

BATTLE OBSERVED FROM TOP OF TREE

Little of Spectacular Is Seen in Business-Like Artillery Routine.

BATTERY FIRING SUPERB

James O'Donnell Bennett, With Bavarian Army, Describes Sensations Caused by Pounding Operations of Great Guns.

BY JAMES O'DONNELL BENNETT. (War correspondent of The Chicago Tribune.)

ON THE FIRING LINE IN COTES LORRAINE, Dec. 7.—It was with a manner which I hope seemed cordial, but in a spirit which was only moderately enthusiastic, that I accepted the invitation of two officers to climb one of the trees where lookouts were signaling by telephone to batteries in the valley below.

In the first place, I have no passion for giddy heights; in the second place, I feel an almost morbid love of life, owing to its surprising interest.

Correspondent Has No Choice. — But as between a broken neck and the laughter of half a regiment of deep-chested Bavarians, affectionately known in the ranks as "those damned Bavarians," fear nothing, and a man who declined their invitation to climb a tree that is small but would permit me to see the firing line, I say, might as well go back to London and write censored stuff about the fearful perils he suffered while motoring at his ease and eating three times a day amid the scenes of the present hostilities.

That kind of stuff sells, and everybody in Europe is too busy or too sad just now to take the time to expose the writer of it as a flamboyant liar.

Tree 80 Feet High, Seems 150.

The tree selected for my observation point stands on the far edge of the camp and at the top of the wooded slope which drops down with the valley. To me it looked 150 feet high. I suppose it was 80 at the most. But if you look down from it into the valley you realize that your fall will be quite twice the height of the tree. So you decide not to look.

On the way to the tree dozens of long gray overcoats are hung on improvised clothes-horses to dry. They are sodden with mud and rain. Soldiers back from 24 hours in the trenches hung them there. The soldiers are asleep now under the rafter chinks with the inscription, "We Bavarians fear God and nothing else in the world."

Secret of "Device" Is Kept.

In the center of the camp is a certain device which we are asked to test. We do so with cries of admiration, so perfect are its workings.

"It is enormously costly, but enormously useful," says one of the officers. "If you please," he adds, "don't write it at this time, for the French don't know that we have it."

Nothing more is said as to keeping this valuable secret. There is no palaver and no insistence. The Germans when they trust you, trust you to the hilt, and when they don't trust you, they just don't, and they can be extremely austere about it.

On the way to the tree nobody could have missed the device in question. On the way back, an hour later, most persons would have missed it. It is still there, but in the distance, and side one of those "now-you-see-it-and-now-you-don't-see-it" things that would delight the inventive soul of a Connecticut Yankee.

The glorious autumn valley is pre-empted with death, and yet at the instant there is nothing terrible to see in it. A remote hanging and a few birds come to the ears. The sounds are full of meaning.

As far as the sights which the naked eye can take in, they mean nothing. A bluish mist rests lightly over the valley. The brown fields, their boundaries marked off by hedges that still appear green, seem deserted. The outlines of a church tower, a squat mill, a bridge, and a huddled village can be discerned, but nowhere is there any sign of human comings and goings.

Burning Village Seen.

Part of the branches a little and put your eyes to the field glasses. The whole picture is in its sharp outline and begins to have meaning.

The spirals of yellow smoke are from a burning village on the opposite hillside. It has been set alight by shell-fire.

To the layman it seems not as much fighting as a lull, and the sound of it is so well covered that the layman has the impression not of the tented field and of martial ardor, but of projects in progress of development by groups of civil engineers who go methodically and laboriously about their work.

Select your position, slowly bring up your artillery under the protection of the infantry and then intrench your infantry under the protection of the artillery. After that the duel begins and it may continue many hours or many days or many weeks. Considering the enormous extent of the western battle line—reaching as it does from Switzerland into Belgium—there is relatively little spectacular work.

