

Monday Sept 30 Dear Dad I thought I would just like you to see this, it's about the new badge of rank we have had since we was drafted what do you think about the bit marked with a cross Love to all from Granville

THE BALKAN NEWS

Price One Penny

Salonica, Monday September 30th. 1918

No. 332 Third Page

The Bulgar Retreat: Scenes in the British Advance

War: 60th. day of 5th year.

To-Morrow's Sun and Moon—
Sun rises 0627 Sets 1810
Moon rises 0242 Sets 1618
New Moon, Oct. 4.

THE BRITISH ADVANCE INTO BULGARIA

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The British Force in Macedonia is now occupying a greater area of enemy territory than has previously been occupied in Europe by British arms. On the morning of the 25th one body of our troops entered Kosturino on the road to Strumitsa and so set foot over the Bulgarian border, and so miles to the East British and Greeks after a climb of over 4,000 feet reached the summit of the Belashtitsa ridge and also passed the boundary. 24 hours later we were in Strumitsa and by the evening of the 26th some 36 square miles of Bulgarian soil were in our possession.

And this has been done by troops who, while nine out of ten people at home thought they were encamped comfortably near the town of Salonica, have actually been fighting an arduous trench warfare against a watchful enemy and under blazing sun in summer and bitter winds in winter, against a material and treacherous climate. One might have expected less conspicuous results after months of waiting. So much greater must be the pride of the British soldier in what he has already accomplished, and so much greater will be his determination to press on with his success against a demoralised enemy.

For there is no doubt that the Bulgar never expected to be pushed out of the area that he held. His first lines had every trace of permanence and of such comfort as can be obtained within close range of our guns. Behind, that part of the Bulgar nation, which with their German allies, were at war in this part of the world, had reached a stage of development that was marked by solid comfort in every detail. There is not a tent to be seen—and had they had any, they must have left them standing in their headlong retreat. Huts of timber and huts of brick, with roofs of felt or thatch, sheltered them from the frosts of winter and the summer suns. They slept in beds made of stout timber and wire netting. They fed on tables and sat on chairs made by their own hands, nine out of ten Bulgars being natural workers in wood.

As well as carpenters, they were gardeners, and there are acres upon acres of land in the fertile valleys, where each man had his allotment, divided by wire fences from his neighbours—some even protected by netting and barbed wire—and grew his cabbages and tomatoes, his red peppers and his pumpkins, with sufficient surplus to supply an ample vegetable ration to the troops in the trenches. For these we thank him, and what he has sown we shall gather to ease our supplies on our rapidly advancing communications, eating his vegetables and feeding our animals with the hay that he has mown and stacked.

In a country of narrow valleys and broken hills the Bulgar made good roads, and whenever possible relieved the roads by building light railways. He put up notice boards whenever they were required. He, or the German that organised him, had a passion for labelling. In the ante-room of the officers' mess at the Divisional H.Q. at Furka there are nails for hats and coats, and under every nail is a slip of paper pasted on the wall showing to whom the hanging space was allotted. "Intelligence Officer," "Gas Officer," "Scout Officer," and so forth. But this sense of detail seems to have been characteristic. In a heap of correspondence in one of the billets was a postcard addressed to a private soldier. It had been posted in Sofia on 12th Nov. 1917, and he had noted on it that it reached him on the 25th—which is not very good going. But he answered on the 27th, and made another note to this effect, and kept it for 10 months till, with the rest of his correspondence, he left it lying in the wanton untidiness and destruction of furniture that preceded the hurried flight of the Divisional H.Q. from billets which they tried to make uninhabitable for those who should come after them. Still there remains, however, much furniture that with a little repair will make the cottages, with their white-washed and painted walls and shady gardens and rich plots of vegetable, a pleasant place for any British troops if they could stay here and not pass on.

"If they should stay"—everything is moving so quickly that it is hard to keep pace with it. Greeks and British are clearing the Strumitsa valley. Beyond, disorganised columns of the enemy are struggling into the next line of hills, still being bombed and fired at by machine-guns from our aeroplanes. Serbian priantry are in Istib, and their cavalry further on towards Sofia. Velez and Prilip have fallen to our allies, who are threatening Uskub. All goes well for the Allies, now well into Serbia and Bulgaria, and the only need is to keep on the heels of the enemy, however fast they flash up the hills and down the valleys in their effort to escape.

