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MUNITION SHIP EXPLODES WITH TERRIBLE RESULTS

Halifax Probably Destroyed and Hundreds of People Killed When High Explosives Burst. Two Ships Collide in Harbor—Full Details Unobtainable.

By the Associated Press.

Halifax, N. S., Dec. 6.—Scores of people have been killed, hundreds of buildings destroyed and portions of the city set on fire by an explosion which occurred as the result of a collision between an American ammunition ship and another ship at Richmond, Va., according to telephone messages received here today.

The explosion was so terrific that it destroyed the installation in the telegraph and telephone offices for practically around Halifax, while it was heard at Truro, 61 miles distant.

It is reported that the American munition steamer was moving out from her pier and rammed the other steamer broadside. Inside a few minutes there was an explosion and the crews of both vessels were killed.

The concussion that resulted caused the railroad depot at North street to collapse while all the warehouses on the waterfront were damaged. The force of the concussion was so great that freight cars were blown off railway tracks along a stretch of nearly two miles. Messages asking for fire fighting apparatus, doctors, nurses, etc., were received in the city.

At Truro, at Windsor and here the city councils met this morning and decided to take immediate steps to render effective aid to the citizens of Halifax. It is understood that large quantities of food were destroyed, and unless relief is sent out starvation will face the populace.

EARLIER STORY

By the Associated Press.

St. Johns, N. S., Dec. 6.—A large part of Halifax, N. S., is in flames following an explosion in the harbor this morning. Two vessels, one of them loaded with munitions of war, including high explosives collided.

Many buildings along the water front were torn to pieces and many persons are believed to have been killed.

Shipping in the harbor suffered severely and the crews of several ships are said to have been killed.

Wire communication between this city and Halifax was interrupted soon after the explosion and before more than fragmentary reports had been received. The munitions ship blown up was said to have been an American.

At the moment of the explosion a fierce storm was sweeping the harbor and it is supposed that the collision of the vessels was due to this.

It was stated positively here that there were several transports in the harbor when the explosion occurred. Nothing as to the fate of these was obtainable. Neither is it known whether the transports were loaded with troops or contained only their crews.

HUNDREDS MAY BE DEAD IN GREAT EXPLOSION

By the Associated Press.

Halifax, N. S., via Havana, Dec. 6.—Hundreds of persons were killed and thousands injured and the city of Halifax is in ruins as the result of explosion of a munition ship in the harbor there today. It is estimated that the property loss will run into the millions. The north end of the city is in flames.

ANOTHER REPORT

By the Associated Press.

Truro, N. S.—The loss of life in the Halifax explosion is placed at 50, according to reports received here. It is also understood that the number of injured is correspondingly large.

SCORES REPORTED KILLED

By the Associated Press.

Truro, N. S., Dec. 6.—Reports reaching here early this afternoon stated it was feared that several score of people lost their lives when the railway station at Halifax collapsed. Twenty-four railway workers were killed on the tracks at Richmond.

Advices from Halifax state that the munitions ship was an American steamer.

The advices further state that the ship which collided with the munitions ship was a Red Cross liner.

What the Red Cross Did For Wounded Soldier, Told By One Who Praises Nurses

The War Council of the American Red Cross has conceived that a great National purpose will be served by having membership in the Red Cross almost as universal as citizenship.

Although pledged as a Nation to the National purpose during this great crisis, it will not be granted to a large percentage of us to play a part in the fighting branches of our country's service.

All of us, however, can be identified with the Red Cross, which in these times when whole nations are organized for warfare, is big enough and strong enough to carry some of the burden for our soldiers, our sailors and our allies.

We want a Red Cross of fifteen million members. We want the strength and support that will grow from this army of members.

We have set Christmas time to attain this goal, because we believe that the Red Cross and Christmas spring from the same spirit, and we wish to bring together these two great symbols of mercy, sacrifice and cheer. On this, our first Christmas in the war, we want the Red Cross symbol to add not a spirit of dejection but the thought of certain purpose and sacrifice which through accomplishment it represents.

We hope that from this Christmas campaign of 1917 will grow a permanent custom which will increase the significance of both Christmas and the Red Cross.

