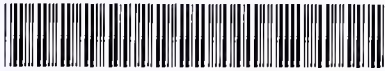


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ARCHANGEL

THE AMERICAN WAR WITH RUSSIA



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THE AMERICAN WAR WITH RUSSIA



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Sergeant William H. Bowman,
339th United States Infantry

ARCHANGEL

THE AMERICAN WAR WITH RUSSIA

By
A Chronicler

Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.—OTHELLO



CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG & CO.
1924

*Dedicated to the memory
of*

SERGEANT WILLIAM H. BOWMAN

who died of wounds
received in the action of
1st March, 1919
near Toulgas, Russia

221240

Gov's office

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ARCHANGEL

THE AMERICAN WAR WITH RUSSIA

I

ARCHANGEL AND GALLIPOLI

*"Theirs not to reason why;
Theirs but to do and die."*

MANY people have asked me about the Russian campaign, why American soldiers went to Siberia, and what they did after they got there, for the general notion seems to be that Russia and Siberia are synonymous, and that the Russian Expedition, whatever its hazy purpose was, was centered about Vladivostok, and that in this far eastern port, a few American and Allied soldiers "marked time," while their comrades on the Western Front fought out, and eventually conquered, in the greatest of all wars.

One American officer was actually ordered to join his command at Archangel, "via Vladivostok," and the order was issued by the War Department of the United States. Six thousand miles of inaccessible territory separated these two Russian ports, and the average American soldier who went out from Archangel in the fall of 1918, and, during the desolate winter months that followed, fought for his life along the Vologda railway, or far up the Dvina river, or in the snows of Pinega and Onega valleys, never knew

that Brigadier General William S. Graves of the United States army, with thirteen hundred eighty-eight regulars and forty-three officers, had landed at Vladivostok on 4th September, 1918, and remained there after the Archangel fiasco had terminated. There was no conscious liaison between this American company of the far East and that of the far North, each performing burlesque antics in fantastic sideshows, while in the West, the greatest drama of all time was in its denouement, and a tense world trembled as it watched.

Whether there was any political connection between the Archangel Expedition and the Vladivostok Expedition is for the statesmen to answer. Surely there never was any military connection. Obviously, there never could be any support or communication between the two forces, and the American soldier at the Arctic Circle who was not told the reasons why he faced death and unknown dangers there, and why he was weakened and broken, and made old by privation and intense cold, never knew that there was a Siberian Expedition, and does not know even to this day.

So I have thought it worth while to tell, as faithfully as I could, the story of this strange war of North Russia, an insignificant flickering in the glare of the mighty world conflict, but inspiring in its human significance, its exploits of moral strength and sheer resolution and godlike courage. I have considered the campaign as a trial by ordeal of American manhood, that tested our souls to the depths, like Gallipoli tested the British. It was like Gallipoli in the hopeless odds encountered at every turn, in the vague outline of the commitment at the outset; in its distressing losses; its hardships and privations; its tragical ending.

But it was very vitally unlike Gallipoli, because in the war with Russia the soldier never knew why. The Austrians, in their effort to force the Dardanelles, were exalted by the belief that theirs was an important operation in the war, and the British soldier went to battle the Turks, convinced that if he died, it was to save some little spot in a Cheshire or Sussex village, which to him meant England. It was a holy war, and men were fired with the high, selfless devotion of the Crusaders. An arrogant, brutal power swaggered abroad, menacing liberty, and the home and all things of the spirit. If German Imperialism engulfed civilization, there would be nothing left to live for anyway.

But there were no such reflections to sustain the soldier in Russia. The Armistice came, and he remembers the day as one of sanguinary battle, when his dwindling numbers suffered further grievous losses, and he was sniped at, stormed with shrapnel and shaken by high explosive shells. He heard of the cessation of blood-letting in France and Belgium, but for many desolate, despairing months, he stood to his guns, witnessing his comrades killed and mutilated, the wounded lying in crude, dirty huts, makeshifts of dressing stations, then in sledges, dragged many excruciating miles over the snow to the rear, where often they got little better attention than at the front lines. He knew his physical strength was failing under the unrelieved monotony of the Arctic exploration ration; he saw others with scabies and disgusting diseases of malnutrition, and wondered how long before he too would be in the same way. He felt his sanity reeling in the short-lived, murky, winter days, the ever encircling menace of impending disaster and annihila-

tion. He asked his officers why he fought, and why he was facing an enemy vastly superior to him in strength and equipment and armament, and why he was separated from his family and home and the ways of life, and when the end would come. But his officers were silent under this inquisition. They asked the same questions themselves, and got no reply. The colonel who commanded this fated regiment told his soldiers that he could give no reason for them to oppose the enemy other than that their lives and those of the whole expedition depended upon successful resistance.

So soldierlike, he "carried on," while the dreary skies above him menaced death, and death stalked the encompassing forests of the scattered front lines, and the taint of death was in the air he breathed.

In the end, and when nearly all hope had fled, he returned homeward, stricken in health and dazed in spirit, where people moved as before, and were agitated by the same concerns, as if nothing had occurred to upset the whole scheme of things and uproot forever the old standards of values and ambition and morality. They noticed a queer look in his eyes and that he was customarily silent, often introspective. They manifested a casual interest in his great adventure. They never could understand.

Both expeditions were conceived by the British High Command and both were conducted by the execution of British military orders. Perhaps therein is the underlying philosophy of North Russia and Gallipoli; this attachment of the British mind to an astricted faith in England and her imperial destiny to rule the peoples of the world, contemptuous of obstacles and difficulties and perils in un-

known, alien lands that appear very real to other than British mental processes.

“We’ll just rush up there and re-establish the great Russian army—reorganize the vast forces of the Tsar,” said an ebullient officer in England, wearing the red tabs and hatband of the General Staff. “One good Allied soldier can outfight twenty Bolsheviks,” was the usual boast of the Commanding Officer in the early days of the fighting.

And it was a boast that was made good in the furious winter combats, when, standing at bay, the scattered companies, with no place to retreat, save the open snow, stood off many times their number of the enemy. In these decisive trials, the spirit of the Anglo-Saxon ever asserted its superiority, but one to twenty is not a very comfortable ratio upon which to form an offensive campaign. And the war against Russia was conceived as an offensive campaign, whatever it turned out to be.

RUSSIA THE VAST UNKNOWN

“The Emperor fully realized the nature of the task he had before him. To defend himself in Italy, Germany or even Poland against the Tsar was one thing; to invade the vast empire of Russia, was another task altogether — a task colossal, if not appalling. And arrayed against him were two fearful enemies — the Russian Army and *winter*.”

WATSON'S *Napoleon*.

II

RUSSIA THE VAST UNKNOWN

SOMETIMES we are amused by foreign *littérateurs* and commentators, who come to our great country for a few crowded weeks of teas and symposia, gatherings of the intelligencia in our metropolis, and perhaps a dash into the mushroom dilettantism of Chicago, to set sail and compose screeds and screeds of America, her ways and her people, their manners and their customs.

Superficial vaporings, but far better composed and built by far on firmer ground than the idle opinions of those few Americans who have gone to the vast, far stretching empire of the Slavs, and glibly vouchsafed their *ex cathedra* views thereon.

The dominions of Great Russia were spread from the Baltic east to the Japan Sea, and from above the Arctic Circle far south to the Caspian and the Black Sea and Lake Baikal in Siberia. They comprised eight million six hundred and fifty thousand square miles of varied territory, nearly three times that of the United States, and were peopled by heterogeneous people, numbering one hundred and eighty million, as estimated, for no census or even approximate count has ever been attempted.

There were the Finns and the Letts, the Lithuanians, the Jews, the Mordvinians, the Estonians, the Siberians, the Great Russians, the Little Russians, the Red Russians, and the White Russians of the Central Provinces, the Cossacks

of the south, and the Tartars of the Caucasus; all with no conscious unity, no national identity, not a single common impulse or purpose or interest. In many instances, without a communion of language.

The total length of railways in 1917 was thirty-four thousand miles, or less than one-eighth of that of our country. Of these one hundred and eighty million Russians, nearly eighty per cent are moujiks, docile, patient serfs, liberated scarcely sixty years ago by Alexander II, and still shackled by the shackles of their serfdom, woeful ignorance, cowed spirit and afflicting poverty.

The remaining twenty per cent are survivors of the fading nobility and the bourgeoisie, or middle class, who have acquired wealth and consequent social rank without claim to nobility of birth. These last are hated with an intense, irrational hatred by the Bolsheviki.

The noble class, the Russian of Turgenev, supersensitive, highstrung, supercultivated, almost to the point of degeneration, is fast vanishing with the passing of the last vestige of the Romanoff regime, and soon will be a thing of the past. This intolerant caste for centuries had dwelt in idleness on great landed estates. It was as alien to the poor moujik as if of an entirely distinct race. I met a few of these highborn on the streets of Archangel, whence they had fled from the murderous Reds in the cities of Moscow and Petrograd. Elegant gentlemen they were, in all the glittering panoply of Imperial army officers, and manners the extreme in *politesse*; very pompous, extremely impressive. They did not conceal their contempt of the crawling moujik; he was a swine, and when the word was hissed in Russian, it sounded very swinish.

The serf and the highborn, the swaggering, objectionable bourgeoisie, the moujik and his animal ignorance, the intelligencia, and his superculture, each separated from the other by an abysmal unspanable gulf; and the various Russian races so dissimilar in thought and living, in customs, even in language, all nevertheless were kept in some semblance of cohesion by the brutal, disciplinary methods of the Tsar and the cooperating spiritual guidance of the Russian State Catholic Church, of which the Tsar was the Little Father.

San Francisco is as acutely conscious of national affairs in Washington, as New York, and more so. But this is because the finest transportation system in the world makes it possible to journey from one city to the other in a few days, and because every American is an ardent disciple of our great public press.

But Vladivostok knows nothing of Petrograd, and Petrograd knows little of Archangel, and in the little villages, where the people live, the world beyond is clothed in impenetrable mystery; for there are no railways to these villages. No news comes in, and if news came, there are few among the moujiks who could read it.

It is well to keep these things in mind when men speak of Russia, as if overnight it could formulate a concerted policy and engage in a purpose backed by preponderant control of the Russian people. Russia is not a nation, it is an immense, unwieldy empire, a giant of tremendous strength, with undreamt-of potentialities, capable of colossal deeds, but without authoritative, united control or direction; entirely unconscious of any national entity.

When Nicholas abdicated in March, 1917, it was an

anxious world that viewed the experimental government of Prince Lvoff. Russia was an important ally, but she had made heroic sacrifices and had lost five millions of men; if she faltered now, the world might be lost. And there were rumors of a separate peace.

A few months after the downfall of the Tsar, Kerensky, as Premier, issued a manifesto expressing undying allegiance to the sacred cause of the Allied Nations, and shortly delivered to the army his famous Prikaz, which:

a. Abolished the penalty of death for disobedience of essential military discipline.

b. Abolished soldierly courtesy and the salute. Officers were henceforth to be known as *tvarishi*, comrades, and all social distinctions between them and the common soldier were abrogated.

c. Meetings of soldiers to discuss the conduct of military affairs were permitted.

Officers were simply unmanned of any effective authority. They were permitted to administer and instruct their organization, but all disciplinary measures were passed upon by a committee of soldiers, and so obedience to any order was a matter for ultimate ruling by such a soldier committee and not by an officer. This was democracy run riot, individual liberty gone stark mad. A few weeks after Kerensky took command, one million five hundred thousand Russian soldiers, grown weary of the tedium and the hazards of the front, quit the army and returned to their homes.

Thus by one foolhardy, ill-advised measure, an army became a rabble. Discipline, as essential to the military as blood is essential to sustain a physical body, vanished, and the collapse of Russia began with Kerensky.



Archangel, where the East comes abruptly face to face with the West

After the entry of the United States into the war in April, 1917, President Wilson was uneasy about Russia and her future course against the common enemy. Emissaries were therefore sent to learn of conditions first hand. Headed by the Honorable Elihu Root, as Ambassador Extraordinary, these reached Petrograd on the 13th June, 1917. Charles P. Crane, Cyrus H. McCormick of Illinois, and General Scott, the American Chief of Staff, accompanied Mr. Root. The emissaries met Kerensky, talked with several military and labor leaders, attended many banquets, made as many good speeches, and reported to the President in Washington on 12th August of the same year.

This report was made in confidence to the President, and even at the late date of the present writing, all requests to examine it have been denied by the State Department, on the grounds that "Divulgence is incompatible with the public interests."

But shortly afterwards, Mr. Root gave out an interview, which purported to express the views of the delegation: that they had come back with faith in Russia; faith in Russian qualities of character that are essential tests of competency and self government; faith in the purpose, the persistence and the power of the Russian people to keep themselves free.

Many American bankers, believing in Mr. Root, manifested kindred faith by the exchange of good American dollars for Russian rubles, despite the fact that the Russian government was hopelessly bankrupt and was showing an operating deficit of milliards of rubles.

General Scott visited the Russian front and witnessed the offensive which resulted in the taking of Kovel and

Lemberg. He conferred with Generals Brussiloff, Korniloff, and Erdeli and their staffs, and reported to the American Secretary of War that Russia would stay in the war "if given even a part of the aid she asks."

Three months before the debacle, the Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, assured the American people that Russia was stronger than she had been for some time, both from the government point of view and the military point of view.

The government point of view? The outstanding feature of the Russian Government "point of view" has always been the venal disposition of the High Command; the shameful, heartless, conscienceless corruption of persons in authority. Everyone knew this who knew Imperial Russia. At the trial of General Sukhomlinov, Minister for War, General Yanushkevitch, former Chief of Russian General Staff, testified that in the retreat from Galicia, during the summer of 1915, there was only one rifle for every ten soldiers. The soldiers in the rear had to wait until their comrades on the firing line were killed so that they might have their rifles. The Russians had no shells, and the Germans knowing this, set their guns two thousand yards off and shot down one helpless regiment after the other.

Many other examples of pitiful defenselessness could be cited at a time when the Allies loaned hundreds of millions of dollars to Russia for arms and military equipment, and Russia had these munitions, but far back of the front lines.

We have viewed Russian affairs as we have viewed Mexico, with American provincial eyes instead of attempting to judge from a Russian angle. Gladstone said that a nation guided by provincial statesmen was doomed for perdition, and, by reason of our provincialism, American statecraft

striving to cope with Russia was hopelessly handicapped at the outset. This wholesale scandal and shameless corruption in high circles was typically Russian, an essential premise upon which to form a judgment of the Russian situation, but a premise totally unknown to persons unfamiliar with Russian character and Russian conditions.

Democracy assumes intelligence, but most important of all, self-control. Had we been familiar with the Russian people, is it likely that our State Department would have given such unstinted confidence to the dreamer, Kerensky? For like all countries where ignorance stifles the progress of struggling national life a strong unhesitant hand was needed to guide the nascent Russian democracy, and instead of resolution Kerensky presented oratory and by his *Prikaz* and vacillating policies rapidly lost his grip upon the army. General Korniloff attempted to rally the demoralized forces, restored the death penalty and strove to bring out of the chaos created by Kerensky, some likeness of coordination, but there was a division in adherence to the Premier and the General, and in the end both Korniloff and Kerensky failed. Probably no man could have succeeded; the seeds of destruction had germinated and struck root. It was too late.

The revolution of the Bolsheviks took place on 7th November, 1917, and in February following was announced the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, whereby the provinces of Russian Poland, Courland, Lithuania, and Estonia came under German control, giving Germany an important Baltic littoral. Turkey, the ally of Germany, was to receive back all territory in Asia Minor occupied since the war, and in addition the districts of Kars and Erivan and Batum. Germany and Turkey controlled the Caucasus, the boundaries

of which were to be restored as they existed before the Russian-Turkish War of 1877. During the civil war that followed in the Ukraine, the Germans occupied the port of Sevastopol, and the Austrians took Odessa. Germany got vast stores of guns and war material, thirteen thousand three hundred fifty miles of railway, more than one-third of the entire Russian rail system, a large amount of rolling stock, seventy-three per cent of Russian iron fields and eighty-nine per cent of her coal.

The war in the East was over, one hundred and forty-seven German and Austrian Divisions were released for the Western Front.

OBJECTS OF THE EXPEDITION

“Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?”

WOODROW WILSON — 27th September, 1918.

III

OBJECTS OF THE EXPEDITION

IT IS said of the Bolsheviks, that they are a terrorist, minority party, rode to power by the seizure of every available machine gun in Russia and maintain their sway by the same forceful persuasion.

One of the *intelligencia* once told me, that of every hundred Russians, only two were Bolsheviks, and the remaining ninety-eight were cowed into submission by the methods of the desperado.

This, to enlightened, high-spirited America is a preposterous statement, but Russia is not America. Nor has she America's schools, nor America's great railways, nor the public press of America.

At Brest-Litovsk, Russia was stripped of nearly all war supply and munitions by the unsparing Germans, and what was left was seized by the belligerent Soviets.

Now, even in proud America, a resolute man back of a six shooter has been known to hold up an entire train load of people. And whether the Soviets are backed by the sanction of the masses, or whether as the Imperialists would have us believe, they are an unprincipled, bullying minority, they are in truth and fact the *de facto* government and represent the sovereignty of Russia in the comity of nations.

For six years Lenine and Trotsky have ruled, while the ministries of America, France, England and Italy have undergone complete transformation with the changing judg-

ments of these troublous times, and now, begrudgingly, Russia; Russia of the Soviet Party, proletarian Russia, anarchistic, "nihilistic" Russia is given a seat at the international conference table of Lausanne, Great Britain has officially recognized the Soviets, and clamorous politicians in this country (even one statesman), are emphatically demanding recognition by the United States.

The Bolsheviks derived their inspiration from the Russian anarchist, Bakunin, an apostle of terror and violence. Bolshevik comes from the Russian word *bolshinstvo*, the majority. The name was used for the first time in 1903, when Nicolai Lenine split the Social Democratic party in two and assumed leadership of the majority. Lenine's real name was Zederblum, that of Trotsky, Bronstein.

The moving purpose of Bolshevism is to organize a great international revolution, affecting all countries. A revolution that will eradicate forever the hated capitalist class, and the despised small proprietors and entrepreneurs, known as bourgeoisie. Bolshevism is openly an enemy of democracy. It has no tolerance for any class save the proletarian. In the Bolshevik era, only the proletariat has any claim. Bolshevism is autocracy, autocracy of the proletariat. A ruthless autocracy that would utterly destroy every social group except this favored one.

Directly he assumed power, Lenine put into effect the Land Decree, which abolished the title of landlords to real estate and confiscated all landed estates, except the small holdings of the peasants. All employers of labor were suppressed, the six-hour day was established in industrial enterprises, and all employees were to have a voice in the management.

There is naught in this program which can be reconciled with German Imperialism, yet many statesmen and soldiers in Allied councils were convinced that an alliance existed between the Bolsheviks and Germany. But it is impossible to conceive of two more extreme opponents in political philosophy, for the Prussian Junkers believed devoutly in the divine commission of kings, as enunciated by the Kaiser himself; and the Bolsheviks, hating every suggestion of imperialism with an intense, raging hatred, threatened death to every king, and recognized, as qualified to rule or govern, none save the proletariat.

Only one tenet did Bolshevism and Prussian militarism have in common, i. e., they were both invincibly opposed to democracy. Both archenemies of political justice, as we Americans understand political justice.

The military leaders and statesmen at Berlin beheld with serious alarm the Revolution of November, 1917. They loathed the Bolsheviks and feared the effect of their insidious propaganda on the German masses. The German Chancellor, Von Bethmann, was obsessed with the fear of Bolshevism, and Ludendorff writes bitterly of the grave error in failing to crush the Soviet Party and to openly take sides with its opponents in Russia. He speaks of the lowered morale of the Eastern German Divisions; how several of them proved utterly worthless in the battles of France, as a consequence of coming in contact with the Bolsheviks; how the Bolshevik revolutionary ideas corroded the spirit of the people at home, and had more to do, than the military defeat, with the downfall of the German Government.

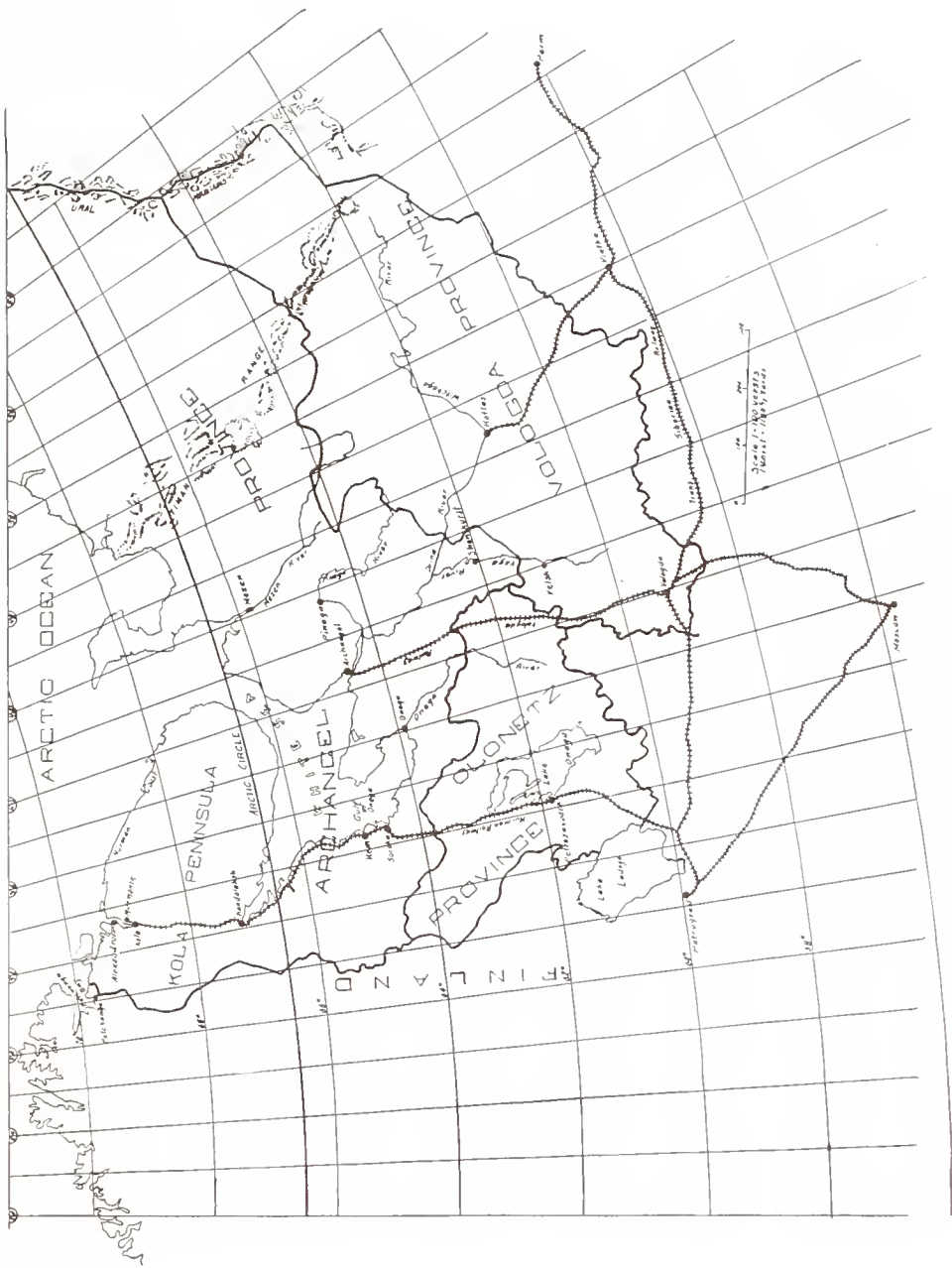
And the Soviet leaders returned the venom of Berlin with even greater virulency. They denounced the Brest-

Litovsk agreement, stigmatizing it as: "The rape of Russia," and in their propaganda repeatedly expressed imperishable hatred of the German Imperialists. Lenin withdrew from the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk on 11th February, 1918, and refused to accede to the harsh demands of Germany. Thereupon, the Ukraine was immediately invaded, and on 1st March, the Germans occupied Kiev, the capital, holding a line to Reval on the Gulf of Finland, through Estonia, Pskov, Vilebsk and Mogilev. The helpless Russians could do nothing but submit, and under duress signed the treaty on 3rd March, 1918.

Still has it been affirmed by Allied statesmen time and repeatedly that the Bolsheviks were a willing party to the Brest-Litovsk pact, and that Moscow and Berlin were conspiring for the destruction of all Western civilization.

In his Fourteen Point address to Congress on 8th January, 1918, President Wilson expressed deep sympathy with Russia and enunciated Point VI as one of the cardinal principles for which the Allies fought:

VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy, and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests.



Archangel Province

On 11th March, 1918, on the eve of its meeting to pass upon the question of the acceptance or rejection of the Brest-Litovsk terms, the President sent a message of friendship to the all Russian Congress of Soviets, which contained this pledge:

Although the government of the United States is unhappily not now in a position to render the direct and effective aid it would wish to render, I beg to assure the people of Russia, through the Congress, that it will avail itself of every opportunity to secure for Russia once more complete sovereignty and independence in her own affairs and full restoration in her great role in the life of Europe and the modern world. The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves forever from autocratic government and become masters of their own life.

Many contend that if the Allies had stood by the de facto government of Russia, as President Wilson's words gave promise of doing, the disastrous treaty would never have been accepted.

Questions have been addressed to the then American Secretary of State asking: Did the administration know at the time of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations:

1. That the Soviet government represented by Lenine and Trotsky was opposed to the projected treaty and signed it only because of the physical impossibility of resisting German demands unless some of the Allies came to its aid?
2. That Lenine and Trotsky gave a note to Colonel Raymond Robbins of the Red Cross, stating to the President of the United States that they were opposed to the treaty and would not sign if the United States would give food and arms to the Russians?

The reply of Mr. Lansing was that answers to these questions were not compatible with the public interest.

On 12th December, 1918, Senator Johnson asked this question in the United States Senate:

Is it true that the British High Commissioner, sent to Russia after the Bolsheviki revolution because of his knowledge and experience in the Russian situation, after four months in Russia, stated over his signature that the Soviet government had cooperated in aiding the Allies, and that he believed *that intervention in cooperation with the Soviet government was feasible as late as the fifth of May, 1918?*

No spokesman for the administration, or anyone else, ever answered or attempted to answer this question.

After Brest-Litovsk, it was generally believed that the ambitions of Germany in Russia were:

1. To recruit her war wasted divisions from the great number of Austrian and German prisoners in Russia.
2. To exploit the great natural resources of the Ukraine, Courland, Lithuania and Estonia.
3. To align on her eastern frontier buffer states from Finland to the Caucasus with Persia as the last link in the chain.
4. To seize great stores of war munitions at Archangel and Vladivostok.

There was also some credence in the rumor that Germany sought to establish submarine bases at Murmansk and Petchenga in Finland.

Murmansk, on the Kola Peninsula, is the only port of North Russia not closed for nearly half the year. During the months of winter, from December until the middle of June, Archangel, Kem, Onega and Kandalaksh on the

White Sea are sealed by effective barriers of ice, and even Petrograd, several hundred miles further south on the Baltic, is closed until late in April. But the Cape current of the Gulf Stream swings around the northern coast of the Kola Peninsula, and at Murmansk there is an excellent natural harbor, which is always open, with thirty-two feet of water in shore, and a high coast line, giving splendid protection against storm. From this valuable ice free port, the Murman railway extends three hundred miles to Kem and continues through Petrozavodsk on the west shore of Lake Onega, six hundred miles further to Petrograd.

The completion of this, the most northern railroad, is a triumph of imagination and courage and invincible resolution. The Russian engineer, Goriatchkovshy, inspired by the necessity of his country having a means of inlet for munitions and supplies during the war (for the Trans-Siberian railway could carry only about one-seventh of such supplies), laid the tracks over seemingly bottomless tundra and conquered in the face of most disheartening discouragements.

A great number of German prisoners and one hundred thousand Russian laborers worked to complete the heroic enterprise. Experts predicted that with the melting of the ice in spring, the tracks would disappear in the marshes, but Goriatchkovshy had reckoned with the elements. The Murman railway is operating today. It has a hauling capacity of thirty-five hundred tons a day, the maximum handling facilities of Murmansk port, and many a lonely soldier, snowbound in North Russia, during the tragic winter of 1919, has the Murman railway and its creator, Goriatchkovshy, to thank for the messages from far off America,

that came to Murmansk and were brought to Archangel by Obozerskaya on the Vologda railway, and then relayed by droshky and the faithful Russian pony to a solitary sentinel post somewhere in the great white reaches of the interior.

