U. S. TROOPS TAKE TRENCH LESSONS

Touch of Dangerous Bravado Develops While "Sammies" Await Opportunity to Fire at German First Line.

By FLOYD GIBBONS.

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The First American Soldiers in the Trenches, American Expeditionary Forces in France, Oct. 23.—(Delayed by Censor.)—American infantrymen and German regiments face one another tonight in the first line trenches of the western front.

Drab colored soft ground blotched with rust red expanses of wire entanglements, separate the hostile lines along the historic sector in which the American fighting men are located. In supporting positions near the rear American artillerymen with guns are registered on every yard of the immediate terrain, where the French and Germans have been in death holds for two years.

There is no moon and the few clouds that veiled the stars seem to accentuate the blackness of the night. Here in the darkness and mud, on the slippery firing steps of trench walls and in damp dugouts, the young, red blooded Americans are mingling for the first time with the veteran troops of France.

Touch of Bravado.

Occasionally a shell wheezes through the soft atmosphere, seeming to lead to an unseen arc of sound in the darkness above. It terminates with a sudden thump in the spongy, water soaked mound behind us. An answering missive of steel whines its way back across the void into the populated invisibility in front of us.

A touch of dangerous bravado has developed after the first hours in the front at darkness. Not a man has been killed yet. Not a man has been wounded. It is not anywhere near as bad as everybody thought it would be.

The infantrymen have all placed a selected and well-polished cartridge in the rifle chamber and are itching for the first opportunity to send their first piece of lead toward the German lines. Each first cartridge case is to be saved and every man has some different plan for inscribing, etching or utilizing this souvenir as a watch charm, a pen-holder or a pocket piece.

Shell for President.

The importance of the occasion has pervaded the artillery also and I understand the plan of battery of the ornamentation and disposal of the cartridge case of the first shell have been destroyed by the expressed wish of a major general to secure the shell and forward it to President Wilson properly inscribed.

The noncommissioned officers have been ordered to warn the men about recklessness in trenches. Against these orders, almost every man has taken a coveted look over the top and out across the awesome precincts of No Man's Land.

"They think this war is a cinch after being out here two hours," a top sergeant told me. "We's got a d—— fool in our company, and I've had to warn him three times to pull his head down below the parapet before he gets it blown off."

The fool, before he reads this, will know what the sergeant told him was bunk, but the story went from mouth to mouth along the trenches and it had the effect for which the sergeant lied.

Think Germans Nervous.

It is quite probable that the Germans across these some hundred yards of blackness are nervous concerning the historic event taking place so near them, and this nervousness they manifested in their repeated attacks on the darkness with star shells.

These aerial beauties of night warfare, released from their exploding encasements high in the air, hang suspended from the white silk parachutes above the positions held by the American trench novitiates.

The numerous company and battery jesters do not refrain from imitative expressions of Ahs and Ohs, "ain't it bootiful," as their laughing upturned faces catch the deadwhite glares.

There goes a rocket. It is rearing itself from the darkness somewhere on the left. Its flight is noiseless as it mounts higher and higher on its staff of red sparks. Then it burns. A shower of green balls fall from the fiery pod.

Green for Gas Attack.

This is different, this business. One green rocket is the signal that the Germans are sending over gas shells. It is an alarm that means the donning of gas masks. They go on quickly. It is the first time this equipment is adjusted under emergency conditions, yet the men appear to be masters of the contrivances. Then the word is passed along the trenches and dugouts for their removal.

It was not a French signal. The green rocketa had been sent up by the Germans. There had been no gas shells. It was a false alarm.

"The best kind of practice in the world," said a battalion commander.

"It is just the stuff we are here for. I hope the Germans happen to do that every night a new bunch of our men get in these trenches."

The real practice of trench movements had started at 6 o'clock in the morning when the first American shot in the war was fired by Battery C of the battalion to which I am attached. My battery is A. All of its men as well as members of Battery B of the same battalion, take the position to which I am bound to adhere, that Battery C's first shot was a "Fundge," that is, the shot was fired by Battery C before it went through the prescribed routine of digging itself into the new gun positions and erecting dugouts, which, according to the understanding of the other batteries, was the principal rule in the race for the historic shot.

