

Historical Officers Report

Events of the Great War as reported in the Camden News
Cables from the European War May 1916

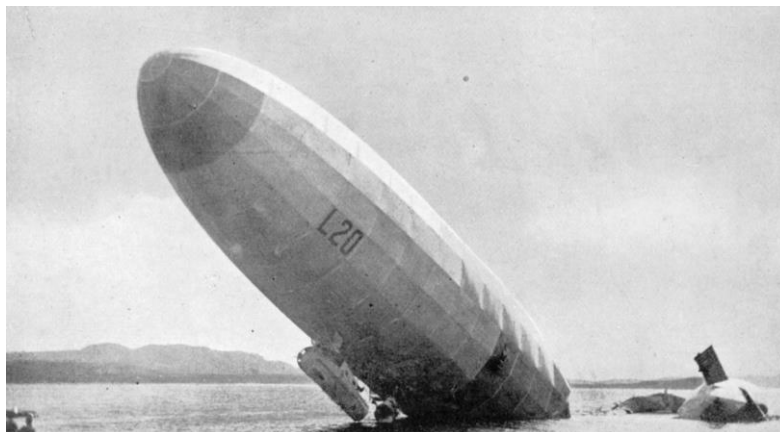
4th May

It is officially announced that General Townshend, commanding the British forces besieged at Kut-al-Amura has surrendered.

The official report says: After a resistance of 143 days, conducted with gallantry and fortitude which will be forever memorable the exhaustion of supplies compelled General Townshend to surrender after destroying his guns and munitions. The force consisted of 2900 British soldiers and 6000 Indians.

11th May

Zeppelin L20 was destroyed at Stavanger Norway was the largest type being 650 f t long and 80ft in diameter with 6 motors of 800 horsepower.



A Zeppelin which attempted to raid Salonika was shelled by land and naval anti aircraft guns and destroyed.

It is officially announced that Australian and New Zealand troops have arrived in France, and have taken over a portion of the front line.

Nearly half of the Australians and most of the New Zealanders who are on the west front have seen fighting at Anzac or in Western Egypt. Their losses at Gallipoli were so heavy that, in order to make up the full quota destined for Northern France with adequate reserves, it was found necessary to draw largely upon recent drafts from the Commonwealth and the Dominion.

When the expedition was being arranged there was much anxiety, some of the regiments fearing that they would not go. Many men belonging to the Light Horse disowned their regiments, hoping to be drafted into the troops for France. None wanted to stay behind.

Nine hundred of the Light Horse volunteered for the Infantry in a single day.

Many of the Australians felt the cold keenly. Some fortunately secured two blankets before leaving Egypt, though the regulation only provided for one. The British authorities thoughtfully distributed thousands of pairs of Mittens.

The moment the Australians entered the section of the Front line trenches the Germans opposite held up a banner inscribed "Welcome to the Australians."

18th May

The Minister for Defence has denied the existence of a ring in connection with the purchase of remounts for the Australian Army.

There was no particular shortage of horses for war purposes. In New South Wales 1749 had been purchased during the past three months

After five days furious assaults costing enormous sacrifice the recrudescence of the Verdun offensive of unprecedented violence leaves the enemy exactly where the attack was started.

A revelation of the inner history of Verdun shows that the French were only aware on February 21 of the gravity of the situation. After the battle had raged for several days General Petain was sent to Verdun.

When the storm broke only 60,000 troops opposed 200,000 Germans.

Colossal losses at Verdun, the failure of the Irish revolt and misgivings regarding the Zeppelins and submarines are contributory causes of recent outbreaks in Berlin and Leipzig. Says a Swiss traveller.

British aeroplanes conveyed 18,800 pounds of food and other stores to Kut el-Amara during the siege.

25th May

On May the 10th Australian and New Zealand mounted troops surprised and routed the enemy at Bayoud and Mageibra Egypt, capturing the Turkish depots. The camp at Bayoud was destroyed, and much ammunition and many camels were captured.

Three seaplanes raided Kent, England, on Saturday morning and dropped 37 bombs. There were three casualties and some buildings were damaged.

A large German battle plane which has appeared at Riga is believed to have a speed of 120 miles an hour. The new Bleriot for the French army travels at 125 miles an hour

From the Home Front

The Camden Red Cross output of work for the month
51 shirts; 26 suits pyjamas; 110 towels; 7 washers; 10 pairs of slippers
3 eye bandages; 18 underpants; 85 handkerchiefs
Case of books to Light Horse Camp,
To the War Chests:—25 pairs of socks, 4 mittens.
The work despatched for the week was:—
30 shirts; 10 pyjamas; 90 towels; 5 underpants; 2 pairs of slippers;
4 brush and comb bags; 40 handkerchiefs; Tooth brushes and soap.
To the War Chest:—25 pairs of socks.

The Irish insurrection is said, to be practically at an end. Tho news is contained in a Reuter's message from Dublin, received in New York shortly before noon on Sunday. This states that it is reported all the leaders off the insurrection have surrendered, unconditionally.

The rebels at the outset of hostilities riddled the tramcars, regardless of consequences. Some wounded soldiers, who were limping along the street on crutches, expostulated with the Sinn Feiner's exclaiming 'For God's sake don't shoot innocent people. You are killing our mothers and sisters.'

The miscreants' only reply to this was to heartlessly fire upon and wound the men who were remonstrating with them. It has been ascertained that the ammunition used by the rebels was German made. The boxes of cartridges bore German lettering.

The soldiers used 18-pounder with great effect on the rebels' stronghold.

The Mayor reported that the metal is now being spread on Campbell's Hill, after which work the men would be going to Dowle's Rd.

With regard to rolling Murray St. he had arranged with Mr. Taplin to do the work with four horses, which he believed the works committee would adopt. Alderman Larkin asked that a few loads of stone be taken to fill the worst of the holes on The Oaks road. The Mayor said this would be attended to.

The Federal Treasurer in the House of Representatives on Saturday said that it was not proposed to move the small-arms plant from Lithgow until the end of the war.

SIX O'CLOCK CLOSING

The campaign for the six o clock closing of liquor bar was opened in Camden on Thursday Evening last at a public meeting in the Forester's Hall presided over by his worship the mayor of Camden, Alderman G F Furner J.P.

Ray Herbert
Historical Officer