Every citizen not now belonging to the Red Cross is urged to become a member during this drive and we take enough interest in the work of saving human lives to join without solicitation. The following, which shows the good work of the Red Cross near the French front from the book written by Private, Harold B. Peat, of the Ex-Third Battalion, First Canadian Contingent:

"There was no need for the enemy to increase the rapidity of his fire once we and over the boys in the trench to let us know what was up. Our ammunition had already given out, and we had to face the last few hundred yards without protection, measure thought it had been throughout. We knew there was not a man in that trench who had a bullet left. We knew that as far as we were concerned, we were done. We metaphorically shook hands with ourselves and wished friend self a long good bye. We looked at the sun and said "Tra-la-la" to it, and we wondered in a flash of thought what the old world would be like without us. We wondered where we would "light up."

All this passed in a moment of time, and then we decided that it would be better if we paired up, two men taking one box of ammunition. This offered a small target for the busy enemy, and also made for increased speed in covering the remaining ground.

We sprang up once more and dodged and doubled as we leaped through the rain of bullets, machine gun and rifle. How we lived I don't know. I was sharing a box with a lad whom I heard the fellows call Bob. He was no more than a boy, but we were much of a size and ran light. We were the only two of the twenty-nine left on our feet. Today I am one of five of that bunch left alive.

About fifty yards from the trench we dropped for a last rest before the final spurt which would decide the whole course of events in the next ten minutes. Would we reach that trench and turn in our box of ammunition, or would we "get our" and would the boys so eagerly waiting for us be surrounded and captured? Or would many of them do what they had threatened? "If it comes to surrendering," several had said in my hearing, "I will run a bayonet into myself rather than be taken."

When a man is lying close to the ground there is not so very great a chance of his being hit by bullets. They pass overhead as a rule. It is when a man is kneeling or standing or between the two positions that the great danger lies. The lad Bob and I were just in the act of rising when mine came along. I felt no more than a stinging blow in the right shoulder, a searing cut and a thud of pain as the bullet exploded in leaving my body. I fell on my face and blood gushed from my shoulder.

"Hit hard of soft?" queried my companion, as he threw himself down beside me.

"Don't know," I gasped.

"You're hit in the mouth," he said, as the blood poured from between my lips.

"No, by gum, you're hit in the back." I gasped, nearly chocked, and spluttered out: "You're a liar; I'm not hit in the back." But there was a gash in the back where the exploding missile had torn away and carried out portions of my lung and bits of bone and flesh.

I closed my eyes. Then from a distance I heard Bob speak.

"I'm going to fix you," he said. and knelt beside me. He got into such a position that his own body shielded me from any of the enemy bullets. It was a marvelous piece of bravery; less has earned a Victoria Cross.

He turned me round so that my head was toward our reserves and my feet were toward the Germans. In almost all cases when a man is hit he falls forward with his face to the enemy. In all probability he will become unconscious. When he awakes he remembers that he fell forward. A blind instinct works within him and makes him strive to turn around. He knows danger lies ahead, but friend and safety are back of him.

Bob shifted me round. "Remember," he whispered, "that if you faint, when you come to, you are placed right. You are in the right direction—don't turn round."

A wonderful motto for a man to carry through life. Bob had no thought of future or fame. In keen solicitude for a fallen comrade

(Continued on page 4)

FIRE IN CONTROL SAYS LATE REPORT

By the Associated Press.

St. Johns, N. B., Dec. 6.—An unofficial report received at 2 o'clock this afternoon said the fire was under control. The origin of the telegraph report was not learned.

QUARTERLY MEETING HICKORY MERCHANTS

The quarterly meeting of the Merchants Association, to be held Friday night at 8 o'clock at the Chamber of Commerce, will be of unusual importance to members and a full attendance doubtless will be on hand. Every member is expected to be present.

GERMANS CLAIM CAPTURE OF ITALIANS

By the Associated Press.

Berlin, via London, Dec. 6.—Eleven thousand Italians have been captured by the Austro-Germans in their new offensive on the mountainous front of northern Italy, it was officially announced today.

Strong Italian positions in the Mafletta region of the northern front were taken and held by the Teutonic forces who captured 60 guns.

Sheriff Isenhower will be in the city manager's office Saturday from 9 until 4 for the purpose of collecting state and county taxes. 12 6 2t

Mrs. J. A. Sellers is visiting her daughter, Mrs. Funderburk at Cheraw, S. C.

Messrs. J. D. Elliott, F. A. Henderson, Geo. S. Watson, Dr. C. L. Hunsucker, Walker Lyerly and Euber Lyerly were among Hickory Shriners leaving today for Charlotte.

