

Historical Officers Report

Events of the Great War as reported in the Camden News
Cables from the European War. October 1918

1st October Australian Light Horse takes Damascus



3rd October LT. Joseph Maxwell, VC at Beurevoir-Fonsomme
Line near Estrees, St. Quentin.



3rd October

During the past week considerable progress was made against the Bulgarians, with the result that Bulgaria seeks peace and hostilities ceased at noon on Sunday. The agreement signed by Bulgaria gives the Entente Powers control of the Bulgarian railways, and provides for the immediate demobilisation and surrender of all means of transport, also the free passage of Entente troops and control of navigation on the Danube.

This will cut off the Central Powers from the East, and may bring about the collapse of Turkey altogether.

In the Western Front (France) the Franco-Americans have launched a new offensive in the Champagne. It was the largest they had undertaken, and extended over a 54-mile front. They progressed several miles. The enemy abandoned the front positions.

In the Verdun region the Americans captured 12 towns and over 5000 prisoners. The Anglo-Belgian attacked in Flanders and advanced all along the line. Boulers and Dixmude have been captured.

Tremendous fighting has taken place in the south between Cambrai and St. Quentin, the later falling, and the capture of Cambrai is imminent.

The British smashed the Hindenburg line to a depth of two miles on an eight-mile front. The Canadians crossed the Douai-Cambrai road. In this area 10,000 prisoners and 200 guns have been taken.

Despite strong opposition the Australian, English and American troops gained ground and took many prisoners.

British air squadrons carried out successful raids over Germany. Aerodromes and munitions factories were bombed.

5th October LT. George Mawby Ingram, VC at Montbrehain



10th October

Damascus has been occupied by the British troops. In its capture 7000 prisoners were taken. Since September 20 General Allenby's troops in Palestine have taken 60,000 prisoners and 325 guns.

A British expedition has seized the German mines at Spitsbergen, a group of islands in the Arctic Ocean.

The English and Americans launched a new offensive between St. Quentin and Cambrai on Tuesday morning. The attack was completely successful; Cambrai has been captured with 8000 prisoners.

Royal Air Force units, co-operating with the Navy, have actively participate in the Belgian coast offensive. The Germans are reported to be withdrawing heavy guns and munitions from Zeebrugge.

An Amsterdam report states that the Germans are removing stores and dismantling works in the Flanders coast area. Zeebrugge work has been thrown idle and the men from coastal towns deported inland.

17th October

The Allied offensive on the Western front has made rapid strides. In Flanders during the past few days operations have been on an extensive scale, the British Navy co-operating by bombarding the coast of Belgium in the region of Ostend. The British, Belgians and French have rapidly advanced past Roulers in Belgium, and have gained an advance of seven miles.

Thourout and Menin have been captured. The British attack at Courtrai resulted in the capture of a number of villages. The Allies dominate the German railways connecting Lille and Ostend. The Germans are retreating. The prisoners taken in the Belgium advance exceed 10,000.

Paris newspapers enthusiastically comment on the magnificent British victory at Cambrai, which will be fruitful of immense results. The Allies captured 20,000' prisoners in two days, of whom 15,000 were taken on the Cambrai St. Quentin front.

General Allenby's prisoners in Palestine now total over 75,000.

24th October

The "Daily News" correspondent stated that the awful casualties since March have caused widespread depression and anger amongst the Germans. Lille and Courtrai were taken by the British at the later end of last week. Steady advance has been made since.

The liberation of Lille was received with great jubilation in France.

President Wilson has given his reply to Austria's peace note. It is notified that the U.S.A. cannot accept the Austrian autonomy plan as a basis of peace. The subject races will determine what Austrian action will satisfy their aspirations.

The Germans have evacuated the entire Belgian coast. The Belgians have occupied Bruges, which has been visited by the King and Queen of the Belgians.

The advance continues in Flanders. Considerable booty and numerous coastal guns have been captured.

An official German Wireless message has been received in reply to President Wilson's Note. The German Government assumes that the procedure of evacuation and conditions of the armistice should be left to the military advisers.

30th October 1918 Turkey Surrenders



31st October

The last remnants of the Turkish Army are concentrating to defend Constantinople. The Germans and Turks under von Sanders agreed that it was useless to defend Aleppo. A retreat is being made towards Mosul, the British having cut the Shergut-Mosul road.

A gigantic battle continues with the utmost desperation on the French front. General Guillaumats' forces broke through between the Oise and le Heric, despite the elaborate enemy defences. The Germans are opposing the advance with a deluge of 'gas and high explosive shells. The enemy has withdrawn on the whole front between the Oise and Serre Rivers.

A slight advance was made by the British north of the Scheldt, and along the high ground north of the Courtrai Canal. The enemy's position south of Valenciennes is being turned.

Telegrams from Hungary state that the people and army are practically in agreement to cease fighting on Nov. 1.

Germany has replied to President Wilson, asking for an armistice in the name of the German people. It is expected that Austria's internal troubles will have a marked effect on the Italian, Albanian, and Danube fronts.

Count Tisza declares that the conclusion of a separate peace by Austria-Hungary is only a matter of time.

From The Home Front

A successful demonstration of the International Harvester Coy's farm machinery, arranged by Messrs. Furner Bros., the local agents, was held at the farm occupied by Mr. H. Liggins, on Wednesday afternoon, the 2nd inst. A single furrow plough, double furrow on-hard plough, cultivator and 2-row corn

planter, were tested with excellent results, and keen interest was manifested by a fair and representative gathering.

In a letter received from Tpr. W. Clemson dated 16/8/18, he says: "I am in receipt of a parcel from the Mt. Hunter Comforts Fund and I am very pleased to have received same, as anything is very acceptable over here. I am sure it is very good of the people over there to think of us boys who are away. Will you kindly convey my sincere thanks to all the members of the club?"

Mrs. R. Kettley received a cable early this week from the Defence Department, saying that her son, Signaller Walter Kettley, had been seriously wounded, and was in a French hospital. This is the second time this brave young soldier has been in hospital this year. In Signaller Kettley's last letter home he said that he had seen several Camden boys. We trust Mrs. Kettley will have good news of her son very shortly.

Mr. Rae, of Mount Hunter, received word a few weeks ago saying that his son, Pte. E. Rae (George) was missing; last Tuesday Mr. Rae received further word that his son was a prisoner in Germany's hands.



Private William Burrough

Killed in Action, 2nd October 1918, France



Private Clifford John Clarke

Killed in Action, 4th October 1917, Belgium

Driver Henry Themas Hacknery

Died of Disease, 28th October 1918 in 56th General Hospital, Etaples, France

Ray Herbert
Historical Officer