

Vivid Narrative of Refugee Work in France

AS THE TOWNS WERE WHEN THE AMERICAN RED CROSS STAFFED RECONSTRUCTION



UNDONING THE WORK OF GERMAN SHELLS



MOTOR TRUCKS ACTED AS DRY LAND FERRIES TO SAFETY



THE VILLAGES IN THE THRICE FOUGHT OVER BATTLEFIELD.



REFUGEES HEARDEN FROM TOWNS THREATENED BY THE SECOND GERMAN PUSH



TWO BABES RESCUED FROM FRONTIER VILLAGE



PRECIOUS PERSONAL BELONGINGS WHICH REFUGEES INSISTED ON SAVING DURING THE LAST DRIVE

relief force from Arras was at Amiens, with the doctor and nurses from Nesle. The relief staff from Ham, Nesle, and Grecoourt, with the Society of Friends, was in Montdidier. A small stock of supplies, hastily sent from Noyon was at Lassigny. Noyon itself had come under the guns and was in the centre of feverish activity. Here, as everywhere else, passenger-cars and motor trucks were evacuating civilians and their goods under the general direction of British officers and the French Sous-Prefet of the Department of the Oise. Between the third and fourth days of the battle, Montdidier, Lassigny and Noyon had to be evacuated, and on the fifth day Amiens came within range of the guns and more than fifty thousand people left the city and poured out on to the roads.

The American Red Cross during this time had served civilians chiefly, although more than one of its trucks, with mattresses placed at the bottom to prevent too much jolting, had gone back and forth, time and again, hauling out wounded Tommies and wounded Americans. A portable kitchen, installed on the exact spot at Compiègne where Joan of Arc was captured, provided tea, coffee and other refreshments to ten thousand soldiers and civilians daily. At the Red Cross headquarters chocolate, figs and meat were served to hungry soldiers on passing convoys.

A temporary infirmary was installed in the buffet of the railroad station at Compiègne to take care of persons wounded by bombs and other cases of wounded men, soldiers or civilians, while they were waiting to be sent to a regular hospital. Four American doctors remained at their post until the last patient had been removed. Then, with assistance, in conjunction with the French, they established another hospital in a secure place. In two days this hospital contained two hundred and fifty beds and all necessary equipment.

More than once a camion brought in its last load of helpless old people from a village where the advancing columns were so near that shots from the machine guns were already patterning in the deserted streets. At Nottville was supplied on an hour's notice a four hundred people who had been without food for six hours.

The American Red Cross at Amiens was evacuated with the aid of the hospital barge, and its patients were taken to a place of safety. The Daily Unit, working under the Service de Santé of the French Army, evacuated its patients from a hospital near Compiègne and then offered its personnel for soldier canteen service. At Beaumont a refugee hospital was opened immediately, with American doctors in charge. Lodgings were provided for several hundred fugitives, and the incessant land ferry service, which had been inaugurated at Croix-Molignée on the first day of the battle, was continued in the west.

Little Lost by Red Cross

The Red Cross stores at Ham, Nesle and Lassigny had been lavishly used for the benefit of British and French troops. When the warehouses were finally given up there remained in them only a few heavy things, such as stoves, that could not be carried off or used on the spot, and some small stocks of civilian clothing. In dollars and cents, or in pounds and tons, the American Red Cross lost little in its evacuation.

In closing his report the Chief of the Bureau of Reconstruction and Relief, Acting Field Commander of the American Red Cross in the War Zone, whose work of nine months had been swept away, said with absolute confidence and optimism:

"The same old needs of shelter, food, clothing, tools, medicines, and the friendly fellowship which have been the blood and bone of our work in the devastated regions—these remain. The voice of America has been heard in France. It is being heard more loudly and more clearly every day. It must be heard until we win the victory, and along with the voices of the fighting men the voices of the builders must be heard—the men of the plow and pruning hook and saw and hammer and lathe side by side with the men of the sword."

RED CROSS MEN AND WOMEN AT WORK.

The full story of just what our Red Cross is doing in the Great Battle now raging in France, and how it is doing it can never be told in anything like completeness. Here is a snapshot of the Red Cross men and women at work—two snapshots, in fact. First, a flash at the work of reconstruction and assistance to the despoiled French people in the farms and villages of the Somme, Oise and Aisne Valleys after the great German retreat a year ago. The second snapshot is on the very same scene in the great battle offensive now going on.

Contrast the two pictures—one a picture of rebuilding, after the retreat of the Hunns, the other the work the Red Cross men and women are doing, not only to aid the soldiers themselves, but to save the children, the women, the aged as they flee from the readvancing German herds.

By EDWARD EYRE HUNT.

THE little towns and villages along the banks of the Somme, the Oise, and the Aisne, were burning like bonfires, and Allied airplanes, sweeping back from patrols over St. Quentin, plunged through clouds of black smoke. It was a great but a tragic day for France. The German armies were in retreat, but they had taken their revenge by systematically burning or blowing up every house, every barn and every stable in scores and scores of villages. So it was a desert which the victorious French and British armies occupied the eighteenth of March, 1917.

