

VILLA NEARLY LOSES LIFE AT THE HANDS OF MEXICAN CITIZEN

Was Being Strangled, When His Officers Beat Assailant Senseless With Their Guns.

MEXICAN IS LATER KILLED

Four Others of His Family, Who Had Worked With American Ranchmen, Also Slain.

ALL RELIABLE AND HONEST

Tortured and Killed by Bandits as "Warning" to Others.

Field Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, Colonia Dublan, Chihuahua, March 26.—(By motor truck to Columbus, March 30)—It has been learned here that Francisco Villa nearly lost his life a few days ago, on the Corralitos ranch, a short distance from this place, where he tortured and put to death five Mexicans. One of his victims leaped upon him and was strangling Villa when officers beat his assailant senseless with the butts of their guns.

Was Peaceable Family.

Mucio Polanco was the name of the Mexican who almost succeeded in ending Villa's career. The murder of five members of the Polanco family was to have been intended as a warning to other Mexicans against having dealings with Americans. Investigation showed that the Polanco family was involved with no political factions in Mexico but that they had a record of uniform honesty and reliability in dealing with the American managers of the Corralitos ranch where they were born and reared.

When Villa retreating from Columbus, arrived at the ranch, he had a list of all the Polancos, six men, the mother and two daughters. He seized the men, beat the women and daughters, but the young women had been hidden so well that he never found them.

To five of the men, Gregorio and his two sons, and Mucio and his one son, Villa said:

"I am going to kill you because you are too Americanized. You are gringo lovers." But instead of killing them outright, Villa had them partly stripped and then beaten with the flats of heavy swords. Mucio Polanco broke away from his captors and got one hand locked about Villa's throat before he was beaten off.

Next Villa ordered the five stood up beneath a huge archway where he told them he would hang them. They were jerked into the air, but were not permitted to die. Just when loss of consciousness approached they would be lowered to earth with demands that they reveal the hiding places of horses and to be hidden about the ranch. There were no horses so far as investigation has disclosed. The prisoners also were offered their lives if they would tell where money was hidden or point out valuable documents.

After several days of torment, Villa ordered the five men taken into the garden where each one was shot five times.

To the residents of the ranch, all Mexicans, Villa said: "You may bury them or not, as you please."

They were all buried in one grave after Villa left.

Before going, Villa led one male member of the family, Gregorio, junior, aged 21, back to the young man's mother and said to her:

"I am going to leave you this one son to support you. You ought to thank me for leaving him to you."

Next the bandit imprisoned each of the workmen on the ranch, placing them in separate rooms. When he found them all locked up, he went to each one in turn, warning him in these words:

"I am coming back and if I don't return some one else will come in my place. Whoever comes will kill anyone here whom he finds working for Americans."

STARTS FIGHT TO AMEND ARMY BILL

Senator Underwood is Determined to Have Provision for Plant to Make Nitrogen.

DECLARES IT IS NECESSARY

Says Hudson Maxim in Opposing Such Proposal is Working in the Interest of the DuPont Company—Amendments.

Washington, March 30.—A determined fight was begun in the Senate today by Senator Underwood, of Alabama, to incorporate in the army reorganization bill a provision looking to the establishment of a government plant to make nitrogen from the air for the manufacture of explosives. Efforts to incorporate such legislation in the House bill were defeated.

Senator Underwood declared no national defense programme would be complete without this provision. He attacked the DuPont Powder Company and its agents, charging them with exerting powerful influences to defeat such legislation because of a desire to control all the powder business in the United States and to prevent the government from entering the field. In this connection, he declared that Hudson Maxim, a member of the Navy's advisory board, was a consulting engineer of the DuPont Company and as such had characterized Congressmen who fought for a government nitrate plant as "pork barrel politicians."

Working for Private Interests.

