

The Mount Airy News.

VOL. XXXIX

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, MARCH 15 1917.

NO. 35

TO KEEP MERCHANT MARINE AFLOAT.

Order Directing That Guns be Placed Aboard American Merchant Vessels Issued by President at White House.

Washington, March 9.—President Wilson from a sick bed today ordered the arming of American merchant ships against Germany's ruthless submarine warfare, and at the same time issued a proclamation calling an extra session of Congress to meet April 16. The President's decision came suddenly late this afternoon, following the action of the Senate yesterday in revising its rules to permit prompt action on important questions and the submission of formal opinions by Secretary Lansing and Attorney General Gregory that he has the power to arm merchantmen without action by Congress.

Details of the Government's armed neutrality plans for defending the merchant marine were withheld to avoid endangering Americans and their ships by permitting the information to reach Germany. The only statement at the White House and the Navy Department was that the President had determined to fully protect American rights.

The decision, coming at the end of a period of tense waiting, was generally hailed as the natural and unavoidable next step in the policy adopted by the President when he broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and gave warning that the United States could not tolerate attacks on American ships and citizens in violation of international law.

Fraught with the grave possibility of war with Germany, the action was taken by President Wilson only after he was convinced that Germany actually was proceeding with her campaign of ruthlessness, and had made efforts to plot with Mexico and Japan against the territorial integrity of the United States.

Long before the order was given from the White House, all necessary preparations for the arming of merchantmen had been completed at the Navy Department. Secretary Daniels issued an appeal to the press of the Nation to refrain from discussion of these preparations.

The President's action sent a thrill through the Senate, meeting in special session and through the Government Departments. Still hoping that war with Germany will be avoided, officials and Senators declared that the issue rests entirely with Germany.

Last Word Spoken, Declares Zimmermann.

Amsterdam, Via London, March 9.—Dutch newspapers publish the following statement made by Dr. Alfred Zimmermann, the German Foreign Secretary, to a representative of a Budapest newspaper:

"As far as the United States is concerned, we have spoken our last word, and the decision is in President Wilson's hands.

"We are determined to carry through the submarine war to the end. The results of unrestricted submarine war thus far have been very satisfactory.

"As to peace, I may say that despite the refusal of our peace offer, Germany still stands by the words of the Imperial Chancellor and is prepared to place herself at the head of an alliance of States for the maintenance of the world's peace.

"As to European neutrals, I believe there will be no change in their present relations with us in the course of the war. Neutral shipowners should give up their trade with England. They have made enough money, and can afford to bear the loss of English trade. They will soon recognize that it is to their interest to keep their ships at home so that they may use them to the best advantage after the war."

Over Ten Millions Have Been Killed in Great War.

Washington, March 11.—More than 10,000,000 men are recorded as killed, wounded, captured or missing in the European war in the first complete tabulation of official and authenticated semi-official reports of the various belligerents received here.

Among the military proper 4,441,200 are reported dead, 2,698,500 wounded and 2,564,500 captured and missing. Among civilians, especially on the Russian and Balkan fronts and in Armenia another 400,000 are figured as either dead or wounded through the war.

GERMAN SEAMEN FOUND GUILTY OF SINKING SHIP.

Counsel for Defense Argued That they Shouldn't Be Punished Because They Were Only Obeying Orders.

Florence, S. C., March 9.—Eight officers and men of the German Hansa Line freighter Liebenfels, which began sinking in Charleston harbor on the night of January 31, were found guilty of sinking the vessel in a navigable stream by a jury in the United States District Court here late today. They were acquitted, however, of a charge of conspiracy to sink the steamer. Capt. Johann R. Klattenhoff is ill at Charleston and was the only one of the indicted men not tried.

The convicted men are Johann Lubken, chief officer; George Sunkel, third officer; Jonas Edward Jansen, chief engineer; Heinrich Wattenburg, assistant engineer; Wilhelm Schwartz, machinist. All are Germans except Jansen, who is a Dane. Several of the men are German naval reservists.

