



WELCOME

HOME



TROOPS OF NORTH CAROLINA

THE WILMINGTON DISPATCH

FULL LEASED WIRE SERVICE



WEATHER FORECAST. North and South Carolina.—Partly cloudy and colder tonight; probably light frost in west and north. Wednesday, fair; colder in east portion.

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WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 27, 1917.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

ALLIED ARMY DRIVING THE ENEMY BACK

Their Forces Forging Ahead North and South of St. Quentin.

THE DESPERATE RESISTANCE.

Of The Germans Before St. Quentin—French Cut Two Railway Lines to The City. Hemming in The Turks in Mesopotamia.

Driving forward north and south of St. Quentin, heart of the Hindenburg line, the Allies have cut two of the four main railroads which feed the city, while a third is well within reach of the French guns. With LaFere inundated by the retreating Germans and two of its dominating spurs in the hands of the French, the chief interest in the tremendous battle which has been raging for a week is the shifting of front shifts to historic St. Quentin.

The Germans are making desperate and bloody attempts to wrest from the French the Essigny-Benay plateau from which General Nivelle's forces command the southern approaches to the city, and render its position, in the opinion of military experts, one of grave peril.

Further to the south the French have forged well to the west of St. Quentin, hammering a great dent in the Hindenburg line between that town and LaFere. The advance of this slender three miles farther would give the French possession of the last direct railroad line between the two towns.

South of LaFere the French troops have swung in a great curve around the forests of Coucy and St. Gobain, the formidable natural barrier which lies between them and Laon, the southernmost fortress on the Hindenburg line. In the center of the curve General Nivelle has forced a wedge into the forest, but about 10 miles of heavily timbered country must yet be conquered before he reaches his goal.

On the northern section of the great Hindenburg line the situation is somewhat obscure. Neither British nor German official communications throw much light on the operations here. Some progress has been made in the direction of the German line, but apparently the determined resistance of the Germans has checked the British advance along the whole Arras sector.

While the issue of the titanic struggle in France remains in doubt, the stage is set for sensational possibilities in far-off Mesopotamia.

In the plain of the Tigris five armies are converging on the Turks in an attempt to deal a death blow to Ottoman power in the Eastern empire.

The Austrians are advancing from their three divisions, driving the Turks from them, and have already crossed the Turkish frontier at two points.

In the south General Maude, commander of the British forces, is pressing forward toward the Taurus and the Djalra rivers.

On the possibility of a decisive victory over their encircling forces, the only road of the Allies is to be confronted with the waste wastes of the great desert of the Taurus—according to military reports, an impassable barrier.

The progress of the official report from London, Constantinople, and other sources, however, continues to doubt as to the precise nature of the situation in this theatre.

French Capture Coucy-le-Chateau. On March 27, the village of Coucy-le-Chateau was captured by the French in an attack last night, the first of the series. Further progress is being made in the lower section of the Hindenburg line.

The French are now holding the French line in the lower section of the Hindenburg line. The progress in the lower forest of the northern part of the Hindenburg line is being continued on Page Three.

AMERICAN VESSEL THAT HAZARDED THE SUBMARINE

The First Armed American Liner to Enter an European Port.

EXCITING PASSAGE OF THE ST. LOUIS.

No Submarine Sighted—Many Evidences of Marine Disasters—Complete Preparations Aboard.

(By Associated Press.) London, March 26.—(Delayed by Censor, from a Staff Correspondent of the Associated Press.)—The St. Louis, the first passenger vessel carrying the American flag to cross the Atlantic since Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine destruction, and the first armed American liner to enter a European port since the war began, arrived this morning. She carried a meagre number of passengers—33, all told—but her holds were filled to capacity with non-contraband freight.

The St. Louis came through without interruption. No submarines were sighted, nor were there at any time any indications that German undersea boats were after the big liner. If any of them saw the St. Louis they made no attempt to destroy her, but kept carefully away from the guns of the American ship.

But signs of war were not lacking and the last three days aboard were anxious ones for passengers and crew alike. On Friday and again on Saturday, after the St. Louis entered the forbidden zone, driftwood was passed—apparently parts of destroyed life boats. Yesterday a great field of oil was encountered. Vague rumors of the sinking of ships, either ahead of or near the St. Louis, increased this nervous tension.

For three days and nights, the captain did not leave the bridge and never in her 22 years of existence has an American ship been driven so furiously by a mine as was from the time she passed into the zone until she was picked up by a pilot.

