

# LIFE ON UNDERSEA BOATS NOT PLEASANT

### Terrible Experiences of Crew of English Submarine

#### Death in Various Forms Menaced the British E-17 and Played With Men for Hours—Struggle to Save the Submarine.

London, Nov. 30.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press).—Death in various forms menaced and played with the crew of the British submarine E-17, wrecked and finally sunk, after a gallant fight for liftoff off the coast of Holland, according to the story of her commander now for the first time told. His account gives a vivid picture of an all night struggle to save the submarine and her crew from the battering of the waves which hammered the little vessel upon the shoal, of a fight with fire in her hold, against leaks that threatened to fill her with water and to catch and secure a torpedo thrown from its launchings with its war-head in place, menacing all with instant destruction.

Freed from the shoal only to be confronted by an apparently hostile cruiser bent upon her destruction, the submarine commander tells how he was driven to desperate resource of submerging in a waterlogged craft and of the suspense of the critical moments when the submarine was filling at the bottom of the ocean and of a fight back to the surface to face the guns of the cruiser.

Writing from a Dutch internment camp, the E-17's commander tells of the tolling of the stranding of the submarine and the vain struggle to float her, adds:

"The antics of the boat proved too much for the lashings of one of the spare torpedoes; the tail held firm, but the nose, with the heavy war-head in place, commenced thrashing about in the boat, and would have done a lot of damage if it had not been rapidly rescued.

"Large quantities of water had come down the conning tower and made an awful mess of things. It got at the electric light switchboards, fused the police lights, and started a fire behind the switchboards, which had to be put out with one of the patent fire extinguishers. The resulting fumes of burnt rubber and fire extinguisher made a most unpleasant combination with which we were bottled up for the rest of the night.

"It was a terrible time, that period of waiting for the dawn. None of us thought that the boat could last, and I take my hat off to the men that made her; it was simply wonderful the amount of hammering she took. My inspection showed that the rudder had gone, and the after compartment had a large direct connection with the sea, probably through the hole where the rudder had been. The bulkhead of this compartment had also been strained and was leaking. Both propeller shafts had been slightly bent by the bumping, and both main engines had got damp and were full of electric leaks; six of the big main tanks were holed, and the ship was leaking internally in about a dozen places.

"I looked pretty hopeless, so I started to destroy all confidential papers, charts and instructions, the most secret things being baked in the electric oven until brittle and then powdered up. Then I held a council of war upon what we should do if we could get afloat in the morning. I had enough faith in the German spy system to expect that we had been observed and were being thrashed about in the night and could expect trouble soon after daybreak.

"When dawn came I found we were barely fifty yards from shore at a point about midway along the island of Texel, had a clear sea behind us without shoals, and that the sea had gone down a lot. We were leaking so badly that I felt that diving would be a risky experiment, only to be tried in the extreme case, with probably a 5 to 1 chance against us. I was quite satisfied however that we could get back to England if the weather held good and we were not interfered with.

"About 9:45 we sighted a cruiser coming along the coast and steaming very fast. A rain squall was coming up behind her which blotted her out before we could distinguish her, but she altered her course toward land just before going out of sight.

"The most hopeful scheme seemed to get straight out seaward, in hope of slipping away unobserved in the mist. It was painfully slow work, ages passed, and we began to cheer up, thinking all was well. Then suddenly we spotted her. She had altered her course again, and was now driving up at a great rate on a course that looked as if she meant ramming.

"When she was short half mile away I made out the blurred outline of her guns, and immediately afterward saw them swinging forward. It is an unwritten law of the sea never to train guns on warships of a nation with whom one is at peace—for obvious reasons. Therefore her action in training her guns on us at this moment seemed to prove conclusively that she was hostile and about to open fire. To stay on the surface seemed certain death, either from gunfire or ramming, so I took the 1 to 5 chance for life under water.

"The moments following my order to dive were rather exciting. When I tried to close the conning tower lid I found to my horror that it had jammed. By the feel of it I fancy a piece of waste or rope's end had fouled the counter balance weight. The water was half way up the conning tower. No time to do anything, so I started down again with the idea of closing the lower door. I had barely got to the edge of the hole when the water came. The first wave hit the lid a great smack, and luckily broke the obstruction and closed the lid with bang, although an avalanche of water got into the boat first.