Organization of Relief.

Life had come back to the desolated fields and villages in the year which had passed since the great German retreat. Slowly and painfully people had returned. And when the American Red Cross sent its Commission to Europe last year, almost its first thought was how it could help these people. When the Department of Civil Affairs was created its director, Homer Folks, formed a Bureau of Reconstruction and Relief to tackle this problem. Several relief departments were established with headquarters in the war zone: it located front-line warehouses within cannon shot of the Germans; it secured remarkable field workers, and at the heart of the destruction wrought by the Germans, in the valley of the river Somme, it began patching up houses and stables for the returning peasants. It shipped into the devastated

region food, clothing, furniture, kitchen utensils, building materials, seed, farm implements, small livestock and fowls.

The relief activities of the Red Cross, apart from its house patching and repair work, were carried on through French relief societies, or through groups of Americans who settled in the villages, and by personal service and the force of their example breathed life into the ruined farms. One such group was the American Fund for French Wounded at Blerancourt, in the Aisne. Another was the Society of Friends at Golancourt, Ham and Grunzy, in the Somme. Another was the Smith College Relief Unit at Grecoourt, in the Somme. Through such devoted groups as these goods were distributed to the destitute, and the implements for farm labor given to the able. Along with the relief societies there was an important movement to organize agricultural co-operative societies in the devastated region. Almost one hundred agricultural associations were in existence; the French government rented them American tractors, plows, and the Red Cross bought them flocks of sheep and quantities of seed for planting.

That was the situation one year to a day since the Germans were driven back to the Hindenburg line from the burning villages in the Somme, the Oise, and the Aisne. A week later, every trace of this work was blotted out; the Germans had again occupied the terrain which for "strategic" reasons they had evacuated a year before.

Story of the Destruction.

The devastated lands were just sprouting of spring wheat carpeted the valleys; daffodils waved in the wind; the fragrance of cherry blossoms hung in the air. In the crispness of the early morning gangs of French workmen in the two big Red Cross barracks were just getting ready to go to their work when the British Town-Major came in. "We must evacuate your workmen across the Somme," he said. "All civilians are to be sent beyond the river at once."

Civilians from neighboring towns were herded together with their hand baggage and livestock. The rapidity with which the order was executed was almost incredible. The two motor trucks which belonged to the construction camp were hastily placed at the disposal of the population, and a sort of dry-land ferry service was established back and forth to the bridges over the river Somme. American military engineers had built those bridges for the British army. The American relief staff in the town of Ham began an immediate evacuation of its small store of supplies; its cars organized a ferry service and carried exhausted civilians beyond the danger zone. The chauffeurs drove again and again into the bombarded towns to bring out the remaining families. One of the chauffeurs in a camionette drove into Ham with three flat tires on broken-down springs and carried out six wounded British soldiers. The staff and the two thousand civilians

from Ham were withdrawn first to Nesle, and then to Roye. At Nesle, the American Red Cross had storage facilities in two wooden barracks, and its stock of food and condensed milk were of immediate value to the refugees and the wounded soldiers streaming in from Ham. A small but important children's hospital also was at Nesle, in a brick house called the Pavillon Joffre. The doctor, the nurses and their patients were evacuated to Roye, where they installed themselves in a small civil hospital belonging to the Secours d'Urgence, and where that night they received wounded soldiers. The following day they were evacuated to Amiens.

The British and American Society of Friends, in close affiliation with the American Red Cross, reported themselves and their cars immediately to the relief delegates in their districts. These non-combatants worked under shellfire without sleep, without rest, day after day and all the nights. The Philadelphia Unit, at Villiquier-Aumont, did similar service.

The Blerancourt Unit used their motor-trucks to capacity in evacuating civilians from the villages northeast of them.

At the rail heads the refugees sat among their bundles, families huddled together fearful of being separated in the bustle, their feather-beds and often their rabbits and a goat pressed close to them. They were dulled by the noise and by their own weariness. The only activity was caused by the Americans, each of whom insisted on finding "my people," and collecting them so that he might better attend to their wants. "Petits peres," an old woman called them.

From the human side the evacuation is, and always will be, indescribable. It was a vast lava flow of men, animals and materials. Every little country road and every highway was jammed with the endless lines of camions moving back the aviation camps, pulling out immense guns, salvaging military supplies of all sorts, and at the same time removing the civilians and their little possessions.

The refugees in their weak misery, and the soldiers in their grim calmness, passed each other on the roads; the one moving forward to stop the invaders, the other fleeing back to safety. The fugitives carried, as best they could, their valuables, seeking safety, and the younger men of their race bearing heavy equipment, went quietly towards the maelstrom. It was like some medieval pageant, for the weak and the strong, the dazed and the keen all bore spring flowers, yellow daffodils or pale anemones, which they gathered as they went along.

Splendid Emergency Relief.

On the third day of the battle the

WAR SUMMARY

General Foch has taken a leaf out of the book of military strategy and ordained the use by the allies' armies of the pincer system of offensive in the Soissons-Rheims salient.