Very close to the Murman road is Finland, which, because of its remoteness from the Russian capital, had always exercised a limited autonomy, and following the Kerensky Revolution of March, 1917, announced by the action of the Finnish Diet, its complete independence.

A civil war between Red Guards and White Guards for the control of the government followed. It was no secret that from the beginning of the European war the sympathies of the Finns were with Germany, and now at the outbreak of this internal conflict in Finland, Germany aligned with the White Guards against the revolutionary Reds who were supported by the Bolsheviks.

At the beginning of April, 1918, three regiments of German rifles, two batteries and three battalions of Jägers, under General von der Goltz, landed at Hanko, and, co-operating with the White Finns, suppressed the revolutionists, took possession of the port Viborg and were in control of railway communication to Petrograd. But this small expeditionary force never left the southern part of Finland, and in August, when every German was needed in France, the greater part of it left for the Western Front.

The campaign in Finland had no effect on the course of the war. Its significance was unduly magnified by both sides.

It was a firm conviction in Allied Councils that the Germans had immense forces in Finland, while the German

Imperial Staff thought that the insignificant hundreds that the British landed at Murmansk in April, almost at the same time that the Germans entered the south of Finland, were in large numbers, perhaps several Divisions.

Thus there existed a blindman's buff in Finland; both Commands in startling ignorance of enemy salient facts, which is often the case in the game of war where "uncertainty is the essence"; each supposed the other was actively engaged in "recreating an Eastern Front," which, in concrete application, meant the recruiting of hundreds of thousands of Russians to press on from the East and fill in the war-wasted gaping ranks of Germany or the Allies.

To effect this object and gain access to the interior of Russia, the Murman railway, therefore, assumed a momentous significance; but in truth the "Eastern Front" remained a figment of the military imagination. Russia had poured out the life blood of her sons in the Allied defense till she staggered weak and exhausted, so spent that she swayed in a moral lethargy from which nothing on earth could arouse her, and those Russian soldiers who survived returned to their villages or else were conscripted for the Red army by the amazingly effective methods of Trotsky.

Still, in the spring of the year 1918, the situation in Finland appeared so fraught with grave potentialities of decisive consequence, that on 27th May, the Allied military attaches of Italy, France, England and the United States met at Moscow and unanimously agreed that these nations should intervene in the affairs of Russia.

Shortly after this, the Supreme War Council at Versailles decided in favor of intervention in the northern Russian ports, and the United States gave its consent.

Brigadier General F. C. Poole had been in Petrograd in command of the technical war mission of the British in Russia. Thoroughly familiar with Russian character and Russian conditions, he was chosen to command the Northern Expedition.

The advance party of the Americans landed in Archangel on 3rd August, 1918. On the same day, this statement was cabled to the Russian Ambassador from the State Department at Washington:

In the judgment of the government of the United States, a judgment arrived at after repeated and very searching considerations of the whole situation, military intervention in Russia would be more likely to add to the present sad confusion there than to cure it, and would confuse rather than help her out of her distresses, as the government of the United States sees the present circumstances, therefore military action is admissible in Russia now only to render such protection and help as is possible to the Czecho-Slovaks against the armed Austrian and German prisoners who are attacking them, and to steady any efforts at self-government or self-defense in which Russians themselves may be willing to accept assistance. Whether from Vladivostok or from Murmansk and Archangel, the *only present object for which American troops will be employed will be to guard military stores* which may be subsequently needed by Russian forces, and to render such aid as may be acceptable to the Russians in the organization of their own defense.

The importance of guarding the Arctic ports from the Germans passed with the signing of the Armistice, but armed intervention continued, and the most sanguinary battles in North Russia were fought in the dark winter months that followed.

When the last battalion set sail from Archangel, not a soldier knew, no, not even vaguely, why he had fought or why he was going now, and why his comrades were left behind—so many of them beneath the wooden crosses. The little churchyards and the white churches and the whiter snow! Life will always be a crazy thing to the soldier of North Russia; the color and the taste of living have gone from the soldier of North Russia; and the glory of youth has forever gone from him.

It is a fearful thing to contemplate the deliberate taking of a life. All consciousness recoils at the dreadful, irretrievable consequences of murder; yet when nations engage in extensive killing, there is no malice in the act on the part of individuals. Killing then has an impersonal character and becomes an heroic contemplation.

In Western trenches, the enemy was called "Jerry" in a spirit of grotesque comradeship and sportsmanship, and the finest soldiers had little hatred in their hearts for those across the twisted, shell gashed acres, who sought to maim and kill them, but with no malice aforethought.

The mildest men, and men of highest culture and intelligence, recently made a profession of killing, and could practice their newly found profession with keen, cold, ghoul-ish precision and the comprehensive analysis of trained minds. War is not murder, and the business of killing loses its infamy and much of its obscenity by the united impulse of millions striving with selfless purpose, pure devotion and heroic sacrifice for a nation's goal. War shears from a people much that is gross in nature, as the merciless test of war exposes naked, virtues and weaknesses alike. But the American war with Russia had no idealism. It

was not a war at all. It was a free-booter's excursion, depraved and lawless. A felonious undertaking, for it had not the sanction of the American people.

During the winter of 1919, American soldiers, in the uniform of their country, killed Russians and were killed by Russians, yet the Congress of the United States never declared war upon Russia. Our war was with Germany, but no German prisoners were ever taken in this lawless conflict of North Russia, nor, among the bodies of the enemy killed, was there ever found any evidence that Germans fought in their ranks or sat in the councils of their Command. And in the conduct of the whole campaign there was no visible sign of connection between the Bolsheviks and the Central Powers.

The war was with the Bolsheviks, the existing Government of Russia, and a few weeks after the arrival of American troops in Archangel, Tchitcherine, Soviet Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, handed a note to Mr. Christensen, Norwegian diplomatic attache, which was delivered to President Wilson, in which the Bolsheviks offered to conclude an armistice upon the removal of American troops from Murmansk, Archangel and Siberia.

This note was ignored. The Soviets had no recognition as the government of Russia, and there was no "war" in Archangel or Murmansk or Siberia.

No war, but in the province of Archangel, on six scattered battlefronts, American soldiers, under British command, were "standing to" behind snow trenches and improvised barricades, while soldiers of the Soviet cause crashed Pom Pom projectiles at them, and shook them with high explosive and shrapnel, blasted them with machine

guns, and sniped at any reckless head that showed from cover.

The objects of the Expedition, as defined in a pamphlet of information given out by British General Headquarters, in the early days of the campaign, were:

1. To form a military barrier inside which the Russians could reorganize themselves to drive out the German invader.
2. To assist the Russians to reorganize their army by instruction, supervision and example on more reasonable principles than the old regime autocratic discipline.
3. To reorganize the food supplies, making up the deficiencies from Allied countries. To obtain for export the surplus supplies of goods, such as flax, timber, etc. To fill store ships bringing food, "thus maintaining the economical shipping policy."

The Bolshevik government is entirely in the hands of the Germans, who have backed this party against all others in Russia owing to the simplicity of maintaining anarchy in a totally disorganized country. Therefore, we are definitely opposed to the Bolshevik-cum-German party. In regard to other parties, we express no criticism and will accept them as we find them, provided they are for Russia, and therefore "out for the Boche." Briefly, we do not meddle in internal affairs. It must be realized that we are not invaders, but guests, and that we have not any intention of attempting to occupy any Russian territory.

Later, this proclamation was issued to the troops by the military authorities:

Proclamation: There seems to be among the troops a very indistinct idea of what we are fighting for here in North Russia. This can be explained in a few words. We

are up against Bolshevism, which means anarchy pure and simple. Look at Russia at the present moment. The power is in the hands of a few men, mostly Jews, who have succeeded in bringing the country to such a state that order is non-existent. Bolshevism has grown upon the uneducated masses to such an extent that Russia is disintegrated and helpless, and therefore we have come to help her get rid of the disease that is eating her up. We are not here to conquer Russia, but we want to help her and see her a great power. When order is restored here, we shall clear out, but only when we have attained our object, and that is the restoration of Russia.

At about the same time that this proclamation was spread among British soldiers in Russia, the Inter-Allied Labor Conference met in London and sent an expression "of deepest sympathy to the labor and socialist organizations of Russia, which having destroyed their own imperialism, continue an unremitting struggle against German Imperialism."

Still later, there was broadcasted among the soldiers, headed "Honour Forbids," an exposition of the campaign by Lord Milner, British Secretary of State for War, who defined its objects:

1. To save the Czecho-Slovaks. Several thousand of which under command of General Gaida were believed to be strung along the Siberian railway from Pensa to Vladivostok.
2. To prevent the Germans from exploiting the resources of Southeastern Russia.
3. To prevent the northern ports of European Russia from becoming bases for German submarines.

When these objects were accomplished, the British statesman declared that to leave Russia to the unspeakable hor-

rors of the Bolshevik rule would be an abominable betrayal of that country, and contrary to every British instinct of honor and humanity.

During the winter months of 1919, when Senator Johnson was demanding in the United States Senate the reasons for the American war with Russia, Senator Swanson, of Virginia, of the Foreign Relations Committee, and one of the spokesmen of the administration replied that American troops were needed to protect great stores of Allied ammunition at Archangel, and to hold the port until terms of peace were signed with Germany. That Germany wanted Archangel to establish a submarine base there, and it would be cowardly to forsake Russia.

During the peace negotiations at a meeting of the Council of Ten at Quai D'Orsay, on 21st January, 1919, President Wilson, in discussing the Russian problem, stated that by opposing Bolshevism with arms the Allies were serving the cause of Bolshevism, making it possible for the Bolsheviks to argue that imperialistic, capitalistic governments were seeking to give the land back to the landlords and favor the ends of the monarchists. The allegation that the Allies were against the people and wanted to control their affairs provided the argument which enabled them to raise armies. If, on the other hand, the Allies could swallow their pride and the natural repulsion which they felt for the Bolsheviks, and see the representatives of all organized groups in one place, the President thought it would bring about a marked reaction against Bolshevism.

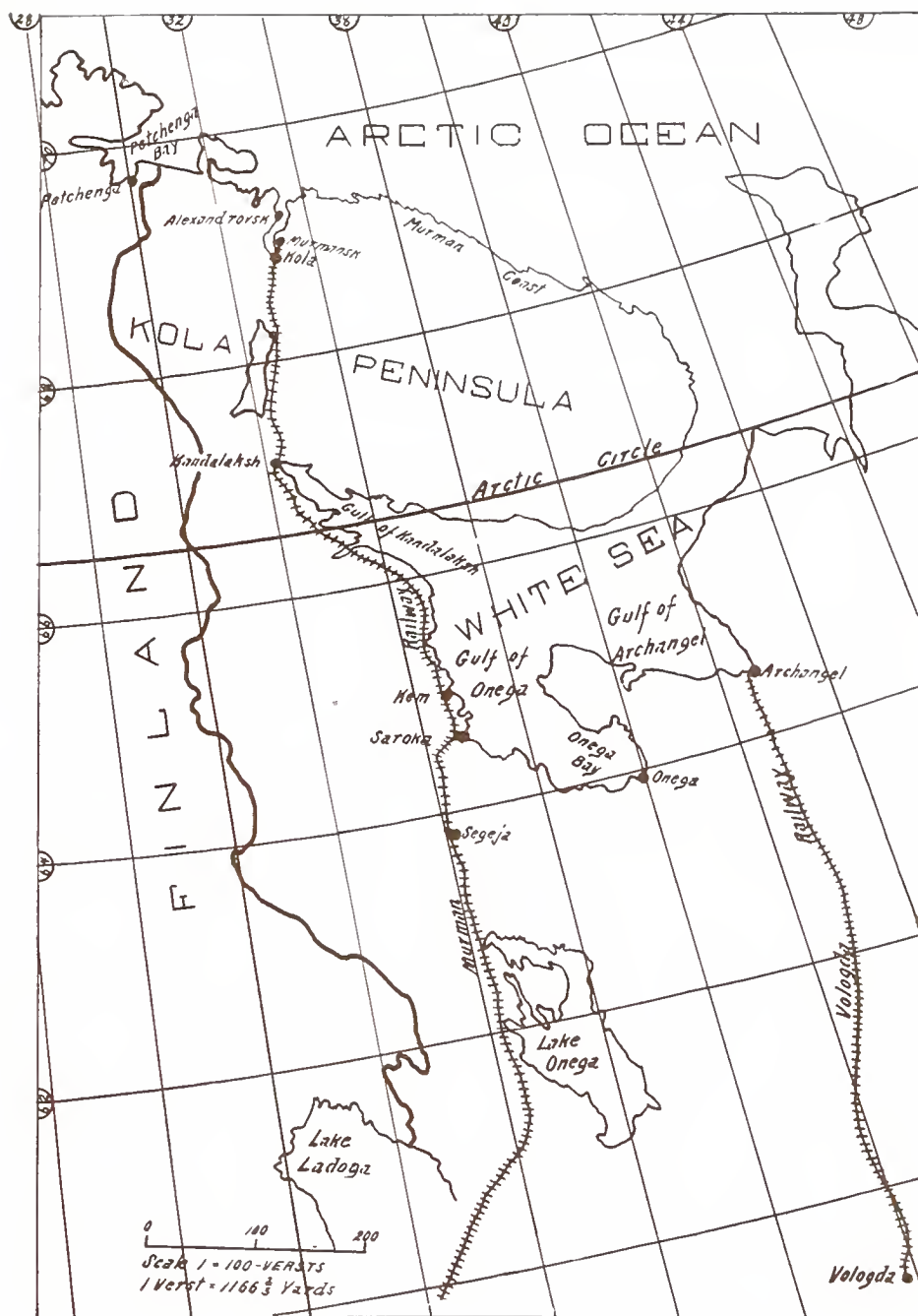
Mr. Lloyd George, earlier in the discussion, said that *the mere idea of crushing Bolshevism by a military force was pure madness*. Even admitting that it could be done,

who would occupy Russia? If he proposed to send a thousand British troops to Russia for that purpose, the armies would mutiny.

It was agreed by the Council of Ten, then Four, that President Wilson should draft a proclamation inviting all organized parties in Russia to attend a meeting in order to discuss with the representatives of the Allied and Associated Great Powers the means of restoring order and peace in Russia. Participation should be conditional on a cessation of hostilities. This meeting was to take place on Prinkipos Island in the Sea of Marmora.

The President issued the proclamation, but the French were opposed to it and communicated with the Ukrainians and the other anti-Soviet groups in Russia, to whom, as well as to the Bolsheviks, the proposal was addressed, telling them that if they refused to consider the proposal, the French would support them and continue to support them, and not allow the Allies, if they could prevent it, to make peace with the Russian Soviet government. The time set for the gathering at Prinkipos was on 15th February, 1919, but no party acted in a definite way and it never took place.

At the time of the Bolshevik revolution, the national debt of Russia was 700,000,000,000 of rubles. The interest and sinking fund charge was 4,000,000,000 of rubles annually. There was a deficit in the annual budget of one milliard. Of this total debt, *15,500,000,000 of rubles were owing to France*, and France felt the prospective loss far more than any of the other creditor nations, for the French government had encouraged the purchase of rubles by her nationals, and these now nearly worthless securities were held by the peasants from Artois to Gascony.



The Murman and Vologda railways

Like the Prinkipos proposal, nothing came of a Soviet proposal for peace which was brought to the Paris Peace Conference by an emissary dispatched by the American commissioners to obtain from the Bolsheviki a statement of the terms upon which they were ready to stop fighting. This was in February, after the desperate situation of the troops near Archangel was brought to the attention of the Conference by the Allied Military commanders. These Soviet peace terms were approved by Colonel House at Paris, who referred them to the President, "but the President said he had a one track mind and was occupied with Germany at the time, and could not think about Russia, and that he left the Russian matter all to Colonel House."

The sessions at Versailles adjourned without day. If we were at war with Russia in 1919, we are still at war with her. Peace was never made with Russia; and peace never will be made in the hearts of those plain people in the Vaga and Dvina villages, who saw their pitifully meager possessions confiscated in the cause of "friendly intervention," their lowly homes set ablaze and themselves turned adrift to find shelter in the cheerless snows.

Friendly intervention? All too vividly comes to mind a picture during the Allied occupation of Archangel Province while the statesmen at Paris pondered and deliberated in a futile attempt to find dignified escapement from this shameful illegitimate little war. Military necessity demanded that another village far up the Dvina be destroyed. As the soldiers, with no keen appetite for the heartless job, cast the peasants out of the homes where they had lived their uncouth, but not unhappy lives, the torch was set to their houses, and the first snow floated down from a dark,

foreboding sky, dread announcer of the cruel Arctic winter. Within these crude, log walls, now flaming fire, had they lived, these gentle folk, as their fathers had lived before them, simple, unsophisticated lives, felicitously unmindful of petty vanities and corroding ambitions. Who can say theirs was not the course of profoundest wisdom? For had they not known in these humble homes those candid pleasures, the only genuine ones, those elemental joys, springing like hope and the unreasoning urge of life from the heart of humanity, oblivious of all artificial environment? Here in these mean abodes had they tasted the ecstasy of love, known the full poignancy of sorrow, wept in natural grief and laughed loud with boisterous, unrestrained, rustic laughter. In a corner hung the little ikon, where the lamp burned on holidays, and they worshipped their God with a devotion so genuine, so deep and reverent, that only a fool could scoff.

Outside now, some of the women ran about, aimlessly, like stampeded sheep; others sat upon hand fashioned crates, wherein they had hastily flung their most cherished treasures, and abandoned themselves to a paroxysm of weeping despair; while the children shrieked stridently, victims of all the visionary horrors that only childhood can conjure.

Most of the men looked on in spellbound silence, with a dumb, wounded look in their eyes. Poor moujiks! They did not understand, but they made no complaint. *Nitchevoo*, fate had decreed that they should suffer this burden.

Why had we come and why did we remain, invading Russia and destroying Russian homes? The American consul at Archangel sent us the Thanksgiving Day message of our President, rejoicing in the Armistice, and the end of

the carnage of war. But the consul announced that we would remain steadfast to our task until the end. The end! What was the end?

The British General Finlayson of Dvina Force said: "There will be no faltering in our purpose to remove the stain of Bolshevism from Russia and civilization." Was this, then, our purpose through the dismal night of winter time, when we burned Russian homes and shot Russian people? And was this still our purpose when we quit in June with Bolshevism strengthened by our coming, and more than ever before the government of Russia?

The only stain was the stain of dishonor we left in our retreating path. But a deep, red, burning stain of shame is on the foreheads of those men who sit on cushioned seats in the high places, chart armed alliances in obscure international commitments, and, with careless gesture of their cigar, send other men to some remote forsaken quarter of earth, where there is misery and suffering, and hope dies, and the heart withers in cold, black days.

Now it was of small concern to Ivan whether the Allies or the Bolsheviks won this strange war of North Russia. What he heard was some vagary of "friendly intervention"; of bringing peace and order to his distracted country. What he saw was his village a torn battle ground of two contending armies, while the one that forced itself upon him, requisitioned his shaggy pony, took whatever it pleased to take, and burned the roof over his head.

He asked so little of life, this gentle moujik, with his boots and his shabby tunic, and his mild, bearded face, only to be left alone. In peace to follow his quiet ways, an unhurrying, unworrying disciple of the philosophy of *nitchevoo*.

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

“I consider it my duty to inform you in plain language that unless considerable reinforcements are sent before the end of October, the military situation both at Archangel and the Murman Peninsula will, in my opinion, become very serious.”

ADMIRAL KEMP, in command of British warships at Murmansk, to the Admiralty, 26th August, 1918.

IV

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

THE Province of Archangel stretches from the Norwegian frontier across the Arctic Ocean east of the Ural Mountains of Siberia. It includes the Kola Peninsula, which lies well north of the Arctic Circle, and the furthest point south is below sixty-two degrees latitude. The total area is six times that of the average American state.

It is a poverty distressed and cheerless, destitute region, which, during the reign of the Romanoffs, like Siberia, was often a place of exile and asylum for political dissidents. War accentuated the poverty of the province, and the only remanent sign of former industry is at the port of Archangel, where large timber mills, owned mostly by British capital, line both sides of the harbor.

The port was founded by Ivan the Terrible during the Sixteenth Century, and ever since then has been a British trading post. At Onega, Kem and Kamdalaksh on the White Sea, there is, or was, before the war, some small traffic in timber products, furs and flax. But this commerce is of small consequence. Prenatally, Archangel was destined for pauperism, for it lies in the far north, where life is poor and hard struggling, and there is little soft sunshine to woo riches from the earth. Nor are treasures concealed beneath its sear and barren surface. The curse of sterility taints the air, and it was never written in the Divine Plan that man should dwell in this fortuneless, for-

saken region. He was banished there, or driven by the pitiless pursuit of his own misdeeds. For nearly half of the year, the White Sea is an impenetrable ice barrier, and then communication with the world beyond can be had only through the Murman railway to the far north port of Murmansk.

In the city, the East comes abruptly face to face with the West. The exotic colors of the great domed cathedral were brought from ancient Byzantium, when the Greek church was made the faith of his country by Vladamir; and bearded, sad-faced priests, with their black robes, glide through the streets like nether spirits, and the mysticism of the ancient, mystic East.

This is the native atmosphere of Archangel, and it will not be in a generation that the city will, without consciousness, take on the soft adornments and the practical utilities of Occidental civilization. The glaring electric lights, the incongruous, modern buildings and the noisy tramway that clangs down the street—these do not belong to Archangel. They are a profane encroachment on her ageless, dreaming tranquillity and eternal repose; her enigmatical, perhaps profound philosophy of *nitchevoo*.

Fundamentally, Archangel is a primitive center of primitive beings. Instinctively, it is a dirty hole. Hopelessly, it is a filthy place, where noxious stenchs greet the nose and modern sanitation is unknown.

In the days of peace, there were perhaps three hundred fifty thousand people in the province, and sixty thousand of them dwelt in Archangel. The only other cities of importance are Pinega, with three thousand persons, some one hundred miles to the east, and Shenkurst, two hundred

miles south on the Vaga River, where there were four thousand. But as a whole, the inhabitants are moujiks, dwelling in little villages of two or three hundred log huts, that in structure and design bear close resemblance to the cabins of our frontier civilization.

About these villages, the peasants have cleared the forest for a few hundred yards, and in the brief, hot months of the midnight sun, they raise meager crops of wheat and flax and potatoes. When winter comes, they are continually indoors, gathered about great ovens of fireplaces, and long through the dismal, cold, black days they sit and dream, or merely sit. They are unsophisticated folk, incredibly ignorant, but gentle, quiet mannered, sweet natured souls, despite a harsh, uncouth life; and very responsive to kind treatment.

Cholera visits them with recurrent, devastating plagues, and takes fearful toll, for they live in the midst of nauseating squalor, with total disregard to sanitation, and drink from surface wells, that in the sudden spring are reservoirs of sewage and all manner of obscene refuse.

All along the rivers and roads of the interior, at intervals of five to ten miles, are strung these moujik villages.

There is, among these people, no agriculture as we practice it in our country, with a set of prosperous looking farm buildings for the cultivation of two hundred and five hundred broad, fertile, American acres. In Russia, I never saw more than five hundred cleared acres for an entire village.

Yet, from these small, unfecund patches, the peasants, somehow, wrung the means of sustaining life, and those who toiled in the fields divided the scanty harvest with

the aged and the weak, and the children who were fatherless; so that there was no mendicancy among the moujiks, and no affluence either.

There are two railways in Archangel Province, the Murman road, which begins at Murmansk on the Arctic Ocean, extends south to Kem through Petrozavodsk, and forms a juncture fifty miles east of Petrograd with the Trans-Siberian, nine hundred miles from the point of beginning; and the Archangel-Vologda railway, which reaches from Archangel four hundred miles south to Vologda, where the Siberian road comes in from Viatka on the east and leads to Petrograd. Both railways have the standard five feet gauge single track. During the winter of 1919, the Murman road, with a theoretical capacity of thirty-five hundred tons, had an actual hauling capacity of only five hundred tons a day, and its rail connections were in very poor condition and badly in need of repair. The Vologda road had a single track, but with sidings every five miles. Both roads had obsolete rolling stock, rickety, tumbled down cars and wood-burning locomotives of a type used in our country fifty years ago.

During the war with Russia, the Allies, with a medley force of friendly Russians, British, Canadians, French, a battalion of Serbians and a battalion of Italians, held the Murman railway as far south as sixty miles beyond Soroka, which is a little south of Archangel and two hundred miles to the east.

There were no Americans on this Murman railway front, except two companies of railway transportation troops, which reached Russia in April and were the last to leave in July, 1919.



U.S.
OFFICIAL

Patrols with webfoot snowshoes went forth on the snow

Beyond the Murman and the Vologda railways, the only other highway to the interior is the Dvina, a dirty colored, broad spreading river, which from its beginning, as the Withega, at the base of the Timan Range in Vologda province, follows a swift flowing course one thousand miles northwest to the sea at Archangel.

Sometimes, when its banks are low and it sprawls out in play, its waters glide noiselessly with a look of gentleness and peace, and the Dvina puts one in mind of our Mississippi; but usually its cold depths are freighted with grave mystery and melancholy foreboding, and then it is the spirit of Russia, hurrying by forested shores and high, desolate bluffs, where a mill, near a huddle of soiled log houses, flaps its clumsy, wooden wings, and a white church, with fantastic minaret, rears aloof, chaste and austere, in the midst of squalor.

During the period of navigable water, in the days of peace, the Dvina was plied by steamers and barges and watercraft of every description, but the freeze commences in early November, and then, until the last days of May, its waters have become a bed of thick ice.

Then, except by the Vologda railway, the only method of transportation between Archangel and the interior is by sledges, drawn over the snow by little shaggy ponies that can perform miracles of labor and seem impervious to the terrible, cold winds. These ponies are the embodiment of the moujik temperament, docile and mild mannered, very patient and long suffering, and never resentful of the most severe chastisement.

The whole province is a plain of low, gentle slopes, covered with small fir trees and several varieties of dwarfed

pine. A long, dormant season and the severity of winter preclude any luxuriant, ligneous growth. Even the underbrush is sparse and thinly scattered, and commercially, about the only value of the Archangel forests is for the manufacture of pulp. The bottom of this spindly pine woods is covered with a tundra. Sometimes, there are patches of waist deep water, and in other places, a morass that seems bottomless.

Such is the character of all the North Russian forests. The natives tell stories of men, unfamiliar with the country, who have lost their way and floundered in these treacherous marshes until they passed from sight without a sign of their passage.

During the rains of fall, and when summer bursts upon winter, in June, is the season of *rasputitsa*. The wagon roads then are sloughs of deep mire, and little travel is attempted. The first snow falls in November and gradually mounts, until in January it has a uniform height of three feet, except in the open places where there are great drifts much higher. No thaw comes until late February, and so moving for any distance on foot is impossible without skis or snowshoes. Cold follows the snow, gradually increasing in intensity until there are January days of forty-five and fifty degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

When the wind is high and the air filled with great, white blasts, this cold of Russia presses on the diaphragm like a ponderous weight and breathing becomes a gasping effort. In the depth of winter, the sun is banished, and during the latter part of December, only a few hours of pale, anemic glimmering separates the black Arctic night; a shadowy gloaming, like shortlived, desert twilight.

Splendid, fighting men were made weak cowards by the cumulative depression of the unbroken, Russian night and its crushing influence on the spirit; for the severest battles of the campaign were fought during the cold, black months of winter time.

Preparations for opening hostilities in the war with Russia were made in April, 1918. The Allied Supreme War Council had been alert to the presence of German troops in Finland and their fanciful menace to the Murman railway; and in the quiet harbor of Murmansk, British and French battleships had been idling purposelessly since early spring. In April, one hundred fifty Royal Marines landed from the British ships and were followed in a few weeks by four hundred more, also a landing party of French sailors. On 10th June, the United States warship, *Olympia*, appeared at Murmansk, and one hundred American bluejackets disembarked. These Allied forces penetrated down the Murman railway to Kandalaksh, some two hundred fifty miles south, and, in addition to holding Murmansk, seized the port of Petchenga on the coast of Finland.

Then the scene of intervention shifted southward, and on the 1st August, General Poole, with a party of five hundred fifty French, British and a few American marines, escorted by a British cruiser, a French cruiser and a trawler fleet, attacked Archangel, which, after a bombardment, was surrendered next day by the weak Bolshevik rear guard.

