

# THE FRONT LINE

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## NEW GERMAN OFFENSIVE ON THE WESTERN FRONT! MAJOR ALLIED CASUALTIES - BUT RELIEF IS IN SIGHT

It has been confirmed that German forces have conducted a series of attacks along the Western Front, ordered by General Ludendorff. Beginning on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, these attacks have been the deepest advances by either side since 1914. What the German's have called, 'Operation Michael' has been their main attack. The operation has been seen as an attempt to break Allied lines and outflank British Forces who have been defending the Somme River, in turn protecting the English Channel.

The first day of the attack has unfortunately seen an estimated 21,000 British soldiers being taken as prisoners, with the Germans making significant advances through the lines of the Fifth Army. Many Parisians have also had to leave France's capital as the Germans have moved three Krupps cannons to the front line and have been used to shell Paris. Despite being 120 kilometres from the front line, shells from the guns take just over 3 minutes to reach the city; 183 of which have been used to terrorize the capital.

The German attack has so far been the biggest breakthrough in three years of warfare on the Western Front. It has also been reported that Kaiser William II has declared March 24th to be a national holiday. However, there is still hope for the Allies as many of the German troops have only been successful as they travel with only their weapons in order to assist their mobility. It seems that German success is only a short term concern. Due to the lack of equipment carried by the troops, the supplies and resources that they need, in order to go forth with their attack, have not been able to keep up with their swift advances.

There have also been reports of advances on the French city, Amiens. As the major rail centre in the region for the Allies its loss could cause potential disaster. Again the German forces are lacking in supplies which has so far been causing transportation issues as it has been said that many of the soldiers have resulted to slaughtering their horses for their meat.

As we move through April, our American ally has confirmed that a quarter of a million troops will join to support our forces against German attacks, resulting in General Ludendorff's worst possible scenario. The enemy has already been facing a tremendous amount of casualties since their initial advances, an estimated 230,000 and with American forces on their way; a victory for the Allies is in sight.

**Reporter: Jess Ranawera**



*Images show the German troops pushing forward with the photo on the right showing German reserve troops marching in the Somme region of the Western Front.*





# RUSSIAN BETRAYAL?

## THE TREATY OF BREST-LITOVSK CONCLUDED

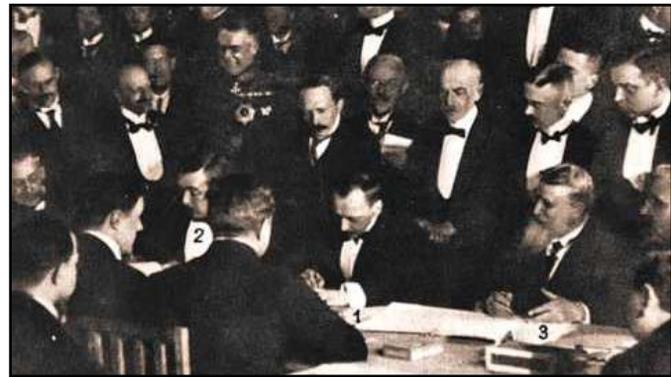
The 3 March marked a sad resignation from the war effort by Russian officials. The fear of Bolshevik indifference to European suffering has been realised, with the young government choosing to withdraw from the Great War through a treaty signed with the Central Powers. The desperation felt by this nation fraught with personal, civil turmoil is evident in the unfavourable terms accepted in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. It is a humiliation both for the nation itself and the Allied international community: Russia has given up approximately one million square miles of land and a third of her entire population. The country has surrendered Ukraine, Finland and its Polish and Baltic territories. This loss of land is especially devastating when considering the great economic importance of these regions as a result of their fertile farmland.

A call to peace had been a prominent slogan for the Bolsheviks in 1917 in the months leading up to their seizure of power. It is no surprise, then, that soon after their ascent to authority in October, negotiations with Germany had begun in December. Coming to a satisfactory peace was no easy task though, with many within the party itself at odds as to what action should be taken. Whereas some were eager to end the conflict no matter how harsh the terms (so that attention could be focused internally on Russia's domestic front and the deteriorating economy), others talked of fighting a revolutionary war that would cause the workers of the European nations to spring up in Marxist revolution. In a response to Russian procrastination, Germany launched Operation Faustschlag in February, an advance into Russian territory. Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin, in his urgency to end the conflict, threatened his own resignation should the peace terms of 23<sup>rd</sup> February be rejected.

A cause for alarm for Great Britain and France, yet a small victory for Germany: Russia's pulling-out of the war is indeed the exact result that the Germans had



*Key officials gather as the treaty is signed - marking a potential turning point for the Central Powers in the Great War*



hoped for when they arranged Lenin's return to Russia from exile in Switzerland in early 1917. They were acutely aware of the Bolsheviks' provocative, incendiary nature in this extremely unstable time for Russian government, and knew that if Russia was occupied with her own civil and political strife, this would relieve Germany from the burden of fighting on two fronts.

Not only a stain on the Allied war effort, the conditions of this treaty are an unsettling demonstration of the merciless peace that could be imposed by Germany should the Great War end in failure. It is also a spurring force, therefore, to crush the Germans and dictate an iron-fisted peace of our own; the omen of Brest-Litovsk shows that any alternative outcome would be ravaging to Great Britain.

*Reporter: Anastasia Vartanian*



## ONE OF THOSE MILLIONS

### PART 17

By early March 1918 Paul Hub was back in the familiar slaughterhouse of the Somme. 'We are already imagining what it will be like when the order comes "Protzen heran" [prepare to move]. We are most conscious of the greatness of the moment, and have got into a terrific state of tension, and even when we have time for any rest, we genuinely can't sleep anymore, not for a second.'