Counsel for the defense argued that the men should not be punished, intimating that they were only carrying out orders. The defense offered no testimony. Its motion for a new trial was denied. Sentence will be passed tomorrow.

The Government introduced testimony to show that the seal of the United States Government had been broken on the wireless apparatus, which had been wrecked; that the machinery had been seriously disabled, and that the sea cocks were open. There also was testimony to show the wreck of the Liebenfels constituted a possible menace to navigation of the channel leading to the United States Navy Yard at Charleston.

Liebenfels began to sink on the night of January 31. The plight of the freighter was observed early on February 1 by two tugs, but an offer of assistance was refused by Chief Officer Kubgen, it was stated, on the ground that Captain Klattenhoff was not on board. The Liebenfels, which had been tied up at Charleston since the war began, is being floated under supervision of United States Army engineers.

TO USE NUMEROUS U-BOAT CHASERS.

Navy Department Plans to Have Large Number of Craft Constructed Immediately.

Washington, March 10.—Plans for the immediate construction of a large number of submarine chasers for use by the navy in coast patrol work will be discussed with motor boat builders at a conference called by Secretary Daniels here Monday. The types of boats to be ordered, as well as the number, it is understood, will depend upon what the builders say as to their plant capacity.

The Navy Department has designs for several types of chasers, ranging from 30 foot boats up to big, swift craft more than 100 feet long. To make use of the small boat shops that dot the American coasts, it is proposed to build many of the chasers of wood instead of steel so as to draw on a different class of skilled labor and also lessen the strain on the steel market.

Naval officers favor the larger boats because they would be able to keep the sea continuously in ordinary weather for a considerable period. Heavier guns could be carried also.

It has been estimated that the first chasers could be constructed in two months or less, and that duplicates could be produced at the rate of 30 to 50 a week thereafter. The engine supply probably would be the governing factor.

On Monday, also, the major ship building companies will furnish the secretary with written statements of their capitalization, contracts, plant plans and other data necessary to distribution of the navy program under the speeding up requirements recently authorized by Congress.

After Monday's conferences, representatives of the manufacturers who supply machinery and equipment for navy vessels will see the secretary to discuss their part in the speeding up process.

How to Prevent Croup.

When the child is subject to attacks of croup, see to it that he eats a light evening meal, as an overloaded stomach may bring on an attack, also watch for the first symptom—hoarseness, and give Chamberlain's Cough Remedy as soon as the child becomes hoarse. Obtainable everywhere.

IT IS AN ACT OF WAR SAYS GENERAL HUGHES.

British Officer Comments on Authority to Sink U-Boats.

New York, March 10.—The belief, that in the event of war between the United States and Germany, American officers fighting with the forces of Canada should have no difficulty in obtaining their release to aid in training American troops, was expressed here today by Major General Sir Sam Hughes, former Canadian minister of militia.

Sir Sam came to New York Friday. His mission, according to reports, was to confer, as a representative of the British army, with United States army officers. He declined to discuss his visit, but admitted he had conferred with Major General Wood, commanding the department of the east.

Sir Sam expressed keen interest in the state department's ruling that armed American merchantmen may fire upon German submarines at sight.

"If the government has done that, it is an act of war," he exclaimed. But Germany has already committed acts of war on the United States many times."

Sir Sam alluded to the Zimmermann note inciting Mexico to invite Japan to form an alliance against the United States in case of war with Germany. "It shows that Germany is pretty badly done for," he said. "It shows also that Germany has no appreciation of America's position in world affairs."

"If there is war," he added, "the Yankees of today will prove they have not degenerated from those of years ago. I have been acquainted with conditions in the United States army for 20 or 30 years. Your soldiers are among the first to be found anywhere and the spirit of liberty is still mighty strong in the United States."

Sir Sam expressed his opinion that German submarines would never get near enough to New York to shell the city.

British Transport Sunk.