The main body of the enemy had carried with them far up the river to Kotlas and down the railway to Vologda, rations, rifles, guns and ammunitions, American manufactured. Likewise, they had seized and carried off nearly

all available means of transportation; and when the Allied troops examined the vast storehouses in the harbor and at Bakaritzza, they found that the Bolsheviks deliberately, systematically and with great thoroughness had stripped the shelves of every conceivable thing of value. If the object of the Archangel Expedition was to safeguard the vast munitions and stores there, it had failed signally and at the outset.

Still the enemy had fled, for, by some occult form of necromancy the Bolsheviks had now become "the enemy," and it is a major premise of the military that a fleeing enemy must always be followed up. Small heed that little was known of the strength or disposition of the retiring army. They had fled. Two forces were immediately dispatched in pursuit, up the river and down the railway; and, to augment the strength of the invaders, new troops were sent from Europe.

The 339th American Infantry arrived at Archangel on 4th September, 1918. It was composed of Wisconsin and Michigan men, mostly the latter; men from our farms and from our cities, who had been drafted for war against Germany.

Like most of our civilian soldiers, they had no exuberant ecstasy for the grim business ahead, but still possessed a remarkable appreciation of the war and its deep significant issues. And they had a quiet courage that was good to see, and a quiet resolution shorn of sentimental heroics to give their lives for their country if the sacrifice was necessary. Not one of them was deeply agitated by the emotion of "Making the world safe for Democracy," which is the desiccated war cry of the academician and never could reach

the heart depths of any people; but they did feel in some vague, yet definite way, that a soulless military system, which had trampled brutal, iron-clad boots through the gentle fields of Belgium, might some day carry its hateful spate to the Michigan village or green-hilled Wisconsin farm, where an old lady with spectacles sat behind the window of a white cottage, and near lilac bushes growing fragrant in the lane a wholesome faced girl waited.

These soldiers of Russia were of the same type as our men who fought in France—no better and no worse; another way of saying that they were the best soldiers in the world. They were all drawn from the Eighty-fifth Division of the National Army, and came from all the races and shades and grades and trades of our many colored American society.

Many of them had had only a few weeks of crowded military training, and were still civilians in physique and bearing. Most important of all, they were civilian in mental constitution.

With the 339th Infantry, came the 337th Field Hospital Company, the 337th Ambulance Company, and the 310th Engineers, a splendid, upstanding, competent battalion, that in the approaching ordeal upheld the best in our American traditions, showed extraordinary power of adaptitude, extraordinary resourcefulness, no matter the difficulties, were ever cheerful and undaunted, and altogether splendid.

Roughly, the entire force of the Americans aggregated forty-five hundred men. It was augmented about a month later by five hundred replacements, snatched here and there from the infantry companies of the Eighty-fifth Division in France.

That September day the Americans landed at Archangel, and the fagged engines of the troop ships *Somali*, *Tydeus*, and *Nagoya* came to rest, those who looked from the decks breathed in the oppressive air a haunting presentiment of approaching evil.

Halfway from camp at Stoney Castle, England, five hundred of the little company had been stricken with the dreaded Spanish influenza. Eight days out at sea, all medical supplies were exhausted, and conditions became so congested in the ships' quarters that the sick, running high fever, were compelled to lie in the hold or on deck exposed to the chill winds.

At Archangel, there was little improvement. Soldiers were placed in old barracks, there they lay on pine boards. They had insufficient bedding, and for warmth had to keep on their clothing and boots. In this way many died and many more were enfeebled for many months, but "stuck it" with their companions and went to the front.

Had the Fates placed a curse on the Expedition from the beginning?

There was an air of inscrutable haunting sorrow in the lowering skies, glinted limpid with a sinister, bronzed light from a sun that flamed to crimson death among the dark trees over the bay.

Across the harbor projected the tiny red roofs of the city, the venerable cathedral, ghostly with great white dome, grotesque fantastic spires and minarets, garish in the fading light with startling pigments of green and gold. A mournful stillness brooded over a scene weird and alien to the men from far off Michigan and Wisconsin, who had a feeling that they had left behind forever the stage of tedious

factory days and prosy farm life, and moved to another sphere, shrouded in mystery, filled with unparalleled, dread adventure.

Besides the American regiment, there was a British brigade of infantry nearly the same strength as the Americans, in the main composed of Companies of Royal Scots, most of them catalogued by the War Office as Category B2 men; unqualified for the arduous, exhausting tasks of an active field campaign, but fit enough to safeguard stores in Archangel, "light garrison duty."

Many wore the bronze wound stripe, and many had two and even three of these honorary decorations. These war-tired soldiers, wearied to the point of cruel exhaustion, had given freely and without stint of their body on the Western battlefields for King and Country; but the great Empire was backed to the wall and fighting for her life in an insatiable conflict, she exacted the last draining dregs of their gasping strength. That these "crooked" Category B men performed prodigies of fortitude and miracles of endurance, and acted deeds of stirring, spiritual courage in this war of the Far North is a permanent tribute to a manhood that England breeds, and imperishable glory to British arms.

The French sent eight hundred and forty-nine men and twenty-two officers, a battalion of the 21st Colonial Infantry, two machine gun sections and two sections of seventy-five millimetre artillery.

On the railway front, there was an armored train, with one eighteen pounder, one seventy-seven millimetre and one hundred fifty-five millimetre Russian naval howitzer. Then came early in the campaign the Sixteenth Brigade

Canadian Field Artillery consisting of the 67th and 68th Batteries, each with six eighteen pounders and tough gunners seasoned and scarred by four years of barrages and bombardments in France, rather keen for the adventure of North Russia while the fighting was on, and thoroughly "fed up" when there was a lull in the excitement.

These Canadians, in peace, had probably been kindly disposed farm folk, gathering the rich bronzed harvests of Saskatchewan fields.

But four years of war had wrought a transfiguration of many things and no longer did life have its exalted value of peace times. No, life was a very cheap affair, but, cheap as it was, its taking often made exhilarating sport. At the end of a battle these quiet Saskatchewan swains passed among the enemy dead like ghoulish things, stripping bodies of everything valuable, and adorning themselves with enemy boots and picturesque high fur hats, with abounding glee, like school boys on a hilarious holiday.

Yet there was nothing debased or vicious about these Canadians. They were undeliberate, unpremeditated murderers, who had learned well the nice lessons of war and looked upon killing as the climax of a day's adventure, a welcomed break in the tedium of the dull military routine. Generous hearted, hardy, whole-souled murderers; I wonder how they have returned to the prosy days of peace, where courage counts for little, and men are judged not by the searching rules of war, but by the superficial standards of secure being; and living is soft and slow, an affair of rounding chores, with few stirring moments to illumine the dull routine of most of us.

At the outset, the Canadians and a few inaccurate Rus-

sians were our only artillery. Two months after the commencement of the campaign, two Four Point Five howitzers, with British personnel, joined the Allied Forces, and there were several airplanes, considered obsolete for use in France, but good enough for the Arctic sideshow.

The air pilots were daring and courageous men, but, besides being hopelessly handicapped by defective machines, they complained that the forests of North Russia made definite discernment of the ground a very difficult thing. The facts are that they dropped several bombs on our own lines, and twice with tragic disaster. There was never any apparent reason to believe that the airplanes caused the enemy even passing uneasiness, but we were always agitated as their menacing drone approached, always grateful when they trailed off to distant skies.

The complete combat command of the Commanding General of the Allied North Russian Expedition at the outset of the campaign was then:

- One regiment of American Infantry,
- One brigade of British Infantry,
- One battalion of French Infantry,
- Two sections of French Seventy-Fives,
- Two sections of French machine gunners,
- One brigade (487 men) Canadian Field Artillery,
- One armored train,
- One 155 millimetre and
- One 77 millimetre Russian howitzers.

There were a few groups of Russian Infantry with the Allied troops, but at the outset these did not number over three hundred men. In all, there were approximately nine thousand five hundred combat troops.

With this force, the Allied Commander proposed to engage in an aggressive campaign, to drive the enemy before him and follow up along the two main ways of ingress to the interior. Troops were at once dispatched down the railway to penetrate as far as the city of Vologda four hundred miles to the south, and other troops were sent by tug and barge up the Dvina River, with Kotlas, three hundred miles southeast, as their immediate objective. From Kotlas, there is a branch railway leading two hundred fifty miles further south to the Trans-Siberian at Viatka.

When their missions were accomplished, the Railway Force at Vologda would be nearly due east of the Dvina Force at Viatka, and distanced four hundred miles across the Trans-Siberian railway.

Beyond this stage, the Allied plan was somewhat hazy. It contemplated rather vagrantly a fusion with the Czechoslovaks along the Siberian railway, after penetration south to this trunk line.

A volunteer brigade of these adventurous soldiers who had been Austro-Hungarian prisoners, but whose whole-souled sympathy was with the Allies, organized in their native Bohemia and Moravia, and joined General Brousiloff in the spring of 1917 to take part in the victory of Zborow near Lemberg. Moving to the railway between Kiev and Poltava in the Ukraine, the brigade recruited more Czech prisoners in Russia until it had grown to the strength of two divisions.

After the peace of Brest-Litovsk, this army corps pushed forward to the middle Volga in the direction of Kazan and Samara intending to reach Vladivostok and sail from there to join the Allied Command in France.

The Soviet authorities promised them safe convoy over the Siberian railway, but instead, treacherously attacked at Irkutsk in Siberia on 26th May, 1918, and the Czechs then divided into two groups, one determined to fight through to Vladivostok, the other under General Gaida bent upon joining the Allied invasion from Archangel.

Although this last aim was not realized (and would have profited little if it had been) the Czechs performed a service of inestimable consequence to the Allies by acting in conjunction with the Anti-Bolshevik Siberian troops, and with the small Allied Eastern Expedition of Great Britain, Japan and the United States, in holding the Trans-Siberian open from Omsk to the coast, so preventing the transportation of many thousands of German prisoners back to Germany. When the Archangel fiasco was brought to a close they withdrew to their own country in October, 1919. And, reviewing the whole unproductive Russian effort in retrospect, the Czechs came closest towards a realization of the mythical "Eastern Front," for, while they could not engage in aggressive action, they did much by negative methods, denying Germany great numbers of returning soldiers that might have been welded into a considerable effective combat force for the Western theatres of war had they been free to enter their country from the Eastern frontier.

The hopelessness of a junction between the Archangel Expedition and the Czechs became certain at the beginning of the northern campaign, and General Poole was advised by the British War Intelligence that Gaida had been driven back in Samara five hundred miles from Viatka and could advance no farther before the commencement of winter.

Still the optimistic Allied Staff clung tenaciously to the belief that all the Anti-Bolshevik Russians could be joined, the Czechs, the Cossacks that General Denekin had organized between the northern Caucasus and the sea of Azov, and a group of loyal officers of the Imperial Army with General Korniloff along the Don. It was within the Allied range of possibilities that all these scattered groups might join the British, French and Americans on the Siberian railway, and after the Staff was thoroughly committed to an offensive campaign, there arose the hope of cooperation from the friendly Russian forces in Siberia. On 18th September, 1918, at Ufa, there was a meeting of representatives from the Governments of Archangel, Eastern and Western Siberia, Samara and Vologda, which purported to form a Central government of all Russia, and to restore the Constituent Assembly.

On 25th October, this group moved to Omsk, created Admiral Kolchak Military Dictator 18th November, and proposed to raise a strong armed force to purge Russia of Bolshevism for all time.

The Allied governments were quick to recognize this Omsk group as the *de facto* government of Russia.

It was hoped that the armies of Admiral Kolchak could get in communication with the Allied Forces working down from the Arctic.

This, then, was the culmination of the first stage of the campaign: There was to be a junction of the Americans, French and British from the North; Czecho-Slovaks, and the armies of Kolchak from the East; Korniloff and Denekin from the South. Tens of thousands of patriotic Russians were to join the colors of these armies, converg-

ing somewhere on the Trans-Siberian, between Perm and Vologda; from Vologda the way would be unopposed to Petrograd, and from Petrograd the Allied-Russian legions would move on and reconstruct the Eastern front, threatening Germany from the northeast!

There was nothing lacking in the imagination of the plans of the Allied High Command, whatever else might be said about them.

The Northern Expedition with great combative esprit set forth vigorously to traverse Archangel the whole length of the province by river and railway with two "Columns" which were even to penetrate well into Vologda Province.

Starting from Archangel, the Dvina river and the Vologda railway rapidly diverged east and west, so that at the first point of contact with the enemy, the two main bodies of the invader were seventy-five miles apart; and if their object, i. e., to reach the Trans-Siberian had been realized, they would have been four hundred miles apart on that railway.

There was no wire communication between these Allied Railway and River Forces, and of course liaison over the lateral terrain impassable swamp in fall, and a field of deep floundering snow in winter, was impossible.

As the invasion developed, the two columns of necessity operated as independent expeditions, with no attempt at establishing connection.

To reach their joint objective, the Siberian railway, it was necessary for the River Force to travel one hundred fifty more miles than the Railway Force. Moreover ice was expected during the first part of November, and if Kotlas was to be taken by the river, it was necessary to

advance the three hundred miles in scarcely six weeks from the time of leaving Archangel.

When forced to assume the defensive in the late fall, the Dvina Column was nearly fifty miles in advance of the Railway front position, and the Vaga Column, an intervening force that was found necessary to prevent an enemy rearward movement on the river, was fifty miles in advance of the Dvina Column.

Lacking any effective communication between bodies of troops, the military incursion was expected to penetrate an unknown alien country, where there proved to be far more hostile sentiment than friendly cooperation.

There was no reconnaissance of the country; no physical inventory of the lay of the land; no reliable military maps; no knowledge of the paths through the swamp-bottomed forests; no information of the roads. Many an early attack was lost because the frontal advance failed to get support of the flanking party that became hopelessly mired in the deep marshes and never got to the fight.

The climatic conditions were a permanent obstacle to an offensive campaign. When the snow came and the weather grew intensely cold, even if we had possessed the necessary men, it would have been madness to think of an offensive in the open. Then it was possible only to dig in and hold on.

Yet despite the intense sub-zero weather there was little trouble with the field guns which during the most severe days recoiled and ran up without any jar. Moreover, there was not so much suffering from the cold as might be supposed. The Command thought that the Siberian railway would be reached before the serious winter set in, never-

theless the expedition was excellently well equipped for the Arctic weather. Soldiers were issued long fur lined coats, fur hats and had an abundance of other good warm clothing and plenty of blankets. The men from Northern Wisconsin and the Michigan peninsula did not mind greatly the severe winter days. There was some frost bite from unavoidable exposure, and much terrible privation in the defensive actions; but on the whole the Allied soldiers withstood the cold as well as the Bolsheviks.

The strength of the enemy was an unknown factor. So were his positions and his dispositions. There were no supports, no reserves. The base of the invading army in Russia was Archangel, a fortnight's journey from the far-most front and nearly three thousand miles from the main base in England; Archangel, in complete isolation during the six months of winter.

There were no reinforcements at Archangel ready to relieve the jaded soldiers so far away, who had to continue doing double duty and fighting against greatly superior numbers with no promise of relief. More important than the objective fact was the thought of being thus forsaken that froze the soldier's heart and numbed his brain and never left him through the long blackness of the days. It was the same feeling of palsied hopelessness that comes over the city bred man who finds himself lost in the wilderness. The soldier felt he was abandoned by his country, that he was forgotten and left to his fate in the grisly plain of pitiless, white Russia.

Then there was no diversion, no break in the gloomy, monotonous, despairing hours; no relaxation from the ceaseless vigilance in the guard against surprise attack; no res-

pite from the constant threat of annihilation. The drear, sorrow freighted clouds menaced death. There was the message of Death across the bleak, endless, desolate snows. Death haunted the shrouded, hopeless days, and in the shadow of the encircling forests, Death waited. It was the most severe strain to which human intelligence could be subjected.

Many lessons were learned in the war, and none so clearly as the one that human endurance cannot be taxed beyond capacity without a resultant of diminishing military returns.

In France it soon became a corollary, universally accepted by all the Staffs, that men could not be subjected to the strain of continuing horrors and uninterrupted drain of physical resources without a pronounced lowering of fighting morale. It was calculated to a nicety how long a soldier could endure mental shocks and suffer hardships until his nervous system snapped and his distraught brain could tolerate no more.

These things were all weighed in the precise scales at the laboratories of the war establishment and provision was made for human limitations, so that there grew up three units in every combat army. One of them attacking, or standing the brunt of enemy assault; another in the supporting trenches, to be used in great emergency, but most important of all to become accustomed to the terrifying effect of the big guns; and a third that was far back, where there was a warm bath and clean clothes, peace in the sky and the soft grass still grew green, where men drank deep their little day of life, and found oblivion from the animal filth and unspeakable griefs, the awful hideous-

ness of modern warfare. It came to be recognized that reliefs of troops on the combat first lines were as necessary as ammunition and ration supply.

But there were few and in some cases there were no reliefs for fighting men in North Russia, because there was no support unit from which to draw reliefs, and no reserve unit to call forth from the rear for those at the front.

The Russian Expedition, if its object was to drive the Bolsheviks clear of Archangel Province and south of the Siberian railway, required for execution of this object an army corps with entire component of artillery, and in this war with Russia, Great Britain and France and the United States failed because of:

1. Inadequate forces in the Allied Command.

This was not only true with respect to numbers, but also with respect to armament and equipment.

We had no artillery support. We were outgunned from the outset and continued to have marked artillery inferiority throughout the campaign. Time after time, the infantry, after gallant success, was shelled out of position, while our own guns were silent because outranged. The effect on the morale was most disastrous.

On the River Front, there were three Allied gunboats which cooperated effectively during the first days, but during the latter part of October, when the fight began, these withdrew to Archangel in fear of becoming caught by the ice which formed at the mouth of the Dvina, and then moved slowly upstream against the strong current.

It took a week for this ice barrier to travel one hundred miles against the course of the river, so that the enemy had

unhindered opportunity to bring up his artillery mounted on watercraft, which he did, and blasted our positions for two weeks after the Allied boats had gone back to winter quarters.

Nothing was more discouraging than this hopeless inferiority in long range guns. Assaulting troops, no matter how spirited and courageous, cannot hold their advance in the teeth of a bombardment that scatters emplacements like chaff before the wind and shocks men into a state of insensibility. The stunning effect of massive, high explosives is more important than the casualties caused by direct hits. Nerves are palsied, then fly from control under unremitting blasting salvos. Fortifications are blown to atoms, and debris thrown up like vomit in a deafening belch, a bolt of hottest hell; while the earth quivers like a frightened living thing. And if modern warfare has demonstrated one thing more than any other, it is the prime necessity of artillery support, especially during the attack. After three years' experience, the French and British Staffs laid down the rule that for an offensive to be made with any hope of success, there should be a field gun covering every ten yards of the objective and a heavy gun every thirty yards.

The British provided fifty-six heavy guns and howitzers per division, and of these twenty-nine were six inch and over.

The French had fifty-eight guns in each division, forty-six of which were six inch and over.

These divisions were made up of two brigades of two regiments each, a total of fourteen thousand four hundred men.

The Americans in France had two regiments of 75 mm. guns and one regiment of 155 mm. guns for every combat division on the first lines. At Archangel there was not a six inch gun in the Allied Command until the late days of spring when the Americans were evacuated. There was only the Russian naval howitzer on the armored train. And the only other heavy guns were two Four Point Five howitzers of the 41st Royal Field Artillery.

Besides this fatal lack of artillery, the Allied Command was miserably supplied with other armament. In the early days we had only a few machine guns and these were Vickers, with water cooled system, that became frozen and would not function in the severe cold. We had few Trench Mortars and no rifle grenades or hand grenades. But most disheartening of all were the Russian rifles issued to the infantry. They were manufactured in our country by the million for use of the Imperial Army; long, awkward pieces, with flimsy, bolt mechanism, that frequently jammed.

These weapons had never been targeted by the Americans, and their sighting systems were calculated in Russian paces instead of yards. They had a low velocity and were thoroughly unsatisfactory. The unreliability of the rifle, prime arm of the infantry, was an important factor in the lowering of Allied morale.

2. Underestimation of the enemy forces and his military capacity.

The Allied military authorities looked with contempt upon the Bolshevik movement, and viewed it as simply a sporadic outburst of outlawry that would pass like all disorganized brigandry.

The facts were that this war was waged against the government of the Russian people. The de facto authority was in the hands of Lenine and Trotsky at Moscow. The Omsk group was distinctly an expression of the minority and the ancient Imperialists who were obstinately impervious to the new Russia flaming in revolution against age long abuses and tyrannies of the old order that could never be returned. The Omsk group never quickened any popular response. It lacked essential authority. The spectacular success of Admiral Kolchak before Perm was not followed through, and his government waned while the Bolsheviks grew in strength every day.

The Soviet army was despised as an undisciplined rabble, without equipment or officers or commissary organization. But the Bolshevik soldier was as well equipped as we were, and incomparably superior in the larger arms. He was often better rationed, and sometimes led better.

During the winter of 1919, Trotsky, an outstanding military genius, raised from the Kerensky rabble an army of one million men, which William C. Bullitt of our State Department saw in March of that year at Moscow, and described as thoroughly soldierly looking, thoroughly trained, well rationed, and well provided for.

From Moscow to Vologda, is less than three hundred miles by the railway which continues straight to Archangel. Why the Soviets did not concentrate a division on the railway, move straight to Archangel and leave the scattered Allied battalions bottled up in the interior is one of the many mysteries of the Expedition.

In February, Omberovitch, the Commander of the Bolshevik Northern army, announced that he would hurl the

foreign invader into the White Sea and concentrated over seven thousand men in an attack on Shenkurst, the Allied position on the Vaga river. This force was ten times the strength of the defenders, who were driven back verst by verst over the deep snows to Kitsa, sixty miles down the river, and the Allied Staff prepared rearward positions in anticipation of withdrawal about Archangel and a last stand there a few weeks later. The enemy struck again with overpowering numbers at Bolshie Ozerki near the Railway.

But he never consolidated his success. For some inscrutable reason withheld the knockout blow, and, before he could reorganize for another advance, spring came with the *nasta* or thaw, and he had to pull back his artillery or abandon it in the bog. He also brought great forces in November to the assault of the River position, and attacked the Railway in spring with large numbers and with great vigor; but despite his vast superiority in guns, and his great advantage in strength, he could not, or *did not*, break through to complete victory and destroy our scattered, weakened battalions.

Perhaps one reason the Bolsheviks did not massacre the puny Allied forces was because the nature of conditions in North Russia did not permit the concentration of great masses for the attack. The little villages, even with greatest crowding, could only house a few hundred men. Except at Shenkurst, where the most ambitious thrust was made, there was shelter for only a few thousand soldiers, and shelter was as essential as rations in this war of the Arctic.

Another reason may have been that Lenine had sagacity and imagination enough to know that a complete massacre

would have fired the people of Great Britain and France and America with burning indignation and a demand for revenge which their governments could not deny. Better to whittle away the little Allied company by methods of attrition. There was no prize in Archangel. The Bolsheviks had stripped that city of everything valuable long before the Allies came to Russia.

3. Ignorance of the military commitment.

The difficulties of conducting an offensive campaign in Archangel province were at the outset not understood or realized by Allied Headquarters.

Military men have asked me why the Commanding General did not, if determined upon an aggressive warfare, concentrate his small numbers for an advance on the Vologda railway, leaving a cordon of well fortified outposts about Archangel, sufficiently distant to protect the city from artillery bombardment.

By such a method, he could have held his little force well in hand, would have safeguarded Archangel and fulfilled the real mission of the expedition (if guarding Archangel was the mission), with small cost and few casualties.

The answer to this is that British Headquarters was determined upon an offensive program, and committed itself to a punitive chase of the Bolsheviks, regardless of the nature of such an undertaking, heedless of where it led, blind to consequences.

As the Allies pushed into this unknown country, it became apparent that between the two Columns advancing by the Dvina river and by the railway, there stretched a great, unsounded territory, entirely unreconnoitered, and

through which by many routes, the enemy could threaten the tenuous unguarded lines of communication with Archangel.

It was necessary to put out flanking parties and to keep an eye to the rear. At Kodish, fifty miles east from the Railway and also on the Vaga river, which forms a junction with the Dvina one hundred and fifty miles from Archangel, it was imperative to organize invasions auxiliary to the two main bodies. Likewise, from east and west, threats were made upon the security of the city of Archangel, and it became necessary to establish detached outposts in Pinega Valley, one hundred miles on the left flank, and Onega Valley, about the same distance on the right flank.

Also, isolated garrisons were installed in villages in the rear — at Seletskoe on the Emtsa, and at Emetskoe, where this small tributary flowed into the Dvina; at Morjagorskaya, midway between Emetskoe and Bereznik, and Bereznik itself, fifty miles farther south on the Dvina, where there was an important subsidiary base; at Shred Mekrenga, where there was an important road, and at other villages in the interior, little groups of soldiers were stationed, and often lieutenants short from civil life found themselves "Officers Commanding," faced with the problems and responsibilities of Field Officers.

By December, the Allied fighting forward stations in Archangel Province were extended in the form of a huge horseshoe, and a line drawn from flank to flank and covering the forward position would have reached out five hundred miles.

There were six principal American battlefronts: Pinega,

Onega, the Vologda Railway, Kodish, the Vaga River, and the Dvina. Each of these in the war of North Russia formed a distinct episode quite apart from the others. The soldiers on the Dvina were entirely in ignorance of the fate of their companions on the Railway. At other points in the interior many did not even know that there were American outposts at Onega and Pinega; and so the history of the expedition must of necessity be a series of disjointed apparently fragmentary accounts of each separated battleground—in truth a description of six little campaigns with only one point of contact, that all Americans went out from Archangel in the fall of 1918 and in spring the following year those who still lived *quit* (under orders), from the same quarter.

Twice during the expedition an attempt at liaison was made between the Railway and its theoretical supporting flanks, Onega and Kodish, and Shred Mekrenga, but both occasions demonstrated that cooperation was impossible. The other forces on the rivers and at Pinega were as unrelated as if they had been situate at opposite poles. Each operated an independent, unconnected war, learning about the other fronts only through wild and distorted rumors of disasters, and hearing from far off Archangel only intermittently.

Thus the Allied North Russian Expedition melted away in the snows, and the first flushed extravagant egoistic ambition of conquest and aggression was followed by a sober appraisal of the grave peril of annihilation.

When the policy of aggression had been carried so far that it was too late to change, General W. E. Ironside assumed command. He was a great tower of a man, the

embodiment of soldierly force and resolution. He directly announced that all ideas of a further offensive were abandoned and that all fronts from thenceforward would be content to hold their ground.

General Ironside has been criticised adversely for not withdrawing his scattered troops to Archangel to await the breaking up of ice in spring, when ships could enter the harbor and the fiasco be terminated by evacuation of Russia. But this criticism is unfair and unwarranted.

It was too late for such a change of policy. It would have been disheartening to the defenders of these distant fronts after the costly toll of the defense to have abandoned their hard fought posts. It would have been a giving of ground that would have heartened the enemy and thrilled him with new life; for the Bolsheviks were never exalted by victory, they paid dearly for every inch they gained, and our men, except when overwhelmed on the Vaga, never retreated from a position which they had fortified and determined to hold.

There were no prepared defenses on the outskirts of Archangel, and the defensive garrisons between the front lines and the city were far separated and inadequately fortified to withstand an extensive assault. Transportation of the retreat over the deep snowed roads would have been beset with terrible and afflicting hardship. There were long, cruel snow spaces between the villages that lay along the backward way and very scanty opportunities for shelter.

The task given to General Ironside, to retrieve the North Russian Expedition, was not within the range of human accomplishment. He did the best he could with the means at hand, which was to hold grimly on until those who di-

rected from far off Europe, and who knew nothing of the gravity of the situation, or did not appear concerned if they did know, came to some sort of decision.

General Ironside conducted his defensive campaign with inspiring leadership, with unfailing heartsome courage; and he won the sympathy of all by his rare tact and understanding, and the affection of all by his consideration for the men, his efforts to stay the casualty lists.