"I found things pretty serious inside, for as soon as the pressure came on the leaks had opened up, and the boat began to take charge of itself, sinking like a stone. The water inside had run aft, depressing the stern to such an angle that it was impossible to stand without holding on to something.

"It was out of the question to remain submerged, the question was rather whether we would be able to get back to the surface at all. The boat had gone right down until she touched bottom with her tail. As she did so the door of the after compartment commenced to gape and give. If the boat had stayed at that depth it would have gone. But immediately on touching bottom she commenced to rise

again, because the water blown out of her tanks was sufficient to give her a slight buoyancy as soon as her downward momentum was stopped.

"There was a tremendous lot of free water in the interior. Some of the men were literally washed away from their stations. Those who were washed away stayed as near their billets as possible, ready to dive back and work their valves if it required it. The men might have been doing a routine practice in home waters for all the difference it made.

"We were now rising slowly, when suddenly the port motor blew out, water having reached it and short circuited it. This happened at 45 feet, then stopped and commenced sinking again slowly. The dial pointer crept round to 45 feet, stopped, then went to 49, then 49.1, 2, stopped there for a long time and then started to rise again.

"This was the critical moment. If she had gone down instead of up nothing could have saved us. Once she made up her mind to come up, she came with a rush. We emerged ready to torpedo the German cruiser if we could, and the men standing ready to swim for it as soon as we had fired. When we broke surface there was the ship, lying motionless 400 yards away, a beautiful shot. But it had stopped raining, and I was astonished to find at first sight that she was a Dutchman. Her ensign was clearly visible, and her silhouette which I now saw for the first time, was unmistakable.

"My boat was practically in a sinking condition and I signalled to the Dutch cruiser for help. Boats were sent over with the utmost promptitude and we shortly found ourselves aboard the Noord Brabant, of the Dutch royal navy, stationed at the Helder. We were received and treated most warmly. I went over with the prisoners and watched my boat take its last plunge. As she went down a bugle sounded the 'Attention' and the Noord Brabant saluted her while she died."

Germany is believed effectually blockaded. Rigid action by America and Allies prevents supplies reaching Germany from neutrals.

London, Nov. 20.—(Correspondence).—Germany is now believed to be effectually blockaded. According to estimate made here, she now is completely cut off from receiving imports from other than her allies owing to the fact that the prevailing shortage of food stuffs in neutral countries nearby have made it necessary for them to withhold from her any imports needed by their own people.

Virtually nothing is now permitted to go into Holland or the Scandinavian countries from England, the United States or any of the Entente countries, and almost all of the world's exports of foodstuffs, feeding stuffs, and raw materials of every kind.

This stiffening up of the blockade is attributed to the policy adopted by the United States in July of withholding its exports from neutral countries near Germany except on terms under which they must cease the export even of their own produce to Germany. This principle was expressed in London in the phrase: "We will not send you wheat or fodder to enable you to export meat and butter to Germany. Until you agree to stop your exports to Germany we will send you nothing."

America's memorandum to Norway as published in that country says substantially: "The United States will regard all export to the central powers as a violation of the foodstuffs and other necessities which the country concerned should expect to obtain for its own industries or support. It can hardly be expected that the United States will supply the countries with necessities if they continue to give help to the central powers."

Imports of oils and fats into Holland and Scandinavian countries have decreased from over 75,000 tons a month before the war to a monthly average of 22,500 tons at present, according to figures made public here. Imports of cereal and fodder formerly 242,000 tons a month, have decreased to 25,000 a month. Cotton imports have declined one-half since 1916 and imports of hides and leather are now a mere fraction of what they formerly were. Copper imports have declined almost to one-fifth their former proportions.

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## EDIBLE EARTH IS EATEN IN CENTRAL EMPIRES NOW

### Was Highly Esteemed Delicacy in the Lean Years Between 1719-1733.

Amsterdam, Netherlands, Dec. 15.—In their frantic search for new food substitutes, Germans have made the discovery that so-called edible earth exists in many parts of Germany, and learned professors have lost no time in making it known that the eating of earth is by no means confined to certain savage tribes of New Guinea and South America. It was a highly esteemed delicacy, they say, during the Thirty Years War and also in the "lean years" between 1719 and 1733.

Layers of edible earth, it is stated, have been located on the shores of Luneburg, near Koeligsberg, in the valley of the lower Vistula and in the Grand Duchy of Hesse, while the Austrians, it is announced, have their own deposits of edible earth near Eger and Franzensbad in Bohemia.