Mr. K. C. Menzies motored to Charlotte today.

Sheriff Isenhower will be in the city manager's office Saturday from 9 until 4 for the purpose of collecting state and county taxes. 12 6 2t

MORSE TO BUILD TWELVE LARGE STEEL CARGO SHIPS

Washington, Dec. 6.—Contracts for the construction of 12 8,800 ton stell cargo ships were let by the shipping board to Charles W. Moore to be built at a plant recently constructed by him.

AMERICA LIKELY SEND TROOPS TO ITALY

By the Associated Press.

Washington, Dec. 6.—The house foreign affairs committee's report on the war resolution declares that the United States probably will send troops to Italy.

HOUSE IS READY TO DECLARE WAR

By the Associated Press.

Washington, Dec. 6.—With a formal report from the foreign affairs committee, the resolution to declare war on Austria-Hungary was today brought into the house of representatives.

There were no dissenting votes in the committee and at the request of Chairman Flood the house gave its unanimous consent to take up the resolution tomorrow at the opening of the session.

HOLIDAY TRADE STARTS OFF WELL

With less than three weeks before Christmas, the holiday shoppers have begun their annual pilgrimage to the various stores in search of articles for relative and friend. The trade, merchants say, is starting off well.

Conservation of resources does not apply to the many thousands of articles and varieties of merchandise which merchants have in stock, but to the one essential for winning the war—foodstuffs. Trade is expected to be carried on by everybody, and the money that is spent is kept in circulation. Even the money that bought bonds and aided the Red Cross goes back into the channels of trade and in Hickory the various factories are receiving in orders far more money than has gone away from here.

Hickory stores, as usual, have ample stocks from which to select and careful shoppers are beginning to make purchases. It will be next week, however, before the usual holiday rush is on but the Christmas trade promises to be as satisfactory as ever.

CATAWBA OFFICERS WILI LEAVE SOON

Catawba county's officer graduates from the Fort Oglethorpe training school will be assigned to different camps in the south and all of them will report for duty on December 15. First Lieutenants Earl N. Carr of Hickory and Andrew Wilson of Newton go to Chickamauga Park, Ga., where United States regular infantrymen are in training. Capt. Eugene Gwaltney of Hickory, field artillery, First lieutenant C. C. Freeman of Hickory and Second Lieutenant R. Lee Hewitt of Newton, infantry, have been assigned to Camp Gordon, Atlanta. First Lieutenant John G. H. Geitner will go to Camp Greene, Charlotte, and Second Lieutenant Philip Gwaltney will go to Camp Pike, Little Rock.

Messrs. R. E. Martin, H. L. Yoder, H. J. Holbrook and Chas. H. Geitner are in Charlotte attending a meeting of the Shriners.

NEW YORK COTTON

By the Associated Press.

New York, Dec. 6.—The cotton market opened steady today at an advance of 27 to 32 points in response to Liverpool interests and trade buying.

The close was steady.

	Open	Close
December	29.10	29.27
January	28.60	28.56
March	28.43	28.25
May	28.20	27.96
July	27.84	27.64

HICKORY MARKETS

Cotton	29c
Wheat	$2.40

WEATHER FORECAST

For North Carolina: Cloudy and probably rain tonight. Friday fair and colder in west portion. increasing northeast winds on the coast.

COMPARATIVE WEATHER

Dec. 5,	1917	1916
High	51	69
Low	29	50

GERMAN ATTACK TWO FRONTS AT ONCE

By the Associated Press.

In the Cambrai sector and on the northern Italian front the enemy has resumed his efforts to dislodge the allied troops.

COMMUNITY CLUB TO MEET TOMORROW

All members of the Community Club are urged to be present at the meeting in the Chamber of Commerce rooms tomorrow afternoon at 3:30. Administrative business will come up at the meeting.

BAPTISTS MEET GREENSBORO NEXT

By the Associated Press.

Durham, Dec. 6.—Greensboro was today selected for the next session of the State Baptist convention.

B. D. Gow of Durham was selected to preach the annual sermon and J. D. Harte of Oxford, alternate.

The convention today endorsed with enthusiasm the plan to raise within the next four years the sum of $1,000,000 for an endowment to Baptist educational institutions.

MANAGER MILLER LOOKS FOR BIG SUCCESS WITH "THE SEVEN PEARLS."

