

# Story of War---Conditions of Warring Armies at End of Two Year's Conflict

## The British Army

By Ed L. Keen  
(United Press staff correspondent)

London, July 28.—(By mail)—Success in modern warfare isn't measured in terms of real estate. If it were Great Britain and her allies might put with considerable pride to the acquisition in the last two years of more than three times the acreage of the German empire.

The second anniversary of the war finds the allies in possession of all the former great Teutonic colonies except German East Africa. Latest advices indicate that this particular parcel of land is about to fall into the hands of General Smuts and his Belgian and Portuguese friends—a mere matter of some 384,079 square miles, or in itself 179,299 square miles larger than Germany.

But as Napoleon observed, the smashing of armies is the only thing that matters. Germany's armies are today just as much unsmashed as they were two years ago. The outposts may be regarded as negligible. Of little more account, in their border aspects, have been the misfortunes of the allies in Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, and in the Balkans.

The last year on the western front has been one of stalemate. There have been tremendous losses on both sides, but the lines of the opposing armies follow much the same course as they did in August of 1912. Each has bitten a few slices out of the other's territory; certain important positions have been captured and some of them have been recaptured; but one requires a large scale map and fairly good eye sight to detect the changes. Both armies, their losses recruited, remain unbroken.

Defenses Now Impregnable

Under the new style of intensive trench warfare which has been steadily developing on this front during the two years, the defenses of each have apparently become impregnable. The objective of the "big push" in these latter days is not so much to break through to the Rhine, or to the Channel ports, as it is to inflict the greatest possible damage upon the other side.

"Attrition" has become the motto on the western front for both armies. Granted enough powerful guns, with sufficient ammunition, concentrated upon any one sector, either may at any time clean up the intervening wire entanglements, demolish the opposing front line trenches and occupy their blocks by more intricate and more elaborate defenses in the rear. Ypres, Loos, Hooge and even Verdun are no longer of especial consequence in the military sense. They are merely geographical points—with much more geography, even more strongly defended, spread out behind them.

Great Britain still is paying the pen-

alty of unpreparedness; or if you don't like it put that way, Germany still is reaping the fruits of preparedness.

That Sir Douglas Haig has failed seriously to get the enemy's lines is no greater reflection upon his military skill than the failures of his predecessor, General French, were upon his. True, he has had more men, and, with in recent months, thanks to the organizing genius of Lloyd George, more munitions—but he has had a longer line to cover. The British now occupy trenches extending from the Channel of Mariencourt—with the exception of a very small sector held by the Belgians—a total distance of more than 100 miles, or nearly one fourth of the entire western front. Furthermore, he is maintaining heavy reserves, subject to any call for help from the French.

Are Poorly Officered

But Haig's armies are suffering from the same defect as those of his predecessor; they are inadequately officered, especially in the staff department. In nearly every instance since the war started, where the British armies have met with reverse or have failed to attain the immediate objective of their offensive, this has been directly traceable to inefficient co-ordination of staff work.

The reason is very simple: It has been a game of amateurs against professionals. England lost many of her capable and promising officers in the early days of the war. She has not only to fill their places, but to train others in sufficient numbers to compete with staff efficiency of a military machine of forty years' standing.

But if Britain's successes in the field have been overly brilliant, no one will dispute that her achievement in recruiting, organizing, training and equipping an army of more than five million men since the war began—and doing so on the voluntary principle, too—has been one of the marvels of military history.

8,000,000 War Workers

Adding to this number those who have been brought in under the recent conscription act—somewhat less than a million—and those employed in the munitions and naval ship building industries, the second anniversary of the war finds approximately eight million men and women directly engaged in war work or in other words, one person out of every six in the United Kingdom.

This feat is all the more remarkable when one considers that Britain was not a military nation, in the sense that the others were.

It was this deficiency of vision that caused the British public to pile upon one man's shoulders what eventually

proved too gigantic a burden for him—or any other man—to bear.

There is no discretion in the memory of the late war secretary in saying that he failed, in part. As an organizer and trainer of human war materiel he was superb. England's new army was properly labeled "Kitchener's Army." On the mechanical side of modern warfare, he was lacking in genius.

Then England woke up. It was suddenly realized that this was no ordinary man's war. Lloyd George was made minister of munitions with authority to commandeer the industries of the country.

The Russian Army

By William Philip Simms.  
(United Press staff correspondent.)

Petrograd, July 1.—(By mail).—The Russian army is twice as big as it was when the war started, is better fed, equipped and munitioned. Militarily, we are able to carry our part of the load.

It was the president of the duma, Mikhail Rodzianko, who told me this, a leader known to Russia as a frank, outspoken man. This man knows something about armies. He began life as an officer from a military academy. He is actively engaged on army problems now.

