter, will be extremely rare.

Santa Claus in the person of the lodge organizations of the city has been very busy all day today bringing comfort and cheer to the home that but for the generosity of those better supplied with this world's goods would be cheerless at this glad some Christmas time.

The Elk's in particular have been active in the distribution of food supplies and gifts to the unfortunate ones of the city and many a home has been made glad because of the visit of these messengers of material comfort. Several automobiles have been occupied in the distribution of these gifts the portion for each family consisting of one sack of potatoes, one sack of flour, a box of apples, 75 cents worth of roast meat, 50 cents worth of beans, 50 cents worth of sugar, 50 cents worth of coffee, and a good fat duck. An additional treat accompanied these necessities of life to give the touch of Christmas cheer to the children of the home. This treat included a sack each of candy, nuts and oranges and toys for the children.

Elks Tree Tomorrow.

The Elks lodge tree tomorrow afternoon is the talk of the town, and it is expected that several hundred youngsters will be present at 3 o'clock to greet Santa Claus. This evening numerous Christmas trees will be held in the various churches, as announced last Saturday evening in the Observer.

Presbyterian Program Tonight.

The general trend of churches is to conduct old-fashioned Christmas trees. The Lutheran church children have a big time on hand tonight with a delightful program; the Methodist children meet in the basement to-night. The Baptist and Presbyterians have elaborate programs ready for delivery tonight; the Southern Methodists, and L. D. S. churches are to observe the event appropriately, and in fact every church in the city is giving extensive attention to Christmas. The L. D. S. Christmas program takes place at 2:30 Friday afternoon.

The M. E. Sunday School Christmas program will be held this evening in the church, beginning at 7 o'clock. The parents of the school children are expected.

All children not members of that school and who are not affiliated with some other school are cordially invited to spend the evening at the M. E. Church. No charges.

Tomorrow evening the Eagles give a Christmas tree to their members, their families and friends, each Eagle being requested to bring the children from his neighborhood.

It is an ill wind that blows no one good, for, although the populace is praying for snow, those who skate are hoping that the ice will be clear tomorrow. Unusually large patches of ice are suitable for skating in numerous places in the valley.

The Sunday School of St. Peter's church will have their Christmas entertainment on Saturday afternoon in Honan Hall. There will be also a special Christmas Sunday School service on Sunday at 5 p. m. in the church.

Oratorio Friday Evening.

Friday evening the Methodist choir gives "The Prince of Peace" an oratorio of well known merits. The evening's program will be augmented with special numbers, and the promoters claim the event is one of the biggest musical undertakings put on by home talent in a good many years.

Mayor Curley Checks Expenditure. Boston, Dec. 24.—This city, which according to Mayor Curley has been spending \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year on public celebrations, will have no municipal Christmas Tree tomorrow.

The city's chief executive has decided that the strong box has been drawn upon too freely in the past and that the city's funds may better be expended for statues, "arches," and concrete sidewalk in the Public Garden.

Last year's city Christmas Tree cost the taxpayers \$9,000, the mayor says, and decorations for public celebrations have cost \$5,000 a year. It is further stated that the mayor's policy of "frugality in municipal frolics is the result in part of failure of the merchants and other businessmen of the city to contribute to a fund for these celebrations. Originally they promised to share the expense with the city, says the mayor, but for some time the entire outlay has been from the public coffers.

Christmas Carols Cheer Cleveland.

Cleveland, O., Dec. 24.—"Ye ancient custom" of singing Christmas carols in the streets on Christmas eve is to be revived in Cleveland tonight. Groups of school children were busy today practicing the songs which they will sing throughout prosperous residential sections after dusk in hope of collecting a few dollars to feed and clothe the city's poor. The plan was originated by Cleveland charity and mission workers.

President Gives Turkeys.