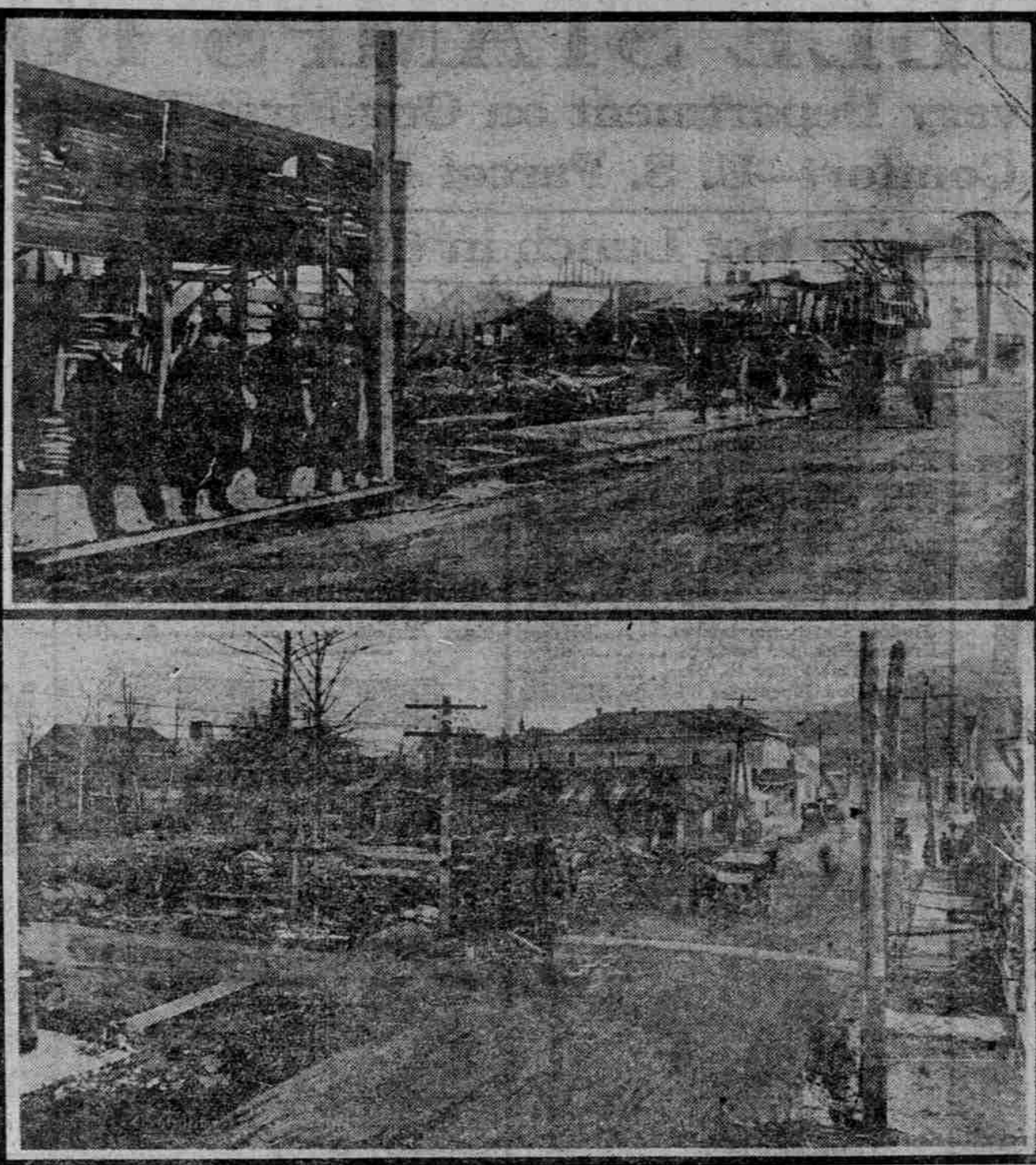
In clearing the ground for the advance of the artillery and in the final dashes of infantry—by which the results of the artillery's pounding are converted into definite triumph and into occupation of a desired position—in that kind of work there must be a superb pictorial quality. I have seen no such fighting and I doubt whether any correspondent has seen much of it.

In the first place, the most important thing to remember is that the line is a long way in advance of the places to which correspondents are allowed to come.

The reader must remember that all locations given over to fighting are almost as definitely marked off as a football field. And, indeed, without the most explicit passbook and the most authoritative escort it is impossible to penetrate even into the region that lies around the zone of fighting. Every road is guarded. Every village contains a patrol. Every chateau out of the range of the shells is either a staff headquarters or a hospital, and no man passes it unless his status is clearly understood by everybody, from a slow-speaking, slow-thinking sentry to a vehement and autocratic chief of staff.

Route of Battle Businesslike. — Passing from the moment from our present point of observation to a place

SCENE OF FIRE THAT DESTROYED NINE BUILDINGS IN BUSINESS DISTRICT OF GRESHAM.



UPPER PICTURE, RUINS ON WEST SIDE OF MAIN STREET—LOWER, SITE OF BARTELT MERCANTILE COMPANY, ON EAST SIDE OF STREET, WHERE FIRE ORIGINATED.

which, it is permissible to say, lies nearly 100 miles to the west, the businesslike routine of the operations which carried the Germans across the Alps may be illustrated by the remark of a German officer who stood on the heights whither we now have moved.

