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GERMANS STILL PERSIST TROOP BOAT WAS SUNK

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED ENGLISHMEN RUMORED TO HAVE GONE DOWN.

SINKING OF SHIPS ON HIGH SEAS CONTINUES

Reported That Lifeboats of An American Ship Have Been Picked up in Mid-ocean—Swedish Steamer Caved in and French Lost Torpedo Boat When it Strikes Austrian mine.

Paris, Feb. 26.—It is officially announced that the French torpedo boat Dague struck an Austrian mine yesterday in Antivari harbor and sank. Thirty-eight of the members of the crew perished. The Dague was escorting ships laden with food to Montenegro.

Swedish Steamer Hit.
Amsterdam, Feb. 26.—The Swedish steamer Svarton arrived at Ymuiden with a big hole in her bow, the victim of either a German mine or submarine.

1800 SOLDIERS DROWN.

Berlin Stays With Transport Rumor and Show Proof of It.

Berlin, Feb. 26.—Officials still insist that an English transport was torpedoed recently by a German submarine in the English channel. A statement by a press bureau said 1800 British soldiers were drowned. It declared the report to this effect was sent to Lloyds from Eastbourne.

Three Drown With Carib.
Washington, Feb. 26.—Consul General Listoe of Rotterdam has advised the state department that three men perished when the Carib was struck by a mine and sunk.

WHOLE SHIP LOST.

American Vessel Reported to Have Sunk in Midsea, Recently.

Washington, Feb. 26.—Loss of an American steamship, the Theodoros Palmer, with all hands, is indicated in a dispatch received by the state department from the consul general at Copenhagen. It is said the Eabjerg, a newspaper there, declared the Swedish steamship Vala arrived and reported it had picked up in mid-ocean February 22, life boats of that ship. The Palmer sailed from New London.

Timber Interests Pleased.

Portland, Feb. 26.—Now that President Wilson has modified the Panama Canal tolls so that deckloads of Pacific Coast lumber can go through the canal free, the Eastern markets are preparing to bid on the western products in competition with that of the South says J. N. Teal, who has just returned from a visit to Washington, D. C., New York and other points in the East.

Mr. Teal was in Washington when the president issued his communication relative to the lumber rates and through the Oregon delegation in congress expressed the gratification of the Pacific Coast lumbermen.

This rule gives the lumbermen just what they wanted. They lay their products down in New York and other Atlantic Seaboard ports at cost plus the actual freight charges via the canal. Had they been required to pay the canal toll rate of \$1.20 a ton they would not have been able to compete effectively with their rival manufacturers in the South.

President Wilson's order on the tolls question was given in a letter to Secretary of War Garrison, who in turn submitted a copy of it to Senator Chamberlain, with whom Mr. Teal had been negotiating for a modification of the toll order in substantially the same form as it now has been laid down by the president.

Mr. Teal also made efforts while in Washington to procure some appropriations for irrigation work in Oregon independent of the state appropriations. Inasmuch as the recent legislature failed to appropriate any money for irrigation work, he thinks it is doubtful if the Federal authorities will make any direct appropriations.

"Bums" Chairs Out.

A certain harbinger of Summer is seen today at the fire station when the sunbaths have been regular occurrences during the day.

WILL CHINA FIGHT JAPAN? THE OLD AND NEW IN CHINESE FIGHTING MEN.



OCTOGANARIAN IS HAPPY ON BIRTHDAY

THOMAS STEPHENSON SAYS WOOD FOR EXERCISE.

Happy and Well Mentally and Physically, Aged Couple Observed Anniversary Quietly.

Thomas Stephenson and Mrs. Stephenson yesterday were just as happy a couple of old people as La Grande has ever seen. Without any particular care to furrow their aged brows they were indeed a happy couple, for yesterday Mr. Stephenson celebrated the 84th anniversary of his birth. Furthermore Mr. Stephenson is hale and hearty in its truest sense. The couple have their home at I and First streets but they also have a little ranch a mile and a half up the foothills and to this ranch Mr. Stephenson takes his morning constitutional. So well is he that since he has been 80 years of age, he has frequently cut up a cord of wood in a day.

The celebration yesterday was a quiet one, friends who remembered the anniversary calling him up to congratulate him and also Mrs. Stephenson who is now 74. The children of whom there are several, also remembered "Pa" and those who live close enough to La Grande, came in to visit with him. The living children are Mrs. Lulu Shaw of North Powder, Mrs. J. E. Cooper of Oakland, Cal., Earl Williams of Modesto, Cal., Earl Stephenson of Perry, and Tom, the youngest, who lives at home.

Joining with the many friends of the couple, the Observer predicts a long list of happy years lie yet before Mr. and Mrs. Stephenson.

DRY COUNTRY IS GOOD

North Powder Man Is Loyal to the Dry Farming Game.

Clarence E. Merritt, who lives seven miles southeast of North Powder, is in La Grande today transacting business at the land office. When asked how the dry country looked he said it is in fine shape and that he believed in a very few years the people of this section were bound to see some pleasant surprises in production from the soil that is not irrigated.

