

ITALIANS CAPTURE, THEN LOSE HEIGHTS

Col Del Rosso and Bonto Val Bella on Asiago Plateau Scene of Fighting.

PIAVE FRONT INSPECTED

Associated Press Correspondent Visits Trenches With General and Finds Troops Strongly Entrenched and Hopeful.

ROME, Dec. 26.—Col Del Rosso and Monte Val Bella, on the Asiago Plateau, were recaptured by Italian forces in a counter attack yesterday, but it was found impossible to hold them, the War Office announced today.

BERLIN, Dec. 26, via London.—Violent counter attacks against the Anglo-German positions on Col Del Rosso and neighboring heights on both sides broke down yesterday with heavy losses, according to the official statement issued today by the German General Staff.

ITALIAN ARMY HEADQUARTERS IN NORTHERN ITALY, Dec. 25.—(By the Associated Press.)—A general commanding an army corps on the Pieve front took the correspondent along the line occupied by his corps today and pointed out the Anglo-German nest on the west bank of the river, which is the only foothold he has succeeded in maintaining.

The main purpose of the Italian commander was to carry a holiday greeting to his men in the first-line trenches, but incidentally this visit to the extreme front gave an opportunity for the general to explain the lay of the land and why the enemy was finding himself unable to advance.

Defenses Are Strong.—As the party moved forward it was noted that the defenses had been highly organized so that any sudden rush of the enemy would meet tremendous resistance. The defenses comprise a string of trenches fortified for defense with masses of tangled wire and construction materials, and in some places, with numerous sharp projections.

Entering the first-line trenches the general led the way. The ground in front was covered with low bushes and scrubby vines running down to the waters edge. Behind this ran a high earthen bank originally erected as a dyke, but now serving the enemy as a refuge against petty shelling. In the foreground were three large stone farmhouses that had been torn to pieces by Italian shell fire. One of these had had the roof, the upper floors and two wings blown off, while the jagged walls of the first story were still standing. It was still used, the general said, for the enemy's machine guns. They were silent then, as the holiday season had by common consent afforded a lull. The heavy Austrian guns were heard now and then.

Machine Guns Taked.—The general said that the enemy force in the Zeonson curve was about three battalions, with an exceptionally large supply of machine guns. Their communications were principally operated in the night hours.

The enemy's foothold on the west bank of the Pieve here was not regarded by the general as a serious menace to the Italians, as it was not a base which could be augmented by an increase of the forces. It could be cleared out at any time, he said, but the effort was not worth the sacrifice it would require in the face of the machine guns. The head was completely controlled and hemmed in and it was better, he thought, to let the enemy sacrifice his men in holding a position useless to him.

The general had a cheery word for the men in the trenches, presenting many of them with holiday gifts and giving encouragement and praise to all. The men were in the best of spirits, looked sturdy and well conditioned and were unanimous in praising their commander that they could hold the enemy against any further advance.

\$5000 BALM IS SOUGHT

E. C. Kruger Charges P. L. Abbott With Defamation of Character.

"He called me a crook and a thief," asserted E. C. Kruger yesterday in demanding from P. L. Abbott in a suit filed in the Circuit Court for balance as the result of the alleged defamation of his character.

BLISS WILL BE RETAINED

General to Remain in Active Service as Chief of Staff.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—General Tasker H. Bliss will be retained on active service as chief of staff of the Army after he reaches the retirement age next Monday, December 31.

BELLANS Absolutely Removes Indigestion. Druggists refund money if it fails. 25c

Not Quite Down and Out. Many a man feels that he is down and out when as a matter of fact he still has in him many years of good service that can be brought out by proper treatment. Stomach trouble often makes one despondent. It hits him where he lives, saps his strength and energy and makes him feel like giving up. Give him a few doses of Chamberlain's Tablets to improve his digestion and invigorate his liver and bowels, and in most cases recovery is prompt and effectual.—Adv.

Santiseptic for a Perfect Complexion. Removes blemishes, freckles, wrinkles, prevents and rapidly clears skin of all eruptions. You'll like its clean, refreshing odor. 50c. All druggists.—Adv.