The journey was virtually without incident until the war zone was reached. Unusual precautions were taken as soon as the liner passed the Ambrose light, but as she neared the danger point even the life rafts and collapsible boats were made ready for immediate use. Reflectors were strung fore and aft and carbide lights were tilted along the rails for use in event the St. Louis became the victim of a torpedo or gunfire.

When the St. Louis reached a British port this afternoon, passengers stated that no submarine had been sighted.

A government tender, carrying the American consul general, admiralty officials and immigration officers, met the liner.

LOSSES FROM SUB WARFARE. (By Associated Press.) London, March 27.—Losses of merchant vessels amounting to more than 420,000 tons thus far in March have resulted from war measures of the central powers, Lord Charles Bessborough said in the House of Lords today.

GOVERNMENT STOPS FURTHER DEMOBILIZATION.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, March 27.—Further demobilization of National Guard regiments now in the Federal service was suspended today by the War Department. The War Department did not explain the order, but it was understood that the units would be used in their respective stations for police duty more than being called into the service of other guard regiments.

MANY KILLED BY ALABAMA STORM

Almost Wiped Small Town Off The Map—Five Whites Known to Be Dead.

(By Associated Press.) Montgomery, Ala., March 27.—A special to the Evening Journal, from La Pine, Ala., says that five prominent white people and nine negroes were instantly killed in a storm which practically swept the thriving little town of Petrey from the map last night. The known dead are: J. M. Middlebrooks, prominent farmer; Mrs. J. M. Middlebrooks, Tom Bandy, school teacher, Ethel Bandy, his daughter; Bob Jeger, well-known farmer. Every building in the town, including the Atlantic Coast Line depot, three churches and the school, were carried away.

The storm swept practically all the crops between Providence and Petrey and tore down buildings in Providence, where several persons were injured and considerable livestock killed. The storm continued in a northeasterly direction and did damage at Shady Grove and Ansley, in Pike county.

Relief parties have gone to the scene from LaPine and Luverne. Petrey had a population of about 250.

SHOE PRICES NOT YET AT TOP.

(By Associated Press.) New York, March 27.—The executive committee of the National Shoe Dealers' Association announces that cloth as a substitute for leather will be more generally used during the coming season. Cloth uppers will appear in a bewildering variety of colors. The association has decided to appoint a committee to instruct buyers relative to proper combinations of colors.

"The crest of the wave of high shoe prices has almost been reached," said A. K. Geuting, secretary and treasurer of the executive committee. "By next fall I should say, a shoe costing \$5 today, will sell for about \$6 or \$6.50."

MUST MEET ALL ALLIES' DEMANDS

Until That is Done Blockade Will Not Be Raised—Limited Food Supply.

(By Associated Press.) London, March 27.—Although steps have been taken to introduce a limited supply of foodstuffs into Greece, the blockade against that country will not be raised until the demands of the entire allies have been satisfactorily executed. Lord Robert Cecil, minister of blockade, told the House of Commons today.

ASSIGNING TROOPS TO THEIR STATIONS

(By Associated Press.) Chicago, March 27.—The work of assigning the various regiments and battalions of the National Guard called into the Federal service yesterday from the Middle West was begun today by Major-General Thomas H. Barry, commander of the Central Department.

Disposition of the troops is being planned on data gathered by the War Department and the Department of Justice. They will be assigned to guard important public works, industrial plants, and Federal and railroad property.

WILSON STILL HAS OPEN MIND AS TO WHAT IS NEEDED

DEBATED HONORS TO NAVAL OFFICER

Posthumous Recognition of Bravery of British Officer at Battle of Jutland.

(By Associated Press.) London, March 27.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)—For "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty in the Battle of Jutland," a posthumous Victoria Cross has just been awarded Commander Loftus William Jones. The London Gazette states that the "full facts have only now been ascertained."

The official reports that on the afternoon of May 31, 1916, Commander Jones, in the torpedo boat destroyer, Shark, led a division of destroyers to attack the enemy battle cruiser squadron. In this attack a shell hit the Shark's bridge, disabling the steering gear and shortly afterwards another shell disabled the main engine.

The commanding officer of another destroyer, seeing the Shark's plight, came between her and the enemy and offered assistance, but was warned away by Commander Jones. Although wounded in the leg, Jones went aft to help connect and man the after-wheel. Meanwhile the fore-castle gun with its crew had been blown away and the same fate soon befell the after-gun and crew. Commander Jones then went to the midship and only remaining gun and assisted in keeping it in action.