On the 20 March a communiqué informed troops that the Kaiser and Field-Marshal von Hindenburg had arrived at German Headquarters to take personal command of the battle.

At four-forty the next morning, 21 March, 'a green Very light was the signal for "annihilation fire",' and 'with a crash, our barrage begins...From tens of thousands of gun barrels and mortars, a barrage that sounds as if the world were coming to an end.

'The gunners stand in their shirt sleeves with the sweat dripping off them. Shell after shell is rammed into the breach, salvo after salvo is fired.' Sixty-three German divisions advanced along a sixty-mile front held by twenty-six British divisions. They were led by storm troopers – heavily trained assault battalions, armed with machine-guns, flame-throwers and trench mortars – instructed to advance at all costs, ignoring any pockets of resistance that could be left to the following troops to mop up. They were supported by ground-attack aircraft, strafing and bombing the Allied lines.

On 24 March, Paul Hub scribbled a hasty note to his parents, 'We've already advanced quite far into the English territory, here in our Somme region. We are full of confidence. Today we finished off English tanks. It was superb. For a few days now, we've been spending the nights outdoors. It is cold, but mobile warfare is an excuse for everything.'

*Contributor: Mr. P. Hinsley*



## THE FRONT LINE REMEMBERS 'LEST WE FORGET'



### SIDNEY C. BRIGHTMAN

In remembrance of Sidney Charles Brightman. He was a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers. He was stationed in Palestine and died age 33 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1918.

*He attended WBGS from 1894 – 1898.*

### HENRY J. CAPERN

In remembrance of Henry 'Hal' James Capern. He was a Second Lieutenant in the King's Royal Rifles. He was stationed in Malta, France and Egypt. He was killed in the German offensive, age 23, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1918.

*He attended WBGS from 1905 – 1912.*

### SIDNEY FAYERS

In remembrance of Sidney Fayers. He was a Corporal in the 1<sup>st</sup> London Yeomenry. He received a military medal for distinguished service. He died on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1918, age 21.

*He attended WBGS from 1908 – 1913.*

### DOUGLAS J. JOHNSON

In remembrance of Douglas James Johnson. He was a Rifleman in the London Rifle Brigade. He went missing, and presumed dead, on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1918, age 19.

*He attended WBGS from 1912 – 1914.*

### CECIL H. OSBORNE

In remembrance of Cecil Henry Osborne. He was a Private in the Royal Sussex Regiment. He died on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1918, age 22.

*He attended WBGS from 1904 – 1911.*

### ERIC H. TATTON

In remembrance of Eric Hudson Tatton. He was a **Flight Commander in the Royal Air Force**, serving in France and Egypt. He was killed on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1918, age 23.

*He attended WBGS from 1904 – 1910.*





# IS VICTORY AT HAND IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

On the 21<sup>st</sup> March, in the dead of the night, an attack began in the Middle East where some of our soldiers have been stationed for 3 years. This attack was to become the first Transjordan attack, and also an attack that aimed to continue the eradication of the Ottoman Empire, already under attack by the Arab Revolt, and a decisive blow towards these countries could topple an key ally of Germany and keep us all a little safer.

The Attack of Amman (as it is now known to us) began on the 21<sup>st</sup> March, when three forces began their assault on the city of Amman. Our very own 60<sup>th</sup> division (long since nicknamed the ‘Anzac Mounted Division’) was involved, along with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force and the Imperial Camel Corps, and it was these three troops that made the brave decision to attempt this war’s first crossing of the famed river Jordan. It has now been proved possible that all our soldiers can cross it in a short span of only two days; bringing across all the supplies despite the rain pouring down upon them and hindering their journey.

Once across the tiresome river, the combined strength of Shea’s Force (the honour presented to the great commander Shea) made their way towards the heavily fortified city, and repeatedly attacked for 4 days. Tirelessly, they fought day and night to break down the reinforced garrison that protected the city, and they aimed to achieve four main goals. One, the crossing of the Jordan, had already been accomplished and bridgeheads were set as territorial boundaries there. The capture of Amman was the ultimate goal, but the small nearby town of Es Salt was also desired as well as the destruction of the Hejaz Railway in order to weaken and contain our enemies.

Unfortunately, life does not work out the way even the greatest of commanders plans it to be, and so it was that our forces could not break through the powerful blockade, not even to break the main

railway of Hejaz. The citadel became ours for a short length of time, along with 135 prisoners, but it was not enough and Shea’s force was pushed back, right to the river, and by the end of the long struggle of 10 days, this attack was over. We lost 1348 men in this ambitious attempt, 30 miles from our front lines, but this war is not over by any measure.

However, despite this failure, the Middle Eastern campaign has been anything but sedentary these past few months, and so as we look upon this latest battle, remember the glorious victories of the first, second and third battles of Gaza; the capture of Jericho that was hard fought and well won; the success of the Battle of Mughar Ridge only 4 months ago. Ultimately, this battle was a defeat for us, but as the first defeat of the eastern corps since the second battle of Gaza, this long chain of victories should be viewed as nothing but impressive and it was not lack of spirit that tipped the scales against our favour. It was not God forsaking us. This was nothing but luck and the unfortunate weather that has overcome us for this battle and likely this battle only.

Look to the future, where a second attack will be made in good time, and continue to pray for all those fighting to keep us safe. **Reporter: Jenni Wall**



*Troops cover the desert in a bold feat to finish the Ottoman Empire and bring the war in the Middle East to a close.*