4. The want of a definite moral purpose.

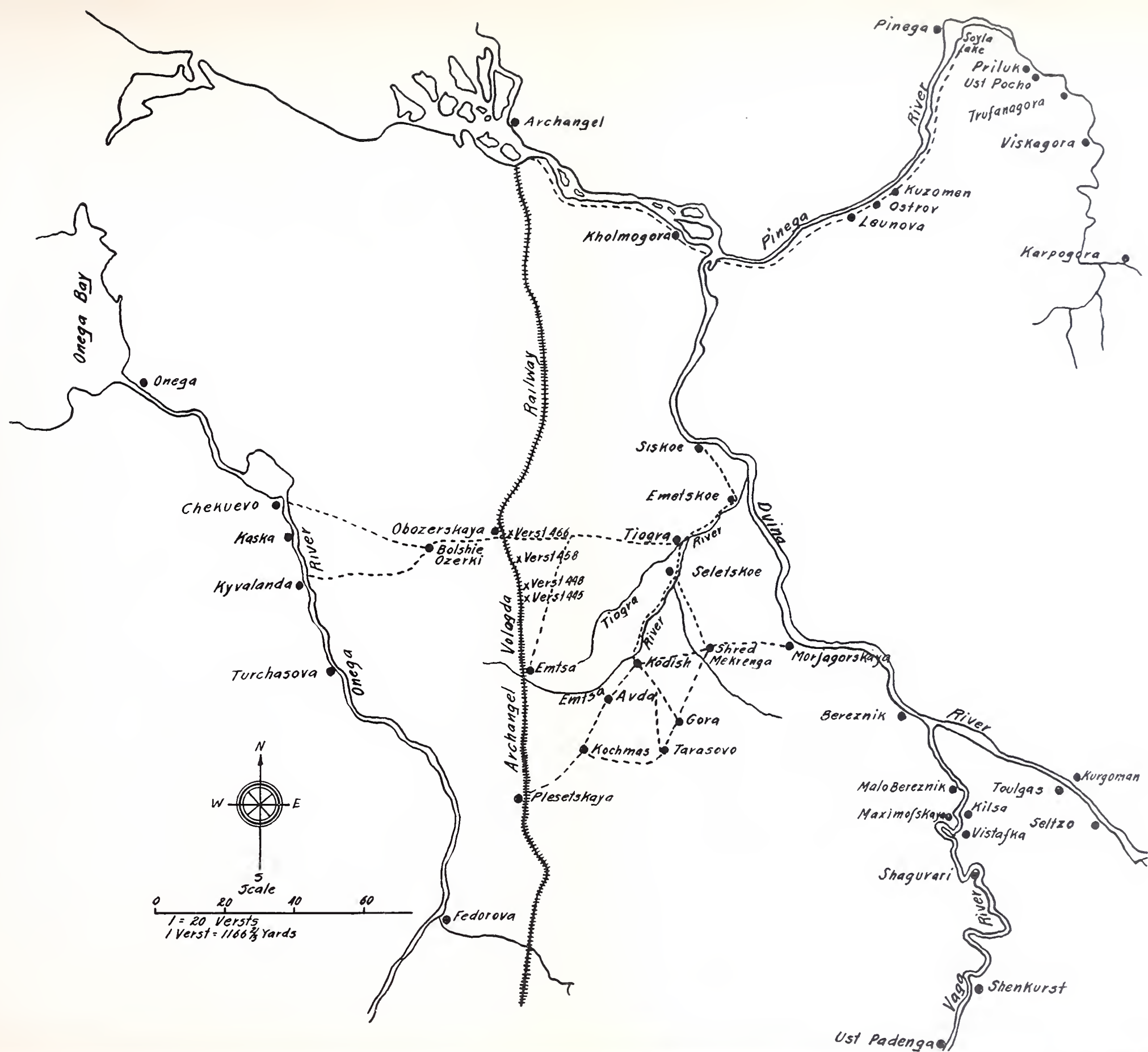
Since the days of Thermopylae, the effect of spiritual stimulus upon the fighting qualities of fighting men has been known the world over. The military people make a concrete thing of this, and attempt to diagram it, analyze and classify it in their treatises, where they call it *morale*.

As well might one try to reach out and touch any other manifestation of the soul. This exaltation that comes over soldiers and makes them glad to die, firm in their faith of the sacred character of their cause is above all finite measurements.

It is the purging light of the spirit that floods men's souls and raises them aloft from the restraining imprisonment of physical being to the heights of the gods. On no other grounds can one explain the superhuman valor of the lone Cheshire Company of the "Contemptibles," which, in the retreat from Mons, held up until dusk a German column of three battalions.

The French had morale at Verdun when they said, "They shall not pass," and fulfilled the eloquence of their words by the offering of their bodies.

The Americans had morale at Chateau-Thierry.



SITUATION MAP—Showing principal battlefronts

The British at Mons, the French at Verdun, and the Americans at Chateau-Thierry, fought as they did because they knew, or thought they knew, the cause of the fight.

But in Russia, the soldier was never told why he fought. At first, this was not thought necessary. Then the High Command, remembering the importance of morale, and recognizing the need of some sort of explanation, if only for the purpose of regularity when men were asked to risk their lives, issued proclamations that puzzled and confused the soldier more than if a course of silence had been followed.

While all this time to the Americans came newspapers from home with accounts of speeches by politicians and demagogues who fired Bolshevik bullets from the rear and extolled the Soviet cause, hailing it as an heroic progression in human effort.

There is another axiom in the military books, that soldiers fight best on their native soil and in defense of their homes; but here was a company taken fresh from civil occupations, with a civilian mental outlook, set adrift in an alien country, six thousand miles from home, engaged in a desperate, sanguinary war, and asked to undergo privation and hardship, to face untold perils for unmentionable reasons.

Still, though the expedition was committed to no definite moral purpose, there was a morale in North Russia. A morale that arose from comradeship in a fated enterprise, a morale of seeing the bitter game through, taking risks and meeting perils that must be borne by others if even one shirked his share. A noble, selfless devotion, playing the man's part in a lottery with Death, where Life was the stake. The upholding of some elemental metaphysical creed that could be definitely felt but never understood, a

code of challenged manhood that had come down through many generations of warring ancestors—this was the morale of North Russia; it brought forth the best and the purest in our manhood, and recorded deeds that no survivor can recall without quickening heart beats, and a profound belief from what he saw, that the spirit is supreme and triumphs over the body of man.

5. The Russian people did not rally to the Allied Cause.

If the fight was for Russia, the Russian people were cold and apathetic, the worst of ingrates. Many Russians had the impression that we had come to restore another Romanoff to the throne.

The statement of the American government, with respect to the reasons for military intervention, put the case as if the Allies were engaged in a highminded, selfless service for Russia, but the great mass of moujiks were indifferent to our immolation, and showed undisguised relief when we finally and ignominiously quitted their country.

During early August, a government of the north had been installed at Archangel by a coalition of Cadets, Minimalists, members of the People's Party and Social Democrats, with a bourgeois cabinet and with an old man, Nicolai Tschaikovsky, as President of the province. But it was a fact known to all that the Allies determined the policies of this government, that it was in fact merely a guise for an Allied Protectorate.

This government of the North it was that had invited military intervention; but had a plebiscite been called, the people would have registered their voice in unmistakable terms and volubly Russian "*Let us alone. Nitchevoo.*"

Thus the campaign was another effort of England to impose her will upon an inferior people, and bring them for their own good to a higher order of things, disregarding of their volition in the premises. It was an echo of South Africa and Egypt, Mesopotamia and India, inspired by that lofty faith in Britain and the immortal commission of the Empire to rule an afflicted world and bring the blessings of sustained order, where only trouble and chaos prevailed before.

In Archangel, an ambitious attempt was made to recruit Russians under the high sounding name of The Slavo British Allied Legion, and after most energetic efforts, about two thousand starved moujiks, seeking something to eat, joined the ranks; indifferent mercenaries never to be trusted in the tight positions. They were given the khaki of the Tommy, but there all resemblance to the British men of war ended. Their pay was in worthless rubles. They were given an inferior ration, were treated patronizingly. Between them and the Allied soldiers there never was that generous comradeship that leaps the restraints of divergent language and manners when men fight shoulder to shoulder for life and some things that are more dear than life itself. It was a case of alien spirit above all else. British officers never could understand why the Russian officers, with the acute, sensitive nature of the Slav, were quick to feel and keen to resent, seemingly studied slights and snubs and discourtesies. Russians of culture and refinement never could penetrate the unfailing reticence and frigid unsympathetic exterior in which gentlemen of England have been schooled for generations beyond memory, habitually to conceal the emotions.

When the utter failure of the volunteer system became certain, thousands of Russians were coerced into the army by a draft system; but these failed too, because their hearts were cold to Russian patriotic British appeals; because there was no great moral issue, no moving cause for the fight.

The war with Russia was in fact a typical British show, conducted by that conquering people who have spread the dominions of the mother country to every shore of the far seas. A war that was waged with the invincible will, that noble effacement of physical comfort; that indomitable purpose and masterful determination; that courage and careless naïveté, and contempt of danger and risk; that splendid sportsmanship, that love of fair play; and all the sublime self sufficiency, all the muddling, blundering and fuddling, the lack of understanding, the brutal arrogance and cold conceit, and apparent heartlessness and want of sympathy that are forever British.

Naturally, the British assumed direction, just as in France when the first Americans came Clemenceau and the Earl Haig demanded that they be fed piece meal to the French and British front divisions; but the soldier, Pershing, sensing the important moral value of having his men go to battle under the American flag and directed by American officers, waited and would not yield to the strongest pressure. And it was an American army that brought us to glory at Saint Mihiel and Chateau-Thierry and the Argonne forest; an all-American army led by American divisional commanders.

There are racial differences, racial prejudices, racial disparities, and racial asperities that cannot be gainsaid even

under the influence of impersonal military discipline, and experience has shown that soldiers yield a more ready obedience to leaders who speak their own language; understand the philosophy of their daily lives, and at no other time did General Pershing so demonstrate his greatness, his complete understanding of the perplexities in Allied military organization as by his courageous insistence upon the solidarity of the American army on the battlefields of France.

But in Russia the American regiment was at once merged with the British Command, and from first action until the end of the campaign, British Headquarters directed and controlled the dispositions and conduct of the Americans.

At Archangel there is a modern, spacious white building, and here from steam-heated headquarters Colonel George W. Stewart commanded the United States 339th Infantry, here were quartered his staff officers, the unemployed "brains" of our Northern American army. He never saw any part of his regiment in action. For a long time I believe he had not even a vague notion regarding the location of his British dissipated troops.

Embassies of France and Serbia, Poland, and Italy were in Archangel, and the American Ambassador, David R. Francis, came from Vologda there early in August, and stayed until sickness compelled him to leave for England during the winter. And there was an American Military Attaché who developed into a Military Mission with Colonel James A. Ruggles as chief, and a staff of officers to assist him. Also there was an American Consulate, with an American Consul General, Dewitt C. Poole, who at times appeared to take over a supervision of the American share in this strange, strange war with Russia.

And over across the harbor at Bakaritzza, a well-fed Supply Company watched over mountains of rations and supplies that had been brought all the way from far off America; supplies and little good things and comforts that would have heartened and brought new life and hope to the lonely, abandoned men on the far fighting lines in the snow. These supplies never reached the front, but the Supply Company, with American business shrewdness and American aptitude for trading, acquired great bundles of rubles, and at the market place converted these into stable sterling, and came out of Russia in the springtime with pleasant memories of a tourist winter; likewise a small fortune securely hid in their olive drab breeches. But there were others who ate their hearts away, fretting and chafing, in Archangel, whose petitions to go to the front to play the man's game were denied by those in command.

British G. H. Q. brought six hundred surplus officers and forty thousand cases of good Scotch whiskey. Some of the officers had come frankly in search of a "cushy job" in a zone they thought safely removed from poison gases and bombardments and all the hideous muck of the trenches. Others, much to their disgust, had been sent to the polar regions because some one in Headquarters had thought they possessed some peculiar qualification to command or "get on" with imaginary Russian regiments that were to spring to the Allied Standard.

So it was that Archangel became a city of many colors, as gallant, uniformed gentlemen strode down the Troitsky Prospect, whipping the air with their walking sticks, and looking very stern and commanding, as they answered many salutes, in a bored, absent-minded way.

There were officers of the Imperial Army, weighed down with glittering, ponderous honor medals, and dark Cossacks with high gray hats, and gaudy tunics, and murderous noisy sabers. Handsome gentlemen of war from England, from Serbia, Italy, Finland, France, and Bohemia, and many other countries, all arrayed in brilliant plumage, and shining boots, and bright spurs, and every other kind of "eye wash." And, of course, there were large numbers of batmen to shine the boots and burnish the spurs, and keep all in fine order, and other batmen to look after the appointments of the officers' club, and serve the whiskey and soda.

In the afternoons there were teas, and receptions and matinees, and dances in the evening, when the band played and every one was flushed with pleasure and excitement. Such flirtations with the pretty *barishnas*, such whispered gossip and intrigue and scandal in light-hearted Archangel!

At Kodish, at Onega on the Vaga, and at Toulgas, far off across the haunting snows, sick men and broken men, men faint from lack of nutrition, and men sickened in soul, were doing sentry through the numbing, cold nights, because there were none to take their places in the blockhouses, and no supports to come to their relief, no reserves to hearten them and give them courage.

The blockhouses so far away, where men were maimed and crippled and shell shocked, and the black hopelessness that crept into men's hearts, and strangled men's hearts, and overcame their soldier spirit—in the blockhouses—far, so far off from gala Archangel.

THE RAILWAY

“We are not declaring war, nor making war on the
Lenine and Trotsky government, because it is not our
affair.”

SENATOR HITCHCOCK, *Chairman of Foreign Relations Committee* in
the Senate of the United States.
13th February, 1919.

V

THE RAILWAY

WHEN the troops of Poole's first expedition divided at Archangel, and one group was sent up the Dvina; another which was a part of the French Colonial battalion was told off for pursuit of the Bolsheviks down the Archangel-Vologda railway.

Hot and eager for first blood, the French hurried forward until the Kayama River was reached, where the enemy made an unexpected stand. There was a sharp engagement, the Bolsheviks were severely punished, and one hundred and fifty prisoners fell to the Allies.

But a little further, at Obozerskaya, some hundred miles south of Archangel, the despised fugitives turned again and displayed an amazing disposition for combat, entirely at variance with the cowed spirit of the feeble rear guard that had surrendered Archangel.

They came back in force and greatly outnumbered the Allies, and there was in the defiant attitude of the Red troops reason to believe that the Soviet chieftains had taken stock of the military situation, had verified the preposterous intelligence that the Three Great Powers—Great Britain, France, and the United States—were definitely bent upon war and seriously intended to invade the great domain of Russia with scarcely two infantry combat regiments!

Reports came of fast gathering Bolshevik armies at all

fronts massing for attack, prepared to take offensive action on a grand scale, and, hardly had the campaign entered upon its initial phase, when the utter inadequacy of General Poole's numbers made egregiously evident the impossibility of the proposed investment by River and Railway.

The two "Columns" were in simple truth little patrol parties, and, as they drove further into the interior, the ridiculous audaciousness of their ambition to sweep the enemy from Archangel Province, and south even beyond Vologda Province, seemed almost beyond the purview of sane contemplation.

Highways for flank envelopment, and byways for encirclement, commenced to appear with discouraging frequency the further the advance developed in this unknown, speculative, shadowy hinterland, and all of these avenues for surprise attack had to be watched and safeguarded. One of these was the Vaga river, which meets the Dvina near the Allied subsidiary base at Bereznik; where an auxiliary, flanking expedition was detailed from the River Column, for this tributary is capable of floating substantial craft that could transport artillery and many infantry from the Bolshevik stronghold at Velsk in Vologda Province, and north of Velsk is Shenkurst, the second city of Archangel, with a political significance that could not be neglected by this politico-military excursion into the interior of Russia.

If left unguarded, the Vaga would be an open invitation for the Bolsheviks to capture this supply depot, Bereznik, and gain the rear of the Allied Dvina forces.

Many other routes for enemy movement developed as the invasion paused, undecided whether to retire for con-

solidation, or to try to plug up these many openings for enemy movement, and as the Command stood hesitant, still other approaches by flank and rear were revealed.

It was (or became) known that the headquarters of the Sixth Bolshevik Army was stationed at the city of Vologda, from which its commander could send troops north along the railway, and assail the Allied frontal position, or detrain, and move his men on roads and trails that took off along this route and led to the Allies' flanks and rear.

One of these roads follows down the Onega valley north to the port of Onega.

At Chekuevo, it is nearly opposite the Allied advanced railway position, Obozerskaya, and these two villages are joined, fifty miles cross-country, by a good roadway that in winter is capable of supporting artillery carriage. Some fifteen miles west from Obozerskaya, on the same road, Bolshie Ozerki, several groups of moujik huts, lies in sprawling confusion.

Late in the winter, a pitiful little outpost of French and friendly Russians, an immolation to this campaign of invincible folly, was destroyed at Bolshie Ozerki in a massed enemy effort that sought to annihilate the whole Expedition.

A few platoons of American infantry were stationed at Onega to shield Archangel from the west, and to watch this Onega, Chekuevo, Bolshie Ozerki, Obozerskaya communication line, which linked up Archangel with Murmansk, and, during the frozen months, was the only outlet to the world beyond the Arctic Sea.

The main Bolshevik stronghold north of Vologda was at Plesetskaya, some fifty miles south of the furthest position of the Allies on the railway, from which an Im-

perial Government highway reached out through Archangel Province northeast as far as Emetskoe, on the Dvina, passing through the villages Kochmas, Avda, Kodish, and Seletskoe, near the Emtsa river. At Kochmas, another road branched east to Tarasovo, thence north through Gora and Shred Mekrenga.

From Shred Mekrenga and Seletskoe, the enemy could have access to the lower Dvina, head off all supply convoys for the Dvina and Vaga columns; and hold the Allies trapped far up stream. Therefore, two more auxiliary expeditions were organized, and, instead of two invading "Columns," the Allied forces, woefully insufficient at the outset, were operating in seven columns, separated detachments, advance parties, outguards, outposts, flanking forces, and all along the Dvina, from Kholmogora to Bereznik, a stretch of one hundred miles, were still other detached soldier groups watching the treacherous way from Archangel, a Cossack Post in one village, a squad in another, in still another a platoon, all without communication and completely undefended in case of real attack.

There was unlimited chance for rear movements along that tenuous, unprotected, communication line. General Ironside would have massacred the Bolsheviks had positions been reversed. The Germans would have annihilated the Allied North Russian Expedition with half the numbers that the Bolsheviks had.

During the winter, several circling movements were essayed, but never on a scale of comprehensive organization; at Morjagorskaya, in February, and at Shred Mekrenga, the enemy came closest to success, but at both places was stopped by the gallant British, and when spring came his

chances vanished, the bogging quagmire precluded any further offensive. But while the Bolsheviks did not destroy the Expedition, they soon reduced the invasion to a series of desperate, detached, outguard actions, and the River and Railway Columns that were to have entered Kotlas and Vologda with the coming of the first snow, were flung far and broad over vast Archangel, as the effort "to stage a real show with two men and an orange" wilted with the first snow, a dismal, ghastly "washout."

Even when the Americans reached Archangel in September, the campaign had already assumed a defensive character. Indeed, so serious was the outlook that they were rushed from the troop-ships, shunted off to Russian box cars, and consigned with expeditious haste to the Railway Front.

Nothing of this was known to these new zealous soldiers off from a brief military training encampment to the very heart of war's purple, glamorous adventure. And it is doubtful whether they could have realized the significance of the military situation, even had it been communicated to them. In a few crowded weeks, so many stirring events had thronged their heretofore placid lives that these recruits from Michigan and Wisconsin were buried beneath a bewildering wilderness of amazing impressions through which confused, alien scenes and persons and places trooped in phantom and fantastic multicolored parade, until their minds were stunned beyond the power of further reception.

During the long voyage, a few still civilian in mind, had recovered sufficient equipoise to inquire about the connection between a war in Russia against Germany, but the inquiry was so unproductive, so futile, and there were

so many eccentric twists and turns to this stupendous world madness that in most part they soon fell into that fatalistic philosophy of all soldiers; most of them were content to place their unbounded trust in those who sat in the high places and whose omniscience guided from afar. It was far more quieting, vastly more satisfactory.

Once, during that swaying night journey, from Archangel to the battle line, the decrepit Russian locomotive gasped convulsively and stood still by an old station of huge logs, and, under the lurid light of a flaming torch, was revealed a trainload of prisoners, passing north from the scene of hostilities somewhere below. They made an unheroic spectacle, with their shrinking countenances and unsoldierly, nondescript uniforms, so that some American wag, in a spirit of bantering patronage, called them "Bolo wild men," a name that clung to the enemy throughout all the days of the campaign.

But the shabby prisoners, first living sign of real battle, sent a thrill up and down the spines of these young men, who were so ardent for war and knew so little about it. They sniffed the air of conflict, yearned to give the "Bolos" a taste of their quality, and promised themselves that the folks back home would have nothing to be ashamed of when they came under fire.

The next morning the depressing aspect of the dirty, unkempt group of huts where the soldiers detrained almost passed unnoticed alongside the captivating spectacle that stood on the track nearby, a ferocious war monster, with massive plates of steel like dragon's scales, huge funneled naval guns, and locomotive set in rear of trucks which were piled with sand bag barricades where Lewis automatics

poked out murderously, manned by a hodge-podge Polish-Russian crew, who were themselves manned by competent appearing, war-weathered British N. C. O's.

A narrow threadlike swath trailed through the stunted starveling forest to the lowering gloom of dull, laden skies, and the hearts of the fresh, battle eager soldiers swelled big as they gazed far down the gleaming rails to the murky mystery of No Man's Land.

There was in the air a peculiar, dispiriting quality, a brooding, pensive, Russian note that cannot be made known except to those who have felt it. Stillness, heavy almost to the point of suffocation, the shroud of skies that hover mourning on the trees, and the shadow of unlifted gloom that reaches out from the forest and bears down upon the spirit with deep intangible melancholy.

Suddenly the quiet was broken by the distant boom of a heavy gun. Then an ominous whine circled from the ground, approached snarling stridently high in air, and fell with a crumbling roar seemingly very near the new soldiers, who, on command, scampered to cover from their erect column of twos on the naked embankment.

A cordon of strongpoints had been constructed around the village, Obozerskaya, and these the Americans took over, tensed for the impending battle.

But inexplicable days passed, and the Bolo did not come. There was not even a feint of attack, and the Allied Command, with short memory for the hazardous nature of its extended position, the apprehension it had felt only a little while before, began to chafe for action, became impatient; again the military fetish of an "offensive campaign" grew, waxed strong, became assertive once more, and again the

ambitious vision arose to take Vologda before the snow.

"All patrols must be aggressive," directed a secret order of the officer in command, "and it must be impressed on all ranks that we are fighting an offensive war and not a defensive one."

So American officers, directed by ranking British officers, moved their companies forward to the "offensive war," and four miles beyond Obozerskaya, where a post on the railway bore the Russian characters "Verst Four Sixty Six," they closed with the Bolos and drove them beyond the bridge at Verst Four Sixty Four.

In the counter-attack that soon followed, one platoon of the Americans, separated in the swamps of the woods, was nearly enveloped. It fought until all ammunition was exhausted, and then the officer, Lieutenant Gordon Reese, had no thought of submission. After the last cartridge was gone, the bayonets still remained, and after the bayonet, came doubled fists. At word of command, the platoon fixed bayonets, went forward with a yelling charge, broke down the Bolsheviks by their sheer courage and impetuosity, and the endangered men were able to join the main body of their comrades, repulsing the attack.

Before Verst Four Fifty Eight, Allied aggressive operations were resumed when one of the French companies came back from Archangel to assist in moving against the strong enemy works. There was a bridge at Verst Four Fifty Eight. If this was destroyed, it would take a long time to rebuild and seriously impede the "offensive war" down the Railway. It was, therefore, intended to drive the Bolos back so violently that they would have no chance to detonate the important bridge.

The plan of attack was for a three-fold movement: front, right flank and rear. The French company, supported by the artillery of the armored train, an American machine gun section, and twenty-one Americans, with three Stokes mortars (who were not entirely sure of the use of these weapons) were to hit out at front. The rest of the Americans, two infantry companies, were to form as many detachments and rush the enemy from his east flank and rear at his furthest trench back at Verst Four Fifty Five.

The frontal assault would wait on these circling movements; a bivouac in the woods, and at dawn, timed together, the three parties would move to the three-quartered battle. The distance through the woods to the enemy rear was "estimated at from six to eight miles."

But, in execution, the plan failed dismally, like many an operation that carries through flawlessly around the military council table, for "estimates" are of little use in the service of battle conduct, where time is reckoned in seconds, and victory measured in minutely fluctuating scales.

The contemplated operation was to approach the enemy flank through one of those lofty, forest aisles, which were cut with masterful, precise woodcraft by the engineers of Peter the Great, entirely transverse Archangel Province. Regularly, narrow lanes intersect these forest aisles, and it seemed to the officer planning this attack a simple thing to follow one of these lanes, and take the course of a north and south aisle until a point was reached opposite the enemy position. He did not know that those forest paths were deep with clinging, slimy morass, and bog that gave no footing, that frequently the main cuttings opened before

shallow lakes of open water. There was no reliable map to show these things, and no native would admit that he knew the way.

So the attackers went forth over unknown ground, and soon were stumbling in a blackness so dense that one file could not see even the outline of the preceding file. The sinking bog made the march distressingly arduous, yet for hours the company kept resolutely on, when, without warning, the forest parted and the sodden way terminated in a wide sheet of open water.

It is impossible in the night blindness to know position or location, or how far the exhausting, laborious pace has made. Startlingly near comes the coughing exhaust of a locomotive, doubtless the armored train standing by the Bolshevik defenses on the tracks.

In their jaded and spent condition, the men are ill fit to engage in battle, yet there is nothing to do but have a go at it, so plowing through waist deep swamp and awful, oozing quagmire, they lurch on. Struggling forward, still forward, they are caught and tripped, and sprawl splashing in the cold water and the bog, but they get up and drag on until all are breathing with heavy, sobbing gasps; and under the strain of terrible exertion, all are weakened, some so done in, that they lie in the water like wounded animals on their haunches, and have to be helped forward by others of more physical strength or greater will.

In this agonizing way, perhaps a few hundred wallowing yards are made, but it is clear that the company cannot go on, and there is no hope of end to the miserable, sinking marsh; so the officers hold council, and decide, not without great reluctance, to abandon their mission, and the word

is passed on to the scattered troops to follow back over the way they came.

In the darkness and the trackless morass, this is not easy, as through the endless black night the lost company struggles flounderingly and with little hope, until the heart of all is cold with despair; but more blighting than the knowledge of being lost in the wilderness of Russian swamps, and the depression of abject, physical exhaustion, is the mordant disappointment of failing the expectant French in the coming fight.

At dawn, two soldiers, who, in days of peace, had been timber cruisers in the pine woods of the Michigan Peninsula, led their comrades to ground firm enough for footing, and half dead from fatigue, brought them back to the railway, but too late, for hours before the tumult and shots of battle had reverberated from far advanced ground on the railway tracks; for, at the appointed hour, hoping that the cooperating actions would still develop, the French went in to the attack, supported by the American trench mortars and machine guns, and smashed the enemy from his foremost lines. Directly he rallied and returned in force to the counter-attack in which many French were killed, the trench mortar section was decimated and lost most of the guns, the machine gunners put out of action, and the whole little force was shoved back over much of the freshly won ground to the bridge at Verst Four Fifty Eight, where the Americans stood with braced backs and would not yield.

For two days, the Bolo armored train showered them with shrapnel, and upcasted tons of high explosives that tore glaring, wide wounds in the railway track, till theoretically they were hammered into submission, but when the

Bolshevik infantry, in the gray hours of dawn and dusk, approached to take the crucial position, they were always driven to cover by a heroic defense that never failed. So the bridge was held under difficulties that would have shaken ordinary troops and caused them to fall back, but not in Russia, for that was the way of this queer little war. Priceless lives would be lost, much blood run, and stirring exploits of courage and noble sacrifices be performed, to safeguard a little bridge like Verst Four Fifty Eight, or a dirty village that objectively meant nothing. Yet what sacrilege to have breathed this to the soldiers who bled for them; for to those who risked their lives and yielded up their lives, rather than desert some little bridge or moujik village, these signified the shibboleth of North Russia.

For inordinate stress was placed upon these inconsequential, hard contended spots; they became graphic in the imagination, cardinal precepts in some strange soldier creed, altars upon which friends had given all as proof of a comradeship triumphant over self and self desire. Indeed, with the fresh recollection of courageous comrades now dead, their abiding faith in him, and the thought of those far back at home, whose eyes watched from afar with undimmed loyalty, did he not stamp himself as a craven if he failed, a mongrel thing unfaithful to his breeding?

