

# GEN. FRENCH TELLS HOW BRITONS HAVE FACED GIANT GERMAN GUNS

London.—The official press bureau issued a report from Field Marshal Sir John French's headquarters on the British operations in France. The text follows:

"The enemy is still maintaining himself along the whole front and in order to do so is throwing into the fight detachments composed of units from the different formations, the active army, reserve, and landwehr, as is shown by the uniforms of the prisoners recently captured.

"Our progress, although slow on account of the strength of the defensive position against which we are pressing, has in certain directions been continuous, but the present battle may well last for some days more before a decision is reached, since it now approximates nearly to siege warfare.

"The Germans are making use of searchlights. This fact, coupled with their great strength in heavy artillery, leads to the supposition that they are employing material which may have been collected for the siege of Paris.

**Confident of the Result.**

"The nature of the general situation after the operations of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth, cannot be better summarized than as expressed recently in a neighboring French commander to his corps: 'Having repulsed repeated and violent counter attacks made by the enemy, we have a feeling that we have been victorious.'

"So far as the British are concerned, the course of events during these three days can be described in a few words. During Friday, eighteenth, artillery fire was kept up intermittently by both sides during daylight. At night the Germans counter-attacked certain portions of our line, supporting the advance of their infantry as always by a heavy bombardment. But the strokes were not delivered with great vigor and ceased about 2 a. m. During the day's fighting an air-craft gun of the Third army corps succeeded in bringing down a German aeroplane.

"News was received also that a body of French cavalry had demolished part of the railway to the north, cutting, at least temporarily, one line of communication which is of particular importance to the enemy.

**German Attack Stopped.**

"On Saturday, the nineteenth, the bombardment was resumed by the Germans at an early hour and continued intermittently under reply from our guns. Some of their infantry advanced from cover, apparently with the intention of attacking, but on coming under fire they retired. Otherwise the day was uneventful, except for the activity of the artillery, which is a matter of normal routine rather than an event.

"Another hostile aeroplane was brought down by us, and one of our aviators succeeded in dropping several bombs over the German line, one incendiary bomb falling with considerable effect on a transport park near La Fere.

"A buried store of the enemy's ammunitions of war also was found not far from the Aisne, ten wagon loads of live shells and two wagons of cable being dug up. Traces were discovered of large quantities of stores having been burned—all tending to show that as far back as the Aisne the German retreat was hurried.

"There was a strong wind during the day, accompanied by a driving rain. This militated against the aerial reconnaissance.

**Several German Attacks Fail.**

"On Sunday, the twentieth, nothing of importance occurred until the afternoon, when there was a break in the clouds and an interval of feeble sunshine, which was hardly powerful enough to warm the soaking troops. The Germans took advantage of this brief spell of fine weather to make several attacks against different points. These were all repulsed with loss to the enemy, but the casualties incurred by us were by no means light.

"In one section of our firing line the occupants of the trenches were under the impression that they heard a military band in the enemy's line just before the attack developed. It is now known that the German infantry started their advance with bands playing.

"The offensive against one or two points was renewed at dusk, with no greater success. The brunt of the resistance naturally has fallen on the infantry. In spite of the fact that they have been drenched to the skin for some days and their trenches have been deep in mud water, and in spite of the incessant night alarms and the almost continuous bombardment to which they have been subjected, they have on every occasion been ready for the enemy's infantry when the latter attempted to assault, and they have beaten them back with great loss. Indeed, the sight of troops coming up has been a positive relief after long, trying hours of inaction under shell fire.

**German Cannon Fire Fails.**

"The object of the great proportion of artillery the Germans employ is to beat down the resistance of their enemy by concentrated and prolonged fire—to shatter their nerve with high explosives before the infantry attack is launched. They seem to have relied on doing this with us, but they have not done so, though it has taken them several costly experiments to discover this fact.

"From statements of prisoners it appears that they have been greatly disappointed by the moral effect produced by their heavy guns, which, despite the actual losses inflicted, has not been at all commensurate with the

colossal expenditure of ammunition which has been wasted.