London, March 9.—The British transport Mendi, carrying South African native laborers, was sunk after a collision on February 21, and 625 persons lost their lives.

Ten of the persons lost were Europeans according to the announcement made today to the South African Parliament by Gen. Louis Botha, the Premier. The collision occurred off the Isle of Wight. The official announcement says:

"Premier Botha stated to the South African Parliament today that the transport Mendi, carrying the last batch of the South African native laborers contingent (the rest of whom were landed safely in France) collided with another vessel en route from England to Havre and sank in 25 minutes. The collision occurred off the Isle of Wight February 21. The escort's searchlight could not penetrate the fog, but the survivors were rescued by passing vessels. Twelve European officers and 191 natives were saved. Ten European and 615 natives were lost.

"Difficulty in obtaining authentic information caused the delay in making the announcement public.

"Premier Botha said that the relatives of those natives who are presumed to have been drowned would be advised. He added that the magistrates and native commanders had been instructed to inform the chiefs, head men and people so that they might know the truth and not heed idle and mischievous stories which experience proved might be circulated seditiously. The Imperial authorities, he declared, would pay compensation to natural beneficiaries."

Washington is Proceeding With the Arming of Boats.

Washington, March 11.—The American government having announced its decision to proceed with the arming of merchantmen intending to go to Europe in defiance of Germany's ruthless submarine campaign no further details on the situation were given out today. Many interesting questions relating to the new policy remained unanswered. The only statement authorized was that nothing will be done by the government not in strict accord with international law.

Because of reports of bad food conditions in Germany, the fall of Bagdad to the entente allies and other news looked upon as unfavorable to the central powers, some officials considered further peace suggestions from Germany as among the possibilities.

BAGDAD CAPTURED.

Fighting Along Tigris British Drive Turkish Army From Positions.

London, March 11.—Bagdad, the chief Turkish city in Mesopotamia and formerly the capital of the empire of the Caliphs, has been captured by the British forces. Announcement of the capitulation of the city was made this evening by the British official press bureau.

The statement was issued on receipt of a telegram from General Maude saying the British forces had occupied Bagdad early Sunday morning. No details of the capture of the city were contained in General Maude's dispatch.

During the day the following official report was received concerning the operations against Bagdad, carrying them up to Saturday morning, when the Turks had been forced back to within three miles west and southwest of the city:

"Our forces engaged with the Turks on the DIALA line the night of the eighth succeeded, despite the bright moonlight, in effecting a surprise crossing of the DIALA and establishing a strong post on the highest bank thereof. Meanwhile on the morning of the eighth the Tigris having been bridged at some distance down stream, a British detachment marched up the right bank and found the enemy holding a position about six miles southwest of Bagdad.

"The enemy was driven from this position to another position two miles in the rear. During the night of the ninth, a passage of the DIALA was forced and our troops advanced some four miles toward Bagdad.

"During the ninth our forces on the right bank (Tigris) drove the enemy from his second position, bivouacking on the ground gained. This advantage, notwithstanding a blinding dust storm and a violent gale, was pressed on the morning of the tenth, the Turks being forced back to within three miles west and southwest of Bagdad."

Bagdad's capture marks the climax to one of the most dramatic and picturesque phases of the world war. The city which has fallen to British arms links the present to a past so distant that it is semi-fabulous. The known history of Bagdad reaches back for more than 4,000 years to the shadowy times of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia, a quay built by the scriptural monarch still existing submerged in the Tigris. Within its precincts also there still stands the tombs of the Jewish prophets Joshua, Ezra and Ezekiel, and the well of Daniel.

Long after the Babylonian dynasty had ceased to be more than a memory, Bagdad rose to splendor as the artistic, literary, scientific and religious capital of the world. The heart of the great Islamic empire of the Caliphs for hundreds of years, it was known throughout the world as "the glorious city" and was the scene of many fantastic exploits of Haroun-Al-Rashid, the potentate whose magnificence is immortalized in the Arabian Nights.