Duma member Sergius Saitovskoy, leader of the Progressive Bloc, controller element of the assembly, gave the same answer, adding:

"The army is better than it has ever been. Its spirit is perfect. In the country the people are too busy to be pessimistic. Townspeople love to tell alarming tales which grow. At the front with the soldiers it is another world. Everybody is cheerful. To some extent, the Russian army has been a disappointment, judging it by German standards of perfection. Judged otherwise, the Russians have accomplished heroic things.

Russia's Vastness

Russia stretches twice as far from east to west as the United States. She is as wide as from New York to San Francisco. Her population is thinly distributed over this tremendous area—few and far, for a campaign against Germany, inconveniently laid.

When war began, the Russian army was undergoing complete reorganization. Mobilization caught it at the worst moment. The new untried mobilization scheme was stopped and the old one resorted to.

Russia is 80 per cent peasant and reserves cannot be notified quickly as in Germany. Also notified, many must walk great distances to the nearest settlement. From here the first small group walks or rides to a village on a railway and from here to a city to be equipped and despatched to the army. It is a slow process, hard to improve upon until Russia has better transportation and communication.

Quick-mobilizing countries mobilize on the frontier. Russia, unable to throw millions of men on the enemy's boundary line in time, concentrates in the interior. She cannot hope to begin a war on the offensive but expects to remove hostilities in a clash inside her own territory against invaders.

When she threw her forces against Austria she threw herself five days after the war began, unprepared by at least a month, though she knew herself to be.

The world knows the disaster to the Russians among the Mazurian marshes of Rennenkamp's defeat at Osterode late in August after he had thrown von Hindenburg back from Insterburg, Königsburg, Allenstein and Gumbinnen. This was Russia's first sacrifice.

Her Work Was Heroic

It is only 180 miles from the nearest point on the Russian frontier to Berlin. Looking at the map, a sidwank strategists opined that Russia ought to make the distance in 30 days. But even had Russia mobilized, struck via short line, she would have reached Berlin only to receive a mortal blow from north and south cutting off and drowning her retreating army. Both eastern Prussia and Galicia had to be occupied before the Posen route to Berlin could even be attempted.

So Galicia was invaded. Tarnopol was stormed and occupied. Lemberg and Przemysl taken by the forces under General Russki who mastered the country clear to the crests of the Carpathians.

Then time, distance, lack of railway facilities, had roads and other physical handicaps outdid him—these and greatly reinforced Austrian armies framed with Germans and led in part by German officers. The Russian retreat from Galicia was the result.

Blocked on the western front by the French and British, unable to advance an inch there, the Germans perfected their trenches, barbed-wire-entanglements and machine-gun system from the Channel to Switzerland, then threw her remaining strength on Poland. Lodz was captured, Plock taken and one by one, quickly the historic cities and fortresses of all Poland, including Warsaw, the capital, fell.

Russia is Unbeatable

If it is said Germany aimed to crush Russia and make a separate peace after Warsaw, but Russia was not crushed. She knows defensive fighting too well. She lost much, but her army is stronger now than ever. A high French official said to me:

"Russia is unbeatable. She is too big. She can keep on retreating until at last the enemy will be swallowed up."

In the retreat from Poland the army had much to contend with. It was badly munitioned. The minister of war, General Soukhomlinov, deemed responsible for the army during this period, has been relieved of his duties and now awaits trial in the fortress of Peter and Paul, on an island in the Neva.

When Grand Duke Nicholas was sent to the Caucasus, the czar himself took command of the Russian front proper. He now spends little time in Petrograd. For the last few months, the citizen organizations of Russia have been backing up the army with vigor. So unified are these groups that there are today two armies fighting for Russia—a soldier army and a citizen one. Thus, after two years of war, many disasters, the Russian army believes its darkest days are over.

The French Army

By Henry Wood  
(United Press staff correspondent.)

Paris, July 1.—(By mail)—Within two years, despite the handicap of maintaining her own unequal end in the world's greatest war, France has built up a military machine that today the French contend is superior to the organization which Germany was forty years in preparing.

France is not a military nation. She does not boast of her war engine, but she takes credit for genius in organization and resourcefulness which she would have preferred to employ in pursuits of peace.

That war engines today are superior to those of Germany, France feels has been demonstrated by the successful resistance to date. Germany has had to divide her organization on various fronts, but has opposed man for man on the French front, and there is reason to believe that in most combats she had had numerical superiority.

Barring the first two months of the war, when an unprepared France fell back under the impetus of this world's Colossus, she has held her own. Before the war ends, she expects to have demonstrated that she can do more than that.

France feels Verdun is the supreme test of the present relative efficiency of the two fighting machines. Best estimate available here place the total of German troops employed there since the beginning of the battle at 1,000,000. France can give the names and numbers of German regiments to establish this figure.