Before him lay a wide valley, its bottom lands comprising rich and carefully cultivated fields, untouched by the hand of war save where a ten-centimeter shell had helped a farmer in his autumn plowing. Half way up the opposite slopes the mill, the church and such like large structures of a village or two could be discerned and occasionally a whole wall of one of these buildings would go spurting into the air, precisely like a sheet of dirty water.

When the wall which had thus been blown into the air by shell fire sank to the ground, tongues of fire would leap from it, growing brighter as the yellow smoke slowly billowed away.

"It is evident," said an officer who was watching this, "that the English have run out of smokeless powder today."

Scene Is Exhilarating.

It was our first view of shell fire and it made us pretty tremulous, not with fear, I can honestly add, for we were not in the slightest danger, but with excitement and wonder. When we tried to call one another's attention to this or that feature of the scene our voices shook a good deal, and finally we ceased speaking, each and only pointed and nudged. There seemed to us a kind of indecency in our human chatter amid this solemn thunder.

Well, what the German officer said that indicated his sense of the routine nature of the appalling activity was this:

"It is rather busy today."

With that he picked up a pair of field glasses and silently studied the opposite slopes for five minutes. The officers said that as we seemed interested we could go down the hill to the battery and see the men firing them—salvo, as the German word of command has it, meaning volley firing. So we left the hill and went down to the battery.

Amazing Results Attained. — But for a half articulate person he got amazing results as to both noise and accuracy. The six gray babies lurched back on their haunches simultaneously when he whispered "Salvo." Blue sky and sunshine seemed torn to tatters, and six shells went singing and sighing clear across the valley to a thickly wooded height, where they exploded over an area that seemed to comprise only a few square minutes to shake the ache out of your ears before the officer with green lines on his uniform raised his eyes and whispered "Salvo" again.

So the 10-centimeter declaration was a reticent kind of spending compared with the roar of the 21-centimeter mortars that go traveling on three flatcars apiece and have difficulty in finding a French field which will sustain them in wet weather. When we took our stand behind them they were not in action. An officer said he believed matters could be arranged.

So he moved 15 feet through the extensive thicket in which the guns were planted and bent over a telephone pit that was screened not with sheaves of grain, but with branches of oak leaves. There was conversation with an officer of a General's staff which was located six miles away, but that was nothing—us to the distance, I mean, for from that same pit you could talk with Berlin if you had something of the highest importance to say.

The word ran along the line, "Keep your mouth open—keep your mouth open—keep your mouth open." Civilians standing 30 feet behind the guns—or perhaps it was 50.

And an officer who seemed to wish us well added, "Stand loosely, gentlemen, stand loosely."

The shell was on its way to the enemy. It was something red, and all I heard was the crack of doom. Later I tried to remember what was heard or felt at the firing of it, and I decided that the dominant thing lay in the seeing, and that what one saw was the blue sky vanishing in a crimson flash.

Burks Take Hills in Persia.

BERLIN, Dec. 20, by wireless to Sayville, N. Y.—The Turks report taking some hills overlooking Kotur, near Lake Urumlah, Northwestern Persia.

MAYOR HAS LIFE JOB

L. J. Simpson, of North Bend, Has Eye on Congress.

HARBOR AID IS SOUGHT

Perpetual Executive Tells of Extensive Public Work Completed and Contemplated, Declaring Coos Bay Prosperous Place.

Did you ever hear of a man, and a young and healthy one at that, elected Mayor of a thriving city for life?

A person of such distinction is in Portland now in the person of L. J. Simpson, Coos Bay enthusiast, who has been Mayor of North Bend since that city was born officially 12 years ago.

"The people in my section were not satisfied with the ten Commandments laid down in the Bible," said Mr. Simpson in the lobby of the Hotel Portland yesterday. "They have pledged themselves to this eleventh commandment: 'There shall not be a new Mayor at North Bend so long as L. J. Simpson lives.'"

But if Mr. Simpson has his own way he will upset the commandment. He intends to see to it that Coos Bay and other harbors along the Pacific Coast set their full quota in Federal appropriations. The object of his present visit is to confer with Major Morrow relative to the prospect of renewing work on the Coos Bay Jetty. Providing Major Morrow will recommend the work, Mayor Simpson says North Bend will send a large delegation to Washington to work for the appropriation.

"The Port of Coos Bay has established a district including the natural watershed of the bay and has voted \$500,000 in bonds to improve the inner harbor," said Mr. Simpson. "This means an assessment of \$55 for each man, woman and child in the district. By the time our \$500,000 has been spent we will have a channel 35 feet deep at mean lower low water and 200 feet wide."

