

FORGERIES INTRIGUE AND LIES BY GERMANS
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and it was featured in the German newspapers.

Our war department has made an official investigation of the charge. Testimony has been obtained from thirty-eight officers who were in command of our troops in the action of July 15. No German prisoners were killed by American soldiers there, nor were any mistreated. "On the contrary," the war department finds, "the prisoners were well treated, the wounded cared for and carefully transported to the rear, and the prisoners given food, drink and cigarettes. In at least one case a wounded prisoner was carried, while one of the wounded officers walked."

It is obviously wise policy on the part of our military authorities to encourage the German soldiers to surrender. To that end, the allies have been scrupulously kind in their treatment of German prisoners and they have carried word of this kindness into the German lines in every possible way. It is equally obvious that the German military authorities wish to make their men fight to the death. And it is for this purpose that such stories as the above are invented by German agents and circulated in Germany.

Agents Invent Stories

Moreover it has become increasingly evident of late that it is not merely stories of American atrocities that are being invented by German agents. They are inventing also stories of German atrocities and circulating them in this country. Such stories are frequently suspicious in their origin and easily disproved. When they are discredited, they have the effect of discrediting also the record of German atrocities in Belgium. When they are not discredited, they act as a sort counter "frightfulness." They worry the relatives of soldiers and Red Cross nurses who are exposed to the alleged brutalities. They also lead to a popular demand for reprisals against the German troops. And with the German morale breaking down, it is not fanciful to assume that the German military authorities would welcome reprisals, and encourage the demand for them by means of these fake atrocity stories, in order to make it difficult for the German soldier to surrender in the coming battles as he has been surrendering recently.

This appears to be the explanation of various forged stories of German atrocities that are appearing in American newspapers. A paper in Auburn, Nebraska, published such a story under the heading, "Tongue Cut Out by

Huns; American doctor sends message to family written under stamp on envelope." An investigation discovered that the doctor's family had not received any message of the sort. The story had been started by an anonymous telephone message that pretended to come from the family but really came from some unidentified liar who was furthering the German campaign.

A similar story in a California paper declared that a similar message had been received by the sweetheart of an American soldier who was dying in a German hospital. He had sent her his watch as a souvenir from his death bed. Concealed in the watch was a message to say that his tongue had been cut out and that she would never see him again. The story proved on investigation to be a fake.

Forged Letters Circulated

What appears to be a forged letter from an American soldier's mother, is circulating in Iowa, Nebraska and Colorado newspapers. It alleges that he has been returned to her without ears, nose, or arms, that he saw two Red Cross nurses similarly mutilated by the Germans, and that the Germans "cut prisoners' eyes out and then stand and laugh at them."

A Trenton, N. J., newspaper recently published a news item from the Philadelphia Enquirer to the effect that there were in Holyoke, Mass., "twenty-three little Belgian girls, ranging in age from six to ten years," all of whom had "either one or both hands amputated at the wrist, the work, not of German soldiers, but of German officers." Inquiry at Holyoke found no mutilated Belgian girls there. There have been no Belgian girls brought to Holyoke, either mutilated or otherwise. This sort of story has the added advantage, from the German point of view, that by disproving it one casts a doubt on all the proved and well-authenticated cases of German atrocities committed on Belgian girls during the early days of the war.

As a result of the campaign to deceive and inflame and confuse the American people with fake atrocity stories, the military branch of our war department has sent the following letter to newspapers that have been imposed upon:

"Atrocity stories are daily bandied around army camps abroad, they gain credence through circulation; and frequently they are communicated to this country in news dispatches, or soldiers' letters, as fact. Many of these stories are extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible to trace to the source of origin. Consequently, we are asking editors to refrain publishing atrocity stories, whether charged against the enemy or against our allies, until facts embraced in them shall have been substantiated and officially made public by our government, or the government of one of our allies.

"This is not inspired by a desire to suppress criticism of Hun cruelty. That he has been guilty of atrocities has been clearly proven. The request is designed to prevent vitiation of the unimpeachable case which has been established against him by the British Bryce report and the findings of other official agencies which have investigated instances of his cruelty. Publication of charges of atrocities that are not susceptible of proof would enable him to make a propaganda attack upon the proven cases.

Soldiers Inspired to Reprisals

"Furthermore, these atrocity stories inspire our soldiers to commit acts of reprisal which enable the enemy to launch a counter cruelty propaganda. Publication of atrocities charged against our allies affords him a similar opportunity.

"General Pershing cognizant of the effect of publicity given to unsubstantiated charges of atrocities, took occasion last July to cable a public message to the war department denying statements relative to the atrocities charged against the German army, which were being made in speeches delivered by a sergeant who had been returned from the expeditionary forces to participate in the Liberty Loan campaign.

"Our request is directed particularly against atrocity statements embraced in soldiers' letters, and we

will appreciate it if you will cooperate with us by observing it."

In this connection, it is well to note that there has been an error made in the crucifixion by Germans of an American soldier named Sergeant A. B. Cole, of East Liverpool, Ohio. A circumstantial account of the atrocity has been printed by the Salvation Army as related by Dr. P. H. Howard, a member of the St. Louis chamber of commerce, who visited France to gather first-hand information about the war. Dr. Howard was quoted as giving the story on the authority of Private A. C. Cole, a brother of the victim, who found the crucified soldier pinned with bayonets to a door.

To an inquiry from the war department, Dr. Howard has replied that he has Private A. C. Cole's signed statement of how he "found his brother crucified by Uhlans, battle of Ypres, July 21, 1915." But if the atrocity was committed in July, 1915, Sergeant Cole was not a member of the American Expeditionary Forces but was enlisted probably in the Canadian army.

HUSKERS ATTEND CHURCH SERVICE

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in the face of dangers and temptations, but should come out with an unblemished character and a strong moral

fortitude, able to fight any of life's greater battles.

Mr. E. R. Hinkley, in charge of the religious work of the local "Y," led

the boys in a prayer for the success of our troops at the front. Mr. W. A. Luke, general secretary of the army Y. M. C. A., then introduced Mr.

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