TO INVESTIGATE WRECK

Superintendent Bollons left this morning for Mile Post No. 26 to look into the cause of a derailment a few days ago which sent five cars off the track but did no damage and caused little delay.

TODAY'S ODDEST STORY

Aberdeen, S. D., Feb. 26.—"You would have to tie a fifty pound weight on those jack-rabbits of yours in Pennsylvania so that you could get your beagles close enough to smell them. Even factory whistles in Pennsylvania would scare our South Dakota jack-rabbits clear out of the state."

This was the letter Moses Bantz wrote J. L. Johnson at Irving, Pennsylvania. Johnson had written Bantz for a half dozen energetic jack-rabbits to give his pet beagles a little exercise.

SPORTSMEN EAGER FOR RECOGNITION

S. D. CROWE ADVANCED AS LOGICAL COMMISSIONER.

Surrounding Counties Have Been Represented in Past—Crowe's Qualifications Held to Be Ample.

Shall Union county have a representative on the Fish and Game commission? That is the question agitating local sportsmen this morning, and the argument in support of Union county's claim seems to be without flaw or fault. As is well known, Hood River has had a turn at the commission, as also has Pendleton, Walla Walla and Baker. Yet in Union county there is the best organized and largest sportsmen's club in the entire eastern Oregon country.

This, it is argued, is sufficient reason why a Union county man should be appointed to the place without a question.

The next step is to find the man, for all know it is useless to attempt a thing of this kind unless there is a united effort at home and unless a concrete proposition can be placed before the appointing power.

The man has been found, according to those at the head of the movement, and that man is S. D. Crowe, manager of the Independent Telephone company, who is a true sport with rod and gun. Crowe's qualifications are questioned by no one and his special fitness for the place is so apparent that the Union county bunch do not hesitate to place him at the top of the list and agree to unite as one man upon him for the place.

The Sportsmen's League, comprising six counties which is known as district No. 6, had its inception in Union county and this is a further argument favorable to the request. This district is comprised of Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Baker, Grant and Walla Walla counties.

FREIGHT HEADS IN CONFERENCE

O. W. OFFICIALS HURRY TO CHICAGO.

New Rulings Regarding Seaport Rates Will Be Considered.

Problems confronting the traffic and freight departments of transcontinental railroads having their terminals on seaport towns will be threshed out at a meeting of directors at Chicago the coming week. F. W. Robinson, assistant traffic director of the O. W., and H. E. Lounsbury, general freight agent for the company, passed through the city today on their way to Chicago. In addition to asserting that the freight business is somewhat brighter, and that the cleanup of grain is going on at a rapid rate, Mr. Lounsbury discussed the situation that has arisen since the authorities that control freight rates have permitted the companies to charge more for a short haul than for a long one over the same line and in the same direction—provided, certain conditions exist. "It is apparent that the interstate commerce commission is desirous of doing something that will tend to allow the transcontinental roads to compete with water lines," said Mr. Lounsbury. "The whole system is somewhat complicated and it is to discuss this situation that the pending conference has been called. We do not know yet what will be done or how it will be done but after the railroads have conferred on the matter, a policy consistent with the new rulings will be adopted."

Income Blanks in Demand.

Today is about the closing date for making out income blanks and several of La Grande's wealthier citizens are looking into the matter with considerable care. The general expression is "blessed is he who hath nothing." This expression is probably pertinent in view of the fact that the county tax collector is also issuing his annual reminder.

BIG BROTHER ATTITUDE NOW BRYAN'S PLAN

NEGOTIATIONS HEREAFTER TO CHECK HINTS OF "DOLLAR DIPLOMACY" ABROAD.

ENGLAND'S VEILED HINT PROMPTS A NEW POLICY

American Commerce Not Alone to Be Consideration Hereafter, But Humanitarian Aspect Is to Have Its Attention as Well—No Selfish Motives Will Be Allowed to Creep Out.

Washington, Feb. 26.—The United States are now enacting the role of a "Big Brother" to Germany and England, administration officials claimed today, in discussing the diplomatic situation growing out of the belligerent's "hunger war." The mailed fist of "strict accountability" which was shown in recent protests, have been withdrawn and a humanitarian idea will hereafter be advanced in American negotiations.

As a result of England's veiled taunts that the United States has adopted an attitude of "dollar diplomacy" the administration will hereafter relegate to the background in negotiations, interests of American commerce. It is hoped the belligerents will be convinced that the United States isn't acting on selfish motives.

REDUCED RATE PROPOSED.

Five Cents Per Thousand Gallons Tentatively Proposed.

To supply water for the big natatorium in the new Elks building, a conference between the building committee and the city officials has been going on for several days and resulted last evening in the proposal by the city through Manager Lafky of a five cent rate for a period of a year, the Elks to pay the meter rent. This applies only to the natatorium which will use a large amount of water each week. The proposals have been taken under advisement by the Elks, but will likely be accepted.

Buffalo Bill at Seventieth Milestone.

Cody, Wyo., Feb. 26.—Col. William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill), famous scout and showman is seventy years old today.

Despite his advancing years the famous Indian fighter is as erect, walks with so firm a step and rides as well as in the past. His hair is now snow white. It is also somewhat thinner, but long locks still flow from beneath Col. Cody's inevitable big black hat.

