

Wireless Telegraph Annihilated Space and Defied Enemy Interference Bringing A. E. F. Into Quick Touch With U. S. Says Daniels

If the Germans had cut every cable we could still have talked to Europe—Says wireless telegraph annihilated space and defied enemy interference—More powerful radio plants in world constructed by U. S. navy built globe with its spark—How the radio compass, a war invention, saved last ships—Loneliness of sea has been robbed of its terrors—Who will celebrate wonders and heroes of wireless?

By JOSEPHUS DANIELS
Former Secretary of the Navy

The miracle of wireless made it possible for the United States to fight a war on the other side of the world without losing contact with her soldiers and ships for longer than three hours out of any twenty-four.

Measuring distance in terms of space, Washington was separated by 3,000 miles of water from the fighting forces of the United States in France.

But measuring distance in terms of time, Washington was in closer touch with its army of the Meuse-Argonne in 1917-18 than it was with the army of the Potomac in 1861-65.

From one room in the Navy department—the transoceanic room, we called it—we could communicate with almost any country in western Europe.

This room had direct connection with the high-power sending stations at Annapolis, Sayville, L. I., and New Brunswick and Tucker-ton, N. J. Messages flung from these stations were picked up in France and speeded on over a net work of land wires and telephones to any point where it was possible to place a receiving instrument—from the rear areas to the trenches.

What Might Have Happened? The tremendous advantage afforded by this means of communication may be the better appreciated by postulating two "ifs"—

If the submarine telegraph had been the only method of immediate communication and—

If the Germans had cut the cables—

What might have happened? Nobody can say what might have happened. It would have been a potentially dangerous situation, and one of sore trial for Washington and the American people.

Things moved so quickly and complete transformations occurred with such amazing suddenness, that telegraphic isolation from Europe for 24 hours might have been fraught with most serious consequences. There were occasions when critical questions came up, and prompt decisions were required. It was of supreme importance then that there should be direct, instan-

which every American may be proud. The La Fayette Radio station is the only radio station in the world that can belt the globe with its electrified ether waves.

An inscription has been placed upon the main building of the plant, the exact words of which I will give you presently, but I sometimes think a briefer inscription might have been better. For example:

"I have annihilated distance. I have made the remotest corner of the world my next door neighbor."

There is no spot anywhere on the earth's surface where, if a high power station existed, a message sent from the La Fayette would not be instantly received.

France gave America the immortal work of Bartholdi—"Liberty Enlightening the World!" America has given France, through the genius and enterprise of her navy, a fine siecle variation on the same theme.

When the tidings of human progress, of commerce and industry and science and politics flash from La Fayette to the high power stations of two hemispheres, in a very real and significant sense it is "Liberty Enlightening the World!"

Towers 832 Feet High. La Fayette station consists of eight lofty towers, on immense concrete foundations, arranged in two rows, 1,320 feet apart.

Each tower rises to a height of 832 feet, nearly 300 feet higher than the Washington monument.

The system affords an antenna area of 5,227,200 square feet, far larger than that of any other radio station. The longitudinal antenna wires are bronze cables, supported by what the wireless people call triatics. The latter stretch across the aisle formed by the two rows of towers. The antenna wires are 690 feet above the ground.

Signals received from La Fayette at Cavite, San Francisco, the Panama canal zone and Washington during the tests proved to be three to eight times as strong as those of other high power stations at like distances.

When the plant was finished and the tests had demonstrated the success of what we had set out to do, we prepared a tablet and placed it

on the main building, with the following inscription: "Conceived for the purpose of insuring adequate and uninterrupted transatlantic communication facilities between the American expeditionary forces engaged in the world war and the government of the United States of America. Erected by the United States navy in conjunction with and for the government of France."

Robs Sea of Loneliness.

One of the great achievements of wireless has been to rob the sea of its loneliness, and of much of its old-time peril. Before Marconi worked his miracle a ship that had been driven from traveled ocean lanes by storm, whose propeller shaft had broken, or whose engine had gone out of business, might lie for days unseen and unable to communicate with any source of help.

Helpless to steer a course, and at the mercy of wave and wind, it might be wrecked and sunk and none left to tell the story. Such things have not been infrequent in the annals of the sea.

Only those who have been to sea know the sense of loneliness, of utter isolation, of remoteness from any source of help which one feels when, standing on deck or bridge and looking around the full circle of the unbroken horizon, one sees nothing, absolutely nothing, but water—a vast monotony of undulating water.