"The town of North Bend, population 2500, had just spent \$165,000 on improvements, and a paving contract is pending. Next year the new grade between North Bend and Empire, four miles distant, will be hard-surfaced. In addition there is about \$400,000 worth of road work in sight in the Coos Bay district."

"Work is about to be started on the \$75,000 Simpson Hotel and between 1500 and 2000 men are employed in building the railroad into the Coos Bay district. This work and the fact that all the big sawmills are running eight-hour shifts makes Coos Bay the most prosperous community on the Coast."

FIRE BURNS BUILDINGS

(Continued From First Page.)

men, who worked heroically and saved other buildings that were threatened. The home of Peter Mitchell, nearly two blocks from the scene of the blaze, was set afire by flying sparks, but was saved by a bucket brigade.

Wires Are Prostrate. — Many telephone and light wires were burned, and direct communication with Portland was interrupted for a time.

The places burned follow: Bartelt Mercantile Company, stock loss \$15,000, insurance \$11,000. Loss on building about \$6000. Warehouse containing blacksmith's equipment. J. C. Hessel & Son, implements; stock loss \$5000, insurance \$2500. Ed Osborne, owner of building, loss about \$1200. Ed Osborne, blacksmith shop and

wagon factory. Building and equipment total loss.

Max Schneider, photograph gallery and equipment, total loss.

Palmquist harness store; loss \$1500, insurance \$1000.

Tietz meat market; loss \$1000, insurance \$800.

J. J. Halligan, barber-shop; loss \$300. D. A. Hart, residence; loss \$250.

The Condon Hotel sustained damage of about \$600, while the heat and water did slight damage to the Bank of Gresham, the Sterling & Kilder hardware store and the C. C. general merchandise store.

Gresham Firemen Praised.

We got the call at 4 A. M., said Captain William Hansen, of Engine No. 3, last night. "I don't know just what time we made on the trip out. The boys in Gresham said that we arrived there just 17 to 18 minutes after they called us."

"But I don't know about that. The roads were bad, and it was dark. We made as good time as we could with safety. We could see the fire from Mount Tabor, as we came up on the Baseline road."

"Gresham has a good little fire department, and they were doing good work when we got there. But the east wind was too strong for them. We had plenty of water, but the buildings were all close together and it was a hard job to fight the fire."

Portland Firemen Shocked.

"A lot of our boys, and some of the Gresham people, were shocked by live wires. They were falling all around. Before we left we chopped all the live wires and cleared them off the street. We got back to Portland at 3:25 A. M. The people of Gresham served breakfast to us after the fire."

Eight members of Engine No. 15 crept went to the fire. They were Captain William Hansen, Lieutenant Frank J. McFarland, Hushel Thomas, chauffeur; George Holshelmer, Jack Kline, Ira Gardner, T. O. Baker and A. J. Conrad.

The men say that the water froze off their clothing.

MOUNT KANAKA SMOKES

NEIGHBOR OF LASSEN BELIEVED TO BE IN ERUPTION.

Theory That Forest Fire Accounts for Smoke Discredited by Snow-Crater Not Known to Exist.

REDDING, Cal., Dec. 20.—Mount Kanaka, 30 miles west from Redding, broke into eruption shortly after noon today, according to residents of Shaasta and Trinity counties.

A dense column of black smoke ascended from the extreme peak of the mountain and hung plume-like until darkness hid the phenomenon from view. In Redding it was declared by several persons that fire could be distinguished by the aid of glasses in the smoke at the apex of the peak. No previous crater existed on Mount Kanaka, as far as could be ascertained.

Mount Kanaka is one of the Yolo-Bolo mountains that form part of the Coast Range and is 15 miles north of Lassen Peak. The eruption, while not of as great magnitude as the recent disturbances of Lassen Peak, bore the same general appearance.

That forest fires were responsible for the smoke plume was not believed possible, owing to the fact that the mountain was covered by a heavy cap of snow, and because the display had come without spreading in any direction or increasing or diminishing in volume when night hid it from view.

A party of investigation was formed tonight and will proceed to the scene of the disturbance tomorrow. Mount Kanaka is 5000 feet high and is situated one mile south of Mount Baldy.

Women Cremated in Scotch Castle.

GLASGOW, via London, Dec. 21.—Three young women guests were burned to death in Herberthire Castle, a historic old feudal building at Denny, seven miles from Stirling, and owned by C. W. Forbes, when it was destroyed by fire today. Many valuable paintings were lost.