Col. Cody's birthday will be celebrated here tonight with a banquet at which plates for seventy persons will be laid, one for each year of the veteran's life. The banquet will be under the auspices of the commercial organization of Cody with "Buffalo Bill" as the guest of honor.

HOUSE NEARING COMPLETION

The handsome new home of W. R. Kivette on M street is nearing completion. It will be one of the very fine small homes of the city when done.

ALLIED SHIPS DRAWING NEAR MARMORA SEA

MINESWEEPERS KEEP THE DARDANELLES CLEAR OF EX-PROLOGUES.

WAR'S MOST SERIOUS NAVAL BATTLE IS DUE

Rain Hinders Fighting in Flanders—Russians claim to Have Success at Both Ends of the Line—Defending Warsaw and That the Attempt to Recapture Lemberg Has Again Been Checked.

London, Feb. 26.—Preceded by minesweepers the Anglo-French fleet today moved past the Dardanelles forts which were demolished after several days of shelling, according to an Athens dispatch.

No resistance was offered by the main Turkish fleet which is lying in the Niagara Roads, 25 miles away, in the narrowest part of the waterway. If the Allies' warships succeed in battering their way past the chain of forts lining both sides of the waterway, the most decisive naval battle of the war will likely be fought.

The Sea of Marmora separates the Dardanelles from Constantinople and it is in this body of water that the naval struggle will be staged. The length of the Dardanelles or Hellespont as it was originally called, is about 50 miles.

Canals Overrun Banks.

London, Feb. 26.—Torrents of rain are hindering operations in Belgium. Field Marshal French has announced. All canals in Flanders are out of their banks and activities are confined to artillery exchanges. Allies and Germans are compelled to evacuate trenches at several points because the pits were flooded.

Russians Have Success.

Petrograd, Feb. 26.—Victories at both ends of the long battle line on which Russians are engaging the German-Austro forces are claimed. Efforts to recapture Lemberg have been checked it is said on authority.

Warsaw in Danger.

Berlin, Feb. 26.—Warsaw, Poland, is menaced by two Russian armies which are advancing upon it from points North of the Vistula river, according to advices received from the front. Traveling eastward through Plock, the German advance guard is less than 40 miles from the Russian stronghold. From the other side, the center of Von Hindenburg's right wing is less than 50 miles distant, advancing slowly and steadily.

Germans Lose in France.

Paris, Feb. 26.—Gains by allied forces along many parts of their lines in France are reported.

FLOODS KILL TWO.

Boston, Feb. 26.—Four are known to be dead and thousands of dollars in damage has been done in New England by floods. Four victims were crushed to death when an ice jam at Lisbon, N. H., swept away.

Many at Land Office.

Roy E. Dawson of Echo made additional homestead entry at the land office today. Among other transactors of business before the institution were Walter B. Anthony of Ritter who sought additional homesteads and John W. Whiting of Palmer Junction who made payment of \$240 on a timber and stone application.

Charter Day at Pitt.

Pittsburgh, Feb. 26.—"Charter Day" was observed at Pitt University today. Dedication of the new Mellon Institute building was the feature. Dr. Rosster R. Worthington, of New York dean of American mining, engineers, made the principal address at the dedication. Following the ceremonies the institute was thrown open to the public.

Degrees were conferred by Chancellor McCormick. Tonight the annual dinner of the alumni will be held.

islate jurisdiction into a state circuit or other court, and this morning argued the citizens of a town might with as much propriety legislate jurisdiction of appeals from its courts into Federal courts. The defendants, with a battery of attorneys at hand, claim that the supreme court has already decided the question, at least by inference. This, too, went, under advisement.

MOTION DAY WELL TAKEN UP

Possibility of New Trial in Johnson Auto Case Seen

Judge Knowles was busy in the circuit court this forenoon hearing matters coming before him on the newly created motion day calendar. At nine, the motion for a new trial in the famous automobile case of Thos. Johnson, of Joseph, against A. C. Brace, for the possession of an automobile held by Brace for safekeeping and claimed by Johnson, came up. Attorneys for Brace made a determined effort to gain a new trial on account of several claimed irregularities and errors. The case was not passed upon, Judge Knowles requesting Johnson's attorneys to make a brief in reply to the contentions of defendant, if they wished to do so.

The second case coming on was a demurrer filed by Olaf Dahlstrom in the cross-suit of W. A. Hudson in equity against him. The case was started by Dahlstrom suing Hudson

for a sum of money, and Hudson answered by filing in equity his cross complaint, claiming he had defenses he could not make in a jury action. Now, Dahlstrom's attorneys claim the equity suit is wrong, and that Hudson may make any defense he may have in the jury case as well as in the equity case. This case went under advisement, also.

At eleven, a case of much importance came, when the appeal of Glass and others from the municipal court of La Grande was called. The city moved to dismiss the appeals for the reason that there is no state statute authorizing an appeal to the state circuit court from a city existing under a charter made by the people under the "home-rule" amendment. The defendants had the city charter of La Grande authorizing such appeals certified up and the city claimed the city has no power or authority to leg-