And the remoteness was as hopeless and as helpless as it felt until wireless came.

Now, if a ship gets into difficulty and needs help it splutters its S. O. S. from its wireless, confident that it will be heard and answered.

Talked With All Ships.

During the war we talked to all our ships, anywhere, whenever we had anything to say; and they talked to one another. We sent them submarine warnings and routings and all kinds of information and orders. Often we would send, simultaneously, as many as 50 or 60 messages to all kinds of vessels, and they would be picked up by them without difficulty.

At the same time we were sending our stations along the coast were intercepting every word or signal sent out by ships at sea. Sometimes "the air was full of them," as the operators said.

The wireless operator in his little room had ears for the world, and all the world spoke to him. There came to him its cries, its warnings, its appeals, sometimes its curses, and sometimes even its laughter. Many a secret he heard—and kept.

But the message which never failed to send a thrill through his soul was "Allo! Allo, S. O. S." That meant that somewhere an American or allied vessel was being attacked by a U-boat. Every naval vessel which heard it went hurrying at once to the scene of its origin.

developed possibilities mark the "farthest north" of human adventure in the realm of experiment and research. Assuredly it is a long road the race has traveled since the days when the tribesmen of Great Britain signalled to each other by hilltop fires and the aboriginal, 100 per cent American communicated with those who acknowledged the same totem by means of a code written in wavering columns of smoke.

The news of victory at Marathon was carried back to Athens by Pheidippides, who, running with sustained speed the 26 miles from battlefield to capital, fell dead from exhaustion with the cry on his lips, "Rejoice, we conquer!"

When Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo it was nearly 36 hours before London heard the glad tidings. When the armistice was signed in 1918 Washington had the news in a few minutes.

Poems have been written about the famous ride of Paul Revere and the carrying of the good news from Ghent.

Elbert Hubbard immortalized the youth who took a message to Garcia. It will take a combination of Longfellow and Browning and Elbert Hubbard to pay a just tribute to wireless and its heroes.

Another article, former Secretary Daniels will be published tomorrow.

Argentina to Ask Restoration of Dominican Independence. Buenos Aires, April 23.—The Argentine government is preparing to use its friendly offices in Washington in favor of the speediest possible restoration of Dominican independence, it was learned at the foreign office today. President Yrigoyen, it is understood, has given assurances to this effect to the representatives of Santo Domingo, who have been visiting all capitals of South America to plead their cause before governments and peoples.

Great Help to Ships. These stations of course were originally erected as a means of locating submarines, and in this work they proved so successful that the U-boats hardly dared use their wireless off our coast. Since they finished their U-boat job, however, they have proved of the greatest value to navigation. There are some 70 of them on the Atlantic, Pacific and gulf coasts, and any ship that becomes lost in fog, or otherwise confused as to its reckoning, can obtain by wireless from the radio compass its exact position. If it is in dangerous waters it will be given sailing directions which will enable it to steer safely into port.

Think of what this would have meant to Columbus, or Magellan, or Captain Cook!

Not a few inventions which were designed specifically for war use are now proving of applicable value to the ways and needs of peace, but I doubt if any of them will do more for the saving of life and the facilitating of human intercourse and traffic than the radio compass.

Sometimes I think the achievements of wireless and its still unde-

Nomination of Edwards As Brigadier General Opposed by Democrats

Washington, April 23.—Strong opposition on the part of democrats was voiced at a meeting of the senate military committee to confirmation of the nomination of Brig. Gen. Clarence R. Edwards, first commander overseas of the 26th (New England National Guard) division, to be a major general. The subject was discussed at a conference with Secretary Weeks, who urged confirmation of the officers recently nominated by President Harding.

The opposition to promotion of General Edwards was said to have been based upon his military record, although Secretary Weeks said the War department files contained no unfavorable evidence in connection with his release from the command of the division some time before the armistice. A more complete investigation of the records, it was said, was suggested, however, and the secretary was requested to supplement information given on the committee. Meanwhile, action on all the nominations was deferred.

Boy Scouts to Aid During Forest Protection Week

New York, April 23.—The aid of 500,000 boy scouts during forest protection week, proclaimed by President Harding for May 22 to 28, has been pledged governors and foresters of each state, it was announced at the headquarters of the Boy Scouts of America. Every scout will be urged to plant a tree during the week, to guard against forest fires and fight them when they occur.

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