WIRELESS ITEMS

On the western front recently an Australian Sergeant named Stratton, armed only with a revolver, rushed an enemy machine-gun post in surprise, killing 5 of the enemy. Later, in the evening, under heavy fire he brought in two badly wounded men. He has been awarded the V.C.

The following passage from a speech by a Socialist leader, Dr. Patai, was enthusiastically applauded in the Austrian Upper House on March 17: "The perpetual pressing and calling for peace is bound to make almost unfavourable impression. Doubtless these times have now passed away. We have long got beyond the phase of annexations and indemnities. When does a victor's one can insist on a victor's prize. To emerge from the war without any material success would be a policy not only weak but stupid. Never shall we emerge from the war with a miserable peace. We are the victors and we demand the price." What Austria thinks now, is shown by her recent peace manoeuvres.

THE BRITISH ATTACK AT CAMBRAI

10,000 PRISONERS AND 200 GUNS:
ANOTHER ATTACK LAUNCHED
IN FLANDERS

London, Sunday. — Friday's British official communique says: Portions of our 1st and 3rd Armies, under the command respectively of General Horne and General Byng, attacked this morning before dawn on a wide front in the direction of Cambrai. All objectives have been reached. On our extreme right, American detachments captured a series of trenches and fortified farms, forming the outer defences of the main Hindenburg system S. W. of Le Cateau. Further N., the 5th Division captured Beaucamp, and, combining with men of the 2nd Division, have carried the Beaucamp ridge, which runs N. E. towards Maroing.

In the right centre, the Guards and divisions of the 6th Corps, under the command of Lieut. Gen. Haldane, breaking through the enemy's defences E. of Havrincourt, captured the village of Flequaières, and gained possession of the long spur which runs eastwards from that village towards Maroing. On their left, Scottish troops and units of the 17th Corps, stormed the line of the Canal du Nord E. and S. E. of Moenveve. They were at first checked by the defences of Graincourt. Outflanking this village from the N., they seized Anneux. The village of Graincourt was captured and our advance continued to Cantaing and Fontaine-Notre-Dame.

On the left centre the Canadian Corps under the command of Lieut. Gen. Currie forced the passage of the Canal du Nord, and captured the villages of Sains-lez-Marquion and Boulon, together with the wooded heights of Bourlon Hill. Pressing on beyond this line, with the assistance of the 11th (English) Division they have made substantial progress towards Raillencourt and Haynecourt.

Several thousand prisoners and many guns have been captured by our troops.

London, Sunday. — Sunday's British official communique says: Our operations on the Cambrai battlefield have progressed favourably. On the right the 56th, 5th, and 42nd Divisions had heavy fighting last night about the Beaucamp ridge, where the enemy counter-attacked strongly. They overcame the resistance of the German Infantry in this locality, and pressed forward 2 miles beyond it, capturing the highly organised defensive positions known as Highland and Welsh ridges. Later in the day our success was extended to the S., and Bouzeaucourt was captured. During the morning also the 2nd (Yorkshire) Division captured Maroing, and made progress to the S. E. of it. Before midday the 5th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's Regiment, captured Maroing, and established itself in the German defences on the E. bank N. of this point.

The 2nd Division and the 57th (Lancashire) Division, during the morning, cleared the west bank of the Canal, as far N. as La Helle wood, and captured Noyelle-sur-Poizout, Cantaing, and Fontaine-Notre-Dame. Lancashire troops are

making progress E. of Fontaine-Notre-Dame, operating in conjunction with Canadian troops N. of the Bapaume-Cambrai road. Here also the enemy has resisted strongly, and has suffered heavy losses in killed and prisoners.

N. of the Arras-Cambrai road, Canadian and English troops have pushed forward steadily on the E. and N. At Raillencourt, strong hostile counter-attacks, launched by the enemy yesterday evening, were beaten back with loss. To-day, Canadian troops gained possession of this village, and of the adjoining village of Sully, together with the trench system running through these villages. Further N., men of the 5th (London) Division, have entered Palluel. The number of prisoners and guns captured continues to increase.