"I consider 'The Seven Pearls' as entertaining and as well produced as any of our best serials," said Manager J. F. Miller of the Pastime Theatre in discussing the Pathe production he will present Monday. "Miss Mollie King, who did such excellent work in "Mystery of the Double Cross,' plays the leading role in this serial. Creighton Hale, who become popular with serial fans by his work as the 'Laughing Mask' in 'The Iron Claw,' is the leading man. Leon Bary, well known on the French and American stage as the leading man for Sarah Bernhardt, who made a success as the 'heavy' in 'The Shielding Shadow' and as the hero in 'Mystery of the Double Cross,' again enacts the role of the villain.

"The story by Chas. W. Goddard, a well known dramatist who wrote 'The Perils of Pauline' and collaborated with Mr. Reeves in 'The Exploits of Elaine,' is one that will interest American audiences. It is romantic and thrilling, it has been well produced by the Astra Film Corporation under the personal supervision of Mr. Louis J Gasnier and has the atmosphere that we put in our five-reel features, plus the snappy serial action."

Mrs. J. W. Hoke and daughter, Mrs. Henry Leonard, spent yesterday in Charlotte.

AIRPLANES RAID LONDON, TWO ARE LOST

By the Associated Press

London, Dec. 6. — About 25 airplanes raided England today, it is announced officially. Of these six reached London.

Two of the raiders were brought down, the crew of three men on each machine being captured.

NORTH CAROLINA DAY WILL BE DECEMBER 14

Raleigh, Dec. 6.—"We appeal to you in the name of your state and your country to utilize the opportunity offered by North Carolina Day program for rendering a splendid and greatly needed service at this time in informing and arousing the patriotic activity of all the children of your school district by disseminating the knowledge contained in these program pamphlets about the war and organized movements for winning it." Thus reads the introductory paragraph of an appeal being sent to every school teacher in North Carolina by Dr. J. Y. Joyner, state superintendent of public instruction.

The letter apeals for special effort at organizing and drilling the children for the special features of the program, effort to get out the parents and friends of the schools in large numbers for the North Carolina day exercises, set for December 14.

GASTON MEANS ON STAND TELLS OF GERMAN PLOTS

Court Permits Evidence Showing That Defendant Was Not Traitor to His Country—Says He Told Secretary Daniels of Several Plots Against Nation.

By the Associated Press.

Concord, Dec. 6.—Gaston B. Means, beginning the story of his relations with Mrs. Maude A. King at his trial for her murder today, recounted to the jury his activities as an agent for German agents before the entry of the United States into the war.

Because he exposed to United States officials the German plot to back Huerta in a war with Mexico, Means was discharged, he said. Later he told Secretary Daniels of other German plots to destroy munition plants and told the secretary four weeks in advance of the plot to burn the capitol at Ottawa.

Means had just begun his narrative covering his business relations with Mrs. King, which the state declares furnished a motive for the killing, when court took a recess. His version of the occurrence, when Mrs. King met her death, is expected this afternoon.

Gaston B. Means took the stand in his own defense today and told the story of the death of Mrs. Maude A. King.

He began under questioning by E. T. Cansler at a point several years ago. The first phase of his testimony told of his relation with the Cannon Manufacturing Company, by which he was employed for 12 years first in the New york and then in the Chicago office from 1909 to 1914, when he severed his connection by mutual consent.

His salary was $4,200 a year and certain commissions totaling an income at the time he quit the Cannon Mill of about $10,000, including incomes from his writing for journals, such as the Journal of Commerce, as to sales, grades and marketing of textiles.

When he left the Cannon employ he went to New York and called on W. J. Burns, the detective.

The defense insisted that the witness' testimony along this line should be admitted. The jury was excused and the defendant's counsel explained that it was desired to have the witness clear up the prevailing idea that he had been something of a German spy. The court agreed that as the Hamburg line was a client of Burns, Means should tell his connection with it.

The witness was allowed to tell what kind of work he did in the absence of the jury. His work was to ascertain for the Humburg-American line whether British war vessels were hovering near the coast of the United States and whether they were receiving any fuel or other supplies from the United States. The court agreed that the jury should hear this. The court ruled out, however, that part of the testimony relating to neutrality.

The jury returned and the witness proceeded.J He said he was engaged in this investigation five or six months, the result being the discovery that reports were not based on facts and that the Hamburg line was informed that American neutrality was being violated. It was established by the investigation that the neutrality laws were not being violated.