Thus has it always been. The race has carried on by dimly understood, irrational traditions that move men to the profoundest depths and challenge elemental impulses that have descended in transmuted ancestral determinism, we know not how or why. And if we are to endure, it must be by these same primal emotions, that cause men the world over to scorn soft ease and security for the sake of

a vague, inexplicable ideal; inchoate conceptions of service; passionate, stirring impulses lacking definition, which are born with life itself, reach down to the bottommost depth of nature and transcend all feeble efforts of analysis and artificial ratiocination.

So it came that the momentous bridge at Verst Four Fifty Eight stood fast, and the Bolshevik attack beat against an unyielding rock until it spent itself by its own fury. Then the position was consolidated, Allied headquarters moved nearly three miles down the railbed, and the dead, in order that there might be no interruption of the renewed offensive, were laid away in white Obozerskaya churchyard, beneath rough crosses of wood, such harsh emblems of life's surcease, and so fitting in this inflexible, cold, repellent north world.

After a fortnight of more scheming and preparation, the forest was carefully reconnoitered, a path that could be traversed was found through the swamps, in a three cornered attack, the Allied position advanced to Verst Four Fifty Five; and pressing on, the Americans and French went forward to still further battle. But now occurred an event more baneful to the Expedition than all the enemy attacks. The month was only October, but in some mysterious way, the French had already received word of the pending Armistice, and entirely unmoved by the disaster that might befall their abandoned comrades, the whole French company quit the front and went back to Obozerskaya in an ugly mood.

"The war is over in France," they argued, "why should we be fighting here in Russia when France has declared no war on Russia or the Bolsheviks?"

Ninety of the mutineers were placed under arrest, and returned to Archangel for confinement.

It is not known whether or not the Bolsheviks were directly apprised of the mutiny, but hardly had the French retired, when the enemy artillery laid down a shaking barrage, and when night came, the lone group of Americans were standing off a great horde of Bolshevik infantry that only waited for dawn to continue an overwhelming assault.

Clearings occurred at intervals of several miles all along the Vologda railway. Usually they were in the shape of large squares, a half mile or more across, with log stations, several woodchoppers' houses in the center, and near them piles of corded pine to feed the wood burning locomotives. The next day when the supports came up they nearly blundered on a large Bolshevik force massed for a surprise attack in one of these clearings.

With unerring, quick-witted appraisal, the American officer saw that he was outnumbered three to one, but losing no time, he divided his company into three parts and struck out from three directions of the woods, firing rapid fire, making a great commotion and noise, to give the impression of great numbers.

Most of the enemy troops were poorly disciplined and poorly led in these days of the Fall campaign, and this ruse of the three-cornered attack was carried through with such colored theatrical effect that it scored complete success. There was a brief fight, some good Americans shooting at open, closely grouped targets, and the frightened Bolsheviks fled in disorder. Not only were the Americans able to relieve their threatened comrades, but the scattered Bolsheviks were followed up to Verst Four Forty Five.



Where a mill flaps its awkward wings

This was the furthestmost point of the advance, for soon General Ironside assumed the office of Commander-in-Chief, and the "offensive war" was heard of no more. The campaign became a stalemate, each side awaiting the opponent's next move, and not till November did the Bolsheviks become aggressive again. Then they stormed the positions with great determination, but all posts held and they were thrown back with frightful loss.

The succeeding month, it was decided by the Allied Command to capture Plesetskaya, so that the enemy might be denied a base for winter movement, and the divergent Allied forces of the Railway brought together. But the effort failed. The Russian contingent that was to go on skis around the left, fifteen miles to Emtsa, floundered helplessly, became exhausted and funkcd out in the deep snow many miles from their objective; also the auxiliary force at Shred Mekrenga could not gain its ground; but most of all, the failure was caused by the members of the Slavo-British Allied Legion, who faithlessly deserted in large numbers and went over to their countrymen, the Bolsheviks, with full information of the Allied plans.

This marked the collapse of the invasion of Archangel, and when the cold of winter had settled, the Red leaders set busily about the task of planning the destruction of the over-extended Allied lines on six unsupported fronts, which could neither retire beyond Archangel, nor be reinforced until the remote coming of spring. It looked as if the great military machine which Trotsky assembled, would speedily crush Ironside's men, and the Moscow newspapers announced that a million Red bayonets would hurl the foreigners to the White Sea, and into it (although the

sea was then solid ice), but inexplicably strange, after the failure of Plesetskaya, there were few stirring, winter days on the Railway Front, except once, when a daring Bolshevik raiding excursion on skis snatched one of the rear guns from the French (who had been shamed into returning to the front), destroyed it, and got away in the snow.

Major J. B. Nichols was at this Railway Front, a civilian officer, and the only one of the Americans in senior authority who appeared to possess a heart, and courage, and unfogged discernment. He early grasped the vain futility of the whole campaign and no cajoling or flattery or threats from Archangel could sway his refusal to engage a single man in unavailing patrols through the ambushed forests or in hazardous "blow-offs" between the contested lines, that accomplished nothing save the sacrifice of life. So for the most part the winter defense was a routine of work on the defenses, the dugouts and the fortifications, and necessary reconnaissance parties over the trails, to watch the flank approaches and to keep an eye on dangerous Bolshie Ozerki.

With ready methods of quick transportation, and an increase in the garrison by the coming of the King's Own Liverpools, it became possible to arrange spells of relief, and in March the Americans went back to Archangel.

At the front it was different. There was a tautness, a hushed, dread expectancy in the air, and life, an uncertain thing, was to be lived, like the Hedonist, for the day; there was no time to analyze the causes of one's misery or even to be more than dully conscious of it; pressing urgencies, actual or imaginary, were always occurring, and they crowded out all opportunities for contemplation and introspection.

But there was no pressure in careless Archangel, where harrowing care and disgusting, swinelike filth vanished with a wave of fairy wand and lo, the war with Russia became a magical heroic pageant. Large numbers of unemployed officers strolled the Troitsky Prospect, very merry and bright, an array of bright, varicolored ribbons, like flower gardens, flourishing on their well-arched military chests.

There was the American Supply Company at full strength, which looked very sleek and smug, and groomed well, and well fortified to withstand the rigors of the Arctic winter, who displayed extraordinary capacity for trading with the natives and astounding dexterity in the acquisition of an affluent wealth of Russian rubles.

It made a soldier sick at heart to see the good things stacked high at Bakaritza, the sweets and dainties and tobacco that would have meant so much to the homesick Vaga men and the far Dvina men who were never relieved—the cases and cases of whisky piled in mountainous piles in the warehouses at Bakaritza!

There were other cases (empty ones) outside the Officers' Club. And in the happy city, parties were held, with sparkling jollity, and entertainments, and dances, and jingling sleigh rides, and down the long toboggan run near the domed cathedral roistering funmakers with screaming laughter would glide through the exhilarating Arctic air to the white world below. The varied military were having a rather unique and amusing time of it in jaunty galliard Archangel, and none of the impassive Slavs there seemed agitated or even interested in this war to bring peace to "sad, distressed, and afflicted Russia," which had ended life for many Americans and broken the lives of many more.

Russian soldiery was everywhere, Russian officers, with gaudy uniform and restored Imperialistic hauteur; and Russian soldiers drilling on the parade grounds, with a snap and a smartness that was oddly British, all fit and well-fed looking, capable of destroying untold American rations, with the appearance of being able to shoulder a musket in defense of their country if they were so minded, but with no apparent intention of being so disposed.

Every soldier knew of the scene at Alexandra Nevsky Barracks, where American machine guns were turned on the S. B. A. Ls. to put down the revolt that occurred when our Russian allies were ordered to the fighting front. And poignantly fresh was the memory of the faithless conduct that had lost Plesetskaya in December. Treachery at the front, and treachery stabbing in rear! Why should American soldiers die and suffer exposure and hardship for these heedless, indifferent people?

And if the fight was not for Russia, what was it for?

There were persistent rumors of a war to collect imperialistic claims and money obligations, and other passing rumors as errant and disordered as the Red Bolo Bolshevik propaganda that begot them. But was it altogether strange, that after this had gone on for months and months, when the soldier asked for the facts and the facts were denied him, that he should begin to wonder, and to grow almost embittered; that, in fact, one of the companies should give audible expression to its turbulence?

During the last part of March, a convoy of sleighs drew up before Smolny Barracks to carry this company and its equipment over the frozen bay of Archangel to the station where a train was waiting to take them to the Railway

Front. But the men did not stir from their barracks, and the equipment was not loaded, so that the colonel of the American regiment came (somewhat hastily) from his warm quarters to learn the reason for the delay.

The colonel assembled his soldiers in a large Y. M. C. A. hall, and read them that Article of War which pronounces death as the penalty for mutiny. Then, following an impressive stillness, he asked if there were any questions. There were no inquiries concerning the Article of War, which is terse, succinct and unequivocal, but one soldier arose very respectfully and said:

“Sir, what are we here for, and what are the intentions of the U. S. Government?”

The colonel very frankly replied he could not give a definite answer to the question, but added, that regardless of the purposes of the Expedition, it was now in acute jeopardy of extinction, and the lives of all depended upon successful resistance. More silence followed.

There is a favorite disciplinary method of the military based upon basic, elementary psychics. It is invoked by all, from the drill sergeant to the general officer. The principle is the antithesis of mob psychology, and goes upon the presumption that man is a gregarious being.

At the first rumor of incipient disorder, soldiers are assembled at attention, and any man holding to minority views is commanded to step forward (usually three paces) from the ranks and expound his convictions.

Great heroes and those capable of the highest, unparalleled courage, quail at this test, for it is one thing to rebel in company, or in the secret counsels of one's inner conscience; quite another to stand out stark alone and un-

supported against the strong arm of the military, the harsh, punitive, martial law of an intolerant warring nation, that can brook no infringement of combat discipline.

Therefore, when the colonel had finished, no one accepted his invitation to stand forth and declare his opposition, and the meeting was dismissed with an order to load packs and proceed to the railway.

The next day, the fury of the Bolshevik offensive which swept the Vaga, and strove to realize Moscow's boast of annihilation for the Expedition, burst at Verst Four Forty Five where this "mutinous" company took the brunt of the attack and never wavered during the ceaseless, storming battles that followed, until, at the end of the third day, the enemy sullenly retired, repulsed and defeated, and another company relieved the exhausted American line.

And often before had these same men proved their mettle. There was no finer company in the regiment than this, and no more gallant officer than its commander. It is not the nature of the American to become "cannon fodder" without a question. Theirs was only the voice of sanity raised in this madman's war; yet when they saw that all in Russia were in the same plight, that no one knew the reason why, that all were caught in the same meshes of inextricable folly, they were soldiers, and played the soldier's part unfalteringly until the untried Russian conscripts came in May.

Many Russians had been killed as enemies; so like these simple peasants in soldier uniform that came to relieve the contested lines in May; so like the bearded host under whose foul-smelling roof the American dwelt. They did not seem soldiers; so spiritless, so immobile, so unmoved by firing emotions in this civil war wherein foreign defenders had

died for Russia. If they felt any gratitude, it was covered beneath an exterior of impenetrable, Slavic lethargy, that defied all effort to disrobe. Life had been a thing of rote with these moujiks, as constant as the law of seasons and of stars, and the violent change from opaque darkness to the dazzling light, left them blinded, befuddled, groping for moral support. Before they had commenced to grasp the tremendous significance of the Revolution, swift came the Bolsheviks, crashing to earth every vestige of law, stability, the social structure, property rights.

Now followed these foreign invaders, warring upon the Bolsheviks and speaking with high sounding, noble phrases of saving Russia, as they burned moujik homes and turned moujik women and children out upon the cold snows. It was too much for the poor serf's imagination. From fatalistic refuge he looked out on a howling storm-tossed universe and abandoned all hope of comprehension.

Nitchevoo. There was no reason left on earth. All had gone crazy; all were stark, raving madmen in a madman's world!

So did the curtain fall on this lurid melodrama and its fretful Railway scene, and now that the heyday of the fight was done, disquieting reflections took possession of the Americans. Their dead had died for a scant few miles on this Railway battle ground, but what the paltry little gain meant now not one could tell, nor why the fearful price was paid, and ever came distracted thoughts of the futility of it all, thoughts like howling, evil genie that ever recurred to haunt and taunt those that came away.

ONEGA

13th Feb., 1919

"Americally Sowest London for H A E F France. Due to primitive conditions of life and continuous service in the field under Arctic conditions, officers and men are beginning to feel the strain. Practically the whole Allied Command has been on continuous duty in the field all winter with no reserves in Archangel. Limited Allied reserves are now being supplied from Murmansk, a few coming on ice breakers and others by rail to Kem and then by horses and sleighs to destination. Recommend present force be entirely replaced as early as practicable in the spring, with an adequate force commensurate with its mission, supplied and equipped so that it can operate in an American way."

STEWART

VI

ONEGA

GENERAL IRONSIDE became Commander-in-Chief of the North Russian Expedition at the commencement of winter, and the "offensive war" forthwith came to an abrupt termination, without ceremony.

At that time, one company of Americans and ninety-three Slavic Legionaires composed the Onega or right wing of the Allied army which was at Chekuevo, some hundred and forty miles from Archangel on the Onega River.

A landing party of the original Poole force, expert rifle marines from the United States warship, *Olympia*, had taken the port of Onega after a noisy fight in September, and a few days later, gave it over to this Russo-American detachment, three hundred strong, whose object was to accord right lateral support to the Railway Column, and above all to safeguard the significant winter road connecting the Railway with Onega, along which the winter mail came sporadically, and the only reinforcements, three companies of British Yorks, were brought from Murmansk during the cold days of February.

As the Americans, verst post to verst post, fought their way south along the Railway line, so this detachment went forward at bloody experience and kept abreast, until the Bolsheviks, following the Railway victory at Verst Four Forty Five, grew cautious, and drew back up the Onega Valley to Turchasova.

And when winter came, the forty miles between Turchasova and Chekuevo, were a shadowy No Man's Acre along the twisting, snow highway of the river, where hostile patrols prowled, and life was held by uncertain tenure; but the disputed ground was narrowed by half when the Americans moved up part of their small number nearly midway to the Bolshevik village, and took station at Kyvalanda, in order to watch a southern trail inlet to the important Railway road, along which were regularly dispatched visiting patrols to the scattered villages of Bolshie Ozerki, that they might hearten and keep contact with the few pathetic Frenchmen and Allied Russians who made an audacious pretense of maintaining a post there, and far off on the snow, deserted many miles from the Railway, reminded one of a choice morsel of tenderloin, baited for puma.

The Onega detachment joined in the operation for Plesetskaya, which the new Commander-in-Chief, in furtherance of his defensive policy of consolidation, was anxious to take before the intense cold.

Plesetskaya was an important base, and had they lost it, the Bolsheviks would have encountered great, almost insurmountable obstacles, in bringing troops from Vologda, and concentrating them in an aggressive winter warfare, for this point was a junction of the principal highways leading from the Railway line to Onega, Kochmas, Tarasovo and Shenkurst.

But this Allied advance failed, primarily for the same cause that the whole Expedition failed, through ridiculous paucity of numbers, and in the second instance (although there were several more), because it was impossible to maintain any semblance of liaison over the difficult lateral

terrain which separated the five Columns, theoretically converging in the push for Plesetskaya.

So on New Year's day, after they had met the enemy and soundly punished him in two sharp engagements, and standing to, were about to drive him from his Turchasova stronghold, the Onega Americans were given the disappointing order to fall back and resume post at Chekuevo, where long, black months followed, and life took on a grinding, monotonous, drab, depressing atmosphere, lifted only by an occasional, welcomed brush or "wind up," till lo, in March, the sun shone high and streamed in extravagant, effulgent light on the glaring snow fields, the days grew longer and still longer, in this eccentric, topsy-turvy, North world, and finally there were as few hours of darkness as there had been of light a few months before.

Late in the month, a patrol was driven off from Bolshie Ozerki by the shot from many rifles, and a combat party the next day ran counter machine gun emplacements, was extricated only by adroit leadership, and after worming a long distance through the piling drifts.

It was learned then that the little garrison at Bolshie Ozerki had been annihilated, but it was thought by a strong raiding party, bent upon capture of the ration and ammunition convoys between Onega and the Railway. Not yet was there a suspicion of the enemy's surprising, gigantic manoeuvre, which with incomparable, superior force, sought to turn the Allied flank at Obozerskaya, carry through to the Dvina, fuse with the Bolshevik Vaga army, then sweep on to Archangel and make good the Moscow boast to cast every foreigner in North Russia into the White Sea.

The British Colonel, irritated by the enemy resistance at

Bolshie Ozerki, was determined to chastise "the raiders" thoroughly, and felt very confident when his seventy Americans were joined by the three companies of Murmansk Yorks, which had marched one hundred and seventy miles from Soroka on the Murman railway in the hope of reaching the hard pressed Vaga Column, before it was too late.

The only access to Bolshie Ozerki from the west is a wagon road, eighty feet wide, which cuts a swath through the ambient forest. Passing sleighs had packed this road so that it gave good going, but at either side among the trees was a hopeless, floundering snow bog nearly four feet, and two miles out from the village, the Bolsheviks had improvised an outguard, which swept this only approach with machine guns that had the concentrated fire of three battalions.

At dawn, on the twenty-fourth day of March, the Americans, supported by the Yorks on either flank, crept through the trees by the roadside to the attack on Bolshie Ozerki. At five hundred yards, the enemy opened fire, a murderous plunging storm of steel and lead that must completely quell all thought of further approach, still none turned back; dragging and pushing themselves through the snow by knees and feet and elbows, the men made four hundred yards; here the American officer was killed, two of the British officers were hit and went down as if struck by lightning, and it was seen by volume of the fire that the odds were hopeless, yet the little company, facing utter massacre, burrowed in the deep snow, and, in the stiffening cold, hung on to the last round, till the retirement order came at dusk; the sacrifice was a heavy one, but not in vain, for by this devoted stand the stupendous nature of the

enemy operations to overwhelm the whole Expedition at Bolshie Ozerki was fully revealed, and every man at the rear position, vividly conscious of the desperate character of the fight, steeled himself for the grim business in hand.

Back in Archangel, General Ironside saw in a flash that the life of his army fluttered in the balance. He scoured the city for every available fighting man, collected the few he could, a varicolored assemblage of Americans, British, Allied Russians and a platoon of French mounted on skis—Le Legion Courier du Bois—all counted, five hundred eighty men, and rushed with them to the battle. There, this iron General, well knowing himself to be faced by great unknown numbers, tossed caution high to the four winds. He dragged his artillery over the snow from the railway at Obozerskaya, and set it twelve miles off in the woods, daring the enemy to capture it. He brought out his handful of divergent troops, and, smashing down trees, built up rough barricades, a cordon about his guns; then, cut off from all hope of accessible retreat, this fighting man, whose fighting stuff had been welded among the Northwest Mounted Police of the Canadian frontier, threw down the challenge of wild death battle to the Slavs.

Very close, not even a mile away, down the Bolshie Ozerki trail, the Bolsheviks had concentrated their artillery and thrown out their advance works, and now commenced a blasting duel between the opposing batteries that tossed skyward mountainous geysers of snow, made fragments of the trees, and, through every lighted hour, shook the forest end to end with a ceaseless, reverberating roar, that pounded upon the ear with the vindictive echoes of tortured damned souls.

Fortune is a fickle mistress, but she loves the strong and smiles her favor on the brave, and in this strange mad Arctic forest fight, the Briton gained her countenance by thus handsomely risking all at a throw, and by his dashing courage, his magnificent, irresistible, reckless courage.

The Slav, more cautious, and overestimating the strength opposing him (as the Bolsheviks did time after time), did not strike while the iron was hot, but held off until he had gathered together three regiments; the 2nd Moscow, the 96th Saratov, the 2nd Kasan and several companies of ski troops; and the road that paralleled the Railway line to the Bolshevik camp at Shelaxa, near Plesetskaya, became a pitiful trailing havoc of dead and dying horses, driven to exhaustion in hysterical haste to bring still more artillery, more supplies, more ammunition to the waiting assault.

But every day spent by the Bolshevik chief, in fortifying his attack, was bringing victory to Ironside. In this winter campaign, with lack of transportation and dwelling quarters, it was always impossible to concentrate overwhelming numbers of troops without costly postponement of the striking assault. The most troops that could be assembled were assembled by the Bolsheviks at the Vaga and Bolshie Ozerki—probably eight thousand to ten thousand at each place, and these were brought together with enormous labor, incredible striving, heroic suffering in the cold, which plundered the soldiers' strength, so that they were weakened by privation and shaken by much exposure, and in the case of Bolshie Ozerki, came to the fight too late.

So this battle that might have taken the life of the Allied North Russian Expedition was lost, the fleeting opportunity for success sped away when after the first fell stroke

the precious element of surprise was profligately squandered. And the Americans, bracing themselves for the storm, fell to under the engineers, and working night and day, erected a citadel in the woods, strengthened the barricades and actually finished two bullet proof blockhouses before the first battle shock. Immense stores of ammunition were stacked high about the guns, and as the men labored, their confident enthusiasm grew; every soldier, under the stimulating, mesmeric influence of his great chief, knew, with unwavering faith, that the fight was won, grew impatient in the blood lust, and whetting his bayonet, waited like a primitive savage, serene in the unshakable conviction "that one Allied soldier was the equal of twenty Bolsheviks." So, in truth, he had to be in the battles of Bolshie Ozerki.

It was a tactical custom of the enemy to attack the front and rear positions, sometimes he struck both simultaneously, but seldom the flanks. Therefore, General Ironside placed his Americans forward and back, where the gun emplacements were, and then stood poised for the onslaught. If the law of averages traversed its orbital course, all might be well, but if the Bolsheviks forsook their usual custom, these dispositions might well prove fatal; for although the Yorkmen were scattered among them as bolsters, the green, Russian, Archangel troops on the flank positions were as yet untried, and the presumption was against them in the pending death fight that would give no quarter.

But when the enemy came at last, on the seventh day, he came just as the General had speculated he would come in an attack on the rear guns; then in greater strength followed through at the front barricades. The next dawn, at

three thirty o'clock, the full fury of the assault was uncovered, as three swaying rows of men hurled themselves forward like swelling, tidal waves, and when this forward attack was at its climax, a wild horde stormed the rear.

In such an encounter, the great chance of success is in overwhelming the weaker adversary by sheer preponderance of numbers, to palsy his intelligence by bearing down on him with an awesome multitude, and before he has recovered, sweep him off his feet. But with these Americans, there was no such terror wrought hiatus, for the very intensity of the situation seemed to electrify their fiber, and fire their brains with the steady, blue flame of coordinated intelligence; under these overwhelming tidal attacks these fighting men were never so alert, never so keenly and appraisingly aware of every event, never so thoroughly mindful of every tense situation as it transpired; for they knew that piling cumbersomely through those bogging snow depths, the oncoming Bolsheviks were shackled nearly as effectually as if bound with ankle ropes, and they were acutely conscious of the verity, that in the circumstances, one steady man behind a bullet proof barricade, deliberately directing a functioning machine gun, had the weight of three hundred rifles.

So now it was a glorious thing to be in the blockhouses and the log barriers and to witness those human multitudes surge on, then slacken, and falter and fail and shrivel as they came, while machine guns swept them line to line, and flank to flank, and piled the dead and left crumpled, moaning heaps of men, where red, ugly blotches widened on the snow.

By noon, the fury of the storm had nearly subsided, the



The blockhouses where men were crippled and maimed and shell-shocked,
far away from gala Archangel

Commander of the Saratov Regiment, thinking his troops had won their ground, rode on his white horse nearly into the defenses and was shot down as he came, and from this time, the firing became desultory, except when some violent commissar drove small groups forward to be killed, or others, made desperate by despair, sneaked creeping out, and so were killed, and the rest lay flattened on the snow, not daring to go forward or back.

At nine, the sun went down upon the tumult of a bloody, grewsome day; it became cold again, and there followed dusky, unnatural silence, shattered occasionally by the rasping crack of snipers' shots, where in that night of horrors, the unfortunate Bolsheviks passed the acme of mortal misery. For if defeated, they returned to their own camp, death was waiting for them, and ahead were the remorseless Americans ready to shoot on sight, without stint of mercy. So, fairly caught between two fires, they lay out through the endless, black hours of terrible cold and frost, and gangrene took a greater toll than all the gunshot wounds.

Yet great as was the enemy distress, all knew that when the next day dawned, new forces would come up and press on to another determined assault, and it was to divert as many of these reinforcements as possible, that General Ironside ordered the Onega Detachment to move against Bolshie Ozerki from the west.

That same night, one of the York companies left the Onega Detachment and followed an unreconnoitred trail through the forest to strike again the hostile village from the north at daybreak; but long before dawn, became confused in the darkness and was hopelessly lost when the

attack began on the road where another British company was to move against the village. A Polish company of Archangel volunteers, who were to execute a corresponding south flank movement, came from Chekuevo too late, so that the brunt of the fight fell upon the unsupported Yorks on the road.

Thirty minutes after the first faint light, dogs, tied to trees by the Bolsheviks, sighting the approaching front attack, gave boisterous, barking alarm, and, on the instant, the woods were made hideous with the rasping rattle of many machine guns. Many of the little band were hit in this first storm, but the rest kept on, dragging themselves through the yielding, four foot snow, while inches over their heads, the air howled hideously with the passage of flying death. In the snow, rifles became clogged in the breeches, so that the bolts would not drive home, and men had to dig them clean with fingers stiffening from cold, but still, a little at a time, the attack wormed on and on. At one hundred yards, the gallant, British captain rose to lead a rush at the machine gun positions and was killed in his tracks; then the second officer was hard hit, and when the delayed Polish company came forward in support, and two of its number got shot through the bowels, the others bolted like sheep and could not be driven to the battle again.

Then the Yanks went in and stood manfully to the fight by the side of their distressed comrades, but against heart sickening, desperate, despairing odds, as the merging Bolsheviks came from both sides and massed in a vicious, determined counter attack that would have overcome all, but when doom seemed certain, the lost York Company emerged

from the woods, by some act of a benevolent Providence, to meet and stay the fullness of the thrust, until darkness came down to save the valiant, little band on the snows.

This last, noble effort of the Onega Detachment had been made with a single thought—that of baring their breasts to the blow that otherwise would have fallen on their tired comrades in the barricades out in the forest from Obozerskaya; and great as the cost, its effect had been the final discouragement to the Bolsheviks who made one more ineffectual effort to gain the Allied Railway flank, then drew back in full retirement to the south.

The enemy sustained great losses in these battles of Bolshie Ozerki, upwards of two thousand casualties, many of them from the frost, for the villages could shelter but a fraction of the large forces, and many had to live in such makeshift quarters as could be devised.

Time was of the essence in this undertaking of the Bolshevik commander, and he had paused when he should have struck out with every man in his control, but by his dalliance, spring joined the league of his enemies. Soon the freezing clutch of winter would be broken in the warm sun, and, unless he hastened to withdraw to the south, his artillery would be mired in the yielding roads.

In June, the new, conscripted, Russian soldiers came to take Onega's posts, and the heavily-tired Americans went back to assembly at Archangel, buoyant and bright-eyed at the prospect of home, till they met on the city streets a few invalided Category B Scots going back to the battle lines, because the Bolo droves were gathering again and every man was needed there. Then the light smile passed

from the lips of the Americans, a blush came to their cheek, home was forgotten and all thought of home; for there was a man's work out in the forest swamps far to the south—where death lurked and misery waited; and hardly a man who would not have chosen the swamps with their physical suffering and their ambushed death than escape and bear the stinging reproach of deserting a mate in distress. Better to play the wretched game through to the uttermost end than to be faithless to the traditions of one's blood, to quit the field with the honor of a nation stained and shamed in burning disgrace.

For was this such a flagitious, disgraceful brawl in which their mates had bled their manhood blood away that American soldiers should sneak from it thus, like cuffed and beaten mongrel curs?

Time, soothing time, will smooth with gentle, cooling fingers, the harsh lines of fretful hardship, the distressful burdens of campaign and trying vigils of sleepless peril, and even burn a purple halo of romance about this miserable, petty, little war, but some hurts the assuaging balm of time can never heal.

Many had cast off at the call of country and given all with generous unstinting affection, and those who were coming back did not begrudge the sacrifice; but rankling deep forever in the living consciousness of every Archangel soldier is the thought of this ignoble quitting and the weak abandonment by his country of everything to which he had pledged his manhood faith.—The causelessness of it all—Alarming, unbalancing reflections, a moral devastation that will not be quieted—Corroding grief for those who flushed with promise were “taken from life when life

and love were young" in a shabby brawl for nothing.—
A dangerous cynical bitterness is with the soldier of North
Russia, mordant and enduring, that grows ever more bitter
with the years.

KODISH

January 30, 1919.

MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL HOUSE.

SUBJECT: *Withdrawal of American troops from Archangel.*

Dear Colonel House:

The 12,000 American, British and French troops at Archangel are no longer serving any useful purpose. Only 3,000 Russians have rallied around this force.

Furthermore, they are in considerable danger of destruction by the Bolsheviki.

The appended memorandum and map which General Churchill has prepared show that unless the ice in the White Sea suddenly becomes thicker, it is possible at present, with the aid of six icebreakers, which are now at Archangel, to move these troops by water to Kem on the Murmansk Railway, whence they may be carried by train to Murmansk.

The situation at Archangel is most serious for the soldiers, but it is also serious for the Governments which seem to have abandoned them. Unless they are saved by prompt action, we shall have another Gallipoli.

Very respectfully yours,

WILLIAM C. BULLITT.

Abridgment of communication from William C. Bullitt of the American State Department, delivered to Colonel E. M. House at the Paris Peace Conference, on 30th January, 1919.

VII

KODISH

KODISH was the epitome of North Russia. Bought with toiling effort, incredible privation and cruel losses, to be lost and won again time following time in the bittermost winter days with moving heroism and a moral grandeur that at times reached a sublime estate—it was in the end abandoned as “of no especial military significance.”

The village lay in the course of the Imperial road from Petrograd that parted from the Vologda railway at Plesetskaya and cut a diagonal lane through the province northeasterly to Emetskoe on the Dvina. Both Commands stressed its importance. In the early days of the campaign the Allied leaders, bent upon conquest, seized upon it as an opportune route to support the railway invasion by surprising the enemy in rear, while the Bolshevik Staff saw a chance to drive a wedge between the two advancing Columns and effectually deny the River forces all communications.

A typical polyglot group of French, British, friendly Russians, and a few American marines, some two hundred in all, had gone out from Archangel in the first days of the Expedition to Seletskoe on the Emtsa river determined to drive south from this subsidiary base along this Petrograd road to Plesetskaya. This group, designated “D Force” to distinguish it from “A Force” on the Railway and “C Force” on the Dvina, and the Vaga, had hardly

commenced its daring operation when an urgent call for succor caused British, French and Americans to hurry across a trail through the swamps to Obozerskaya, leaving the loyal Russians as rear guard before Kodish. But the former never reached their goal. Days passed and nothing was heard from them until a relief contingent, out a day's journey from the Railway front in the forest swamps, found in the midst of scattered infantry gear and other signs of desperate encounter the soiled diary of an American sailor with the epitaph of this illfated "B Force" written on 30th August.

The rescue party continued east through the swamps to Seletskoe as the pursuing Bolsheviks closed in on that village, but the Americans, reinforced by a slender garrison, drove them south over the Emtsa, where they stood their ground behind a destroyed bridge. It was suicidal to attempt a passage of the open river in the face of machine guns, so the Americans dug in the cold sodden ground, and in the grim siege that followed the suffering was intense; no doctor was at hand to care for the many casualties who were given crude first aid (when they were reached), and bumped and jolted thirty torturing miles to Seletskoe, yet, in the face of all these things, none at Kodish knew thought of weakening or turning back.

On the ninth day, long awaited supports came up, a crossing was effected at an unexpected point below the Bolshevik position, and Kodish succumbed to a courage that would not be denied. Exposed baldly in a broad clearing and flanked by three dominating hills, this moujik village was helpless against modern artillery. The French colonel pronounced it "strategically untenable," but the

worst feature was its opportunity for complete encirclement. This was brought vividly to the consciousness of the Americans soon after their occupation when great Bolshevik bands converged on them from villages to the south and the Shred-Mekrenga trail, and following a four days' battle, they fought for their lives in a night flight nearly two miles along the road back across the river.

There the old familiar siege tactics were resumed. The engineers with a genius of adaptitude built a fortress of blockhouses on the north Emtsa embankment, and in these, one company of Americans, augmented by a few British infantry and a section of Canadian Field Artillery, stood off the Bolsheviks from the crucial Petrograd road. In December, with Plesetskaya the objective of three Allied fronts, this little group, now 450 strong, led by the impetuous "Major Mike" Donaghue forced twenty-seven hundred Bolsheviks out of Kodish, but could make little progress on the road beyond. So the contested village was held as an advanced post for the main Allied force on the Emtsa, and exposed to unremitting bombardment from many superior guns, became an inferno of bursting shells.

Once on a black January night, it was abandoned by the little outpost and set aflame, but before dawn, Donaghue was back with his men to a chaos of charred ruins, like the skeleton of a beast of prey in a desert of snow, through which the bitter, chill winds wailed dolefully. In these deserted Kodish streets of abject desolation, the American soldier knew the uttermost depths of physical misery experienced during the whole winter campaign.

The Commander-in-Chief came to the Kodish front when British soldiers evinced a truant disposition and would not

“carry on” unless certain interrogatories concerning this evasive war with Russia were answered. The interrogatories were addressed to Premier Lloyd George and were such as might arise from the mental consciousness of any men who still have well poised, wholesome regard for life and the pursuit of happiness as they understand it. These British soldiers had come from the winter murk of Murmansk, had emerged from four years’ hell in France, and saw themselves the hapless forfeit in a confused international melee without wit or reason at a time when all were thoroughly sickened with war and thought they merited restoration to their homes. But when the soldier Ironside, six feet four, with “an eye like Mars to threaten and command” had spoken, the interrogatories were all forgotten and these disgruntled men, who had uttered mutiny, returned to the fight with a matchless valor; with a steadfastness that gave never ceasing wonderment that they could so freely offer all with every instinct and inclination opposed.

It was at Kodish that the Bolsheviks strove their uttermost with propaganda, that insidious, warring weapon of which so often they have revealed themselves the masters. Thousands and thousands of pamphlets, leaflets, circulars, manifestoes, announcements, proclamations, appeals—an amazing collection of vitriolic, eloquent literature, were left along the patrol routes in the snow forests. This was true at all fronts, but especially at Kodish, where these persuasive methods were concentrated like a great verbal bombardment, a veritable war of scarifying words, Russian, French, German and English. Many messages of hate and fire, with frank artlessness, urged the Allied soldier to de-



An outpost on the Railway

sert and join the Soviet; others, more subtle, displayed a masterful knowledge of human weakness and human passions and prejudices.

The following is taken from *The Call* published in Moscow and printed in English:

Do you British working men know what your capitalists expect you to do about the war? They expect you to go home and pay in taxes figured into the price of your food and clothing, eight thousand millions of English pounds or forty thousand millions of American dollars. If you have any manhood, don't you think it would be fair to call all these debts off? If you think this is fair, then join the Russian Bolsheviks in repudiating all war debts. . . .

Do you realize that the principal reason the British-American financiers have sent you to fight us for, is because we were sensible enough and courageous enough to repudiate the war debts of the bloody, corrupt old Tsar? . . .

You soldiers are fighting on the side of the employers against us, the working people of Russia. All this talk about intervention to "save" Russia amounts to this, that the capitalists of your countries are trying to take back from us what we won from their fellow capitalists in Russia. Can't you realize that this is the same war that you have been carrying on in England and America against the master class? You hold the rifles, you work the guns to shoot us with, and you are playing the contemptible part of the scab. Comrade, don't do it! . . .

You are kidding yourself that you are fighting for your country. The capitalist class places arms in your hands. Let the workers cease using these weapons against each other, and turn them on their sweaters. The capitalists themselves have given you the means to overthrow them,

if you had but the sense and the courage to use them. There is only one thing that you can do: Arrest your officers. Send a committee of your common soldiers to meet our own workingmen, and find out yourselves what we stand for.

The following is from the same publication:

The Bolshevik Revolution marked the culmination of the world struggle to set us all free. Strike off your shackles, comrades, we are your friends not enemies, and the only reason we seek to stamp out the parasitical capitalists by force is because force is the only language they can understand. This is the beginning of a great world revolution which knows no national limitations. It will set the producers free. Join the Soviet Party. We are fighting your fight against the unprincipled capitalistic class. Comrades, you know the meaning of "scab," well, that is the part you are acting in Russia. For shame, comrades! Kill your officers, then shoulder your rifles and come over to our lines which are your own.

These extracts have been taken at random from a hundred others of like incendiary tenor, most of which had little effect on the Americans except to impress them with the coincidence of a striking similarity in style and sentiment between them and many public addresses of American politicians printed in the newspapers that came from home, where a soft going government tolerated perversions of free speech, as hostile to American soldiers in Russia as the most violent preachments from the enemy.

A huge bulletin board was erected on the Bolshevik bank of the Emtsa river, which conducted daily classes in doctrines of International Revolution, and the first confirmation of the Armistice news came in a weird preternatural

voice which startled the night stillness of Kodish by announcing in sonorous tones the cessation of infamous war and the restoration of peace to the afflicted peoples of earth. There on the Emtsa bridge, a Bolshevik orator, shrouded by the phantom shadow of a waning moon, delivered in excellent English, almost academic in polish, a rhetorical harangue on the glories of communism, the injustice of soldiers suffering in cold swamps while others sat back in Archangel in soft ease. Also the speaker described most persuasively the abundant, bountiful hospitality awaiting all within the Soviet lines. It was all very diverting, but nevertheless gave audible utterance to many of the disquieting reflections which rankled deep in the heart of every man in the Allied ranks and did not go towards helping Allied morale. Later that same night, when this extraordinary speech was ended, two captives, a Scot and an American, came out on the bridge to tell their comrades of benevolent treatment at the hands of the unspeakable enemy; in the darkness their voices were like those from the grave, for many soldiers were led to believe that the barbarous Bolos killed all prisoners after torturing them with frightful savagery.

In the first stages of the campaign, the French on the Railway killed those that could not be carried off the field to spare them the grewsome horrors which would have been visited upon them by the enemy, yet at Ust Padenga, volunteers brought in wounded not a hundred yards in front of Bolshevik machine guns, and at Toulgas, after a disastrous ambush, the enemy mysteriously withheld his fire from a relief party that was entirely exposed. There was, in fact, only one recorded instance of atrocity. This was on the

Vaga where the bodies of an officer and several Americans were found hacked and mutilated with hideous debauchery, but there was nothing to show that this barbarism was approved by the Bolshevik leaders, and it may have been only an uncontrollable manifestation of primal cruelty which underlies all war.

Several months after the last troops left Archangel, a number of Americans "missing in action" were expatriated through the efforts of the Red Cross by way of Finland, and these men spoke very favorably of their considerate treatment in Moscow.

THE RIVER

“There ought to be an efficient American Hell Raiser from one end of the front to the base, with a rank of lieutenant colonel.”

DOCTOR JOHN HALL (*Major Medico 339th U. S. Infantry*).
21st October, 1918.

“The Government of the United States has never recognized the Bolshevik authorities and does not consider that its effort to safeguard supplies at Archangel or to help the Czechs in Siberia have created a state of war with the Bolsheviki.”

Cablegram, State Department, Washington, D. C., to David R. Francis, American Ambassador, Archangel, Russia.
27th September, 1918.

VIII

THE RIVER

HALF of the original Poole Expedition was selected for the punitive pursuit down the railway, a garrison was left to guard Archangel, and the trifling group that remained followed the dark course of the Dvina into the unknown region of the interior. There were told off for this river expedition two depleted companies of the Tenth Royal Scots Regiment, and twenty-five of the American marines crowded into merchant barges and towed slowly up-stream by small tugs. The only escort was an armored British monitor, and seen from the shore, as they made their toilsome struggling way against the swift racing river course, conspicuous, unshielded targets on its broad surface, the dauntless little band looked tempting ambush prey.

At Chamova, some one hundred and eighty miles from Archangel, the enemy gave sign of having abruptly recovered from his first stampede. He turned and showed his fangs, and the pursuit stopped short.

It now grew apparent that the retreat had not been as riotous as first supposed; in fact, there was good reason to believe that it was a part of Bolshevik strategy, and evidence was accumulating that Trotsky had ordered the withdrawal from Archangel to make certain of the millions of American made supplies and ammunition, had taken a careful appraisal of the military situation, and elected to give battle in the interior. When the Americans ar-

rived they were met at the wharf by an agitated Brass Hat who said the Allies at both fronts were standing at bay and the situation had assumed a very precarious phase.

The Third Battalion was rushed to the Railway, and the First Battalion, in dirty, ill-smelling barges, followed the pioneer Poole Expedition up the river one hundred and fifty miles to Bereznik. These barges had carried many cargos on Dvina's waters, cargos of livestock and flax and other agricultural produce, but were new to human freight, and in their cramped, miserable, dank quarters, the scourging influenza broke out afresh among the troops, and those who had already been weakened by the disease grew fainter and fainter as they followed up the unknown waterway till a day came when one after one they quietly passed to the bourne of that country of gentle unwaking sleep, and sometimes off on the gloomy foreboding river the passage of this antic caravel seemed more a funeral procession than an aggressive expedition of war.

The tired comrades who were even denied the vibrant thrill of the fight, and its doubtful glory, were with simple soldier ceremonials given to the soil of Russia, ceremonials, moving because of their simplicity and that wholesome, fullhearted sentimentalism which has always marked the American character—and always must be of our America.

Here in these little churchyards, tragic death seemed robed in sorrow more sacred with the brown, barren embankments like a shroud of mourning, the grave skies drooping and disconsolate and the sombre recesses of the forest where taps trailed in grieving cadences and echoed within the soldier's spirit long after its last note had been lost in the gloom. Laden with inarticulate depression and confused

melancholy, thoughts of life's crazy theatre, the crushing power and immensity of fate, the tragedy of all, these men fresh from the fields and shops of Michigan and Wisconsin groped their dazed way back to the barges where dark shadows with ominous fingers reached over the waters and death, in this haunting, melodramatic land waited, suspended in the alien air like a pestilential vapor.

The first stop was five days out from Archangel at Bereznik, near the junction of the Dvina and its main tributary, the Vaga. Here there was a group of commodious, well constructed log buildings, which had served as hunting lodges for the Tsar Nicholas and his retinue during the days of the Romanoff dynasty. It was decided to make use of these buildings for storage purposes, and to have Bereznik as the subsidiary base of the Dvina expedition until progress was made so far up the river that practical considerations would impel the movement of the subsidiary base to a more advanced position.

So from the time of the arrival of the Americans on the 13th September, until the close of water at the end of October, rations, munitions, clothing and other accouterments of war, in value over one million pounds sterling, which had been brought all the way from England, were loaded on every craft that could be commandeered at Archangel and transported the one hundred and fifty miles to Bereznik.

One of the American companies was left to guard these precious supplies and the others hurried on to take up the gage of offensive campaign. There was a brush at Chamoova, but the enemy did not make his first stand until he came to Seltzo, nearly thirty miles further upstream, and

now well over two hundred miles from far away Archangel. Except on the Vaga, this was the furthestmost south achieved by the Allied troops.

At Seltzo, it became clear that the Soviets had no intention of running further, and that the foreigners would be fortunate if they held the ground already gained. The tactical abandonment of Archangel having accomplished the effective seizure and retention of everything of value in that port and extended the invader far into the interior, revealing with obliging frankness his numerical weakness, had realized the ends sought by the Bolsheviks, and the signs were now many that they intended to strike back and strike back hard.

Why did not Poole retire to Archangel?

The futility of the attempt to reach the distant Siberian railway with the ridiculously small force at the disposal of the Allied Commander was glaringly apparent to every common soldier.

Why did not Poole, like Joffre at the Marne, shift his policy to meet the exigencies of the military situation, draw in his far scattered fronts to Archangel, construct an enceinte of defenses about the city, and hold on until help came in the spring, or until some definite action was determined for Russia?

Many lives would have been spared and much misery averted had this been done, but the lives of a few men, and the permanent impairment of the lives of many more, do not weigh heavily in the scales with those who sit in the councils of the inner sanctum at General Headquarters and think nothing of the spending of divisions and even army corps. Perhaps it would have been too galling to Anglo-

Saxon pride to admit being on the defensive before an inferior people like these poor Slavs who were to be chastised with thoroughness and dispatch. Then, too, it was always safer for Archangel to have the outposts far into the country, and flattered the Allied Command in the belief of still being the aggressor.

When Ironside took command he not only conceded that the Allies were conducting a defensive campaign, but with soldier bluntness declared that the Expedition was in gravest peril. It was too late then to draw in the far dispersed battalions. They would have to fight it out on the wide separated snowbound fronts, and show by deeds the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon. If they failed, if they were faint hearted and even so much as faltered, the entire force was doomed.

On the morning of 19th September battle was joined at Seltzo. A mile of open marsh lies outside, through which the stream at the border of the village meanders from the forest to pay tribute to the mighty Dvina. The only easy approach is along a narrow road that parallels the river and crosses a bridge over this deep icy stream. On this morning of battle the Americans waded the swamp until within fifteen hundred yards, when suddenly from the scattered concealment of the houses there burst such a furious fusillade of musketry and machine guns and Pom Pom guns that they dropped low in their tracks and could go no further.

Two other companies moved through the woods on the flank to assist the frontal attack, but their location was determined by the enemy batteries, and his infantry laid down such a withering fire, that the battalion, exhausted

from a day of fighting and a heart-breaking march, without rations and with no cover from the cold and the drizzling rain, was compelled to bivouac that night in the soaking morass, hopeful that with next morning would come promised artillery support, for without it further advance was unthinkable.

All through the night the Bolshevik guns searched for the Americans who were new to combat, ignorant of the ground, and had not an inkling of the enemy strength or his fortifications or dispositions. And at dawn a reconnaissance patrol stumbled into a large enemy force, was scattered and came back with no information, save that the Bolsheviks had assembled in superior numbers and were well supplied with ammunition. As daylight broadened, the shelling from the river became so violent that the attackers had to choose between a further advance or complete retirement; to stay where they were meant destruction.

So with grave misgivings the attack was renewed, although there was still no sign of promised artillery support; machine guns guarding a trench system in the woods killed and wounded many Americans, but the advance would not give ground, and supporting comrades at flank and rear kept up such a sustained unfailing fire that the Bolsheviks were led to believe that the attack had been replenished during the night.

During the fight the American lieutenant colonel "caught in a bracket" had stayed in the rearward village, Yakovlevskaya, but at dusk he emerged with the important Field Pieces which laid down an effective *feu de barrage* on Seltzo. Hardly had it lifted when the battalion arose and with

splendid dash and gallantry stormed forward to the village, entered it and took possession. But the story of Seltzo is the story of the whole campaign. After the infantry, with inspiring display of courage and at great cost, had gained a position, its small forces would be drafted for some other distant hard-pressed front, or the position would be left to the mercy of the Bolshevik guns until no course was left except evacuation.

The monitor which had convoyed the battalion up the Dvina, fearful of being caught by the ice that was expected to creep upstream from Archangel at the beginning of October, but did not actually come until mid-November, went back before the battle and was gone for the duration of the winter. A few days after the battle, the artillery left and was seen no more at Seltzo. Also Headquarters ordered two of the companies to proceed to Shenkurst on the Vaga, the second city in the Province, where it was alleged a large number of Russians in sympathy with the Allied cause were anxious to have a garrison of American troops during the approaching winter.

So it came that there was no artillery to avenge the smashing havoc of the enemy heavy guns in this furthest Dvina village where one infantry company of Scots, a like number of Americans, and a few Allied Russians held on under terrific shell fire that from river and forest racked and battered them.

The enemy had a complete battery of three inch pieces, which he was free to bring up to the edge of the woods beyond the village, and down the river on rafts and improvised gunboats he floated three six inch guns and two Nine Point Two naval pieces, and for days with this com-

bined armament he smashed and blasted until many of the houses became a riot of shredded and splintered timbers, and it was only a question of time before the garrison would be decimated utterly.

On 14th October the Bolsheviks attacked the defensive positions with great vigor, but were thrown back in complete repulse with many killed; yet that night and in the first morning hours the defenders slipped away in the darkness, for under unhindered bombardment the place had become a death's trap where all must eventually perish.

After this escape in the night there was a heart-breaking drag through the mud, until late the next day the tired Allied soldiers found harbor in Toulgas some fifteen miles back. Toulgas is typical of the North Russian village, a group of bedraggled log houses huddled together on a hill, which bends down in a long easy slope to the plain, where, like Seltzo, a stream comes out of the forest and margins another cluster of huts on the flat ground which the moujiks call Upper Toulgas.

This stream is deep and numbingly cold, and has cut an abrupt channel through the yielding soil so that fording it is a difficult feat at best. For an enemy to make the attempt in daylight would be suicidal. In darkness, any considerable numbers cannot fail to give the alarm. A road comes down from the hill and crosses a wooden bridge to the forward village. Watching the bridge is the inevitable white church, and its gaudy minarets, consciously aloof and superior in the poverty of the scene. In the setting of dun barren ground the white edifice flashes in undefiled purity against a low shrouding sky, more black than gray, which rests upon the darker tufted forest.



The fighting Canadians

Across the road is the priest's house, like the others of bark stripped logs, differing from the others only in its greater size. With a little barricading the walls of the priest's house were secure against the lead of small guns, but it was death to stay there during the avalanche of high explosive shells that was poured out by the Bolshevik gunboats.

After the battle of Armistice Day, the bearded priest of Toulgas Church was found amid the hideous battle litter of his wrecked home, the crown of his head cut clean as with a scalpel, exposing the naked brains. Near him were two children, a boy and a girl, sleeping by the guardian who from infancy had taught them of a Providence who watched over the good of earth, and surely would not desert them through this malignant turmoil that had descended to the quiet moujik country with terrible death and indescribable misery like the recurrent plagues. So sleeping, a shell had found the unconscious children, and lulled them to that everlasting sleep. The big shells had a way thus, of stealthily sniping their victim's life away with no mark of their dread approach, as if disdaining the brutality of violence. But again they would pounce down with the atrocity of a fiend, smash head from trunk, and members from the torso, and leave great gaping wounds gushing black blood with unspeakable, horrible ghastliness.

Back of the church, on the same side of the road, is a moujik house with the customary stable attached in rear. A platoon used this as billeting quarters. It was shielded by the church forward, and gave shelter to the little reserve that would replenish the blockhouse at the bridge with men and ammunition, and, if the blockhouse was knocked

out, would stand off the Bolsheviks from crossing the bridge.

From the billet house to the church is about thirty yards. The priest's house is nearly opposite the church across the road. The blockhouse was built just before the Armistice fight and stands on the bank of the stream guarding the bridge about twenty yards forward of the priest's house. It is thirty yards over the bridge, and in front of the first line of Upper Toulgas houses, a field, shorn of all cover, stretches one hundred yards to the stream.

Back of the center village on the hilltop the ground undulates almost unnoticeably in a series of folds and reaches a shallow draw. A little beyond this, perhaps two hundred fifty yards, is still another clump of huts known as Lower Toulgas. In this draw, the Canadians built emplacements for their two Field Pieces, which during the first battles were the only artillery for the defense of Toulgas.

The forest gives way for nearly a half a mile before Upper Toulgas. From Upper Toulgas to Lower Toulgas is an ample two miles. From Toulgas, itself, the center village, to Lower Toulgas is a scant three-quarters of a mile.

On the forest flank the ground has been cleared for a space, varying from three hundred to less than sixty yards. This clearance is greatest opposite the upper village. In the lower village it narrows, until in rear the trees close in on the road that leads back to Bereznik and Archangel, affording excellent opportunity of concealment and surprise attack for an enemy that would have the endurance and the hardihood and the courageous daring to march through the deep swamps of the woods.

On the left the Dvina spreads out in a wide expanse, two miles. Opposite the rear and center villages the river

banks are high and steep, nearly precipitous, but at the forward village on the flat ground the level is only a few feet above that of the water. Across the river there is not the slightest sign of cover as far as the distant embankment on the opposite shore. The chances for surprise from this quarter are practically none, and without surprise, infantry advancing over the waist-deep snow against machine guns, would have to be possessed of fanatical courage and be in overwhelming strength. The river could be nearly neglected as a source of danger.

To defend the three Toulgas villages we had: One company of American infantry; one company of Royal Scots infantry, and one section of Field Artillery, manned by fifty-seven Canadians.

In command of this force was Robert P. Boyd, an American civilian, who, scarcely a year before, had graduated with the rank of captain of infantry from a three months' officers' training school at Fort Sheridan, Illinois.

Shortly after occupation of Toulgas, ice choked off navigation of the lower river, and replenishments of supplies and ammunition had to be brought by small one pony sleighs from Bereznik. The distance was some fifty miles, and the journey by Russian pony was usually two days, but when the snow was deepest, the weather bitterly cold, and the days had but few hours of light, it took three days.

There was a field hospital at Bereznik, vicariously supplied, and attended by a medical personnel of changing nationality, British, Russian and American by turns.

We converted one of the huts of Lower Toulgas village into a dressing station, where first aid was given the wounded; but we had no facilities, no operating equipment, or

surgeons, or surgical instruments to care for the serious cases. If a soldier was hard hit and lived, he had to be brought to Bereznik.

Following the retreat down river from Seltzo, there was hardly time for a tactical survey of the situation, for the construction of temporary redoubts on the forest flank and at the crucial bridge, when enemy gunboats opened fire on our positions and for three days kept up a determined bombardment. When dusk came on the third day, the shelling lifted, and when the night grew black there was a roar of many rifles and a mad yelling from the woods as a horde of Bolsheviks fell on the center village. In the darkness and wild confusion, the tumult of battle made by the roar of musketry, the shouting and screaming of many foreign voices sounded like the onslaught of a Division.

But, even with the advantage of overpowering numbers, a night attack to succeed, demands most accurate knowledge of the enemy position, and most rigid control by a leader of his men. The Bolsheviks were not thoroughly trained in these early days, although later they displayed impressive military skill and the utmost cooperation between officers and men; now their lead went high and shrieked through air several feet above the heads of the unscathed Americans, who had concealed Lewis guns in a dugout at the point of the enemy rush and turned these loose upon the massed Bolsheviks, felling them like cattle in a slaughter pen. One American private, swinging an automatic rifle from his hip, shot until there was a semi-circle of prostrate forms before him, some of them fifteen yards away; and once a few of the enemy came so close that they were spitted at the end of the bayonet.

At the height of the fight the Canadians opened up their guns and rained the woods with shrapnel which threw the wavering Bolsheviks into worse commotion and disorder, for while the Lewis guns scattered death in front, rattling shrapnel bullets threatened death in rear, and thus, huddled together in the darkness like stampeded sheep, they were shot down until the fierce exulting battle yells were changed to moans of the wounded and appealing cries for mercy.

At a signal, the Canadian guns ceased firing, the Royal Scots, shooting low and true, went into the counter, and the disorganized Bolsheviks, seized with blind animal terror, lost all semblance of order and fled in violent flight, each man for himself, to the sheltering recesses of the forest.

After this night attack there was nearly a fortnight of quiet on the Dvina, with no outward sign to show the enemy intentions. Patrols went out into the woods and came back with the report that Zastrovia, the nearest village upstream, was clear of hostile troops; but, while the Allied Command took under advisement the opposing contentions of retirement and holding on, the Bolsheviks were assembling large fresh forces of infantry, and bringing heavy guns from Krasnoborsk, preparatory to striking the most ambitious blow yet attempted.

All at Toulgas were aware that the lull was ominous. All knew that this phase of security was a very transient one, and directed by the American engineers, every man who was not on guard duty, worked building log blockhouses, at tactical strong points about the center village, one of them to guard the bridge over the stream to the upper village, where there was a small outpost, which in case of frontal attack was to give the alarm, then retire to the defenses.

The defense centered around the middle village. There were no fortifications to protect Lower Toulgas, and the Canadians in the draw in front of Lower Toulgas had for their protection only a squad of Americans under a sergeant, with a Lewis gun. The great danger in the situation lay in the threat of the capture of the rear village by an attack from the close-edging forest. If this lower position was taken, the garrison would be trapped, starved and cut off from all communication with Bereznik and Archangel. Customarily, there were kept on hand rations sufficient to last from two to three weeks.

When the British Brigadier General R. G. Finlayson inspected the Toulgas area, on 10th November, apprehension of such a rear attack was expressed by some of the officers, but the general could see no real menace from that quarter, and said that it was a military impossibility for a large body of troops to successfully execute a flank movement through the heavy swamps of the woods.

The day following, Armistice Day, at dawn there was a crackling of rifles in Upper Toulgas, then the crash of guns from the river, as a great number of Bolsheviks swarmed from the forest, deployed in perfect order, and advancing in squad rushes, drove the little outpost back to our main lines. Timed, it seemed almost to the moment, came the roar of musketry far at rear, the staccato rattle of machine guns and dominating all the din and tumult, the ringing Cossack *Hourra! Hourra!*

Our surprise was complete. Hundreds of dark figures sprang from the woods and closed in on Lower Toulgas.