Bavarian Premier Offered German Chancellorship

Amsterdam, Oct. 29.—The Zeitung Am Mittag of Berlin says the German chancellorship has been offered to the Bavarian premier, Count von Hertling, who has asked for time to consider the matter.

SAILOR INJURED—One man was killed and five slightly injured when an American destroyer was struck by a torpedo from a German U-boat in European waters. William Edward Merritt, of New York, one of the injured sailors.

WILLIAM E. MERRITT.

Michaelis' Situation Still Hanging in Air

Berlin, Oct. 29—Although confirmation is still lacking of reports that Chancellor Michaelis has resigned, Berlin newspapers continue to discuss them and devote columns to speculation as to the probable successor to the chancellor. Prince von Buelow and Foreign Secretary von Kuehlmann are mentioned most frequently in this connection.

Press Feeders Strike; Tie Up New York Print Shops

New York, Oct. 29.—Virtually all printing establishments in the city, according to union claims, were tied up here today by a strike of press feeders. The walkout came as a result of refusal by the employers to grant them a flat wage increase of $4 a week.

The pressmen thrown out of work by the absence of the feeders announced they would confer tomorrow with the employers on demands for 10 per cent increase which they have made.

Present pay is $18 to $22 a week for feeders and $20 to $35 for pressmen, and, it is said, the employers offered a "war relief" scale of increases ranging from 50 cents to $2 a week.

The possibility of asking the government to conscript labor in case of failure to reach an agreement in view of the fact that many of the larger printing concerns have government contracts was brought up at a closed meeting of employers today, it was said.

Palmer Begins Taking Over Enemy Property in U. S.

Washington, Oct. 29.—A. Mitchell Palmer, enemy property custodian, actually began the business of taking over the millions of dollars of enemy property in the United States today, with a conference with President Wilson, at which the full scope of the work was discussed in detail.

Judge Wade to Preside At The Second Matters Trial

Federal Judge Martin J. Wade of Des Moines will preside at the second trial of Thomas H. Matters, which is to begin in the federal court here next Monday. Matters is under sentence of six years for aiding President Lueben of the First National bank of Sutton in the unlawful issuance of certificates of deposit. The circuit court of appeals remanded the case for retrial.

WANT U. S. TROOPS ON SALONIKI FRONT

General Sarrail, Commanding Army of the Orient, Believes Presence of American Soldiers Desirable.

Saloniki, Oct. 29.—"We are glad to see Americans here and we want to see more of them."

This was the greeting of General Sarrail, commander-in-chief of the army of the Orient, to a correspondent for the Associated Press, who was received at headquarters today.

General Sarrail is a man of large build, much like General Pershing, with gray hair and heavy moustache, big chest and shoulders. He wears the steel gray uniform of the French high command. The bronze stands on the sleeve tell his rank as major general in the French army and generalissimo of all the allied forces on this front, seven nations in all, French, British, Italian, Russian, Serbian, Greek and Albanian.

"Yes, we want to see the Americans," he said. "Their reputation has come ahead of them. We hear the most flattering reports of those who have landed in France—just the kind we need.

New Pep Into Ranks.

"This army of the Americans has had a stimulating effect on all our fronts," the general went on. "It was timely and our men seem pleased, for they have been bearing this burden a long time. They have carried on a noble and devoted work, but they are naturally gratified to find that the great American republic now has thrown its tremendous weight into the scales and that the vigor and youth of America will soon be fighting with the allied forces in the cause of humanity.

"For the morale of the troops, as well as the great international effect, nothing could have been more stimulating than the entry of the United States into the war."

The general desired that the amplest facilities be given to see just what the army of the Orient was doing. Reports had been spread in America, probably through German propagandists, that the Sarrail army was in a bad way and was going to withdraw. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Covers Wide Front.