"By this it is not implied that their artillery fire is not good. It is more than good—it is excellent. But the British soldier is a difficult person to impress or depress, even by immense shells filled with a high explosive, which detonate with terrific violence and form craters large enough to act as graves for five horses.

**Scott at German Shells.**

"The German howitzer shells are from eight to nine inches in caliber, and on impact they send up columns of greasy black smoke. On account of this they are irreverently dubbed 'coal boxes,' 'black Marias,' or 'Jack Johnsons' by the soldiers.

"Men who take things in this spirit are, it seems, likely to throw out the calculations based on loss of morale so carefully framed by the German military philosophers.

"A considerable amount of information has been gleaned from prisoners. It has been gathered that our bombardment on the fifteenth produced a great impression. The opinion also is reported that our infantry makes such good use of the ground that the German companies are decimated by our rifle fire before the soldier can be seen.

"From an official diary captured by the First army corps it appears that one of the German corps contains an extraordinary mixture of units. If the composition of the other corps is similar it may be assumed that the present efficiency of the enemy's forces is in no way comparable with what it was when the war commenced.

**Germans Lose Many Officers.**

"The losses in officers are noted as having been especially severe. A brigade is stated to be commanded by a major; some companies of foot guards by one-year volunteers, while after the battle of Montmirail one regiment lost fifty-five out of sixty officers.

"The prisoners recently captured appreciate the fact that the march on Paris has failed, and that their forces are retreating, but state that the object of this movement is explained by the officers as being to withdraw into closer touch with the supports which have stayed too far in the rear.

"The officers are also endeavoring to encourage the troops by telling them that they will be at home by Christmas. A large number of the men believe that they are beaten.

"Among the items of news are the following: Recently a pilot and observer of the Royal Flying corps were forced by a breakage in their aeroplane to descend in the enemy's lines. The pilot managed to pancake his machine down to earth and the two escaped into some thick undergrowth in the woods.

"The enemy came up and seized and smashed the machine, but did not search for our men with much zeal. The latter lay hid till dark and then found their way to the Aisne, across which they swam, reaching camp in safety but barefooted.

"Numerous floating bridges have by now been thrown across the Aisne and some of the permanent bridges have been repaired under fire. On the twentieth Lieutenant (name deleted) of Third signal corps, Royal Engineers, was unfortunately drowned while attempting to swim across the river with a cable in order to open up fresh telegraph communication on the north.

**Telephone Aid to Spies.**

"Espionage is still carried on by the enemy to a considerable extent. Recently the suspicions of some of the French troops were aroused by coming across a farm from which the horses had been removed. After some search they discovered a telephone which was connected by an underground cable with the German lines, and the owner of the farm paid the penalty in the usual way in war for his treachery.

"After some cases of village fighting, which occurred earlier in the war, it was reported by some of our officers that the Germans had attempted to approach to close quarters by forcing prisoners to march in front of them. The Germans have recently repeated the same trick on a larger scale against the French, as is shown by the copy of an order issued by the French officials. It is therein referred to as a ruse, but if that term can be accepted it is a distinctly illegal ruse.

**Charges Tricks to Germans.**

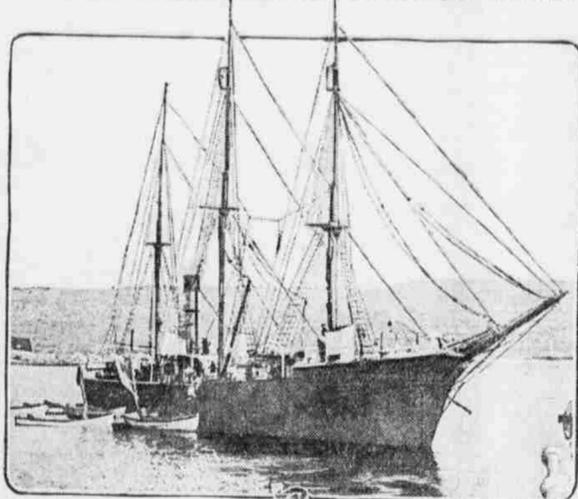
"During a recent night attack, the order reads, 'the Germans drove a column of French prisoners in front of them. This action is to be brought to the notice of all our troops, (1) in order to put them on their guard against such a dastardly ruse, (2) in order that every soldier may know how the Germans treat their prisoners. Our troops must not forget that if they allow themselves to be taken prisoners the Germans will not fail to expose them to French bullets.'