FIRST SEA LORD OF BRITISH ADMIRALTY, WHO SUCCEEDS SIR JOHN JELICOE.



SIR ROSSLYN WEMYSS.

JELICOE IS OUSTED

Sir Rosslyn Wemyss Is Made First Sea Lord.

NAVAL POLICY ATTACKED

Change Believed Due to Non-Aggressive Policy and Desire of Younger Elements in Navy to Try Some New Tactics.

LONDON, Dec. 16.—Vice Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss has been appointed first sea lord in succession to Admiral Sir John R. Jellicoe, according to an official announcement issued this evening.

The translation of Sir John R. Jellicoe to the honorable eclipse of a seat in the House of Lords and the promotion of the second sea lord to his place, briefly announced in an official communication tonight, will convey but one interpretation to the mind of the general public in view of the strong criticisms for a long time past upon the Admiralty, which culminated in deep disappointment and dissatisfaction at the impunity with which German raiders recently again sank a British convoy.

The official announcement says nothing of Admiral Jellicoe having for any reason desired to resign. The announcement proceeds:

"During the war Admiral Jellicoe was in command of the grand fleet before he came to the Admiralty to take up the position of first sea lord, which he has held with distinction for three and a half years. His services and his services and experience may be made use of at a later date in another important appointment."

Admiral Jellicoe goes into retirement with universal expressions of admiration and thanks for his services to the nation. Even his most ardent critics testify to his capacities and achievements, the affection he won throughout the fleet and emphasize the nation's confidence.

"It can never be forgotten that if the fleet trusted him, the nation rightly trusted him, too," says the Times.

That Sir John Jellicoe would be removed from the position of first sea lord of the British navy has been foreshadowed for some time because of heavy criticism to which Admiral Jellicoe and the Admiralty have been subjected by a section of the British press and prominent Englishmen opposed to the present naval policy.

It has been asserted that Admiral Jellicoe's policy of hemming in the German fleet is not aggressive enough and that a more aggressive policy by the Admiralty should be adopted.

It is openly admitted that Admiral Jellicoe and other officers of the British navy have opposed any attempt to try and rout the German fleet from its base at Helgoland, whereas a growing element of younger officers of the fleet has urged an attempt to destroy the German fleet and bases, especially the submarine bases at Zebruge and other Belgian coast ports.

GEORGE BERRY BURIED

PIONEER PROSPECTOR AND LUMBERMAN LAID TO REST.

Stockman of Sheridan County Shared Honors of Being a Pioneer of Great California Gold Rush.

SHERIDAN, Or., Dec. 26.—(Special.)—George W. Berry, pioneer of the California gold rush, prospector, stockman and lumberman, was buried today. He died Monday at the home of his daughter, at Yacolt, Wash., at the age of 88 years.

Born in Maine, Mr. Berry crossed the Isthmus of Panama when 21 years old and mined and prospected in the late '40s he went to work in the Grand Ronde Valley, of Eastern Oregon, and engaged in stockraising, coming to Rickland, Polk County, in '62. Later he moved to Yacolt, near Parkersburg, Or., and two step-children, Dr. W. E. Tatam, of Florence, Or., and Frank Tatam, of Rickland, Or., all of whom attended the funeral.

Mr. Berry is survived by five children, George A. Berry, of Arlington, Or.; Charles A. Berry, of Albany, Or.; Lillian Bowman, of Yacolt; Clara Sloan, and Ethel F. Miller, of Parkersburg, Or., and two step-children, Dr. W. E. Tatam, of Florence, Or., and Frank Tatam, of Rickland, Or., all of whom attended the funeral.

KAISER HAS CLOSE CALL

Mannheim Station Destroyed an Hour After Emperor Leaves.

GENEVA, Dec. 26.—The German Emperor, returning with his staff from the Verdun front, had a narrow escape during the reprisal raid of a British air squadron on Mannheim Christmas eve, according to a dispatch from Basel.

The Emperor's special train left the station an hour before it was burned by several bombs. A section of the tracks was torn up, cutting communication north.