His next investigation was to ascertain if submarines were being built in the United States for the allies. It was ascertained that no submarines were being built in the United States, but all the parts were being manufactured in the United States and sent to Montreal for shipment to the allies.

"I went in and submitted my ideas to him," said the witness, and made a contract with Burns in which the witness was made manager of the commercial department of the Burns agency. Some days the witness had three men under him and sometimes one hundred.

The statement that Burns had a contract with the Hamburg-American line was ruled out by Judge Cline.

After severing his connection with the Burns agency, the witness said he discovered a plot on the part of German sympathizers in the United States and reported it to Burns, having previously agreed that whatever evidence he should find of value to the United States should be turned over to the government.

When he discovered the plot he made full report and filed it with W. J. Burns to be delivered to the government.

This report was read by the witness. It told of a conference at Barcelona betwen former General Huerta and Germans. Huerta agreed to follow German interests. It agreed that a peace conference was to be held in a soathern city.

The purpose of the whole movement was to bring about war between the United States and Mexico. He mentioned a number of prominent Mexican leaders who were involved in the alleged plot. A letter to Afton Means dated February 7, 1917, was identified and one photograph stated that a Pinkerton detective was looking after him since the tension between the United States and Germany became so great, but that he was not worried over his position.

He told of going to Washington to lay before Secretary Daniels the details of German plots, the Huerta revolution in Mexico and the plot to blow up the capitol at Ottawa.

The witness pointed out that the Huerta plot was partly carried out. That General Huerta left New York for Mexico and was captured on the border.

Means said he told Secretary Daniels of the munition plant destruction plot that men, because of their loyalty to Germany, were willing to go into plants and blow them up and lose their own lives.

The witness said he told Secretary Daniels of the plot to burn the capitol at Ottawa four weeks before it was destroyed and the fire occurred just as he had outlined it.

"FATTY ARBUCKLE" AT PASTIME FRIDAY

Don't fail to see Roscoe "Fatty Arbuckle at the Pastime Friday in a two reel side splitting comedy. The following is a short story of what he will do: Between delivering purchases of calves' brains to customers of the butcher shop where he worked, Fatty Arbuckle, made sheep's eyes at the pretty cashier. He also sent her notes on wrapping paper by the change carrier. He also thereby incurred the enmity of the careless clerk, and the careless clerk told the proprietor—and so on. Before two muscular locomotives began to haul Fatty Arbuckle from the Pacific coast it was said that the corpunt comedian was worth his weight in laughs. He's heavier than ever now.

DR. SHUFORD IS CAPTAIN IN U. S. ARMY

Dr. Jacob Harrison Shuford, proprietor of the Richard Baker Hospital and recognized as one of the leading surgeons in the state, has received his commission as captain of the officers reserve corps of the United States army, and will leave next spring for the front. The local hospital will not be closed until Dr. Shuford is called to the colors and this will be some time in the spring.

Captain Shuford will be one of the five surgeons assigned to the North Carolina base hospital, organized by Dr. J. W. Long of Greensboro who will be major. The staff will contain 22 physicians. Dr. Shuford's close friends knew several weeks ago of the offer of his services to the government, but the matter was not made public until he received his commission. This came today from the war department.

In offering his services to the government, Captain Shuford makes a real sacrifice. His hospital here has been a success and he has taken high rank in the state. The longer one is in practice, the better his business grows, and Dr. Shuford will leave at a time when he was safely over the top. He did not feel, however, that he should remain at home when the country needed his services, and the result will be that he will close up the Richard Baker Hospital until after he returns from the war.

Catawba county has done well by the government in furnishing its young medical men, who have responded to the call. Among those who are actually in the service now are Dr. Roscoe Mauser, formerly of Hickory, who is now in France; Dr. Glenn Long of Newton; Dr. Locke McCorkle of Newton; Dr. Kluttz of Maiden; Drs. Fred and Frank Ford of the county. Dr. Gaither Hahn of Hickory; Dr. F. S. Steele of Hickory, now with the navy at New Bern.

Dr. B. B. Flowe, veterinarian, is in France, and his brother, Dr. Homer Flowe, is with theh colors.

Dr. C. L. Hunsucker of Hickory was rejected on account of physical disability and Dr. George West of Newton and Dr. W. E. Wilson of Sherrill's Ford were rejected because they had passed the age limit.