"So this corporation agent is speaking for his own interests and those of his employers," said the Alabama Senator. "It is not for the good of the country, but for the private interests of the DuPont Powder Company in its legitimate business and naturally does not want it to be taken over by the government. It wishes to control the powder business of the country. It has a right to have its agents here attempting to defeat my proposal, but the Senate of the United States has a right to permit the DuPont Powder Company to defeat this legislation."

Early in the day Senator Sausbury, of Delaware, introduced a bill prepared by Senator Underwood, which provided for granting of 50 year water power site leases to corporations which would guarantee to erect a hydro-electric plant for production of nitro.

(Continued on Page Three.)

INVESTIGATION OF WRECK UNDER WAY

Ohio Utilities Commission and Interstate Commerce Commission Are to Fix Blame.

IN AMHERST CATASTROPHE

Chief Inspector Hoffman Says Accident Was Due to Man-Failure and Not Machine-Failure—Hearings Open Today.

Cleveland, Ohio, March 30.—Investigation into the wreck of three New York Central trains at Amherst, Ohio, Wednesday, which took a toll of at least 28 lives—the exact number may never be known—and brought injury to more than 40 others, got under way today.

With a fierce controversy raging among railroad employes as to who was responsible for the accident, representatives of the state of Ohio and of the Federal government were told by officials of the New York Central lines that the railroad officials would not conduct a separate formal inquiry on their own part. They asserted the best interests of all concerned would be best served by one investigation on the part of the representatives of Ohio, the Ohio Utilities Commission and of the Interstate Commerce Commission. The railroad officials said they would give every help to make the investigation complete and the railroad would abide by the findings of these bodies, whatever they are.

Test Signal Block.

Testing of the signal block apparatus at Amherst was the main work of the government and state experts today. Taking a special train the investigators went to the scene of the wreck and inspected it thoroughly. The controversy centered about A. H. Ernst, age 25; tower man at Amherst, and Herman Hess, age 55, veteran engineer, whose train ran into the first section of train No. 86, causing the deaths of nearly all of those killed.

Ernst vehemently denied he was at the scene or that he was in such a condition as to be able to give any information. He stated that he had no recollection of the wreck and threatened to show that failure of the signal to work was not an unexplained thing by any means, but that he was not given any signal but that the signal light had flashed red.

Due to "Man-Failure."

M. J. Heffernan, chief inspector for the State Utilities Commission, late today said the wreck was due to a man-made failure, not a machine failure. Heffernan's statement was made on the scene of the wreck, where he went with other state, federal and railroad investigators today.

"Engineer Herman Hess of the second section of Flyer No. 86 will have (Continued on Page Six.)

INTENSE ACTIVITY ON AUSTRO-ITALIAN FRONT IS RENEWED

Strong Forces of Austrians and Italians Facing Each Other in Gorizia Sector.

RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE ABATED

German in St. Etloi Region Reach Portion of Mine Crater Held by the British Forces.

Fighting is still going on between the British and Germans along the British end of the French line, particularly near St. Etloi, where German grenades (browies) have succeeded in reaching a portion of a mine crater held by the British. Near Soesinghe the British put down an attempted attack by the Germans.

Strong forces of Austrians and Italians are aligned against each other in the Gorizia sector of the Austro-Italian front. On the heights of Sella spirited fighting is taking place for the possession of trenches. Elsewhere along the front, the artillery duels continue.

Berlin says the big offensive of the Russians in the region of Postav has ceased and that the Russians also have given up their attacks around Laski Narek. Artillery duels, however, are going on around Jacobstad and to the north of Vidy.

Great Britain has put in effect on the night of March 29th a non-blockade order in Council under which neither a vessel nor her cargo is immune from capture for a breach of the blockade on the sole ground that the vessel at the moment is on her way to a non-blockade port.

Great aerial activity is reported in the latest official communication issued by the French war office. Five German aeroplanes were brought down in the region of Verdun, two in the Champagne district and two in the Ardennes. The German planes were shot down by the French pilots, the war office says. The aeroplanes were shot down by the French pilots, the war office says. The aeroplanes were shot down by the French pilots, the war office says.