## SWISS TO SUPPLY AMERICANS 2,000 WOODEN BUILDINGS

Berne, Dec. 15.—The American military commission in Switzerland, it is announced, has just contracted for an additional 2,000 wooden buildings to be used as barracks which are to be delivered not later than next February to the American military authorities. These will supplement 1,500 such barracks ordered months ago.

The barracks are to be about 100 feet long by 20 feet wide, and are of double thickness so as to protect the soldiers from cold and dampness. They are of pine and are so built that they can be shipped in parts and erected without the use of nails. Each part is numbered so that the assembling is an easy matter. A number of Swiss building concerns are to fulfill the contract.

## GERMAN SMUGGLING STILL ATTEMPTED IN SWITZERLAND

Berne, Dec. 15.—Smuggling foodstuffs into Germany is still practiced in ingenious and unexpected ways. The other night a party of about fifty persons crossed the frontier to take part in a masked ball in a little Swiss town. Towards midnight they returned in automobiles, which were warned to stop at the frontier.

No notice being taken of the warning, the sentinels fired and brought the cars to a standstill. The occupants, most of whom were discovered to be German soldiers, succeeded in making their escape, but the cars, which were hidden with large quantities of soap, chocolate, butter, leather and fats, were seized by the authorities.

# CRIMINALS FREE MEN IN DEMOCRATIC RUSSIA

### Prisoner Whose Plots Caused 3,000 Deaths Escapes

#### After Being Led Upon Scaffold He Stirs Crowd With a Speech and While Comrades Vote on His Freedom Escapes.

Petrograd, Nov. 15.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press).—The provincial newspaper Priasovsky Kral publishes an amazing account of the escape of a Russian military prisoner who had been sentenced to be executed for selling military secrets to Germany and plotting explosions in two powder factories which caused the death of 3,000 persons.

When a squad of soldiers and government agents had assembled to watch the hangman do his work, the condemned man stepped then to the scaffold and instead of executing him, they give him a vote of approval. In the debate which ensued the executioner narrowly escaped hanging in place of the prisoner. The convicted man was elected as secretary of the meeting and escaped while the vote whether to kill him or the executioner was being taken. The meeting then voted to sentence the executioner to imprisonment for failure to do his duty.

Smiling contemptuously the prisoner was led to the scaffold. When the sentence had been read, he raised his hands and demanded to be heard.

"No," objected the prosecuting attorney. "It is too late now. You should have spoken before, at the trial."

One of the squad of soldiers stepped out and said in a tone of amazement: "What a way to die! Is not this a free? Thank God, there's no czarist regime to keep our mouths closed. Speak, comrade, speak!"

The condemned man began: "Comrades! Do you know who has condemned me? A court constituted entirely of lower middle class capitalists, inspired by the imperialists of the allied countries. The prosecutor, as I know absolutely, was a masquerading Kornilovist! Comrades! Shall not democracy itself speak? Shall it not say 'Hands off the creators and inspirers of the Internationale'?"

"Comrades! Can you possibly recognize a decision of this counter-revolutionary, anti-democratic court as binding on you?"

"Bravo," shouted a guard. "Let me also speak."

The condemned man yielded the floor to the guard, who began: "Comrades! Can anything be more atrocious than for us to permit the hanging of this man, who speaks as an apostle and champion of the Internationale? Comrades! I propose a vote of want of confidence in the executioner."

"I demand the right to speak," said the executioner.

"Comrades! I solemnly protest against this universal condemnation of all executioners. I am just as good a revolutionist as any of you, and if the revolutionary people has imposed on me this sad duty, I am bound by my conscience. I demand, comrades, that you pass a resolution confirming the lawfulness of my acts. I hope that you understand that it is better to deprive one dangerous individual of his life rather than sacrifice thousands of useful lives."

"I move to discontinue your speech, Comrade Hangman," broke in the condemned man.

"And by what right, Comrade Executioner of Powder Magazines, do you constitute yourself the chairman?" replied the executioner, vehemently.

"Chairman! Chairman! Let's elect a chairman," came from several parts of the audience. The election proceeded fast. It took only half an hour, and the condemned man had the office thrust upon him of secretary of the meeting.