In 800 A. D. Bagdad was credited with a population of 2,000,000 and was easily the first city in the world in wealth and commerce. With the fall of the Caliphs before the Turkish sultans, the decline of Bagdad commenced. It was successively the prey of Turks, Mongols, Tartars and Persians but it was not until 1638 that the city became definitely a part of the Turkish empire.

The British campaign against Bagdad was opened early in 1915 when an Anglo-Indian force under Maj. Gen. Charles Vere Ferrers Townsends was landed at the head of the Persian gulf and moved rapidly up the Tigris. The primary object of the expedition was to secure the valuable oil wells in the region at the mouth of the Tigris, but the ultimate and far greater object was the shattering of the great German dream of dominion in the near east.

The realization of this dream was based on the construction of the Berlin-Constantinople-Bagdad railroad and by the seizure of Bagdad the British hoped to prevent the completion of this road, at least by German hands.

General Townsends commanded a force of about 40,000 men and at first he pushed forward with amazing speed. Early in June, 1915, he captured Kut-el-Amara, about 250 miles from the mouth of the Tigris and about 100 miles from Bagdad. On the 22nd of the following November he reached Ctesiphon, 20 miles from his goal, where he was attacked by an overwhelming force of Ottoman troops. His water supply gave out and he was

forced to retreat.

Fighting a continuous rear guard action, the British expedition regained Kut-el-Amara on December 5th.

Here General Townsends determined to make a stand with a portion of his forces and entrenched with about 10,000 men, while the remainder of his troops continued to fall back along the Tigris in order to join hands with the relief army that was hurriedly despatched from France and India, after the defeat at Ctesiphon.

Thirty thousand Indian troops and two Anglo-Indian divisions which had been fighting in France formed a relief corps that joined the remnants of the Townsends expedition and made desperate effort to rescue the beleaguered garrison at Kut-el-Amara. For three months General Sir Percy Lake, the relief commander, fought his way up the Tigris and was within eight miles of his besieged comrades when on April 13, 1916, General Townsends, his food supplies exhausted, was compelled to surrender. In the meantime, additional reinforcements had been sent from Egypt, including the 13th colonial division which had taken part in the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign. But after the disaster at Kut-el-Amara the British abandoned the offensive for several months.

General Townsends' operations against Bagdad had been seconded by the Russians, who had advanced from Persia and the Mush region and had reached within 70 miles of the Tigris when the Townsends surrender occurred. Shortly afterward the Russians abandoned their campaign and after some desultory fighting withdrew to the Persian mountains.

The resumption of British operations occurred in December, 1916, when an advance on Kut-el-Amara was made from the Babylonian plains, while a second force again moved up the Tigris. Gen. Frederick Stanley Maude was in command of the new campaign and was unofficially reported to have 120,000 men at his disposal.

From the time of the opening of the campaign the British progress was steady and uninterrupted and in its last phases of remarkable rapidity. On February 23 Kut-el-Amara was captured for the second time and several thousand Turkish prisoners taken. Within two weeks the British had driven forward about 90 miles and on March 8 their cavalry patrols were within a few miles of Bagdad.

The fall of Kut-el-Amara and the rapid progress of the British toward Bagdad was the signal for the renewal of the Russian campaign to the north. A Russian army advancing from Persia captured Hamadan and pushed swiftly forward in the direction of the Tigris.

On March 9 the Russian troops were reported within 70 miles of the Tigris while another diversion was caused by the unheralded advance of a second British expedition into Palestine from Egypt. At last reports this force had pushed within striking distance of Jerusalem, but the meager official details have shed little light on its ultimate purpose and composition.

Maj. Gen. Frederick Stanley Maude, the conqueror of Bagdad, is 53 years old and has had a distinguished military career. He took part in the Sudan campaign in 1885 and served with distinction in the South African war.

Prior to taking command in Mesopotamia he saw service in France, where he was wounded; was mentioned in dispatches five times and created a commander of the Bath. From 1901 to 1904 he was military secretary to the governor general of Canada.