It has been asserted that the Emperor's train was the last to leave Mannheim, and no trains arrived at Basel yesterday from that city. Two bombs fell on the palace, and one on the suspension bridge across the Neckar river, both structures being badly damaged. An ammunition factory in a northern suburb was blown up. Few persons were killed at the factory however, as the employees were having a holiday. A considerable number of persons were killed or injured in the town and several were blown into the Rhine.

AGED MAILCARRIER IS DEAD

William Squires Carried First Sack of Mail to Tillamook in 1866.

TILLAMOOK, Or., Dec. 26.—(Special.)—William Squires, resident of Tillamook for 50 years, and the first person to carry mail in this vicinity, was buried here Sunday. He was born near Leeds, England, in 1828, and came to America in 1848.

Mr. Squires first located in Illinois, but later returned to England, where he was married to Elizabeth Jackson. He then came to the United States and located at St. Joseph, Mo. They afterward settled in Kansas, where Mr. Squires operated one of the first sawmills in that state.

Mr. Squires crossed the Isthmus in 1845, and later took up his residence in Portland. On July 8, 1866, he started over the old Indian trail with the first sack of mail consigned to Tillamook. He once served as postmaster here, but for the past few years has lived on a homestead near this place.

LABOR IS BARRED FOR SHIP DELAYS

20,000 Men Idle for Month, but Situation Is Now Improving.

BIG PROBLEM IS FACED

Senators Sherman and Nelson Discuss Policy of Conscription of Labor for Government Work During Continuation of War.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 26.—Labor troubles were blamed for much of the delay in the Government's shipbuilding programme by Raymond B. Stevens, vice-chairman of the Shipping Board, testifying today in the Senate commerce committee's investigation.

Since the United States went to war, Mr. Stevens said, shipyards have lost a total of 200,000 man-days through strikes and other disputes. This, he argued, represents the work of 20,000 men for a month. Happily, said Mr. Stevens, the situation is improving by reason of measures taken by the board to adjust differences wherever they arise.

Senators took a lively interest in the story of the labor situation, and the inquiry turned to the whole subject of industrial production during the war. Questions as to the wisdom of conscription of labor for shipyards and other Government work "new from Mr. Stevens' emphatic opposition to any attempt to force civilians to work under prescribed conditions and Government-fixed wages.

Wages Should Be Doubled.—Telling of the board's work in establishing employment agencies on the Pacific Coast, Mr. Stevens said that with their institution also in the East the board hoped to obtain from other industries as many men as it needs.

"The number of men should actually be more than doubled," he said, "we are not accomplishing our full aims. Roughly, there now are about 150,000 men engaged in shipbuilding. We could use from 300,000 to 500,000 more. Recently 100 yards reported that they could use immediately 20,000 more men."

Mr. Stevens described a bonus system instituted in Pacific Coast yards and said if it proved successful an extension of the East was planned.

"Is that not an excess profit you are paying?" asked Senator Nelson.

"We do not consider it as such," replied Mr. Stevens, "but it is a means to the production of ships we think it wise to pay it. What we are concerned with now is the production of ships, and we will not let any excess profit that it is worth while, despite the cost."

Labor Situation Big Problem.—The labor situation, the witness said, presents a problem too big for any one department to handle. A centralized policy as to the relation of the Government to labor during the war, he said, should be worked out immediately. This brought up the discussion regarding conscription.

Senator Sherman asked if it was fair or just to conscript men for the Army and permit workers to strike for higher wages. Mr. Stevens said he did not believe conscription would help accomplish that, as the sentiment was too strong against it. Senator Nelson argued that sentiment had been against the conscription of men for the Army, but that it had been put into force.

"And," he added, "I think it was wise, nevertheless, to vote against it at the time. Sentiments may change respecting labor conscription, too."

Delay Saved \$15,000,000.—Asked if quibbling over prices had delayed ship construction, Mr. Stevens said that the delay had cost \$15,000,000. He told of the delay in closing contracts for fabricated ships, while Admiral Capps, formerly general manager of the Emergency Fleet Corporation, was reducing figures approved by his predecessor, Major-General Goethals. The delay, it was brought out, saved the Government \$15,000,000 in the contracts.