Aviation: Our machines were active on every part of the front throughout Friday. Bombing patrols were carried out at a low altitude on the battlefield, and enemy troops and transport at the canal crossings and along the roads were heavily engaged with machine-gun fire by our pilots. 30 tons of bombs were dropped by us by day, and 18½ tons by night. 32 German machines and 8 hostile balloons were shot down by our airmen, and 20 of the enemy's machines were driven down out of control in the course of air fighting. 19 of our machines are missing.

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LONDON, SUNDAY. — THE BRITISH HAVE TAKEN 10,000 PRISONERS AND 200 GUNS IN THE CAMBRAI OFFENSIVE.

The 2nd British Army attacked on the Flanders front yesterday morning in conjunction with the Belgians. The operations will be reported in the Belgian communique.

THE FRENCH-U.S. ATTACK

U. S. TROOPS CAPTURE
ENORMOUS MATERIAL

Paris, Sunday. — Yesterday's American official communique says: The attack begun on Thursday last continues to develop successfully. To-day our troops advancing in the face of heavy infantry, artillery and machine-gun fire have reached the outskirts of Bricelles and Exormont. More than 20 towns and enormous quantities of material have fallen into our hands. The number of prisoners continues to increase.

Aviation: American aviators brought down 12 balloons and over 60 enemy planes. Less than a third of that number of our planes are missing.

HEAVY COUNTER-ATTACKS ON THE FRENCH

Paris, Sunday. — Yesterday's French official communique says: This morning the attack was resumed at 5.30. The French troops seized Somme-Py and took the heights N. of Fontaine-en-Dormois. The battle is continuing.

Later: The stubborn attacks of our troops on the plateaus N. of the Aisne have finally forced the enemy to withdraw towards the Ailette in the region B. of Allennes-Jouy. Our troops pursuing the enemy rear-guards occupied the S. part of the forest of Pinon and the villages of

Pison, Vandesson, Chavignon and Malmison fort. Further S. we have made progress on the plateau N. of Vailly.

In the Champagne district the day was marked by violent enemy counter attacks on the right of our battle-front. Bitter fighting is taking place in the Bonconville region, on the heights N. of Fontaine-en-Dormois, and N. of Gravel, in the centre and on the left our troops continued to advance, particularly N. of the Chalange railway. We have taken Manre and reached the E. outskirts of Ste-Marie-a-Py. Our losses are light.

THE WEST OFFENSIVES

BRITISH CROSS THE CANAL WITH SCALING LADDERS

(By Wireless.)

London, Sunday.—How the British troops overcame the obstacle of the Canal du Nord is described by Mr. Percival Phillips. He says that in some parts the fissures were too deep to permit the infantry to drop down one side and clamber up the other with the requisite promptitude. Surface bridges were impossible since they could be seen and shot away before our men could get a footing on them. Every yard of the Canal was under enemy observation and enemy observers could detect any suspicious movement to get men across.

Narrow routes had to be arranged—sharp and restricted as the neck of a bottle. Everything depended on the first rush. The men had to be assembled in the dark with scaling ladders. These the men had to climb, weighed down with their packs and supplies of bombs, to face the waiting machine-gun fire in the fields above. It is no light effort to clamber swiftly and steadily down swaying ladders into a dark pit and up again with breath enough to begin a fight for life without a moment's pause. "Going over the top" is arduous enough in itself. Prefaced by such a journey as this, the endurance of the strongest men might well be shaken.

Once across, our men carried out a most complicated movement with wonderful slickness, and a number of elements were soon moved forward. Troops continued to storm "impregnable" defences in spite of opposition from good troops. The advance was nowhere held up for long and all the morning prisoners came through, a good many of them bearing their own wounded. Some of these men said that our attack had been expected hourly.

The most simple and concrete result of the morning's fighting is that now we can look into Cambrai. The British population has left. The great victory is of a high strategical value and an immense tactical complication has been overcome, but it is not yet finished.

THE FRENCH FACED BY 30 LINES OF TRENCH

The French offensive in Champagne has progressed magnificently. The *Morning Post* correspondent says: "Nothing could have encouraged the French troops more than the fact that they have not merely driven the enemy out of the old French positions, but that they are now in positions that the enemy regarded as essentially theirs. The famous Buttes and insignificant-looking chalky dunes are now in French hands. Navarin Farm, which has become an historic name, is again French, and with it Navarin Hill, which commands the country around. While the gains of territory are satisfactory, they pale into insignificance beside the very great difficulties against which the French have had to contend in the course of their advance. These can be summarised briefly by a mere reference to the fact that the French in their advance have found themselves, as they knew would be the case, faced by some 30 lines of enemy trenches."