The French machines were hit many times, but all the French pilots, the war office says, returned safely.

Heavy German attacks were delivered around Fort Douaumont. Liquid flames were employed in these assaults but the Germans were repulsed with considerable losses.

Heavy fighting has taken place recently, the infantry actions, ceased temporarily, but the bombardment of the artillery continued in the region of Malincoeur.

DELAYED IN USE OF MEXICAN RAILROAD

Failure of Carranza to Permit Guarding of Supplies Disappointment to Officials.

MOTOR TRAINS YET ACTIVE

San Antonio, Texas, March 30.—General Funston delayed using the Mexico Northwestern railway today for the shipment of supplies to the troops in Mexico, pending a conference, with General Gaviro, commander of Mexican troops at Juarez; General Bell, post commander at El Paso, and Andres Garcia, Mexican consul at El Paso.

It is expected shipments over that route will be begun tomorrow, but there was a disposition at army headquarters today to move cautiously. The failure of General Carranza to give permission to guard the supplies was a sharp disappointment and it was believed that even yet some arrangement might be made whereby supplies entering Mexico might be safeguarded.

The ordinary movement of supplies along the route from Columbus, N. M., continued today and until the railroad route has proved satisfactory the long line of motor trucks will not be reopened.

Where Villa is tonight remained unknown to General Funston, but General Pershing reported during the day that Villa had been sighted near a mountainous district south of Namiqui, Villa was known to be making his way south and General Pershing's cavalry resumed their unrelenting ride on his trail, notwithstanding it may lead them into the dangerous passes of mountains of the region.

CARRANZA'S AGREEMENT TO BE GIVEN A FAIR TRIAL

Washington, March 30.—General Carranza's agreement to "commercial use" of the Mexican Northwestern railway for transportation of supplies to the American expedition hunting Villa will be given a fair trial, and in the meantime the United States will not press for an extension or further definition of the arrangement.

General Funston has been instructed to accept the shipments to General Pershing's column under such conditions as the Mexican defecto authorities prescribe, and yesterday's determination to seek a more satisfactory understanding with Carranza was accordingly promptly and safely necessary supplies subject to the restrictions imposed. Reports to the War Department tonight by General Funston (Continued on Page Ten.)

DECLINED TO CONCESSIONS

Const Line Feels That Present Terms and Working Conditions Are Liberal.

DEMANDS ARE PRESENTED

General Manager F. B. Albright, of the Atlantic Coast Line, in common with the general managers of practically all the railroads of the country, yesterday was presented with a copy of the request of the train employees asking for an eight-hour day without reduction in pay and time and a half pay for over time. He immediately replied with a letter to the representatives stating that the present standards of rates and working conditions have been largely fixed by mediation and arbitration and that the A. C. L. feels that they are adequate and even liberal to the employees.

The request that the Atlantic Coast Line join in a concerted movement with other railroads for a reduction in pay and time was not answered on this point given as soon as practicable. The railroads are given until April 29 to make reply before further negotiations are asked for.

Const Line's Answer.

To the joint communication with a copy of the demands for a revised schedule of compensation to train employees, which was presented in person by Mr. S. J. Brooks, chairman, and Mr. Warren L. Jones, secretary of the adjustment committee of the R. C. E. A. M. L. L., chairman, and Mr. C. A. Windham, secretary of the committee of the E. of R. T., and Mr. F. D. Howard, chairman, and Mr. G. W. Barnes, secretary of the E. of R. T., General Manager F. B. Albright, of the Atlantic Coast Line, submitted the following reply, a copy being given to the representatives of each of the organizations named.

"Gentlemen: Your communication of March 29, 1915, giving notice of your desire to revise present wages, schedules and arrangements according to certain standards of rates and working conditions, has this day been received.