The army of the Orient has a front of about 350 miles, running across Macedonia, Serbia and part of Albania. It sweeps in a great arc, about 60 miles in Salonika and being on the Aegean Sea at the Gulf of Orfano, on the east, and running to a point 38 miles west of Koritza, Albania. Here it connects with the Italian front across Albania, which is separate from the army of the Orient.

Generally speaking this 350 miles of front is divided between the British on the right, the French in the center and the French, Serbs, Greeks, Russians, Italians and Albanians on the left.

This huge front has not far from 25 divisions guarding its whole length. It is a composite army, with generals, princes and pashas on the roster of the supreme command.

Besides the fighting, an immense amount of construction is being done along the whole front, with a net work of splendid roads for the quick shifting of troops, substantial bridges of steel, masonry and vast camps of supplies and ammunition.

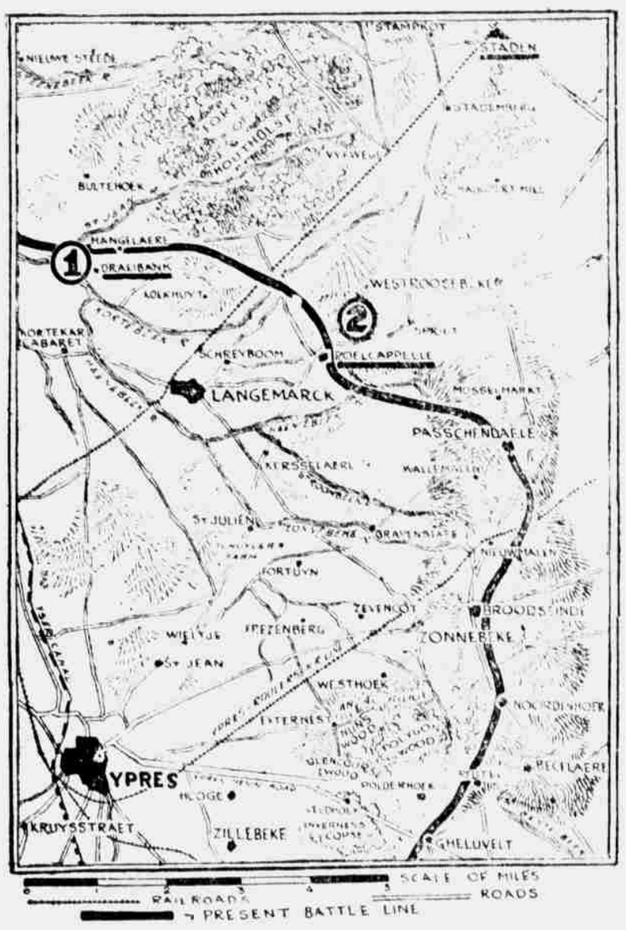
Are There to Stay.

Everything is being done with the evident purpose of permanency and there is no evidence of withdrawal, now or later on.

General Sarrail makes frequent visits to the front, going to Monastir, Koritza or some other point as an offensive is delivered. Each of the allied armies has a staff officer near General Sarrail to keep in touch with every branch of the organization. Major Davis of the American army has just been added to these staff officers. The sign on Major Davis' office reads: "American Liaison Officer."

What lies ahead of the army of the Orient is partly a military question and partly political. The militaries are united in the belief that the Balkan front must be held as a vital link in the chain encircling the central powers. Also they believe that the greatest stroke of strategy in the war can be made here by a move on the right flank, which will cut through to the Black sea and sever Germany from Turkey. But the political councils of the entente allies, which coordinate all their movements, have thus far ruled that the supreme effort shall be made on the western front.

HAIG AGAIN DRIVES FORWARD—Striking northeast of Ypres, General Haig's Franco-British army moved forward between (1) Draeibank and (2) Poelcappelle. The movement had as its primary object the advancing of the allied left wing to keep pace with the wedge driven in the center.