THE U.S. TROOPS FIGHT LIKE WILD CATS

Meanwhile on the French right the American infantry attacked with great dash. The *Times* correspondent says: "We all felt that this was the biggest fight they had yet been in, and they went into it like wild cats. Their aeroplanes flew overhead in dense formations of 60 to 100 machines, and as the heavy groundmist prevented effective observation, the machines kept very low, using their machine-guns on the Germans. The whole attack was characterised by force without stint or limit and by great speed. The German heavy artillery was caught in the act of changing positions, as at St. Mihiel, and could neither get into action satisfactorily nor escape action against itself. On the American right centre towards the Meuse the Germans had been working for 48 hours with feverish haste to establish strong defensive positions on Mont Blainville, very evidently intending to hold the valley of the Aire on this line in great strength, but they were unable to realise their anticipations as the new line was smashed utterly by the violence of the American onslaught."

WHAT THE PALESTINE VICTORY MEANS

(By Wireless.)

London, Sunday.—Commenting on the far-reaching effects of the victory in Palestine, the *Daily Telegraph* says: The effect of the victory on the situation in the Near East will probably be very great. Syria, with its large anti-Turk population of Christians and Arabs, lies open to invasion, and the communications of the Turkish force in Mesopotamia cannot now be considered too secure. The Turks cannot afford to ignore these dangers, and we are justified in thinking that it will paralyse their operations in Persia, coming as it does on the top of the Balkan success, which must create the liveliest fears for the security of their position in Europe. It has thus gone very far indeed to reduce the Turkish and German menace in the Middle East.

At the same time, although it is decisive as regards the situation in Palestine, it cannot be called in the larger sense decisive, since even supposing it could be exploited to the maximum extent by the capture of Aleppo and the cutting of the Baghdad railway, this would only have the effect of compelling the evacuation of Upper Mesopotamia by the Turks, and would not affect the main Turkish army in the Caucasus and Persia, which is based on the Black Sea ports. One of the most important results, however, is that it has freed our army in Palestine for any use we may like to put it to. In other words, it gives us the initiative to an extent which we have never possessed before in the eastern theatres of war. This victory is rendered all the more memorable by the fact that it was obtained to a large extent by Indian troops, after a large number of British troops had been transferred to the Western front.

AT THE TOGS TRIBUNALS

(If clothes were rationed in Blighty as they are in Germany, it would probably be found necessary to set up tribunals for the granting of extra materials. The scheme would work somewhat as follows).

At the Poplar Togs Tribunal to-day, Arthur Jones appealed for an extra two yards of blue serge, with which he proposed to make extensive alterations in his trousers.

Applicant, a moderately stout man, claimed that his present allotment of cloth was barely sufficient to make both ends meet.

The Chairman: The suit fits you like a glove.

Applicant: But I'm afraid to stoop, sir, or the buttons will come off.

The Chairman: Then don't stoop! At a time when England is fighting for her very existence surely it isn't too much to ask you to do without stooping?

Applicant: But I'm a carpet layer, and all my work is done stooping.

The Chairman: Then you'd better get another job. Can't you find work as a limber or some other upright job?

Application refused.

At the same Tribunal Mrs. Eliza Burgess applied for an extra length of cloth on behalf of her husband, who could not appear.

The Chairman: These applications must be made in person. I see from your clothing card that Mr. Burgess had a new suit ten months ago. What has he done with it? Why does he not come himself?

Applicant: Please, sir, he's in bed. You see, sir, I made a mistake and cut down his only pair for little Jimmy.

The Chairman: And what have you done with the pieces left over?

Applicant: (crying): Please, sir, I made a lumpsade of 'em. And now my husband can't go out.

The Chairman: Not in those trousers (laughter).

Application granted.

A curious case under the new clothing ration scheme came before the Uxbridge Tribunal.

August McPhairson, a native of Drumtochty, was called up to explain why, in defiance of the Act, he had refused to wear the clothes allotted to him.

The Chairman: The wearing of these clothes is compulsory and must be enforced. What is the good of the Government going to all this trouble to provide standard suits if you will not wear them?