Both jaws of the pincers are moving smoothly with the pivot along the Marne working in unison, and the process of attempting to capture many of the nearly half a million Germans is well on the way to what at present seems like possible success.

The Germans, however, evidently do not intend to permit themselves to be entrapped without fighting. Having thrown thousands of reinforcements into the already congested salient, they have started a counter-attack of great violence all along the semi-circular front from the Ourcq river to the region immediately southwest of Rheims, and their men are said to have orders to stem the allied tide of advance at all costs.

Nevertheless, at last accounts the Americans, French British and Italian

troops, themselves well reinforced to meet the new turn in affairs, were steadily pressing forward at nearly all points on the battle line to Rheims, while east of the cathedral city a Polish contingent—the first of the Poles to enter the combat—is declared to have carried out successfully an enterprise against the enemy in which more than 200 Germans were made prisoner.

The western jaw of the pincer continues to move eastward on both sides of the Ourcq river, and the Franco-American troops are virtually knocking at the gates of Fere-en-Tardenois, the important railway junction and storehouse for Germany's war supplies. Further south to the Marne new successes in keeping with those to the north, have been attained. At the pivot of the pincer north of the Marne, midway between Chateau-Thierry and Rheims, the French have extended their line northward in the forest of Fere, in the Ris forest and north of

Dormans, while the eastern jaw of the pincer, under pressure of the British, has noticeably moved forward in a northwesterly direction for about a mile and a half over a three mile front to Mery-Premecy and Gueux, the last named village five miles west of Rheims and scant mile and a half from the Rheims-Fismes road. At Mery-Premecy the allied line now stands about ten and a half miles southwest of Fismes, which is the central station on the railway running between Soissons and Rheims.

For a week and a day the allied troops have hammered against the Soissons-Rheims salient until its width across between the cities has been narrowed to about 21 miles from an original width of 37 miles. Over the entire pocket the allied artillery continues to rain shells from all sides and airmen are keeping up their intensive bombing of troop formations and military works.

As yet, notwithstanding the inroads of the allied troops, there has been no sign of impending general retreat on the part of the Germans, and it is expected to stand and fight it out. And the allied gains continue with the same success as heretofore; it seems that, with the daily narrowings of the neck of the pocket, the enemy necessarily will lose many of his men when the time comes to make his way northeastward.

Some perturbation is being caused in England through a strike in several cities of munition workers. The workmen threaten a further extension of the strike unless their demands are met.

If you are helping to make those about you happy, you are helping to make them good.

BIG INCREASE S. P. REPORT

Net Income for 1917 higher by \$26,509,274.08 Than Year Before

An increase of \$26,509,274.08 in the net income of the Southern Pacific Railroad company for 1917 over 1916 is shown in the report for 1917 which was filed yesterday with the public service commission. The net income for 1917 was \$30,099,351.19 which means that the net income leaped to that figure from \$3,590,077.11 for 1916. Other figures shown in the report are: Gross income, \$79,696,737.68, an increase of \$10,692,147.80; operating revenue, \$141,652,380.36, an increase of \$20,171,399.62; operating expenses, \$90,961,278.56; taxes, \$9,554,151.74. For Oregon the operating revenue of the company in 1916 was \$9,087,772.55 and for 1917 it was \$11,474,801.52. Operating expenses in Oregon for 1916 were \$7,401,330.61 and for last year \$8,936,506.34.

OREGON

Automobile records in the office of Secretary of State Olcott are kept better than in any other office in the northwest, according to a letter received by Mr. Olcott from Ben Ludlow, investigator for the Pacific Coast Automobile Underwriters conference. On a recent visit here Mr. Ludlow and H. I. Baring, chief investigator, were shown through the department by C. D. Butler, superintendent of the automobile department. Mr. Ludlow says that at the next California legislature an at-

tempt will be made to have the same system adopted for California.

Forest Fires of State Under Control Is Report

According to State Forester F. A. Elliott forest fires in the state are under control, though a fire on the Klamath Indian reservation is still considered a menace. The recent rains fell only lightly in Jackson and Josephine counties and parts of Eastern Oregon were not touched, but fires in those districts are being held down. Most Western Oregon counties had a heavy rainfall.

INSURANCE COST ON GRAIN LOWER

Insurance Commissioner Wells Approves Reting Bureau's Figures

Because of better protection that has been established for grain warehouses in Oregon, State Insurance Commissioner Harvel Wells has ap-

proved new fire insurance rates filed by the Oregon Insurance Rating Bureau, making a reduction of about 20 per cent in all cases where buildings are not exposed to hazards. Warehouses used exclusively for grain and the grain stored in such warehouses are covered by the ruling. As a result of inspections made by the fire marshal's department fire hazards generally have been eliminated by better policing, cleaning of debris and by installation of more adequate fire fighting apparatus in many towns.

Read the Classified Ads.

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The end of the Turk will bring the end of the war. This is Armageddon. By all means hear this.

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