Washington, Dec. 24.—President Wilson today personally presented a 12 pound turkey to all of the White House employees. He also remembered his associates in the executive offices with handsome gifts. As far as is possible the president has refrained from all work, devoting most of the time to preparing for the family reunion at the White House tomorrow.

Following are Christmas week programs in La Grande churches:

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The Elk's in particular have been active in the distribution of food supplies and gifts to the unfortunate ones of the city and many a home has been made glad because of the visit of these messengers of material comfort. Several automobiles have been occupied in the distribution of these gifts the portion for each family consisting of one sack of potatoes, one sack of flour, a box of apples, 75 cents worth of roast meat, 50 cents worth of beans, 50 cents worth of sugar, 50 cents worth of coffee, and a good fat duck. An additional treat accompanied these necessities of life to give the touch of Christmas cheer to the children of the home. This treat included a sack each of candy, nuts and oranges and toys for the children.

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CLUB WHEAT IS BRINGING \$1.25 SPOT DELIVERY

UNHEARD OF PRICE FOR CLUB
UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS
REACHED TODAY.

FARMERS HOLDING ON EVEN AT THAT PRICE

Dollar and a Quarter Offered for Club Wheat Spot Delivery on Merchants Exchange Today With No Takers — Future Deliveries Have Had Higher Figures but Not Spot Stuff.

Portland, Dec. 24. — Unheard of prices in the Northwest for "spot" wheat were attained today on the Merchant's Exchange. Wheat for spot delivery — Club wheat — brought \$1.25. This is a few cents under future delivery prices quoted a few days ago, but is the highest known here for spot delivery.

Regardless of this high price, growers are refusing to sell what little they have on hand. It is believed that spot delivery wheat will bring even higher prices than that quoted today.

FIRE DEPARTMENT OUT

Thawing Out Pipes Leads to Fire in Jefferson Street Home.

Last evening fire in a residence occupied by the Dennis family, 1600 Jefferson, necessitated the presence of the fire department. The blaze was started by thawing out water pipes and was under the floor. To get at the flames entailed the greatest percentage of the small loss sustained. Chemicals only were used. Fifteen volunteers were out.

No Paper Tomorrow.

On Christmas day alone of all the workdays in the year, the Observer makes a habit of halting its wheels, and tomorrow is to be no exception.

Joe Whitby Improves.

J. A. Whitby, chief boiler inspector who was injured a few days ago by a fall into a pit in the boiler shops, is recovering slowly. His ribs were fractured and torn loose in two instances, but rapid recovery is expected. He will be able to sit up in a few days.

Timbermen Visit La Grande.

The men employed in the various lumber camps in this and Wallowa counties came to town yesterday evening to spend the Christmas holidays. The branch line passenger yesterday morning carried an extra coach which last night was filled to capacity with loggers, and the men from the camps of the Grande Ronde Lumber company up the river have been coming to town the past two days. As soon as the branch line hit town last night a party of "lumber jacks" made a bee-line for a local restaurant with reputation for big feasts and eye-witnesses state that the waitresses who took the orders believing that the restaurant had been mistaken for a wholesale house could hardly be convinced that the men were only looking for a square meal like the ones they get in camp or some of the city luxuries that are not generally found in a lumber camp.

Rate Hearing Set.

Baker, Dec. 23.—Mayor Palmer yesterday received a message from the state railroad commission to the effect that the hearing in the rate investigation of the Eastern Oregon Light and Power company will be held by the commission the last week in February. The message stated that the letter to the mayor, saying that it would be impossible to set even the approximate date for the hearing, was sent by the secretary, H. H. Corey, during the absence of the commissioners in Salem. Some force evidently stirred the commission to hasty action, for it is not their custom to abandon the mails for the use of the telegraph service.

"If the hearing is set for the last week in February," said the mayor, "it means that it will probably be several months before the commission rules in the case, which would mean that much time lost."

The commissioners as a body have not discussed the message or what their action will be since receiving it. It will be brought up for discussion this afternoon.

(Continued on Page Two)