

# GERMANS TAKE VILLAGES ACROSS YPRES CANAL; TAKE 1,600 PRISONERS

USED LARGE QUANTITIES OF ASPHYXIATING BOMBS, IS FRENCH CHARGE.

Effect of Gases Felt for Long Distance—French Take Half Mile of Trenches Near St. Mihiel—Following Bombardment—Much Fighting in West.

After stubborn fighting the Germans yesterday crossed the Ypres canal to the western bank and captured the Belgian villages of Langemarck, Steenstraete, Het Sas and Pilken. Berlin announced 1,600 French and British prisoners and 30 cannon were captured.

Paris announces the capture of nearly a half mile of German trenches near St. Mihiel, southern extremity of the German wedge, but Berlin claims part was recaptured in a counter attack.

Petrograd reports minor engagements along the Prussian front. The opinion is expressed by prominent

statesmen that Italy's participation in the war at present is unlikely.

#### Use Asphyxiating Bombs.

PARIS, April 23.—An official statement this afternoon says:

"Yesterday in a bend of the Yser, north of Dixmude; Belgian troops repulsed an attack against Chateau Vicoque and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. North of Ypres, the Germans, by employing large quantities of asphyxiating bombs, the effect of which was felt for a distance of two kilometers behind our lines, forced us to retire in the direction of the Yser canal. Toward the west and in the direction of Ypres toward the south, the enemy's attack was checked. Vigorous counter attacks enabled us to regain ground and make many prisoners. In the wooded valley near St. Mihiel, by attacks east and west of positions previously captured, we took 700 meters of trenches."

#### Notable German Success.

BERLIN, April 23.—An official announcement today says:

"During an action yesterday, we advanced from our front at Steenstraete east of Langemarck, against positions of the enemy north and northeast of Ypres. With a rush our troops moved forward along the line extending as far as the hills south of Pilkena and east of Douon. At the same time they forced their way across the Ypres canal at Steenstraete and Het Sas, where they established themselves on the western banks of the canal. The villages of Langemarck, Steenstraete, Het Sas and Pilken were taken. At least 1,600 French and British soldiers and 30 cannon, including four heavy guns, fell into our hands."

#### French Take Trenches.

PARIS, April 23.—An official statement this afternoon says:

"Between the Meuse and Moselle active fighting yesterday became more lively. Artillery battles were especially fierce at Combres, St. Mihiels, Apremont and northeast of Flirey. An infantry attack of the enemy followed only in the wooded country between Alilly and Apremont. The French penetrated this region in certain sections of our foremost trenches, but they were partly driven out again. Fighting at close quarters still continues. The village of Embremeuël, which had been taken by us and which was set on fire by French shells, has been evacuated by our outposts. The hills north and south of Embremeuël were retained. The situation in the east is unchanged."

#### Fire 17-Inch Shells into Ypres.

LONDON, April 23.—The official semi-weekly report says:

"German attacks on Hill No. 60 have been renewed several times. These attacks all failed and for the time being have ceased. We hold the entire crest of the hill. During operations around the hill the enemy fired 17-inch shells into Ypres."

LONDON, April 23.—A dispatch from Petrograd says:

"There was much activity yesterday on the part of Russian airships. One dropped 15 bombs on Plock. Several German boats on the Vistula were struck as were the railroad station and trains. Two other machines bombarded the station at Miawa and a German aerodrome at Sanniky."