Had the Bolsheviks been Germans, they would have immediately rushed the Canadian guns, and the story of Toul-



A Bolshevik scout

gas would have been one of massacre. They did rush the guns, but not until it was too late. The march through the forest had been an exhausting one, and the Bolshevik soldiers were very tired and very hungry. A few critical moments were spent searching the houses of the captured village. One of the Commanders, Melochofski, a stalwart giant of a man, with a high, black fur hat, entered our hospital billet, and flourishing his arms, gave a loud-voiced order to kill the invalided soldiers. The British medical N. C. O., with rare tact and extraordinary presence of mind, placed rations and two jugs of rum before the big Bolshevik leader, who helped himself liberally to the spirits and under their benign influence momentarily forgot about the execution.

Probably in this way and in ransacking Lower Toulgas, not over three minutes were lost, but never were three minutes more costly, for during that time the Canadians swung round their guns, and, when the Russians rallied to renew the attack, they were met by muzzle bursts.

Nearly a hundred years before, at Wilma, the iron veterans of the Grand Army had been shaken by that blood chilling *Hourra! Hourra!* of charging Russians; but now it only made those leather faced men at the guns laugh with the wild, delirious delight that comes only to the born fighting man, then only when the fight is at its height. They swore fine, full chested, Canadian blasphemies that were a glory to hear, crammed shrapnel into their guns, and turned terrible blasts into the incoming masses that exploded among them and shattered them into ghastly dismembered corpses and hurled blood and human flesh wide in the air in sickening, splattering atoms. While all

the time the American sergeant and his single squad kept up an incessant fire with his Lewis automatic, and those Canadians who were not hit, and were not needed at the guns, worked the bolts of their rifles with the energy of fiends, so that the crackling of small arms sounded like the bursts of machine gun fire from the emplacements, and deceived the Bolsheviks, who thought it was the fire of machine guns. These Canadians had used the rifle often in the untracked places of the Western World, were well schooled in marksmanship, and now when the target loomed big and at extremely short range, they covered the ground with dead.

The mere weight of those approaching great numbers would have shaken and turned ordinary troops, for the onslaught was not stopped until less than fifty yards from the guns; but the Canadians were not ordinary men and they gave not the slightest hope of being turned. They would have stood by with their bayonets to the last, and when the Bolsheviks saw the unyielding determination of these Western savages, to whom fear seemed unborn, and knew that more devastating death storms of shrapnel awaited further advance, their morale broke down, the front wave hesitated, panic spread with telepathic swiftness, and in the control of overpowering fear, the whole force bolted and scampered like rabbits to the covering trees. There they were rounded together by the remaining commissars, and from places of concealment directed a hot fire on the guns.

So quickly were they reorganized that fifteen minutes after the assault had been turned back, the Company of Royal Scots, hurrying across an open field to the support,

were subjected to such a blighting fire that the ground was strewn with the huddled figures of their dead and wounded.

As the day advanced the chief commander of the Bolsheviks was killed and three other commissars were picked off and killed. The march through the marshy forests had been made at tremendous toll in vitality, the advantage of surprise had now passed, rations were running low, and, unless the attack could be pressed with renewed forces, there would be another bivouac in the wet and cold, for the Canadian devils watched Lower Toulgas, and, at the first sign of occupancy, hammered and pounded and shook the houses with high explosive until they were untenable utterly. During the afternoon an American force from the center village pushed back a band of riflemen that hung at the fringe of the woods, and, as evening fell, the enemy fire grew less sustained and it was evident that unless reinforcements arrived, the attack would fail. But hours passed and no reinforcements. The rifle reports sounded more and more erratic, and, as the night wore on, there was only the sporadic crack of a few snipers in the rear woods, who held on hopefully waiting for the supports that never came.

Prisoners said there were six hundred and fifty in this rear attack and an equal number had taken the upper village, where they kept up a steady volley fire, but seemed to wait upon success of the rear party before storming our fortifications. Therefore, far forward in the blackness of the night, the Canadians sent forth two salvos, to let this frontal attacking force know that the guns were intact and that a fight was waiting beside them.

So ended the first day of the battle of Armistice Day. There was firing all through the night from Upper Toul-

gas, and luminous flares burst startlingly from unexpected places in the blackness, but after the failure of the rear movement, no further sustained and determined attack was attempted.

When a patrol from the garrison entered Lower Toulgas the next morning, men nerved themselves for a fearful grewsome spectacle in the hospital billet; but lo, their comrades were unharmed, and a woman in the uniform of a Bolshevik soldier was caring for them as well as the enemy wounded. She had come with her sweetheart, Melochofski, the thirty miles from Seltzo—Lady Olga, as the soldiers called her—and had bivouacked the two cold nights with the soldiers in the woods and swamps. She saved the lives of our injured men by pleading with Melochofski. Later she ministered to him as he died in the same hospital room where he would have witnessed his helpless enemies die.

She was a member of the Battalion of Death, this extraordinary woman, of intelligent, almost beautiful appearance. Madame Botchkoreva also had been a member of the Battalion of Death, so named because it chose to die rather than betray Holy Russia. Madame Botchkoreva, who had come with the American soldiers on the transports from America, and had spoken to them on shipboard so eloquently and so movingly of her country and its sacred, unshakable loyalty to the Allied cause, was said to have interceded with President Wilson, urged the sending of American troops to succor afflicted Russia, and prevailed upon the President.

American soldiers had already witnessed grotesque inconsistencies in this strange campaign. After the first fight they picked up shell fragments with the letters "U. S. A.," and learned that all, or nearly all, the Bolshevik ammuni-

tion was manufactured in their own country. They were told that they had been commissioned to safeguard valuable war supplies, and, coming to Archangel, had seen the great warehouses there destitute of those supplies. Now they were mystified by Lady Olga, who fought against Madame Botchkoreva in this baffling Russian war. Who was the greater patriot? Each a soldier in the uniform of her country, each had plighted her heart to beloved Russia, each had taken solemn oath to defend her country until death; and both now thought they were offering their lives for the defense of that country!

In this rear attack, one hundred Soviets were killed, many more wounded, many taken prisoners, a few rejoined their comrades at Upper Toulgas, and the rest faded in the forest and were lost. Weeks afterwards, the villagers at Nitzni Kitsa, fifty miles to the west, told of three Bolshevik soldiers who came to their village in a crazed condition, clad in rags, and half starved, babbling an incoherent story of the frightful battle of Toulgas on Armistice Day, and of hundreds of their comrades, lost in the woods and perishing in the treacherous quagmire of the swamps.

Following Armistice Day, early the next morning there was a flash at the bend of the river beyond Upper Toulgas, then the screaming passage of a shell, and the dull, vibrating, smashing roar of high explosive as it struck near the bridge. Two enemy gunboats were seen mounted with three inch and six inch guns. Further up the river and beyond sight was still another craft with six inch guns. Concealed among the trees, just on the edge of the clearing before Upper Toulgas, was a complete Bolshevik Field Battery, and these combined cannon now concentrated on the block-

house that guarded the bridge. Shells, tossing geysers of dirt and debris, struck all around, and ploughed a deep circular furrow within a radius of five yards of the death house, where seven Americans sat with blanched faces and set teeth, counting the seconds between the hideous successive whine of the plunging shells, and waiting silently for certain destruction. At the edge of Upper Toulgas, Bolshevik infantry stood crouched for the dash, watching for the strongpoint to collapse under the terrific pommeling bombardment.

A stack of hay was near the important post, where a shell smashed, scattered the hay to right and left, and clogged the loophole that outlooked to the enemy position. The American sergeant in command sprang from the blockhouse, snatched the obscuring hay, and was back again, while bullets from the amazed Bolsheviks spurted inches over his head.

Again the same thing happened, and again the sergeant, Floyd A. Wallace, with as noble an exhibition of cool, deliberate courage as man is capable, went out to clear the covered loophole, and did clear it, but he crawled back with a hole in his tunic from a machine gun, and his drab coat was soaked deep red from a grievous wound.

It was noon when the blockhouse was hit. It crumpled like paper under the impact, and one man, drenched with a welter of blood, was seen to drag himself from the wreckage and crawl back to the priest's house. I saw this man on the deck of the transport when the Americans were leaving Archangel in June, every soldier radiant at the prospect of farewell to the army and Russia, and going home, but he had not yet learned to smile, and written on his

face and deep in his eyes was the look of one who has gazed at hell.

When the bridge post was knocked out, one American, carrying a reserved Lewis gun, followed by two more each with panniers of ammunition, rushed from the house back of the church, and the three, dashing a few yards at a time, then throwing themselves flat on their faces, made the cover of a trench by the side of the priest's house, and, when the Bolsheviks came forward to the bridge, scattered them with a heavy fire.

In the emergency, a Vickers gun was hastily barricaded against a church window that looked down on the bridge. A platoon had come down the hill from the center village when it was seen that the blockhouse could not survive, and, using the skirmish tactics of the Indian, had passed through a tempest of rifle and machine gun bullets to the billet house, and reached the church. These were only a few instances of brilliant initiative. Nowhere than at Toulgas during the battle of Armistice Day was there better truth of that French saying during the war: "Every American private soldier is an officer."

Several times the Bolsheviks felt out the bridge, and the commissars in rear could be heard urging their men to the attack, but each time they drew back before the heavy, well directed fire of the Americans, and, although the artillery smashed the white church and made of the priest's house a rent and tattered ruin, the defense held at every point till with merciful darkness the gunboats ceased their cursed belching, the guns in the forward woods subsided to blessed silence, and, screened by the shielding night, the Americans were able to bring in their wounded and send relief to those

who had stood at the most exposed posts without rations or water for many long hours.

On the third day of battle, the Bolshevik batteries were augmented by two six inch guns brought down river from Seltzo to Andreevskaya, and all guns as throughout the first two days stayed safely beyond the furthestmost range of our feeble three inch pieces. Despairing of breaking down the obstinate defense of the bridge, the bombardment shifted to our fortifications on the forest flank of the center village, and here for hours high explosive projectiles and clouds of shrapnel fell at the rate of one shell every fifteen seconds, ranging from the strongpoints that guarded attack from the direction of the woods, to a row of huts on the side hill close by, where a platoon was quartered as a reserve for these outposts.

Hardly had the Americans withdrawn from one of these huts, when its roof was smashed with deafening explosion, and then bolts struck right and left with stunning rapidity like raging messages from hell, flinging debris and dirt and fragments of wood in wild disorder that fell down upon the prostrate men crouching in a nearby fold of ground. The houses on the hill were raked through and through and many became a chaos of splintered timbers; the air was stabbed by the sibilant, vindictive snarl of the shells, fluttered and throbbed with their violent passage, the ground trembled in quaking travail; shrapnel burst in gray clouds, fell rattling on the house roofs or plumped down to the wet ground with suggestive vicious thuds, and the cumulative effect of successive thunderclap detonations was like a physical pommeling on the brain.

But through it all the Americans held fast, clinging to

sanity by sheer point of a desperate wilfulness and facing the Bolshevik infantry men with unwavering front, so that they dared not show themselves and were still back in the forest when night came to heal the hideous turmoil of the day and still the shaking salvos that stormed through every hour of light, and would be renewed at first dawn, for the Bolsheviks never relented in their determination to take the village Toulgas.

The great Trotsky himself directed the attack. Prisoners said that, stationed like Napoleon on one of the river craft, he watched the battle from afar. The Soviet leader made an address to his soldiers and told them that he intended to keep hammering at Toulgas if it took all winter to break down resistance of the garrison. The battle was fought on the first birthday anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, and its objective was to sweep through the Allies' lines to Bereznik, where the soldiers were promised many gifts from the valuable stores there.

On the evening of this third day we took an appraisal of our fast failing resources and estimated the prospect of a further stand. If the attack had settled to a siege, it looked as if there was small hope ahead, for a quarter of the little company had been hit, and those who remained were hollow-eyed from fatigue, so weary that they staggered like drunken men. All night long, enemy patrols prowled about the defenses, sounding them for a weak point, rifles cracked and snapped and through the black sleepless hours, machine guns beat the devil's own tattoo.

There was a tacit understanding in the way each man eyed his mate that when the fortifications fell there would be a street fight in the center village and the Bolsheviks

would take no prisoners. These men from Michigan and Wisconsin had come from Camp Custer, and, when the trial came, Custer's spirit would triumph over flesh and live again the glory of the Little Big Horn. Likewise in those fighting ranks were heirs of Cromwell's men and a host of sires whose imperishable battle deeds have risen to the heights of gods the strength of mother England's fighting men. So there was no thought of surrendering Toulgas, and evacuation was entirely out of the question. If the Bolsheviks were bent upon a determined siege, they could bring fresh levies of men and new guns from their Dvina Headquarters at Krasnoborsk, a short distance from Seltzo; but Toulgas had no new guns to draw upon, and there were no supports and no reserves for Toulgas.

Our Command decided that the only hope lay in a bold counterstroke. The Scots relieved the Americans at the outposts, and in the murk of early morning, on the fourth day of battle, the American company crept through the noiseless forest and surrounded an observation post in the woods on the flank off Upper Toulgas. Several Bolsheviks were killed and the rest fled to the enemy village in panic, with the report of a great force which had overwhelmed them. The observation post with many rounds of small arms ammunition was set afire, the explosions sounded like the musketry of a regiment, and the tired and discouraged Bolsheviks thought it was a fresh regiment firing unseen from the unknown depths of the forest.

Fortune plays a great part in war, and uncertainty accounts for many things that appear inexplicable reviewed from the comfortable distance of peace; perhaps the most important information that can come to a commanding

officer is knowledge of enemy strength and his fighting morale, and the Bolsheviks had no such information. They had lost their Chief Commander Foukes in this forest counter-attack, and a message from him, found on the body of a runner who was trying to reach Upper Toulgas, read:

We are in the lowest village. One steamer coming up river — perhaps reinforcements. Attack more vigorously. Melochofski and Murafski are killed. If you do not attack I cannot hold on, and retreat is impossible.

11th November, 1918. 12:30 P. M.

FOUKES.

With Foukes, four of the five commissars had been killed, and now when the frightened survivors of the detached outpost spread the alarm of overwhelming numbers of Americans in the forest, the Bolsheviks were seen fleeing Upper Toulgas in skeltering disorder.

The Americans dared not pursue, for to do so would have revealed their true strength, and they were outnumbered four to one. Besides, they were too elated at being rid of the enemy to give him the chance to return to the attack. They contented themselves with taking prisoner those stragglers who could not keep pace with the leaderless rabble that dispersed into the forest.

A row of houses isolated near the stream at the edge of Upper Toulgas was suspected of being the dwelling place of unfriendly peasants. The Bolsheviks used these houses as vantage points for sharpshooters, and in the counter combat a number of prisoners were taken from them, so now, when we gained the upper hand, "sniper's row" of huts was condemned, the peasants were cast out with their scanty possessions, and as the first snow filled the air and spread

an apron over the drab colored ground, the homes of their fathers became a sea of crackling flames, and the poor moujiks, women and children sobbing hysterically, and men with mute sadness and uncomprehending resignation on their bearded faces, set forth to begin life anew.

The prisoners taken in this battle of Armistice Day, all except one, expressed no martyr's devotion to the cause of the Soviets. Some spoke of being impressed in the Red army at the point of the bayonet, and being kept in the ranks by the same argument. Others said that they had joined to escape starvation, and there appeared to be something plausible in this assertion for as far as we had gone into the interior the people of the Archangel villages were in desperate want. The Bolsheviki had commandeered all available food supplies which at best were not bountiful, barely sufficient to sustain the life of the villages through the long cold winter; a few potatoes with a little wheat which the peasants had cached in forest dugouts sustained life in some manner. Later had not the Allies doled out rations of flour and other food stuffs from Archangel, many in the Province would have perished of slow starvation during that winter of 1919.

The ration of the Bolshevik army was ample enough; a portion that looked princely to the moujik: a *funt* (fourteen ounces) of meat, one and three-quarters *funts* of bread, with tea, sugar and tobacco for every soldier.

If the stories of the prisoners were true and not inspired by motives of gaining sympathy, one could believe those Russians of the *intelligencia* who asserted that the Bolshevik party was a minority party of terrorism, and that very few Russians were ardent Soviets.

Even Lenine himself, once said that of every one hundred Bolsheviks fifty were knaves, forty fools, and probably only one a sincere follower.

Two highly cultivated artillery officers, who had held commissions in the Imperial Army, gave themselves up shortly after the battle of Armistice Day and told a tale of being forced into the Bolshevik army by the threat to kill their families if they refused. They said that all Bolshevik officers were ceaselessly observed by spies who were quick to report to Staff Headquarters the slightest symptom of a wayward disposition, or the suspicion of any gesture of mutiny.

Few of the prisoners wore any regulation military uniforms. In appearance there was nothing, except the carrying of firearms, to distinguish them from the moujiks of the villages. Both were clad in like *valenkas*, or felt boots, dirty, gray, curled, high fur hats, shapeless dun-colored tunics. Many of the villagers were in sympathy with the Soviets, and despite all vigilance, there was an active system of espionage between many moujiks and the Bolshevik leaders with which it was impossible to cope. Our Intelligence received information that the rear attacking party had been conducted to our lines by a prominent resident of Toulgas, and sometimes the enemy showed amazing knowledge of our forces and the state of our fortifications that must have come from those in whose houses we dwelt as unwelcome guests.

There was but brief respite after the four days' battle of Armistice Day, for the American engineers set all hands vigorously to work on the winter defenses. Around the center village, blockhouses were built on the forest flank,

and at front and rear at points distanced from two to three hundred yards one from the other. Coils of barbed wire were transported over the snow from Bereznik and strung in wire aprons between the strong points. Every blockhouse had an automatic rifle or a machine gun, and some at the more important posts had two, all targeted and trained to lay down a devastating, enfilade fire along the connecting wire barriers. A few Colt machine guns that were air cooled arrived, and helped the morale immensely, for they had no difficulty functioning in the very low temperatures. Then, when there was more time, the blockhouses were reconstructed with heavy timbers and piled high with sand so that they became bomb proof to anything except the explosion of a six inch shell, and even along the unfear'd river bank there were placed two small blockhouses with machine guns.

When the snow mounted high and icy winds stung with the sting of wasps, Toulgas had become a fortress, well nigh impregnable, unless her defenses were penetrated from within, or the attack came in hopelessly overpowering numbers.

But scarce had all this preparation commenced, when came glorious news of the Armistice. The war was ended, and it was taken as a matter of course that the coming peace would extend to the war of the Arctic Circle.

From the outset the soldiers never had any rampant enthusiasm in this strange conflict with its motives of mystery, but while the struggle in France went on they stilled their questioning doubts and followed the work set out for them by their officers in the uncertain belief that somewhere back of the scenes at Paris or London or Wash-

ington those in the high places had charted a wise policy beyond the comprehension of a common soldier; and that in some devious, undisclosed way the campaign in Russia was necessary, was playing its inexplicable part in completing the defeat of the Germans. Even when weeks elapsed and no announcement of change in policy was forthcoming, the men were patient and did not complain. But when at the end of November, Consul General Poole sent word from Archangel that the Americans in North Russia would continue at their tasks to the end, knowledge came to the soldier with stunning reality that the great struggle in which he was prepared to die had no relation to the war with Russia, in which he probably would die, that he was engaged in a war which had no assignable reason for its being, in which many of his companions had already been killed, and the end was not in sight.

The uncertainty, the isolation of the distant snowbound fronts, the ever present prospect of being trapped by enemy occupation of the villages along the extended communication line, and now that the excitement of the fight had waned, the depressing monotony of the days ground down the spirit of the men. They commenced to lose heart. Life became a very stale, flat, drab thing in the vast stretches of cheerless snow reaching far across the river to the murky, brooding skies and the encompassing sheeted forests, so ghostly and so still, where death prowled in the shadows and the sinking realization came home of no supports or reserves along the two hundred miles of winding winter road to Archangel.

Week follows week, and November goes by, and December, and no word comes from the War Department. No

reassuring message to the perplexed Commander-in-Chief, defining the purposes of the war, its duration, when relief will come. No word comes and the soldier is left to think that he has been abandoned by his country and left to rot on the barren snow wastes of Arctic Russia.

Men move about wintered Toulgas emitting great clouds of vaped breath, shuffling over the snow in the clumsy Shakleton Arctic boots, wrapped in great coats against the bitter, deadly cold; on their faces the condemned look of felons from whom all hope has fled.

In the dismal huts of the village soldiers are packed with the crowded moujik families like herded animals, where the atmosphere is dank and pestilent with an odor like stale fish. Filth is on the floor and vermin creep from the cracks and crevices of the log walls.

In December and January there are only a few hours of feeble shadowing light, then tragic blackness blots out the snows and the mournful woods and the skies of melodrama. With night the tiny windows are shrouded with board coverings, a candle flickers in the low ceiling room, unless the issue is exhausted, then a bully beef can is produced, filled with bacon grease and an improvised rag wick which flutters a hesitant glimmering through the heavy gloom.

There through the long dark unwholesome hours, the Americans sit and think thoughts more black than the outside night. Red, hateful, revolutionary thoughts like those of the maddened mob that rushed Louis Seize to the guillotine, and that would threaten the stability of any nation. Black thoughts of their country and the smug, pompous statesmen who with sonorous patriotic phrases had sent them to exile; of the casual people at home and their

damned complacency and their outlook on war as a gorgeous heraldry of youth, a gay, romantic adventure.

Sometimes it almost seemed as if malignant Bolshevism had poisoned the air, for once in February when the situation looked worst and nothing seemed certain except annihilation for the whole garrison, the American soldiers at Toulgas threatened, unless promised early relief, to walk out like disgruntled factory hands. The same thing, but with a more serious aspect, occurred in an American company at Archangel; and the French on the Railway had, at first rumor of the Armistice, flatly deserted and returned to Archangel. At Kodish a company of British refused to fight further in this indefinite war, and among the first conscripted Russian troops there was serious mutiny resulting in much bloodshed.

But there was nothing mutinous in this expression of opinion at Toulgas. It seemed the only course to civilian soldiers who were schooled in strikes under an industrial system where the strike has always been the concerted expression of disapproval by those who toil in the ranks. When the nature of a mutiny was explained to these men, they felt a burning shame for what they had done so unwilfully, and never again, throughout the many discouraging, hopeless days that followed, was there the smallest hint of protest from these civilian American soldiers.

When the days were shortest, the commissary transport broke down, and for a time the principal ration was corned beef that was frozen in the tin, and a nauseating mixture of vegetables and stewed meat that had been alternately frozen and thawed in the tin, and when eaten, gave some loathsome skin diseases and others dysentery.

Cooking and eating were the only breaks in the melan-

choly monotony; there was no diversion, no relaxation, no recreation, and the divine gift of humor which was the salvation of the Western soldier, was denied to the soldier of North Russia, for humor springs from buoyant spirits, the wells of radiant health, and the Americans on the Dvina were so physically depleted that in February the medical officer of the First Battalion reported that one-third of all those on active duty should be committed to the hospital without delay. But these sickened soldiers could not be sent to the hospital without abandoning the undermanned posts that guarded the garrison.

Robbed of physical resistance and broken in spirit it was pitiful to see strong men and brave men become shrinking cowards, filled with a vague, sapping dread, under the uninterrupted strain and the depressing influence of the long nights. Fidgety sentinels were constantly seeing lurking Bolsheviks conjured by their morbid imagination from the menacing shadows of the woods, and there was an epidemic of accidental self-inflicted wounds, which always occurred at the ticklish, unsupported, advanced positions.

The doctors pronounced many as cases of neurasthenia induced by much loss of sleep, unbroken fatigue, and continual drain upon the nervous forces. They looked solemn and dubious and said it was demanding too much of human endurance to expect the defense to hold on without relief through the many winter days that stretched ahead.

One January night, terrible in the severity of its cold, all hands "stood to" and waited for the rush from the woods, for sentinels had heard the muttering of many voices and had caught the movement of bodies among the trees; but no attack developed, and in the morning the tracks of

timber wolves were found approaching almost to our wire, where the pack had stopped to sniff the scent from these strange tenanted loghouses, standing apart on the snow, like outcasts of the village.

The few sentinels kept far in advance at the front village were always having jumping nerves, and robbing exhausted men of precious sleep; but once in truth they were nearly surrounded during the night and escaped by a miracle. So it was decided to burn the houses, as "sniper's row" had been burned in November. Some two hundred peasants were turned out in the snow, and Upper Toulgas became a dirty smudge on the whitened plain over which our range of visibility extended far to the forward woods, and our field of fire was increased comfortingly.

The High Command passed out word that Arctic conditions would preclude any active fighting, but the prisoners spoke differently. They said that the Bolshevik Staff expected the Allied soldiers to die like flies in the cold winter, that the enemy intended to strike when the cold was most bitter, the snow deepest, and so they did.

In January, with a temperature forty degrees below zero Fahrenheit, at midnight, Bolshevik batteries from across the Dvina commenced shelling Toulgas, and continued for fifteen minutes a bombardment that went wild in the dark and struck harmlessly far from our works.

Directly the last shell had been fired, enemy infantry advanced in the open and rushed our front posts. In the darkness there was frantic, wild fighting and struggling in the deep snow, shrill yells and a confused babble in a foreign language, the hideous moans of the wounded, the ringing commands of the commissars in rear, urging their men

forward to sure death, and the prolonged explosions of machine guns spurting a rain of bullets over the heads of the attackers to warn them of a death that waited in rear if they turned back.

In two hours the force of the assault was spent, the last shot had been fired, and the snow before one of the blockhouses, where enfilading fire had cut up the attack, was covered with Bolshevik bodies. The fight was an uneven one, for the Americans in the blockhouses fired from bullet proof cover and were sheltered from the weather; but the Bolsheviks had to advance against barbed wire, struggle in the snow against targeted machine guns and had no protection from paralyzing cold. Many of the prisoners were so badly frostbitten that arms and feet were amputated to save their lives.

In February, acting in cooperation with the enemy offensive on the Vaga, a large force of fresh troops composed mainly of the Eighty-second Tarasovo regiment, who knew nothing of the reputation of Toulgas and the fate of other attacking parties, waded through the cold snow forests, clad in white smocks to blend with the color of the ground, floundered up to our lines in the impenetrable night, and were not discovered until they were engaged in cutting the wire between two blockhouses. They were fairly trapped then between the enfilading fire of two sets of machine guns and suffered fearful carnage before they fought their bloody way back wading ponderously through the deep snow to the forest.

Some of the dead came abruptly to life and gave themselves up when a search was made of the bodies next morning; horribly frozen by exposure, they said they preferred

an uncertain chance of life at the hands of the Englishskis and Americanskis, to the certain chance of death in a further attempt to conquer Toulgas.

After this sanguinary fight, the Bolshevik soldiers met in a great assemblage, made bitter speeches against the Commander who had led them to disaster, and resolutions were passed which threatened death to any commissar who insisted on another assault of Toulgas and the fighting fiends who defended it.

So this village, far up the Dvina, was no longer the prey for wild midnight sorties and desperate melodramatic clashes in the deep snow, and there might have been comparative peace for the garrison were it not for adherence to those cardinal precepts of military orthodoxy that aggressive contact with the enemy must be always maintained and reconnaissance is vital to a successful combat campaign. It was to conform to these inflexible precepts of the military that patrols left Toulgas seeking for Bolsheviks. Sometimes they went forth on webfooted snow-shoes, and scouted the forest far on the threatening flank to discover whether the enemy had found some new method to approach our positions, and then they served a useful purpose. But the customary patrol party was the one that went out every day, a band of three or four, along a trail of padded snow just wide enough for a single file, that led through the front forest, five miles to the nearest enemy position at Zastrovia.

A hunter can understand this tracked snow trail. It was like a game runway that leads to a salt lick, fresh signs show that deer pass every day, and it is only a question of time until the hunter gets his chance for the fatal shot.

Sometimes, by the mere coincidence of fate, a patrol

would turn about in the trail and start back towards friendly lines, when a machine gun would snap and crack and a rush of bullets sing harmlessly high, where another hundred yards meant death from the ambushade; and often the scouts would come to the hidden waiting spot where imprints in the snow left the story of a large Bolshevik force that had stayed long, but, overcome by the cold, had been forced to quit the death hunt.

Often the Bolsheviks would leave bundles of propaganda on these patrol paths, much of it written in English, inciting British and American soldiers to mutiny, to kill their officers and join the Soviets in a revolution for the world wide supremacy of the proletariat.