"The present standards of rates and working conditions have been very largely fixed by mediation and arbitration, and this company feels that they are adequate and even liberal to the employees. This company has no desire to change either the existing rates of pay or the working rules, nor to reduce the earning possibilities of the employees under their existing rules, but inasmuch as your proposals contain fundamental changes in operating methods and practices on which the schedules have been built up, this company hereby gives notice that in connection with and as a part of the consideration and disposition of your proposals (Continued on Page Ten.)

DANIELS THE LAST WITNESS FOR NAVY PROGRAMME, HEARD

The Secretary Urges Establishment of Government Plant for Making Projectiles.

ASKS FOR 15,000 MORE MEN

Advocates \$2,000,000 This Year for Air Craft — Will Continue Testimony Today.

Washington, March 30.—A final review of the administration's preparedness plan for the navy was given today by Secretary Daniels, who will be the last witness before the committee begins framing its bill. The Secretary added in several respects to the programme he had mapped out in estimates previously submitted to the committee.

He urged the establishment of a government plant to manufacture navy projectiles; raised the estimate for the proposed research laboratory from \$1,900,000 to \$2,000,000, asked for 15,000 additional men instead of 10,000 and proposed that civilian educators be placed at the head of the non-military departments of the naval academy to release line officers for active service.

Requesting that all provision for air service be stricken from the five-year building programme, Mr. Daniels urged an appropriation of \$2,000,000 for air craft this year. He explained that there was no way of determining what expenditure would be necessary in the future.

Criticism May Come Up Today.

Criticism of Secretary Daniels' administration of the Department, foreshadowed by the course of certain committee members in examining the testimony, probably will materialize tomorrow. The Secretary was allowed to proceed without interruption today, taking up the items in the programme singly. He will conclude his testimony tomorrow and be questioned by the committee.

Questions of new battleships versus fast cruisers, of the size of warships for future submarines and other subjects much debated during the prolonged hearing, were not reached.

Mr. Daniels' statements outside of the hearing, his statements to the press, almost wholly with industrial problems of the service.

An outline of the Department's plan for building up an adequate reserve force for the navy was presented by the Secretary. It provides for five classes of reservists. The first, to be known as the fleet reserve, would be composed of former officers and enlisted men; the second, of former officers and men of the seagoing profession for service on fighting ships in war; the third, or naval auxiliary reserve, of ship masters and seamen enrolled for war in the navy; the fourth, or naval coast defense reserve, or residents on or near the coast capable of serving aboard mine craft, patrol vessels, torpedo boats, aircraft carriers, or duty on the coast and in their respective districts, and the fifth or volunteer naval reserve, of men who would have no duty to perform on the coast or yachts, power boats or other craft could render efficient aid in war times.

Urges Passage of Armistice Bill.

Secretary Daniels urged the committee to report the armistice bill to the Senate and which will be taken up next Tuesday. He laid on the necessity in his opinion of providing for the establishment of a fair price for arms or any other material needed by the navy through equipping government plants to produce whatever could not be obtained in a satisfactory figure by contract.

A projectile plant, Mr. Daniels declared, was vitally important to the navy. High prices due to the war orders from Europe, he said, had made it virtually impossible to obtain what the navy must have. He added that a government plant would prevent navy inventors getting into the hands of possible enemy powers as was now almost certain to be the case.

The Secretary read a long statement to show the fluctuation in the price of projectiles asked by bidders.

"To spite of all the armistice bill, I am engaged in manufacturing projectiles for foreign governments," he said, "it is a fact that last July the Department advertised for six-inch and three-inch common projectiles and was unable to obtain satisfactory bids. And on this account only the Department undertook to manufacture a large quantity of these projectiles at navy yards." "The [1914 bids for armistice projectiles were advertised, Mr. Daniels said, an English firm, Handfield, limited, announced its intention to bid.

"The companies usually furnishing armistice projectiles," he added, (Continued on Page Three.)