Mr. Stevens took occasion to denounce a published charge that he had let friends in New England ship at a high price. He filed with the committee a letter from General Goethals who, upon seeing the charge, wrote that he had filed the contract in question and that Mr. Stevens had nothing to do with it.

WOMAN KILLED BY BLAST

Hurling Log Carries 175 Yards and Death Is Result.

ASTORIA, Or., Dec. 26.—(Special.)—Mrs. Laura Newport, wife of William Newport, manager of the cookhouse at the Crown Willamette Pulp & Paper Company's construction camp in the Green Mountain district, was instantly killed about 4 o'clock Monday afternoon and the body was brought here this morning.

Mr. Newport was at work in the cookhouse when a charge of 50 sticks of dynamite was set off in a pile of logs and a chunk weighing 120 pounds was hurled about 175 yards, striking the woman in the back of the head and fracturing her skull. She was a native of Iowa, 22 years of age, and left a husband and a 5-year-old son.

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GILL UNDER FIRE

Disbarment Proceedings Are Started Against Mayor.

Case Up to State Board

Action Follows Recent Attempt to Impeach Official in Connection With Vigorous Army Reproof of Vice Conditions.

SEATTLE, Wash., Dec. 26.—(Special.)—Disbarment proceedings were filed today with the State Board of Law Examiners by the Attorney-General against Mayor Hiram Charles Gill and his former law partners, Heber B. Hoyt, Hermon S. Frye and James G. Raley.

This move was the outgrowth of the recent futile effort to secure the impeachment of Mayor Gill by the City Council following the Army order closing Seattle to Camp Lewis convalescent soldiers because of alleged vice conditions here.

Copies of the complaint were received by Sheriff John Stringer late today for service on the attorney. The order is returnable January 7, and the hearing will be held in Seattle. The alleged connection with the law firm with the Merchants' Protective Corporation Council is made the basis of the action.

Mayor Gill is charged with unprofessional conduct in allowing his name, while serving as Mayor, to be used by the firm in its connection with the corporation.

The Merchants' Protective Corporation is an organization that has for its object the protection of its clients in police and justice courts, should they ever be made defendants in such courts. As such, under the complaints filed today, it is alleged that the corporation and its legal representatives are in conflict with the ethics of the legal profession, and are equally under the law prohibiting such practices.

Mayor Gill has always contended that he is not and has not been a member of the law firm of Gill, Hoyt & Frye since his election to office four years ago. Today Heber B. Hoyt and Hermon S. Frye, his former law partners, in a signed statement, bear out the Mayor's explanation, adding:

"We have retained Mr. Gill's name simply because our firm has been known as Gill, Hoyt & Frye since 1902, and we have always expected that as soon as Mayor Gill's term as Mayor expired that he would return to our office and again associate himself with us."

Just what procedure Mayor Gill will follow he has not determined. He has stated that the attempt to disbar him is part of a political conspiracy, and because of this fact he has intimated recently that "he may be forced, much against his will, to run for Mayor again."

Declarations for candidacy for Mayor close January 19, and the hearing on the complaints in disbarment is set for Monday, January 7, in Seattle.

PACIFIC ALUMNI TO MEET

Old Students Will Hold Reunion at Hazelwood Tonight.

Alumni and old students of Pacific University will meet at dinner at the Hazelwood at 6:30 o'clock tonight. The dinner has been arranged by A. J. Prideaux, principal of the Woodstock School, who is president of the Alumni.

It is held at this time because a large number of former students of the Forest Grove college will be in the city to attend the state teachers' meeting.

WAR TAX RETURNS HELD UP

Portland Theaters Not Yet in Receipt of War Blanks.

Patrons of theaters in this city will not know for several days how much they have contributed in the aggregate in war taxes to the Government through the purchase of tickets.

The war income tax, applicable to theater tickets, went into effect in November, and amusement houses were required to make returns early in December. The time for making these reports has been extended, as the Government has not been able to furnish theaters with the necessary blank forms for making returns.

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Salem's Temporary Bridge to Stand. OREGONIAN NEWS BUREAU, Washington, Dec. 26.—The chief of engineers