France has had no more than half that number. The Germans themselves place the total of French troops at Verdun at 600,000. Some neutral military experts give the same figure while the Swiss and Argentine military attaches with the crown prince's army place the figure so low as 350,000. Yet the French have more than held their own at Verdun.

5,000,000 in Service

This intensive organization has cost France tremendous effort. Since the beginning of the war, 5,000,000 French men have worn the French uniform in actual service. With a population of fewer than 40,000,000 one person of every eight in France, regardless of age, sex or physical ability, has served.

Before the war, each class as it was called to the colors with its attainment of military age, gave France but 350,000 soldiers. Since war began, the classes of 1916, 1917 and 1918, the last not called but its number known, have yielded 300,000 men each. The explanation is that when France had to create a military machine in a hurry, she turned to the civilian population.

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great drive through Galicia. Guns furnished the Russians by the Japs are French models. Other nations were aided.

When the present war began, it was one of the national scandals in Italy, that her artillery did not have a single modern field piece. France allowed her to equip her entire army from the Dupont works.

Since the beginning of the present war, France has organized, fought and bled with all the superior genius and generosity of which the French nation has ever been capable.

The German Army

By Carl W. Ackerman  
(United Press staff correspondent.)

Berlin, July 1. (By mail)—The second year of the war will be known in Germany's military history as the year of political strategy. The moves of the military chessboard of Europe have been dictated by international relations. Fighting was framed to help the diplomats.

The goal has been victory where possible and to keep the allies from winning over neutral powers or bringing offensives. From his standpoint the first year of the war when the military strategy was to beat back the enemy armies in France and Russia. The first year was one of military events for military purposes; the second year one of military movements for political purposes.

An army is not supposed to play politics but in a great war there is always danger of other nations coming in and the strategy of an army must be dictated by the then national aims of the nation. For instance, instead of invading Serbia the armies used there might have been used against Russia.

Riga and even Moscow might have been taken. Had this been done, the Russian move would have been against Russia only, and the effect would have been great outside that country. But the armies were sent into Serbia, Bulgaria joined the central powers and the united offensive kept Roumania and Greece neutral. That campaign solved for many months the vexing Balkan problems.

Temporarily on Roumania

The situation there since has not materially changed. The allies have occupied Salonika. For months they have had thousands of soldiers there to feed and pay. For the central powers this has been a valuable thing because it has further divided the attacking power of the allies. The presence of the allies in Greece, however, has been a permanent invitation to Roumania to join hands with Russia and cut the line of communication between Berlin and Constantinople. If Roumania did break her neutrality it might not be a difficult thing for the allies to bridge the Balkans between Roumania and Greece and perhaps force the fall of Constantinople via Adrianople.

With this possibility continually confronting the diplomats of Europe; with Bukarest excited by the intrigues of the ministers, Roumania was at times on the brink of declaring war. One of these moments was last February. At about the same time the German correspondents at the west front reported that papers had been found indicating that the French were preparing a great offensive on the west front March 15. Therefore two birds could be done with one stone. If there was a German offensive on the west front the French forces could be occupied and an offensive from that side of the allies could be postponed. At the same time an impression could be made in Roumania to show that the German army was not at the end of its resources.

Politics Caused Verdun Move

Political necessity dictated the battle of Verdun. The initial success of this attack encouraged many people to expect the early fall of the fortress but the French were strongly prepared to resist and the policy of an offensive on a large scale was changed to a "ribbling." This process has been continuing for three months, because in the offensive the German correspondents reported that the French had shifted the time for their offensive to May 15. Since then the German army has attacked Verdun continually and kept a large French reserve force on the ground, preventing a unity of French forces at any other part of the front for an allies offensive.

During the last year the allies have achieved what in Germany was gaining by all her victories. The farther she invades our lands, the more she defeats herself. As long as we control the seas, Germany's military victories can gain her nothing. We are sure to win because we control the seas.

This contention of the allies is worth careful consideration. If Germany gains nothing by her victories on land, the war might as well stop one might as occupy Serbia, could they have made the bids for terms in the Balkans they can make now? If the German army did not occupy Warsaw could the German chancellor state in the Reichstag that Germany will not make peace until there are assurances that Poland will not again fall into the hands of the Russian government? Every mile of land gained by the central powers from the sea can be checked off against the allies control of the seas and if Germany solves her economic problems, the loss of the sea routes will not be felt any more keenly than the loss of Belgium to the King of that country or the occupation of Serbia by the interests of Russia and the Karageorgevich dynasty.

Judging solely from appearances in Berlin and at the front the clasp of the first two years of the war does not find Germany nor her allies exhausted in a military way. Germany has not yet called out all of her 1916 class, while France has called the 1917 class. If Germany does this her army can be increased at any time over 600,000 men. The summer and fall months may see

great battles in more than one war theatre. The Italian Army.