Kerensky at Front To Reorganize Army

Petrograd, Oct. 29.—Premier Kerensky has gone to the front. The newspapers today published a note to the effect that the war minister has begun the elaboration of a scheme for the reorganization of part of the army on the basis of separate nationalities.

Consumers Make Slight Gain in Chicago Milk War

Chicago, Oct. 29.—The fight between producers and distributors of milk on one side and consumers on the other on the matter of prices today continued with slight gains for the consumers. One large company announced that beginning next Thursday the price to the consumer would be reduced 1 cent to 12 cents a quart. Twelve cents is, however, 2 cents higher than a year ago. Meanwhile 42 representatives of milk companies were called before the grand jury as the result of charges of price fixing.

GREEN TROOPS CAUSE OF ITALY'S REVERSE

Believe Germany's Greatest Card Is Played in Offensive on Southern Front; Fears America's Coming.

Washington, Oct. 29.—Lack of material, munitions, guns and unseasoned troops on the right wing in the face of an overwhelming Austro-German force coming from the Russian borders are the causes assigned by leaders here for the Italian disaster in the Italian Alps.

There must be a reorganization of the fighting lines, they say, and a resumption of the Italian offensive cannot be expected before next spring, the campaign meanwhile [illegible] on defensive lines.

Food and Munitions Needed.

Members of the mission are confident that relief and assistance will be forthcoming from Italy's allies. Men are not wanted. Italy has an abundance of men. Munitions, steel, coal, cotton, and last, but not least, food, are what must be had at once.

The Italian right which just folded under the enemy's great assault, it is said here, was composed of Austrian units, not seasoned in war. The left could not move safely for the whole front to be withdrawn to avoid a flanking attack. The Italian general staff knew that no less than 700,000 German and Austrian troops were in the Cadorna's arms. Nevertheless, the attack would have been resisted successfully, Italians here say, had help been given by the allies to Italy well in advance and supplies.

Most of the 700 guns lost were taken without having fired a shot, for lack of ammunition.

Allies To Rescue.

That the allies will now make every effort to supply the Italian army is not doubted. Last week the Italian embassy here learned that the American shipping board had allotted 25 ships, or 100,000 tons, to Italy and these ships should be able to carry not only munitions but supplies of food to the Italian people and thereby relieve the internal political strain.

In throwing its enormous force against the Italians, the mission here believes, Germany has played its greatest card. The Italians, when turned back, were within 35 miles of Leibach, which, in the opinion of the Italian general staff, was the key to success, and the capture of that place by the Italian forces would have meant the collapse of Austria, which, in turn, would cause defeat for Germany.

Will Not Change Result.

Cardiff, Wales, Oct. 29.—Speaking in regard to the Italian situation here today, General Smuts, the former South African commander, said:

"Germany sees America rushing in with tremendous weight. Therefore, it is trying to dodge the issue and catch some advantage in a minor theater of war. It will not help her; it will only prolong the war a few months. The issue is no longer in doubt."

Allied Airmen Drop Bombs On German Airdromes

London, Oct. 29.—The admiralty today issued the following statement regarding air raids on German military establishments in Belgium:

"The naval air service yesterday afternoon carried out bombing raids on enemy airdromes at Engel and St. Denis Westrem.

"Many tons of bombs were dropped close to the sheds and the railway lines. One machine is believed to have been damaged. Most of our machines returned safe.

"The enemy airdrome at Varsenare was bombed at noon yesterday. Direct hits on the sheds were made. During the same raid bombs were dropped on the Staddlebrugge station near Ostende.

"During numerous patrols, which were carried out, an enemy machine was shot down and seen to crash to earth."

Nebraska Apple Crop is Reported Largest in Years

The apple crop in southeast Nebraska and northern Kansas is the largest in the history of the two states, according to reports to the Burlington. Nebraska apples are said to be of unusually good quality, due to successful spraying methods last summer.

The demand for the Nebraska apples is unusually good and the orchards in the southern part of the state are being overrun by eastern and southern buyers. Picking is well along and much of the fruit is being offered for shipment.