CONSPIRACY FOR A MILITARY TRIP INTO CANADA CHARGED

Captain Hans Tauscher, Arrested in New York, is Alleged With Alfred A. Fritzen to Have Set on Foot Scheme to Blow Up the Welland Canal—Information Given by Von Der Goltz.

New York, March 30.—Captain Hans Tauscher, said to be an officer in the German navy and reputed head of the Tauscher Arms Company of this city, as well as the American representative of the Krupp Gun Works, was arrested today by Federal authorities on a warrant charging conspiracy. Captain Tauscher is the husband of Johanna Gadski, the grand opera singer.

The warrant was sworn to "on information and belief" by William M. Otley, a special agent of the Department of Justice. The complainant in the case also names Alfred A. Fritzen, who is not yet under arrest. It is charged that Tauscher and Fritzen, on August 15, 1914, set on foot a military enterprise to be carried on from the United States for the purpose of destroying or damaging the Welland Canal. The defendants named are said to have had four associates.

Bought Quantity of Dynamite.

It also is alleged that the defendants, obtained a large quantity of dynamite and other explosives and that on or about September 14, 1914, all except Tauscher left New York carrying the dynamite in suit cases and proceeded by rail to Niagara Falls. Sources of information on which the complaint is based are kept secret.

Tauscher was arrested at his office in this city and taken before United States Commissioner Houghton. He entered a plea of not guilty and was held under a bond of \$25,000 for examination on April 15.

The arrest of Tauscher and the naming of Fritzen in the complaint are said to be the direct result of the examination by Federal authorities here of Horst Von Der Goltz, also known as Bridgman Taylor, who arrived Tuesday from Liverpool. The information furnished by Von Der Goltz, it is said, completed a chain of evidence that Federal authorities have, been awaiting against six men for a year and a half. Other arrests are expected soon.

From representatives of the Department of Justice here, it was learned today that the plot in which Tauscher is alleged to have been implicated, was the first of the several plots believed to have been originated in the United States to destroy the Welland Canal.

Six men in Paris.

Federal agents today said that soon after the war broke out a party of six men purchased from an explosive company in this city a quantity of dynamite. This was taken by a man at night in a trunk from a ship anchored near Gravesend Bay. It is charged, the launching proceeding to a dock on the Niagara river in Harlem where the dynamite was unloaded and taken in a cab to a boarding house in Manhattan. There, it is asserted, the explosive was fitted with fuses and caps and electric devices for exploding, after which it was packed in six suit cases that the alleged conspirators took with them to Niagara Falls.

At this point the journey was interrupted for some reason which the Federal officers declined to disclose at present, and the party is said to have returned to this city with the dangerous baggage.

A later plan to destroy the Welland canal which resulted in the arrest and indictment of Paul Koenig, the officers said, had no direct connection with the case now under investigation. Information regarding Fritzen was withheld. It was said, however, that all six of the alleged conspirators are in the United States.

The majority of the vessel from which the dynamite is said to have been taken, was not disclosed, but it was declared she was not the German steamer Madgeburg that for a long time, after the war, started was at anchor in Gravesend Bay with a cargo of dynamite.

Charge Under Criminal Case.

The charge against Tauscher and Fritzen is based on the provisions of section 13 of the United States criminal code which prescribed a penalty of not more than three years imprisonment and a fine of \$5,000 for beginning, setting on foot or preparing within the confines of the United States a military expedition directed against a foreign power with which the United States is at peace.

Tauscher is understood to have asserted today that he was not in the United States at the date the conspiracy is alleged to have been formed, and that he did not return until after the ten days later.

SHIPPERS MAKE INQUIRY

Ask Whether Panama Canal Will Be Open by April 15.

Panama, March 30.—Notwithstanding the official prediction by the War Department that the Panama canal would be open for traffic on April 15 many shipping concerns have cabled Lieutenant Colonel Harding, engineer of maintenance with cables, asking whether the canal will be ready or reopened by that date. Colonel Harding invariably informs these inquirers that condition in the Galliard Cut justify the prediction.