"Further evidence has now been collected of the misuse of the white flag and other signs of surrender.

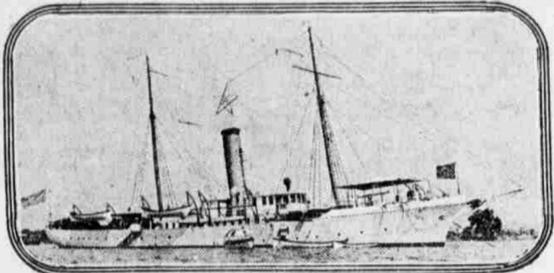
"During recent fighting, also, German ambulance wagons advanced in order to collect the wounded. An order to cease fire was consequently given to our guns, which were firing on this particular section of ground. The German battery commanders at once took advantage of the lull in the action to climb up their observation ladders and on to a haystack to locate our guns, which soon afterwards came under a far more accurate fire than any to which they had been subjected up to that time."



MAP INDICATING THEORETICAL POSITION AND SHAPE OF AN UNCHARTED ARCTIC CONTINENT



J. S. KARLUK



U.S. REVENUE CUTTER BEAR

# RESCUE SHIP of the ARCTIC

**H**ISTORY again repeats itself. Seventeen years ago, in November, 1897, the United States revenue cutter Bear was dispatched northward to rescue the crews of eight whaling vessels ice-bound in the Arctic ocean somewhere in the neighborhood of Point Barrow, Alaska. Now the same ship is off once more for that frigid region, but this time to effect the relief of that part of the crew of the ill-fated Karluk now marooned upon Wrangel island, to the northwest of Bering strait.

As will be recalled, the Karluk set out to explore the Arctic region north of Beaufort sea and if possible to examine more closely Crocker land, which was sighted by Peary on the 24th of June, 1906, from a distant point. The discovery of Crocker land gave tangible support to the old contention that the polar region was not a great ice-covered sea, but instead that a vast continent existed beneath its eternal cloak of snow and ice. Stefansson was one of those who believed in the existence of an Arctic continent in that wide untraversed realm, and his aim was to trace a part at least of its boundaries.

To the casual observer the untimely ending of his expedition might seem to have thwarted his purpose and to have rendered useless the venturing of the Karluk, but the loss of that craft in itself has, paradoxically, added cumulative evidence of the existence of the shores that Stefansson and his followers did not see. To make this clear it is necessary to explain how the searching mind of the scientist has already determined the probable existence of an uncharted Arctic continent or a vast archipelago of large islands covering a total area of quite 500,000 square miles—an area more than ten times as big as the state of New York or as large as Alaska itself.

Have you ever spilled a cupful of water on a level bit of ground? If so, you have probably noticed how far the liquid spread. Again, you have no doubt poured a bucketful of water into a barrel and been disgusted at the modest degree it went toward filling it. In a popular way this illustrates the manner in which the waters of a rising tide advance upon low-lying lands and, again, how the same influx is relatively but little noticed when the basin is deep and broad.

Without entering into the details of Arctic tides, it is a fact that they are normally of modest range, and yet in some parts the rise and fall is considerably less than it should be if the water were free to circulate from shore to shore or from side to side of the Arctic basin. Indeed, so we are told by R. A. Harris of the United States coast and geodetic survey, "at Bennett island at Teplitz bay, Franz Josef land, the range of the diurnal wave has about one-half of the magnitude which the tidal forces acting over an uninterrupted Arctic basin would produce." In other words, the normal or theoretical flow is somehow impeded, and the question is, What is the nature and the extent of this obstruction or series of tidal checks?