(By John H. Henrichy, United Press Staff Correspondent.)

Rome, July 1.—(By mail)—Italy today is fully satisfied with the results of the first year of the Austro-Italian war. The once strongly fortified Austrian mountain line from Giudicarie to Montefalco practically is all in her hands. Only a small section of Italian territory in the neighborhood of Sette Comuni has been taken.

The history of Italy's war on land reads like fiction. When the European strife began, the Italian kingdom was unprepared. The standing army of 280,000 was disorganized and unequipped. Big and petty politics were dangerously mixed in it. The country's finances were in a bad way.

Italy's military house had to be put in order. All eyes turned to Luigi Cadorna, chief of the general staff. His father before him had led the Italians into Rome in 1870. Like him, he is a quiet man of few words and big deeds. Cadorna in twelve months worked wonders. The army was increased to more than 1,500,000, trained and equipped for all kinds of warfare. The hum of munition and gun-making machinery was heard through the land.

The enemy, it was believed, would attempt to enter the country through the Trentino in the west and the Isonzo in the east. The Italian campaign was planned to retake Trent and Trieste, lock these two gates against invasion and press on possibly to Vienna. The meeting of two Austrian armies on the historic plains of Lombardy for a possible conquest of Italy had to be prevented. The great battle Napoleon had fought on Lombard soil had taught its lessons.

Cadorna's Good Work

Cadorna and his intimate associate, General Porro, laid their preliminary plans well. Both knew the tricky mountainous frontier of Austria, with its natural defenses and fortifications, perfectly. Disguised as beggars, they are said to have studied every mook and cranny of the hostile border.

Four fronts with 14 zones were established, the Trentino, Dolomite, Gargia and Isonzo. At the very beginning of hostilities the right bank of the Isonzo, excepting the bridgeheads of Gorizia and Tolmeice, fell before the Italian arms followed by the capture of Monte Nero and Piava. These things took less than a month.

During July and August the invasion of Austrian territory continued. Extensive inroads on enemy soil were made, especially in the Carso and Trentino. By October the Isonzo front was blood-soaked. The fighting about Gorizia, the key to Trieste, grew heavy early this year. March and April crowned the Italian offensive with the capture of Col di Lana. The Austrians in Italy delivered their first big offensive. fierce onslaught was made on Montefalco which fell, but later was retaken.

Meanwhile on a 50-mile front in the Trentino 400,000 Austrians and immense quantities of ammunition were concentrated. Then came the tremendous attempt to open the way to Venetia. Thousands of Italians were mowed down. For the first time in the war the enemy set foot on Italian soil and about 500 square kilometers of territory was occupied. It was mountainous country dotted with Alpine hamlets. The Italians still held about 4000 square kilometers of enemy soil, including the fertile plains of Montefalco and important villages.

Pressure Relieved by Russia

The Italians then began to push back the enemy, slow as snail work. Meanwhile General Brusini was openly charged with responsibility for the Austrian invasion and deprived of his command for "neglect of duty." This invasion cost the Austrians 20,000 in prisoners and almost as many in killed and wounded. Austrian losses were heavy, too. The initiation of the Russian offensive in early June relieved the pressure of the Italian front.

By then, Italy's army had grown to almost 4,000,000 men and plans for adding a million more were made. The Italian campaign has taken a tremendous toll in dead and wounded because in the beginning Victor's forces were deposited in unfortified valleys while the Austrians were strongly entrenched on the overlooking mountains. Uphill fighting had to be waged for many miles and it was equalized.

The Alpini have been the heroes of Italy's war. Their catlike agility is marvelous. They have been forced, tentatively to climb sheer walls of mountains, pulling up men and cannon behind them to begin the slow process of fortification. Trenches had to be tunneled in the rock or hewn in solid ice. Moving glaciers and avalanches added to the dangers as well as to hardships. Freezing weather occasioned the invention of extremely warm but light clothing for the military.

Above Snow Lines

"Heat Balls" were invented. These were made by soaking rolls of tightly drawn paper in prepared oil and grease. When lighted, they retained their heat and flame for about 15 minutes. Bopes lifted baskets of them to Alpini and soldiers, fighting in the clouds, thousands of feet above the sea level. They were used to warm canned foods and soups.

Skins and snowshoes were also introduced to war. Engagements between whole companies of Austrians and Italians on skills have been frequent.

The spirit of the Italian army is fine. Unofficial estimates place the Austrian losses at approximately 450,000, about 80,000 of which are said to be in killed. Austrian prisoners are rumored to bear the 100,000 mark. The enemy damages, it is asserted, are not counterbalanced by the Italian casualties. The presence of the king in the field is an inspiration to the fighters.

(Tomorrow the story will be about the navies of the warring countries.)

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