Three of the five vessels at Balboa and three at Cristobal awaiting transit through the canal while others are reported on their way to the terminals.

HOPE M'LEAN WILL BE DANIELS' SUCCESSOR

Lumberton Man Suggested for National Committeeman.

Suggestion Meets With Unanimous Approval Among North Carolinians in Washington—Would Accept, in Relief.

(Special Star Telegram.)

Washington, D. C., March 30.—The story from Raleigh today suggesting the name of A. W. McLean, of Lumberton, as the Democratic National Committeeman from North Carolina met with unanimous approval around the Capitol today. There appears to be no objection to him from this end. Indeed, every one who talked about the probable successor to Secretary Daniels said they hoped the Lumberton man would be selected.

When Senator Simmons was asked what he thought of Mr. McLean as the next national committeeman, his only reply was, "Fine." It is known, however, that the senior senator is very fond of Mr. McLean and should the latter decide to be a candidate, and he undoubtedly will, he would have the support of Senator Simmons.

Senator Overman said that he hoped McLean would be selected. He said he had given good service to his State and party and that his selection, he thought, would be a popular one. "Will McLean is a fine, loyal fellow," said Senator Overman. "If selected, he would be a credit to the State."

In conversation over the long distance telephone from Baltimore, Mr. McLean admitted that many of his friends had urged him to allow his name to be presented as the successor to Mr. Daniels. He did not say whether (Continued on Page Three.)

BRITISH CREW ARE HELD UP BY LONE GERMAN STOWAWAY

Puts Wireless Out of Commission, Throws Ship's Guns Overboard, Then Rifles the Safe—Compels Captain at Point of Revolver to Change Course and Land Him at Delaware Breakwater.

Lewes, Del., March 30.—How a lone German stowaway held up the captain and 56 members of the crew of the British steamer Matoppo, compelling them at the point of a revolver to change the course of the vessel and land him at the Delaware Breakwater after he had rifled the ship's safe and taken the valuables, was told here tonight by Captain Bergner, master of the Matoppo. The stowaway, who says his name is Ernest Schiller and that he had lived in Hoboken, N. J., for the past eight months, is now locked up in the jail here awaiting the arrival of the United States district attorney from Wilmington, Del., and the British consul general from Philadelphia.

The hold-up took place outside the three-mile limit and Federal authorities here say this government probably will have nothing to do with the matter. Schiller, they say, will be returned to the Matoppo and turned over to British officials at St. Lucia, where the vessel will stop for coal.

He First Heard the Captain.

The ship sailed from New York yesterday for Vladivostok with a cargo consisting chiefly of barbed wire and farm implements. She passed out Sandy Hook at 8 o'clock in the evening and two hours later, upon entering her cabin, Captain Bergner says he was confronted by a young man with a revolver in each hand. "Hands up and not a sound if you value your life," he said. The captain was then bound hand and foot and locked in his cabin, promising under penalty of death, not to raise an alarm.

Cautioning making his way to the wireless cabin, the stowaway, who is about 36 years old, put the instruments out of commission, and threw the ship's guns, consisting of six rifles, overboard. He then returned to the captain's cabin, rifled the safe and destroyed many important papers. He had expected, he told Captain Bergner, to find at least 2,000 pounds sterling in money which he thought was in the ship's safe. Government officials expressed the opinion that the man's mind is unbalanced.

(Continued on Page Three.)

THE DAY IN CONGRESS

SENATE

Met at noon.

Resumed debate on Army reorganization bill.

Adopted resolution asking Attorney General to investigate gasoline prices.

Adjourned at 5:40 P. M. to noon Friday.

HOUSE

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Secretary Daniels testified before the Naval committee.

Burnett Immigration bill with literacy test and Asiatic exclusion provisions passed 308 to 87.

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