The semi-daily tides found in the Arctic ocean are derived almost entirely from those of the North Atlantic, because the semi-daily forces vanish at the pole and are very small in the higher latitudes," Mr. Harris continues, "it is a case of getting near the hub of a wheel. These tides enter the Arctic ocean proper by way of the strait lying between Spitzbergen and the eastern coast of northern Greenland. They are propagated through the Arctic to the New Siberian islands, the average rise and fall at Bennett island being 2.5 feet.

"Now upon the assumption of an uninterrupted Arctic basin the tides at Point Barrow and at Flaxman island could not differ greatly in size from the tides which would, upon the same assumption, be found at Bennett island. But as a matter of fact the rise and fall of the semi-daily tide is 0.4 foot at Point Barrow and 0.5 at Flaxman island."

But the presence of an obstruction, assuming the water for the tidal movement to come, as Mr. Harris says, from the Atlantic ocean via the passage between the northeastern coast of Greenland and Spitzbergen, is further evidenced by the directions in which the ebb and the flood tides flow. If no barrier existed to the free movement of the flood from east to west then the ebb would run east to the outlet between the two points mentioned. In short, it would leave by the shortest route to the original point of entry into the Arctic basin.

Other records are available that help to bear out Mr. Harris' argument in favor of a vast uncharted continent or extended group of big islands of which Crocker land is but a part. In September, 1879, the Arctic exploring craft Jeannette was caught by the ice and frozen in near Wrangel island, where the Karluk's men are now marooned. She was carried by the ebb tide along with the ice to the westward until she sank on June 12, 1881, to the northeast of Bennett island.

Again, Nansen's Fram was frozen in to the eastward of Bennett island on September 22, 1893, and after drifting generally westward got clear on July 19, 1896, at a point nearly due north of Spitzbergen. Now let us see what happened to the Karluk.

On October 6, last year, Stefansson's ship was swept from her anchorage by a gale and carried off shore at a point northeast of Barter island near Manning point. There she was caught by the Arctic pack, from which it was impossible to break her loose, and thence she, too, drifted to the westward—always westward—until crushed and sent to the bottom north of Wrangel island

at a position close to that in which the Jeannette was first gripped by the ice in September, 1879.

Why should all these vessels have been moved continually to the west by the Arctic drift? Simply because, as Mr. Harris and others have explained, the incoming tide from the Atlantic has to sweep to the eastward and around some great obstruction that reaches down from close to the pole to a point fairly near Alaska and the uppermost shores of the Dominion of Canada. The ebb tide in passing out in turn has to follow the same circuitous route, but its movement is to the westward, and probably stronger in its general effect than the incoming or flood tide. Why should this be?

Look at the little map that goes with this article. The curving lines with time marked in Roman numerals show how the advancing high tide moves from the Atlantic and the other figures and decimals indicate the measure of the rise. Plainly, the further the water sweeps into the pocket ending at Beaufort sea the smaller the tidal flux and the slower the water moves in the interval of tide change; the water, so to speak, is being crowded. Accordingly on the ebb the sweep is freer, as it is trending toward the great open Atlantic, and this probably accounts for the aggregate net gain in the westward drift.

In this fashion, with the tidal data available, the hydrographer has been able not only to compute the general area of the unknown continent or archipelago, but to approximate its broad contours. True, the Karluk never reached her objective, and Stefansson did not even see Crocker land, but his ship, in her unchecked wanderings in the grip of the Arctic pack, confirmed the existence of the vast barrier in the Arctic basin and will inspire further efforts in the direction of its exploration.

After the Karluk sank Captain Bartlett and his men made their toilsome way southward over the pack ice to Wrangel island, where they encamped with such of the ship's stores as they were able to carry off with them. From Wrangel island Captain Bartlett and one Eskimo made a sledge trip to the Siberian coast and Providence bay, thence crossing in the American whaler Herman north of the St. Lawrence island to St. Michael on the Alaskan shores. From St. Michael news of the predicament of his men on Wrangel island was dispatched to the United States, and steps were at once started looking to the early relief of the shipwrecked crew.