ELECTION OF CARRANZA PRACTICALLY CONCEDED

First National Election Since That Which Lodged Madero in the Presidency is Held in Mexico.

Mexico City, March 11.—Elections were held today throughout the republic for president, senators and deputies. The election of Carranza, who as first chief of the constitutional revolution has dominated Mexico since the overthrow of the Huerta government was conceded.

It was the first national election since that which lodged Francisco Madero in the presidency for his short lived term of office. This fact caused much enthusiasm among the people. There were several disturbances reported in some places due directly to the electoral campaign. But these disorders were bloodless affrays.

Mr. Carranza took an active part in the campaign. Many persons who held themselves aloof from revolutionary activity cast their votes in his favor.

HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK.

Westfield Home Demonstration Club and Its Work.

The Home Demonstration Club at Westfield is steadily growing in members, interest and efficiency. They have placed an oil stove and necessary equipment in one room of the handsome new school building and now hold their meetings there twice a month. They have arranged for the County Home Demonstration agent to meet with them twice a month giving them practical lessons in cooking. So Westfield, through the efforts of this Club is the only school in Surry County which has cooking lessons for its girls.

New Clubs Organized.

Some of the women and girls of White Plains met at the home of Mrs. George Nichols Wednesday afternoon and with the aid of the County agent, organized a Home Demonstration club which is to be held regular semi-monthly meetings at the homes of its members. Sixteen were enrolled, showing the large interest of this community in club work.

There are several new Canning clubs already organized this year with prospects of others. Pilot Mountain High School and Derow on Pilot Mountain Route No. 3, have sent in good enrollments. Already the girls are getting ready to take part in County Commencement Day celebration at Elkin, April 13. They will wear the Club uniform; blue chambray dresses and white caps and aprons.

Margaret M. McCucas.

Quarterly Conference to be Held at New Hebron.

Saturday March 24, 10 a. m. to 12 o'clock.

Song service, by Sunday schools. Devotional service by Presiding Elder.

Organization and Roll Call, by Presiding Elder.

Report on General State of the Church, by Pastor.

Report of the Charge Lay Leader, by J. M. Parker.

Song by Sunday schools.

Reports from Sunday schools.

The Teacher and the Class, by E. L. Brown.

Duties of the Sunday School Supt., by W. L. Gwyn.

The Family Altar, by J. M. Parker.

Revival Needs, by E. J. Miller.

Benefits to be Derived from a Circuit S. S. Convention by Fletcher Wall.

12 o'clock to 1 p. m., Dinner on the ground.

Song service by Sunday Schools.

System in Church Finance, by I. L. Armfield.

What Should be Done with the Church member who is able to contribute to the support of the Church, but refuses to do so, by Jesse Richards.

The Bible and the Tithe, by J. D. Wall.

Our Conference Collections, by Presiding Elder.

"Collections in Full," J. W. Gardner.

The place of Methodist Literature in the Home, by Pastor.

Song.

Sunday, Love Feast, behind closed doors.

10 a. m. Sunday School.

Sermon followed by the Lord's Supper.

The speakers named above will lead the discussion with short talks on subjects assigned, which will be followed up by a general discussion, participated in by all.

H. C. Sprinkle, P. E.

J. W. Bennett, P. C.

Increase in U-Boats is Much Greater than Loss.

Berlin, March 11.—V. Sayville.—Discussing the submarine situation the Overseas News agency (the German official news bureau) quotes the German press with reference to the "reports spread by the entente about the heavy losses of submarines" as saying: "Even if the losses of German submarines became greater than they really are, even then the increase in the number of submarines, which is continuous and uninterrupted, would still be several times greater than such losses."

The German newspapers point out that losses are unavoidable on account of the particularly delicate character of submarines, the undaunted bravery of the crews and the vast defensive system set in motion by the entente, but that nevertheless German submarine losses have been held within very moderate limits and are infinitely smaller than the figures reported or hinted at in hostile and some neutral reports.