McPhairson: I've never worn trousers yet. I'm a Scotsman.

A Member: Then it's time you began. McPhairson: But I've tried, and can't get used to them. They suffocate my legs and tickle me.

After some discussion it was decided to grant McPhairson three months' exemption, during which time he undertook to practise wearing trousers in the evenings.

THE BRITISH-GREEK ADVANCE

The activities on the British Macedonian front are described in the following notes:—

Sept. 28, 10 p.m.—The pursuit of the enemy along the Strumica valley and northwards from Strumica is being continued. Further guns were captured. Gusevo railroad, congested with troops and transport, and also enemy parties in the Upper Struma valley, were effectively bombed by our aeroplanes.

Sept. 29, 10 a.m.—Strong enemy rear-guards are being encountered in the Rukova and Strumica valleys.

THE GERMAN MISTAKE ABOUT THE BALKAN OFFENSIVE

(By Wireless.)

London, Sunday.—Up to Sunday last the German newspapers contained not the slightest indication that anything in particular was happening in Palestine. On Sunday the "Frankfurter Zeitung" wrote as follows about the Allied offensive against Bulgaria, which it described as having a strong "political" flavour: "The attack must be taken quite seriously, although in accordance with the whole war situation, which forces the Entente to concentrate its strength in the west, it can aim at only a very remote strategic object. We do not believe that there can be any largely conceived plan of attack, aiming for instance at the liberation of Serbia, or at an immediate attack on Old Bulgaria, because the enemy resources, dependent as they are on sea communications, would doubtless be insufficient for this. But the danger is that the parts of Macedonia which are occupied by the Bulgarians and coveted by them, might again come into the enemy's possession. We assume this danger will suffice to stir our Allies to the most bitter resistance. In this our Allies are sure of our support."

Stop Press

The Balkan Offensive

DEFEAT OF THE BULGAR ARMY ACCOMPLISHED

USKUB TAKEN

(Communique of the Allied Armies in the Orient.)

The following official communique of the Allied Armies in the Orient was issued at 8.30 p.m. last night:—

We are continuing to pursue victoriously the enemy elements which are attempting by their resistance to stop the uninterrupted advance of our troops. Thanks to the admirable ardour of the Allied contingents, who are rivaling one another in boldness and endurance, the success of the manoeuvre which is putting the Bulgar Army out of action is now an accomplished fact.

The French troops, including Indian Chinese units, after having yesterday entered Ochrida, have continued to advance on both sides of the Lake N. and N.W. of the town. On the W. bank of the Lake Serbian detachments fighting in liaison with our troops have broken the energetic resistance of the enemy. Co-operating with the French troops, the Italian Expeditionary Corps is progressing towards Kicevo in spite of the considerable difficulties of the terrain.

More to the N. the Greek troops, putting once more to proof their brilliant aptitude for mountain warfare, have stormed the exits in the Upper Treska valley, and are advancing rapidly to the N.

In the centre, traversing particularly difficult ground, the French cavalry has entered Uskub.

The Serbian Armies, after having thrown back yesterday the enemy elements which attempted to hold up their inexorable pursuit, are advancing fast towards the N. and N.E.

On the right, crossing in a few hours the summits of Plac Mavista Plarina, Greek divisions have ceaselessly driven back the Bulgar divisions which were vainly trying to bar their road, capturing from them at one point alone 3 heavy batteries and much material.

In the Strumitza region, in liaison with the British troops, they are continuing to press the enemy, who is hastily destroying the rich stores he had massed in the valley.

The Allied Aviations are bombing and machine-gunning ceaselessly the enemy columns.

The number of prisoners is continually increasing; at one point alone 700 men were captured by one Serbian division yesterday.

M. VENIZELOS AT SALONICA

M. Venizelos, the Greek Premier, arrived at Salonica yesterday morning by special train.

Gen. Petar Boyovitch, commanding the 1st Serbian Army, has been promoted Field-Marshal.

King Victor Emmanuel of Italy has sent a telegram of congratulation to King Peter of Serbia.

LOST

Lost on Sept. 23: put into wrong ambulance car from ambulance train: small brown leather bag and Sam Browne marked R.K. Robertson R.A.M.C.: Finder please inform Balkan News.