At this point an unfortunate divergence arose among three of the soldiers and workmen's delegates. One of them, a Minimalist, demanded the instant execution of the prisoner; another, a socialist revolutionary internationalist, suggested getting explanations from the government; the third, a Maximalist, proposed that they should release the prisoner and in his stead execute the executioner as a servant and agent of the counter-revolution.

The drummer got up to declaim against the third suggestion, but after his first sentence he began talking, not to the point, but to demand the transfer of all the land without purchase to the masses. A vote of closure was invoked to cut his speech off.

A very eloquent speech followed by the secretary of the garrison committee, although it was not much to the point. He said that the revolutionary government was now organized, that there was no reason now to fear German spies or explosions at powder magazines, and therefore, in the name of the revolution, he called for the disclosure of all secret treaties.

The chairman had turned the discussion to the actual subject, putting two questions to vote—first, the fate of the prisoner; second, the rate in store for the executioner.

The voting showed a two-thirds majority in favor of executing the sentence, whereupon the condemned man expressed dissatisfaction as to the accuracy of the voting and demanded a formal division of the house. Thus the matter was carried to the prison court yard, and the eyes and noses were requested to line up on opposite sides of the gates. The result was still the same, but when they looked around for the secretary, who was also the condemned prisoner, he was nowhere to be seen.

It was explained that he had voted by marching out at the gate and had failed to return subsequently.

After some discussion, the meeting decided that the disappearance of the prisoner had disposed of any necessity of further discussing question number one, and that there remained before the meeting only question number two, the fate in store for the executioner.

This time the vote was unanimous, and the following resolution was passed:

"In consequence of the fact that the revolutionary people on February 25 to March 12 gained its freedom, not in order to down civil liberty, also in consequence of the fact that Executioner Demochkin neglected to execute the sentence on the condemned man, the assembly has decided to condemn Demochkin to three months' imprisonment, and to the self-determination of the peoples on the basis of Russian federative and indivisible."



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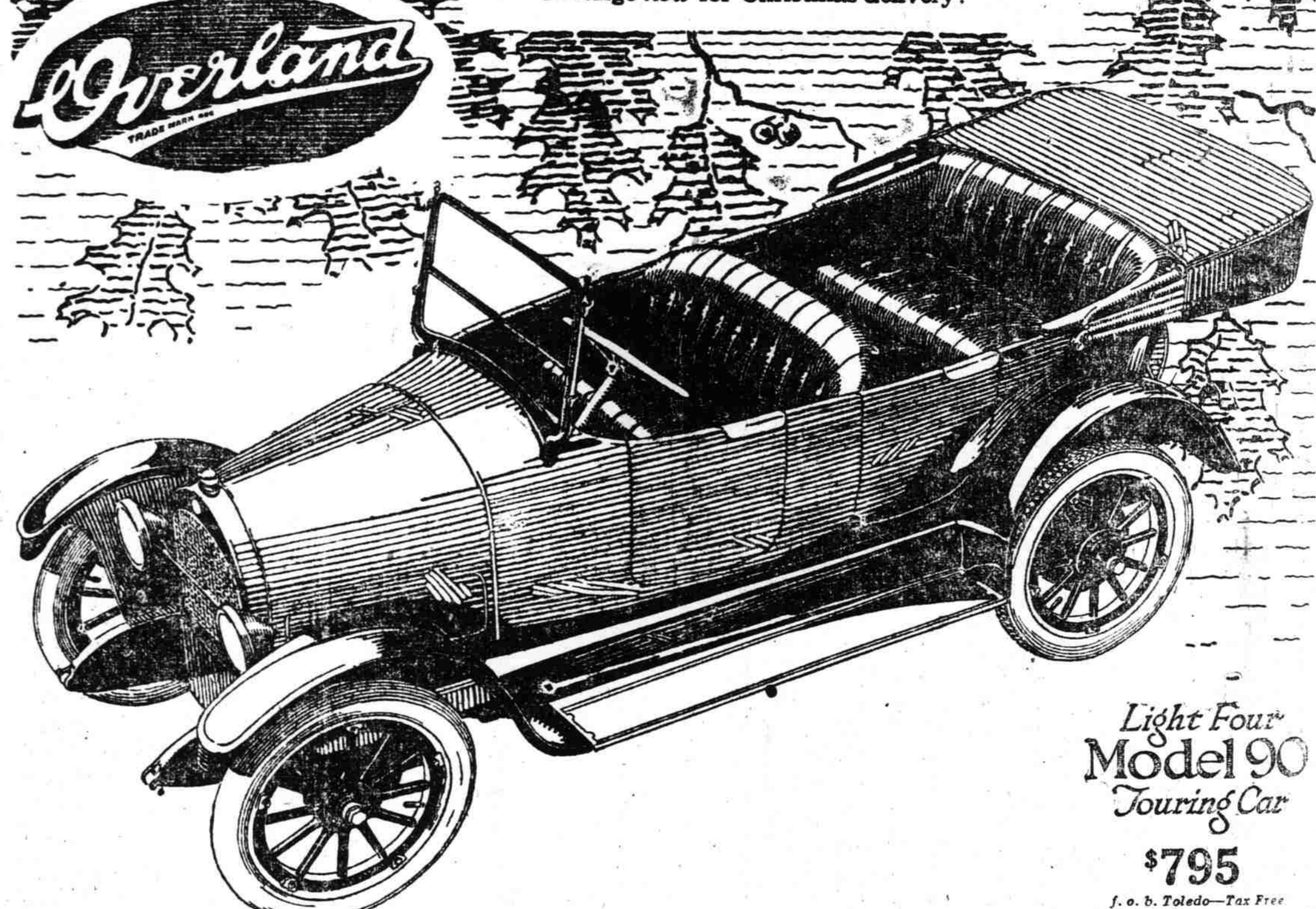
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## PROVIDING WATER IS IMPORTANT WAR WORK