Place Your Orders Early FOR THE Annual Edition OF The Oregonian

Every resident of Portland, the Columbia River Basin and Oregon should secure a copy of the New Year's Edition of The Oregonian. It should be the duty of every person interested in the welfare and development of the state to send a copy of this great edition to each of his friends in other states.

The forthcoming number will be distinctive and unusually attractive. Articles of compelling interest, statistics and illustrations compose a complete resume of progress in 1914. Without doubt it is the greatest medium for advertising Oregon's development.

It will contain elaborate pictorial features, portraying the important activities of the state.

It will feature Portland's maritime growth and harbor and river improvement. Oregon's trade opportunities with foreign lands will be exhaustively treated.

This great edition will be on sale Friday, January 1, 1915. Single copy 5c; postage 5c.

Fill out blank form and send to Oregonian office, Sixth and Alder Sts.

Table with 4 columns: Name, Street, Town, State. Multiple empty rows for filling out names.

THE OREGONIAN, Portland, Oregon. Gentlemen—Enclosed find..... for which mail The Oregonian's New Year's Annual to each of the above addresses. (Enclose 10c for each name.)

Sent by..... (Duplicate blanks may be had by calling, telephoning or writing to The Oregonian Circulation Department.)

MR. LANE'S ACT SKIMPS

SECRETARY ASKED TO GO FURTHER AND APPROPRIATE FUND.

Authority of Congress Not Required and Mr. Chapman Suggests Stigma of "Passing Buck" Remains.

While Oregonians generally were gratified to learn that Secretary of the Interior Lane had announced that he would approve the appropriation of \$450,000 for irrigation work in Oregon, they were disappointed to learn that the bill was not passed by the Congress.

"The sum of money already has been set aside for expenditure in the State of Oregon and if Secretary Lane had said the word it will be ready for use tomorrow. In his statement Saturday he recognized the main principle at issue and shows that he is willing to compromise his previous stand, but if he is disposed to do the right thing by Oregon."

"It is not necessary for Secretary Lane to await action by Congress to insure Oregon that \$450,000," said C. C. Chapman, of the Commercial Club, last night.

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WAR PICTURES TO REMAIN

Heilig Will Show Movies of Battle Line for Another Week.

The Belgian war pictures, the first authentic moving pictures from the far-flung European battle line, will continue to run this week at the Heilig Theater from noon to 11 o'clock at night. The Heilig Theater procured the rights for an additional week as soon as The Oregonian relinquished its right, which was for one week, in the interest of charity and jointly in the interest of the Belgian Red Cross fund of the Chicago Tribune.

The Heilig continues in the arrangement with the Chicago Tribune and a share of the proceeds goes to the Red Cross fund.

The pictures, which are the first authentic motion films from the Belgian battle zone, show actual warfare, life in the trenches, and the camera has clicked in the wake of the big steps.

guns and field artillery. The pictures of the ruined cities are likewise vivid and realistic.

One of the features of the films is that they show the effective organization of the great fighting machines of the nations involved.

WOMEN'S CAUSE IS AIDED

Mrs. L. W. Therkelsen Gives \$100 to Congressional Union.

Among other gifts to the work of gaining the Federal amendment for woman suffrage, known as the Bristow-Mondell resolution, was that of Mrs. L. W. Therkelsen, of Portland, who Saturday gave \$100 to the Congressional Union, which is heading the campaign for the passage of the bill. The gift was made at the meeting of the sustaining committee of the Portland branch of the Congressional Union, at room 613 Eilers building.

This committee is composed of Dr. Florence Manion, Mrs. E. S. Gilbert, Mrs. A. E. Borthwick, Mrs. Therkelsen,

Mrs. Emma B. Carroll and Mrs. W. J. Hawkins. Miss Virginia Arnold is the union organizer in Portland.

PORTLAND FIGHTER WRITES

John R. Crichton Tells of Learning of Supposed Arrest After Landing.

Reading of his alleged capture on the high seas en route to Liverpool on his arrival in the port abroad was the interesting experience of John R. Crichton, ex-Portlandian, according to a letter received from him recently by E. Hubbard, a carman residing at 1178 Borthwick street.

Mr. Crichton, who for several years lived at 1631 Concord avenue, of this city, and was an employee of the Portland Railway, Light & Power Company, sailed to his native country about November 1 in answer to a call for volunteers to the army issued by the English government.

The first half pint of milk at a milking contained only 1.07 per cent of cream, while the last half pint contained 10.26 per cent.

Advertisement for 'A Gala Week at YE OREGON GRILLE' featuring Christmas dinner, special entertainment, and war pictures. Includes a drawing of a man's face and the text 'MERRY XMAS'.