At this time the United States revenue cutter Bear is on her way into the Arctic ocean and would undoubtedly have gone sooner had it not been learned that the Arctic pack was still as far south as Point Hope, Alaska. The work cut out for the doughty little steamer is perilous, for she will probably have to nose her way north and westward against a good deal of opposition as it is. We can best gather an idea of the task by reference to the kindred duty performed by the ship in the early summer of 1898 when she got the crews of the eight whalers out of their hazardous positions on the northern Alaskan coast.

Capt. F. Tuttle, then in command of the Bear, started from St. Michael on July 7 and on the 17th of that month stood northward through Bering strait. Arriving off Point Barrow about July 30, the Bear was made fast to the solid pack. It

was impossible to anchor. One of the whalers, the Jeannette, was also secured to the ice to the south of the revenue cutter. Here is what Captain Tuttle reported of the situation at the time:

"In the afternoon of the 30th there were large pieces of ice drifting along with the current. Fearing they might strike the vessel and part the mooring lines, got under way and steamed into an indentation in the ground ice, where the steamer Jeannette was made fast. A suitable mooring place was found and the vessel made fast to the ground ice.

"On August 1 and 2 loose ice would drift in and pack around the vessel where she lay in the indentation in the ice. As there was only a trifling pressure no danger was anticipated. At 2 p. m. August 3 came a sudden pressure of the ice, the four forward fasts carried away and the vessel forced astern about five feet. The pressure then coming against the starboard side forced the port side against the ground ice.

"A point of ice under water abreast the engine room, the weakest place in the vessel, as there are no athwartship timbers there, forced the port side in sufficiently to buckle the engine room floor plates. Men were immediately sent with ice chisels and the ice was cut away. As soon as the ice was removed the pressure at that point ceased and the floor plates dropped back in place.

"The after section of the rudder was sprung about an eighth of an inch. The ice was cut from around the rudder and the pressure on that was removed. So far as can be seen no material damage was done by the nip. A vessel less strongly constructed would have been crushed at once."

On more than one occasion that year the little Bear was hard put to it and her mission of mercy was fraught with hazards. On several occasions during that Arctic summer she had to blast a channel open to clear water, and this exploit was not always immediately successful, while the odds against escape piled up in a threatening manner. However, the ship kept steadily at her task, and in the end the ice-bound whalers were succored and carried back to civilization, or after restoration to health set upon other whalers in that treacherous region.

Ice was not the only peril, for with the milder months there was fog, and occasionally very strong winds or gales that meant danger upon that barren coast. As a part of the relief expedition a sled party was dispatched overland long before the Bear could nose her way into the Arctic ocean, and of the gallant work of those men Americans and the personnel of the revenue cutter service may well be proud.

In closing his report to the treasury department Captain Tuttle said: "The officers and crew bore the monotonous isolation with the greatest patience, complaints being almost unheard of. The courage, fortitude and perseverance shown by the members of the overland expedition are deserving of the highest commendation.

"Starting over a route seldom traveled before by dog sleds, with a herd of over 400 reindeer to drive and care for, they pushed their way through what at times seemed impassable obstacles, across frozen seas and over snow-clad mountains with tireless energy until Point Barrow was reached and the object of the expedition successfully accomplished."

Such is the type of the men now aboard the little cutter, and there is every reason to expect the same splendid performance of their present mission as was witnessed under somewhat kindred conditions 17 years ago.

### NOTICEABLE ACCENT.

Rosemary—Look at the man making motions with his hands and wriggling his shoulders.  
 Thornton—Yes; I happen to know him.  
 Rosemary—Who is he and what is he doing?  
 Thornton—He is a deaf and dumb man who talks with a French accent.

### WORTH TRYING.

"Now some doctor advises people to eat sand. Seems dangerous to me. What do you think?"  
 "Dunno. I think it might be safe to take a chance. Most of us need it badly in our systems."