### Activities of the Corps That Looks Out For Soldiers' Drink—Clean Wells and Lay Pipe.

French Front, Nov. 30.—(Correspondence).—Next after a plentiful supply of munitions the provision of water for the troops in the trenches is the most important task facing the staff of an army in the field. When the correspondent of the Associated Press, following close on the heels of an attacking force, arrives in the front lines where the troops are engaged in consolidating their newly conquered positions, he is most welcome when he has with him a well filled water bottle.

The soldiers during an advance have generally exhausted their water bottles on the march over the ground torn up by shells, or perhaps have seen the water spurt out as a bullet passed through the tin gourd. Despite their physical exhaustion and nervous tension, the troops must continue to fight and sometimes for days after an attack it is impossible to bring water or food up to them even during the night without sacrifice of many of the lives of men of the supply column.

Even behind the front lines, in the cantonments and villages where the troops in reserve or at least are quartered, the supply of water for both men and horses is surrounded with many difficulties, since large quantities are needed for both drinking and washing, and those not available in country communities. Also the numerous small locomotives of the network of narrow gauge railroads consume immense amounts.

The closest study has been given to this question by army engineers, and with the progress of the war they

have developed an excellent system of supplying the needs of the army in this direction. Special companies of officers and men have been organized into what is called the army water service. Each army composed of several army corps now is provided with a superior officer in command of several other officers and a company of expert well sinkers, borers, plumbers, and pump erectors, to whom are attached, according to the importance of the work to be undertaken, labor units for the construction of water channels, the laying of heavy piping and the loading and unloading of materials. No fewer than 75 officers and 3,500 experts are employed on the French front in France in this highly important work, while the number of labor units they can call upon to aid them is almost unlimited.

These men have cleaned 3,800 wells contaminated by the Germans in their retreat and have laid over two hundred miles of water pipes.

From the water supply centers motor trucks, each carrying three barrels containing 500 quarters apiece, make several trips daily to points near the front lines as possible, where they discharge the contents into cisterns. To these cisterns the mules and donkeys attached to the battalions occupying the lines are led each night and are loaded with small barrels of water, one on each side of the saddle, with which they make their way through communication trenches to the thirsty troops.

## HOLLAND FIRMS FINED.

### Overseas Trust Gives Drastic Treatment for Trade Violations.

Amsterdam, Netherlands, Nov. 30.—Infractions of the rules of the Netherlands Overseas Trust, the official body of which regulates the import trade of this country during the war, are punished with drastic severity, as some business firms here have found out to

their cost. A margarine firm which has been caught in attempting to export its product against the terms of its contract with the trust government the conditions on which its raw materials had been imported, has been mulcted in \$120,000. The record fines so far is held by a cocoa firm which has had to pay \$200,000 for a similar infraction. So far the total fines inflicted by the trust aggregate \$1,600,000.

-at the club utter comfort has dictated that head and foot have perfect rest. A majority elects.

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