All this time the Shark was subjected to very heavy fire from enemy light cruisers and destroyers at short range. The crew of the midship gun was reduced to three, of whom one soon was badly wounded. A few minutes later, Commander Jones was hit by a shell which took off his leg above the knee, but he continued to give orders to the gun's crew while a stoker improvised a tourniquet around his thigh. Noticing that the ensign was not properly hoisted he gave orders that another be raised.

Soon afterward, seeing that the ship could not last much longer and that a German destroyer was closing in, he gave orders for the surviving members of the crew to put on life belts. Almost immediately after giving this order the Shark was struck by a torpedo, and sank. "Commander Jones," stated the report in conclusion, "unfortunately was not among the few survivors from the Shark, who were picked up by a neutral vessel in the night."

HIDDEN MACHINE GUNS FOUND

In Petrograd—Investigation Into Illegal Acts of Former Russian Ministers.

(By Associated Press.) London, March 27.—Reuter's special from Petrograd says that a special commission has begun an investigation of illegal acts committed by former ministers, heads of departments and other officials of the old regime. About 600 machine guns have been found hidden in different parts of Petrograd.

At the first performance at the Marie Opera House since the revolution two members of the Duma executive committee addressed the audience from what was formerly the imperial box. Delegates of the workmen and soldiers delivered speeches from another box.

According to the Bourse Gazette, Rasputin's body has been burned near Petrograd.

TREMENDOUS DEMAND FOR STEEL PRODUCTS.

(By Associated Press.) New York, March 27.—The tremendous demand for steel products was emphasized today when it was asserted by trade authorities that steel mills had booked 2,250,000 tons of rolled product thus far in March. The demand has come chiefly from shipping, railroad and agricultural interests, which are said to have taken nearly 1,500,000 tons at advancing prices. Export sales this month are estimated at 10 per cent. of the total.

DEBATING WHAT STEPS HE WILL SEEK AS TO CONGRESS AS TO GERMANY.

HITCHCOCK DECLARES THREE COURSES OPEN

West Would Rather Not Have Declaration as to War—President's Message to Congress Not Completed.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, March 27.—President Wilson was represented today as still having an open mind on exactly what steps he will recommend to Congress when it meets in special session next week, although the preponderance of official opinion is that he should ask for a declaration that a state of war exists between the United States and Germany.

Prior to a cabinet meeting, at which details of preparedness measures were discussed, Senator Hitchcock, member of the Senate foreign relations committee, discussed the situation with the President. Afterward he outlined the following three courses, which he believed open to Congress:

1. Passage of a resolution endorsing steps already taken by the President to place the United States in a state of armed neutrality, and authorizing further preparedness moves.

2. Adoption of a resolution declaring that a state of war exists between the United States and Germany; and

3. Adoption of a declaration of war against Germany.

Senator Hitchcock said there was undoubtedly sentiment in the West for taking the first of the three instead of declaring war or declaring that a state of war exists.

Other advisers of the President taking the view that the best step is a declaration that a state of war exists are examining precedents in order to map out the best course to pursue.

The general expectation is that the resolution adopted when the United States went to war with Mexico will be followed closely in the present situation. That resolution recited repeated acts of aggression on the part of Mexico against the United States.

The President is not expected to put his message to Congress into final shape until just before delivering it. Senator Hitchcock made it clear that he went to the White House on his own initiative.

The President will be ready to go before Congress at the earliest possible time after it convenes.

KING ALBERT UNDER FIRE

While Aeroplaning Over The German Lines For Observation Purposes.

(By Associated Press.) London, March 27.—King Albert of Belgium on March 18 made a long airplane flight under fire over the fighting front, according to La Metropole, a newspaper published here. While visiting a new flying ground the King expressed a desire to act as an observation officer. Accordingly he ascended with the famous Belgian airman, Captain Jacquet, at 8:15 p. m. Preceded by a squadron of fighting planes the King flew over the whole Belgian Yser front at a height of 3,000 to 6,000 feet. He made many observations and took photographs with success.

German anti-aircraft guns kept up a sustained fire, but no German airman ventured in the way of the king's airplane. Subsequently the king discussed his observations with the general staff.

LOWER GRAIN RATES PETITIONED FOR. (By Associated Press.) Washington, March 27.—Memphis Merchants Exchange today petitioned the Inter-state Commerce Commission to compel the railroads to grant lower freight rates on grain and grain-products from Memphis to Louisiana points.

WELCOME EXTENDED RETURNED ENGINEERS BY THE POPULATION

ROADS OF SOUTH ALSO ASK RAISE FREIGHT RATES

Along With Lines of The Southwest They Join Other Roads.

BECOME PARTIES TO THE PETITION.

All Railroads of The Country Now Seek General Advance For Inter and Intra-State Rates.

(By Associated Press.) Washington, March 27.—Railroads of the south and southwest today joined eastern and western lines in requesting the Interstate Commerce Commission to amend its rules so as to permit a general advance in freight rates.

Carriers in all sections of the country are now represented in applications looking to a general advance. In opening the railroads' presentation of the situation their spokesman announced today that advances on intrastate as well as interstate rates will be sought.

Fairfax Harrison, president of the Southern railway, appeared for the southern roads, and B. F. Bush, receiver of the Missouri Pacific, for the southwestern lines.

Hale Holden, president of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railway, opened the argument for the western roads. Mr. Holden based his application for an increase in freight rates on these grounds:

Increased wages to trainmen under the Adamson law.

Increased wages to other employees, some already granted, and others likely to follow in the immediate future.

Increased cost of locomotive fuel.

Increased prices of equipment.

Higher taxes.

Mr. Holden said the roads had come to the interstate commission first because they felt that should the commission grant their petition there would be less difficulty in obtaining authority to increase intrastate rates from the various State boards and commissions. Such applications, he said, would follow a ruling in the present instance.

To meet increases in wages and materials already effective, Mr. Bush told the commission advances would have to be made by the Southwestern lines as follows:

Missouri Pacific, 18 per cent.; Frisco, 20; Cotton Belt, 21.4; Missouri, Kansas & Texas, 21, and Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, 18.9 per cent.

Mr. Bush said that unless a general advance in rates was granted and unless State authorities co-operated in advancing intrastate rates, the only alternative was government ownership.

Parade Reviewed by Governor Thos. W. Bickett From Orton Balcony.

LUNCHEON TENDERED BOYS AT THE ARMORY

Buildings Were Draped in Flags and Patriotic Banners Told Plainers Than Words How Glad The City Was to See Her Soldiers.

Wilmington turned out en masse today at noon to welcome her returned soldier boys. Front street was lined with happy-faced individuals, who gave vent to their pent up feelings in shouts and handclapping as the Engineers, with shoudered arms and heads thrown back, swung up Front street to Market, and thence to the Wilmington Light Infantry armory, where a reception and luncheon was tendered them.

The reception was a royal one. As the returned soldiers swung up the city's principal thoroughfare to the stirring music furnished by the Wilmington Drum and Bugle Corps, it was plainly evident to them that the city was glad to have them back. One could almost smell the alkali, and there was that atmosphere about the boys that made it possible for one to picture the rolling plains of Texas and the mountains in the distance.

Old Glory occupied her place. The proudest flag in all the world floated majestically from the many buildings lining Front street, and urchins too small to be out alone promenade prominently with the flag in their hands. It was a sight that one will not soon forget, for as the stiff wind that was blowing whipped Old Glory against the buildings the full realization of what the flag represents dawned forcibly on the minds of all.

Providence was kind, for after showering all morning Old Sol peeped out from behind a rift in the clouds and shed his benign smile down on the glad scene. The clouds lifted entirely just before the parade started at 12:20, and the whole city was flooded with golden sunlight.

As the parade moved up Front street it was cheered wildly by the crowd. Governor Thomas W. Bickett reviewed the grand spectacle from the upper balcony of the Orton hotel, and the camera man was on the job, busily grinding his machine and recording the varying emotions of the crowd.

The parade was led by Chief Marshal Donald MacRae and his assistants, with the Wilmington police force coming next. The department made a splendid showing in its blue uniforms. Then came the city officials in machines, followed by the drum corps, the members dressed in linen dusters and Uncle Sam hats, with miniature flags waving from the crowns. Just in advance of the drum corps were three duster-clad men carrying a mammoth flag. The banner, reading "Wilmington for Wilson," was wildly cheered as it moved slowly up the street.

The Wilmington Light Infantry made an excellent showing, it occupying a position just to the rear of the drum corps.

And then came the Engineers, led by Captain George Gillette. Their ovation surpassed even the expectations of the most optimistic. As the stern-faced boys moved up the street cheering broke out all along the line. The mounted members of the company came close on their heels and the Texas ponies ridden by the boys appeared to enjoy the ovation as much as their riders.

The young ladies in the garb of Red Cross nurses occupied the next position, and they made a beautiful spectacle. Clad in white, they represented in the fullest extent the ministering angel of the battlefield. The rear of the procession was brought up by the veterans of the Civil War. They were transported in automobiles.

(Continued From Page Six.)