Death walked these white runways. Death, and his romantic partner, Chance. But the color of youth had vanished before dour, wan reality with the soldier of North Russia, and the romance of Chance was lost on him. Yet it was strange how often men could walk these suicidal paths and escape unscathed. The goddess was kind, she visited them with benevolent mood, save a few times such as once in March, when from a party of seven, only one got back to tell of the fatal ambush.

When a platoon hurries out to pick up some sign of the others, it is caught in the open at Upper Toulgas, pocketed from the supporting fire of our own lines. There in the open snow, and denied all cover, the men are trapped like condemned animals. They flatten on the snow and fire at an unscen foe that pelts a withering fire from behind trees three hundred yards on a quartering forward flank; bullets whip the snow beside them and sweep by in such a storm that the air whimpers and cries aloud like a tortured liv-

ing thing. At the end of three hours snow clogging in rifle breeches has frozen solid and they can shoot no more. Then, when it looks as if all were lost, the last man on the line gets back to the artillery, but is so winded and farked by his experience that his directions are a confused babble and the artillery opens up at risk of hitting our own men, shrapnel bursts in front of the platoon, the murdering fire from the clump of trees slackens, and the officer is able to withdraw his men to a God-given dip in the ground, all that are left of them, for out on the white snow still stretches a crumpled drab colored line; some lie very still, others writhe in the agony of grievous or fatal wounds.

Two days after this shambles of the snows, an officer and three men were met, on the forest runway to Zastrovia, by the fire of a large force of Bolsheviks, but until the day the Americans left Toulgas, there was no abatement of the perilous policy of patrols in this undefined war, where the loss of every life seemed sacrilegious sacrifice.

And this amazing campaign so prodigal of men's lives continued through the lengthening winter days.

At the end of March the sun had mounted high, and the snows were fields of myriad dazzling diamonds. A new fresh fragrance filled the air, and brought the promise of vague, perceptible hope. Spring was coming with the sun, and the renewal of youth would not be denied.

Then the Headquarters of the American Expeditionary Force took cognizance of the war with Russia and sent a general officer to command the forces from Archangel.

Then the Secretary of War announced that no more troops would be sent, and the units there withdrawn.

This was the end, but the Americans did not know it. The Royal Scots came to take over the defenses, the old Category Bs, with their wound stripes, their traditional, cockney jauntiness and just a hint of superiority in their eyes for the Yanks who were leaving the show.

It was strange how that night the winter's harshness relented in the gentle lulling wind, and in the luminous spell of the limpid moon, weary, war-worn Toulgas was at peace, sleeping, in unbroken white stillness.

Far up the sloping hill the rude silhouette of the center village is etched against a starlighted sky. Forward the church, shell gashed and mutilated, with its grotesque minarets, and the moon, a pendulous globe of living fire. Clear in the lucid light is the hard contested bridge, that means so little and yet so much; beyond, the charred ruins of the sacrificed village, and, still farther, the somber, gloomy forest. Vividly white gleams the church beneath the steely mystic moon, but whiter than the church or moon are the endless wastes of immaculate, unmarred snows that reach across the great river to the lurking darkness of the distant shore and abroad to the sinister shadows of crested trees.

This is Russia of the American soldier—a cluster of dirty huts, dominated by the severe white church, and, encircling all, fields and fields of spotless snows; Russia, terrible in the grasp of devastating Arctic cold; the squalor and fulsome filth of the villages; the moujik, his mild eyes, his patient bearded face—the gray drudgery and gaping ignorance of his starved life; the little shaggy pony, docile and uncomplaining in winds, icy as the breath of the sepulcher; Russia, her dread mystery, and that intangible quality of melodrama that throngs the air, and lingers

in the air, persistently haunts the spirit, and is as consciously perceptible as the dirty villages, the white church, and the grief-laden skies.

It was not until nearly June the Americans were told that their bizarre service to their country was at an end. They were to go by slow stages back through the Dvina villages, always within call in case of dire need. But at last the purple day comes, and they are going home. A troop ship off among the ice floes of the White Sea toils westward, and upon its decks is a throng of soldiers who gaze with equivocal valediction upon the failing Russian coast, which mingles imperceptibly with the distant haze, and so passes like this shameful war to the bourne of memory's empire. The fairy rumor has come true, the Americans are going home.

THE VAGA

27th Oct., '18

Dear Colonel Stewart:

I understand you have very little information of the situation up here. I have very little myself, and what I get is usually from rumors unless I go to British Hdqrs and ask for it which I do not care to do.

. . . . The commander of Force C has my Bn scattered so much there is only one company in a place. Have two companies under my orders Co A is up the river about 25 versts from here Co C is at this place and one Plt of Co A. Co B is over on the Dvina and Co D is with Force D about half way to Archangel between the river and the railroad.

. . . . Suppose part of us will winter here, but do not know yet. . . .

Excerpts from letter written from Shenkurst on the Vaga, by Lieutenant Colonel John B. Corbley to Colonel George E. Stewart, Commanding Officer, 339th United States Infantry, Archangel, Russia.

“In North Russia, Shenkurst has been abandoned and the Allies are in a precarious position. The country is apt to hear much of these American battalions of North Russia, whether they live or die. If they live, it will be only after an heroic struggle with two fierce enemies—man and nature. If they die, it will only be after they have expended the last ounce of strength and the last cartridge.”

The Washington Post, 28th January, 1919.

“Shenkurst has been evacuated and we are greatly outnumbered, but there is not the slightest reason for anxiety. New positions have been occupied a little further north. The Archangel expedition is quite safe, and always has been safe.”

The London Times, 28th January, 1919.

IX

THE VAGA

THE meagre numbers of the Railway had been irreparably spent by the establishment of the Onega force, on the west, and a like outguard at Seletskoe on the east, with its right and left wings, Kodish and Shred Mekrenga.

Now, as it followed up the Dvina, in the same manner, the dubious, striking power of the River Column was lost by the output along the tenuous, weaving waterway of many communicating posts, that like great drops of heart blood from a mortal hurt, wasted its vitality and drained its strength, until it could go no further.

These posts, like Indian blockhouses of frontier days, were strung along the river course nearly to far Archangel, and in them, insignificant detachments, with the grim, quiet resolution of the frontier men, and the steady, reliant nerve of the frontier men, safeguarded the backward way, where always silent, winter darkness held ceaseless, dire, ominous threats.

In the Shred Mekrenga offensive of January, when the enemy sought to cut off the River Column from its base, he launched a venomous attack at one of these river posts far back at Morjagorskaya, but the British garrison held without flinching and saved the communications by a narrow margin.

By this process of dispatching numerous, guarding detachments throughout the province, the Allied forces, ut-

terly trivial at the outset, became so dispersed that the "offensive war" swiftly degenerated into a disjunctive, raiding excursion, and the invasion, instead of striking the Red Bolos with terror and chasing them like scurrying quail to cover, was regarded by the enemy with contempt, even derision. The Bolshevik soldiers, at first panicky, soon overcame their fear, and when their leaders saw that no reinforcements could come through the frozen north port, they assumed an attitude of aggressive defiance, and were ever conducting raids, ever menacing the long, basal lines, the flanks and rear of the far separated, uncoordinated, unsupported Allied fronts. On the Dvina, hardly had the detached American company taken over the defense of the costly stores at Bereznik, when friendly natives from Shenkurst directed the observation of our Command to the danger of a rear flanking movement from that quarter, so half of the garrison was detailed up the Vaga to take possession of this city of Shenkurst in the name of "friendly intervention."

It must be said that for the most part the city welcomed, with a genuine, welcoming spirit, the coming of the foreign liberators, for many people had fled north to Shenkurst from the violent Reds at Moscow and Petrograd, who hated the *intelligencia* and everything else that was unproletarian, with a destructive, vehement hatred.

These people were the Russians of literature, cultivated and mannerly in appearance, soft spoken in approach, and accustomed to the niceties, the softer things of life. They wore shoes and stockings, and with a revealing hint of gawkiness, most of the rest of our unimaginative, Western habit; also they had a few of the simple delicacies on their

tables that seemed like fairy gifts to the homesick, American soldiers.

The Vaga is noticeably smaller than the Dvina, and seldom exceeds a breadth of a half mile, more often it is five hundred yards, even less, and the soil through which it plows a tumid trail is soft, sandy loam, so that high, commanding bluffs have been eroded by its waters, where the villages group in almost neighborly proximity. On one of these bluff heights, stood effete Shenkurst, a generation removed from moujik poverty and enchaining ignorance, and consciously superior to the humble log huts that below north and south trailed the river. The dominating buildings, a monastery, a barracks of the Tsar, and five conspicuous churches were white as Russia's snows, and in the fall, made Shenkurst flaringly garish in its frame of tenebrious, surrounding forest.

Nearly a week of tranquillity passed with the Americans at Shenkurst, when the Staff, chafing at this prolonged unbelligerency, issued orders "to stir up the enemy," and some one hundred Americans, with fifty Allied Russian soldiers, embarked to reconnoitre the upper river.

All was uneventful, until ten miles out from Shenkurst, when suddenly an unseen fire poured from both high river embankments on the steamer bearing the unsuspecting, scouting party; there was no method of gauging the ambushade, which judged by the volume of fire, most of which screeched harmlessly high, was far stronger than the Americans; but on the instant, the officer beached his craft on the nearest ground, the eager men scrambled over the side into the water waist deep, and engaged the enemy, who was so taken back by this unexpected action that he wilted

into the forest; then, entirely undaunted, the little party moved on down the forest road, which wound south with the river, and into the sinister shadows of an unexplored, uncharted, alien country, where many signs pointed to certain, overpowering resistance, and the law of probabilities pointed to extinction.

The American in command, Captain Odjard, was more an antique Viking than a city-bred modern, and as the intrepid march continued, he never wavered in his purpose to penetrate the heart of the Bolshevik stronghold; for twenty days he kept on, despite distressing hardship, and short, iron rations, and most grievous of all, the utter absence of comforting tobacco. Reports came constantly that the enemy was intent upon the capture or destruction of the little band, Bolsheviks thronged the forward way through the forest, and every day information reached Captain Odjard that the villages in his rear were heavily garrisoned with enemy forces; most serious of all, the fast vanishing ration supplies would soon be all gone. Situations such as this search the innermost fiber of the stuff that makes for leadership. There are no precedents. A man of courage and valiant will would face about and fight his way back and perhaps die fighting. A coward would vacillate and falter in a mortal terror of indecision, and thus perish.

Stonewall Jackson and Forrest would do the genius born, unexpected thing. The Viking pressed onward, met the hostile Russians, forced them to a savage engagement, in which they lost in killed and wounded twice the number of the entire reconnoitering force, then turned about and backtracked the cleared way to the south, hastily abandoned



The only means of transportation after the rivers were closed

by the Bolsheviks, in every reasonable fear of meeting the outnumbering reinforcements that surely must be coming up in support of such a bold and confident advance.

But at Ust Padenga, fifteen miles from Shenkurst, the party was stopped by a dispatch from Headquarters. It would go no farther downstream, but would act as an advanced outguard for the main Vaga position, a barricade to serve as a distant, delaying obstacle, and so render the inner post more easily defended.

For when the notion of an offensive war languished with the General Staff, and had nearly expired, it was revived a little by the theory of "an offensive defense," in which the six, widely scattered, battle fronts acted as protective tentacles, each of them in turn establishing an "offensive" outguard for Archangel, since once this virus of the "offensive defense" was inoculated in the Allied Command, it would not rest dormant, but persisted, assertive to the ultimate.

Meanwhile, Nature, flagrantly disrespectful of the military, swung the seasons in their immutable cycle. Fall made her parting courtesy, and winter with dread message and icy breath waited on the threshold.

The hope was not yet dead of the Railway Column gaining Plesetskaya, and the present objective of the Vaga force was to penetrate some eighty miles to Velsk, an important junction point of roads converging from the area of Plesetskaya, from the city of Vologda and from the Dvina.

The Railway got little further than Obozerskaya, and the little River Column, by the end of October, was at bay, fighting for life nearly two hundred miles from Kotlas, its first objective.

But before these forces had been halted, already the Vaga Expedition had gone too far, thrust out nearly one hundred miles from the Railway, and fifty miles further south than the River party, it presented inviting opportunity for enemy encirclement—a dangerous salient, projected midway between the two main Columns, and nearly three hundred miles from Archangel, by the tortuous course of the road.

The British are a bold people and it did not seem to weigh heavily with them that Shenkurst, the base of this Vaga Column, was flanked by hostile villages, where vain attempts had been made to drive out the Bolsheviks, that the city was garrisoned by locally recruited Russians, who had been tried and found wanting under fire, and whose loyalty might wane when the tide of Allied fortunes ebbed low, as soon it did.

Shenkurst must be held, and so the reconnaissance patrol, which had eluded doom only by the splendid dash of the men and brilliant leadership, stayed at Ust Padenga as an advanced outpost, and the theorists of the “offensive defense” were satisfied.

Captain Odjard took main station in a village on a precipitous cliff, that reared high from the river, and posted his Russian retainers in huts that clustered on the flat bank of the Vaga, nearly midway down the long valley that spread south to the forest.

Quartering from this second village, and much further down the valley was a third, conspicuous on another abrupt bluff, which when seen from the distance of the main post, the house tops had the picturesque appearance of toy roofs, sculptured on a pedestal.

The houses on the flat river bank stood out naked on the snow, and in case of attack, could be supported from the main position, for they were well within effective shooting range; but the other, the elevated village, was nearly a mile away, and beside it, on the west, the forest crowded perilously near; gullies were at the base of the bluff which made "dead ground" there, a series of natural trenches for an attacking party. It was a hazardous spot, the Russians would not stay in this distant, treacherous "Death's snare" on the heights; and they wagged their heads lugubriously over the few Americans who persisted in holding it. From the steep side of Headquarters' cliff, the usual wagon road descended, sent offshoots to the two south villages, and trailed off to the concealment of the lower forest.

Week succeeded week in lonely Ust Padenga, where the sad disgarnishment of this tragical, little war was seared vivid in the living consciousness of American soldiers. The Armistice came, but with it no word of enlightenment, until they were led to believe that in the general rejoicing, the stirring movement of momentous events, no heed could be given to the trifling performances of their fantastic, Arctic side show, long since forgotten in France.

Yet strange, the soldiers did not grow deeply embittered, a stoic calm came over all and they became worshippers of the Russian philosophy, *nitchevoo*, votaries of the Fates, burning frankincense at their shrine, praying favor, yet unmoved by their displeasure, indifferent to their whimsical caprice. They became atrophied men, asking nothing of the future and expecting nothing. The doctors said many were cases of neurotic disorder, and others suffered from enteritis and scabies, and ordered rest and the hospital, but

the Staff waived the medical men brusquely aside and sarcastically asked who was to hold off the Bolsheviks.

During November, and shortly following the Armistice, two patrols "seeking contact," were waylaid in ambush, and from the first, only one man came back. The officer of the second might have escaped, but to do so he would have had to leave a detachment in distress, surrounded in the forest. He rather chose the hazard of death, and leading the fight, he laid down his life for his friends.

During the weeks of December and January, with their bitter cold and dismal, somber days, trees were felled about the defenses to widen the field of fire, and long, intersecting lanes were laid through the forest like swaths through a standing grain field, so that the machine guns and the automatics might hurl their spray of death at longer range, where skulked shadowed and grisly, white forms. When in the dead and quiet of the night, rockets burst from unknown quarters, flared with ghostly glare and faded in mystery behind inky, plumose silhouettes.

In the cold and the long darkness of winter, there was time for reflection for any one who would be so idle, on the defenselessness of the position, the remoteness from the base, the hordes that were massing on the road north to Shenkurst and meant soon to make "the big push."

Our Intelligence reported that in January the Sixth Bolshevik Army of the north numbered forty-five thousand seven hundred, and the dribbling replenishment of our forces that had come down the railway from open Murmansk, had far from kept pace with attrition by sickness and gunshot wounds. Disregarding our Russian Allies, we did not have six thousand men at all fronts.

By the middle of January, a blighting influence, a devastating, nether presence filled the air, like the spell of an evil spirit, and as capable of being finitely recorded as the testimony of eyes and ears. There was in the atmosphere something closely akin to that heavy, stifling calm, that in the summertime hangs over all, before the wind swoops down and the first, big, pelting raindrops fall from blackened thunder clouds, the advance guard of the drenching storm that descends to earth in howling, unrestrained fury.

All at lone Ust Padenga knew the storm was coming, it was only a question of where it would strike. On the 19th day of January, the dispositions were these: a platoon of Americans held the village on the pedestal, fifty-four allied Russians were in the village on the flat below, and the main body of Americans, some two hundred strong, two Field Pieces, one One Pounder of Russian design, one Pom Pom and forty Russian artillerymen (who funked in the first fight and were relieved by Canadians), were in the backward village on the high bluff.

At dawn, for one hour, enemy batteries from across the Vaga shelled the foremost position on the elevated ground, then suddenly ceased firing, and like grotesque Jacks in the Box, swarms of white-clad Bolsheviks arose by magic from the concealment of the ravines. A succession of long, white lines came from the close forest, and across the open snow of the Vaga came still more advancing, white-clothed men.

Against such bulked masses, resistance was impossible. Three machine guns, burst after burst, tore rending gaps in the coming lines, but they merely welded and kept on.

When the last pannier of ammunition was gone, word was given to blaze a path through to the rear—and double time! And now down the steep hillside the trapped company charged, tumbling and fighting like maddened, cornered animals, until they gained a foothold on the road which stretched out bleak and coverless eight hundred yards to the main village. Some tried to make a run of it over the bottomless, intervening snows, where they struggled piteously like hobbled animals and were killed. But in most part, they dashed in frantic relays down the open road, sprinting forward a score of yards, then flattening on the ground, and so on, rushing and sprawling flat, until the fatal course was run, while every rifle from the abandoned village on the height, and the flanking forest and across the Vaga spurted death, and machine guns rattled rasping death, and bullets lashed the air with the furious cracking of ten thousand whips, or sped fluttering through the snow, and went off whimpering into space, or felled men with sledgelike blows, until the doomed way was strewn, end to end, with the prostrate forms of the fallen ones, and a pitiful few, by some fluke of luck, had gained the shielding hill.

Not ten minutes had been taken in that terrible dash through that valley of Death's shadow, and of the forty-seven who began the journey, six reached the goal of the main village. In the fearful sub-zero temperature, all of the wounded would have perished by freezing, had not a volunteer party, braving the unspeakable, barbarous Bolos (who for some reason held their fire), gone out in the open snow and brought them to shelter. Fifteen were thus accounted for, and the rest lay somewhere beyond sight,



When the snow mounted high the fortifications had been made safe against any projectile save a six-inch shell

"missing in action," that ambiguous, impersonal expression of the War Department, so fraught with mingled hope and dread, harrowing fear.

When night screened the battle scene, the Allied Russians, upon their own inspiration, evacuated the village on the flat, and the next day, the unwitting Bolsheviks began the second phase of their investment of Ust Padenga. Again the artillery, even more violently than the first day, flung hurtling blasts at the deserted village, and late at day, the infantry, grotesque, bobbing objects out on the wide snow stretches, stormed the uncontested position. It was like rifle practice to shoot down those living targets, glaringly open on the white snow, and they were downed by tattering bursts of shrapnel, downed by musketry, downed by awful devastating bursts from machine guns, that moved them row upon row, until the last man had passed to the cover of this village of costly folly, and the snow was dotted with dead and wounded, which, from the distant hill, looked grotesquely like raisins stuck in an immense rice pudding.

On the third day, the surviving village, lying bare on the unsheltered top of the cliff, was the target of a barrage that searched it house to house, until many of the moujik homes were wrecks of smashed timbers, and the trail of human wreckage was a ghastly, unsightly thing. The American doctor went to death, a victim of the shells, because he would not have his wounds bound up while a single, private soldier was not relieved, but he lives with Vaga men as long as life endures, a symbol of moral grandeur and noblest self abnegation, that will ever inspire faith in the immortal, spiritual entity of man.

It was not the Viking Captain who ordered retreat from Ust Padenga. Half of his little company was gone, but he had no thought of yielding. He would have held on until the last dog was hung, if superior directions had not come from Shenkurst. He loved a fight, this antique Norseman, loved the wild, esoteric fury of it. Three times, his men threw back the Bolsheviks, and caught in a contagion of blood lust, they craved still more, maddened by battle, they took hilarious delight in seeing "the Bolos bite the snow banks."

They did not know that pitted against them was the vanguard of an army that by every objective rule of warfare should have crushed this rash, little group to utter destruction; but if Ust Padenga did not know, all at Shenkurst were fully alert to the gravity of the situation. This was the much proclaimed Bolshevik offensive, with its object, the annihilation of the Allied North Russian Expedition; and now as the full fury of the gigantic, impending assault unfolded, the "offensive defensive" theory found vindication, for at the Ust Padenga, little more than one company had stood off a regiment of the enemy.

There seemed small hope of escape for the valiant Vaga men who remained after the fourth night of the attack, when an incendiary shell fell upon the village, sending hungry, devouring flames athwart the curtain of the Russian night, till naught was left of the moujik homes save the gray ashes of "friendly intervention"; but in the confusion of concentration, the assemblage of large numbers and numerous troop movements, the retreating company glided in darkness down the center of the frozen, white covered Vaga, through the very midst of unsuspecting,

enemy hosts, and two nights later, reported at Headquarters tired and half starved, the Viking leader among the casualties with a serious wound.

In Shenkurst, the beleaguered city, in point of numbers, the Slavic Battalion, nearly twelve hundred strong, was the mainstay of the garrison, but on trial in a previous attack for one of the two flanking villages, it had made a sorry showing, and in a last stand, was estimated as of uncertain, staying quality. Besides these Russians, there was one full company of American Infantry, the exhausted half company from Ust Padenga, one section of the Thirty-Eighth Canadian Field Artillery, four Two Point Nine mountain pieces, and three trench mortars.

The Bolsheviks had surrounded Shenkurst in an immense, unnumbered multitude. They had mounted one nine inch gun, two six inch guns, four Four Point Sevens and a Battery of Field Artillery, and from three-quarters of the forest commenced to batter down the buildings.

It could be only a brief time before the city would be in ruins, but even more serious was the question of provisions. They were already limited, and in case of siege, no new supply could be brought up until the breaking of the river in May.

The Bolsheviks, confident that the garrison would try to escape from Shenkurst, waited in great masses on the main north road, eager for the coming slaughter; but a native had informed the Allied Command of a secret path through the deep, snow covered swamps, and at midnight, along this unknown route, evacuation was silently effected.

Before the retreat, the Allied Russians were sent as a protective screen along a flanking trail, but scarce had the

retiring movement begun, when what remained of them came rushing back in frantic haste, that was altogether unsoldierly, gasping an excited, incoherent story of how two entire companies had deserted to the enemy lines and the rest had fled in desperate fear for their lives.

Many civilians joined this bizarre, midnight march through the snow forest and swamps, and made the retreat a spectacle of wantonous disorder, as stoical men and wailing women strove heavily on, bent under the torturing weight of bundled treasures, which, under duress of fatigue, one by one were reluctantly abandoned, leaving a pathetic havoc of cluttering waste in the trail; and soldiers, weakened by much fasting and sleepless battle nights, lurched in the darkness, fell and lay in the cold snow, and had to be struck and urged on by violent means, so grateful was any surcease from further excruciating effort.

Late the next day, a merciful halt for the night was made at Shaguvvari, where a rear detached outpost of Shengkurst had been maintained, and which outnumbering, advance enemy patrols had vainly striven to dislodge. But the disheartening march was resumed in the morning, when the Bolsheviks were reported collecting in force to cut off retreat downstream. So Shaguvvari was added to the sum of Russian villages fed to fires of the Allied cause and became another charred ruin on the Vaga.

At villages outside of Kitsa, twenty miles further, trenches were dug in the snow, and barricades improvised of trees, in order that the driven troops might catch their breath. And on the Dvina, now only a few miles away, new positions were taken, where the imperiled River Column could be drawn back, and the consolidated Allied

forces stand embattled in a desperate last defense of Bereznik, for if Bereznik fell, all knew it meant the beginning of the siege of unfortified Archangel.

But the delaying action was prolonged beyond the most sanguine dream of hope, and at Vistafka and Yeeveevskaya, Maximofskaya and Ignatevskaya, the neighboring villages of Kitsa, the Americans held out, relieved in turns by British troops, and the remaining Slavic allies, who atoned for much by a heaven bestowed blunder that saved a surrounded post of the Americans.

These places, with their unpronounceable Slavic names, will be remembered always by the Vaga men, for here during Arctic February and March days, they fought savage, bloody fights in the mounting snowdrifts, and performed deeds of sublime sacrifice and courage, that will never be known save by those who were there.

They were still at Kitsa, and had not given ground, when the first redolence of spring softened the rasping, winter winds, and made the Bolshevik Commander draw back his artillery in fear of being mired in the yielding snow roads.

Not one of the Vaga men, in the innermost counsel of his heart, had ever expected to live through that winter onslaught, and when all with quiet courage stood ready for the end, lo, the enemy abandoned the field where victory awaited, and left the battle when it had been won. This petty, strange and inexplicable war was freighted deep with countless things of mystery, but none so beyond understanding as the failure of the Bolshevik Command to follow up the capture of Shenkurst.

The feeble, Allied remanent on the Vaga was reeling

from the stunning blows of the massed attack, and thought of resistance all hung on the hope of saving Archangel and the life of the Expedition; but when all tensed themselves for the crucial shock, it did not come, the Bolshevik advance weakened and faltered and held back, so that the defenders, panting in terrible exhaustion, were able to suck in the air of reviving strength and hold on. When later the attacks of February and March came, they were sporadic, and lacked the fury, the sustained and vehement driving power of the first assault. Now in spring, it was too late, for Nature with sun and gentle breath had definitely won the battle for the Vaga men, and they crossed the river to safety, leaving in the black, despairing night, two villages flaming, a recession of ill-will and destruction.

The first boast of "one Allied soldier against twenty Bolsheviks" had been made good, and the Expedition was saved, but by a precariously close margin. In no respect did the Allied Command so underestimate the enemy as in his power of military organization. The miserable "Bolo brigands" that were to have disbanded with the first punishment of Arctic cold, had raised an enormous army, which now, in late winter, exceeded one million soldiers, and the regiments that took Shenkurst must have laughed contemptuously at the undisciplined, untrained troops of the early days of the campaign.

Perhaps it will never be known why the Allies were not destroyed by these Vaga attacks. There were many villages capable of housing great numbers of soldiers south of Shenkurst, and probably in the January thrust, seven thousand five hundred to eight thousand hostile troops were quartered in them, a force that should have swept the Vaga

Column before it like chaff in the storming wind, but it did not do so, and one may conjecture that the reason was because Trotsky did not care to hazard the risk of stirring the American people and the British people to an avenging and genuine war by the annihilation of the lone Allied battalions. Greater wars have been brought about by more trivial causes; but the stronger probability is that the Bolshevik soldiers revolted at the staggering slaughter of the attacks over the deep snows.

"Our losses are terrible," said one of the prisoners, "the commissars cannot understand your resistance. We are twenty to one and have many guns. Our Commander expected to take Bereznik in three days, but the soldiers will not attack any more over the snow against your awful machine guns."

The troops at the Vaga battles could not be compared with the unruly, Bolo rabble of the early days. They shot low and were well officered by officers, mostly Letts, who had been trained in Trotsky's military schools at Moscow.

Another explanation might have been in the story of some of the prisoners, but which was never confirmed, that the soldiers had met in a solemn, protest meeting, following the last costly, Vaga offensive, and shot their Commander for his persistence in pushing on, despite the heavy casualties. The fatal potion of Kerensky's Order still poisoned the blood of the Russian army, and although the Soviet soldiers gave exhibition of great bravery, and were well led, they were not great soldiers; they failed in the ultimate trial, and did not go through to victory when stamina and resilience for the last lap would have won.

As the Vaga men had gone furthest in fulfillment of a

vain and futile mission, had parried the heart thrust, and beat back its violence, so were they the last to leave, and were still in battle at Malo Bereznik at the close of May, six months after the Armistice, that proclaimed Peace to an afflicted World, and poured cooling balm on a million wounds, so far from feverish, strife torn Russia.

Not until June did they meet their regimental comrades, coming from every compass point of the wide province, save the seaboard, impassable north, to assemble at Economia for the homegoing. There the battles of Kodish and the Railway, Onega, the Vaga and Dvina and Pinega Valley were fought again, until the white, Russian snows were hued rose red with blood of recounted slain, until American soldiers sailed away, bewildered still at this gambling murder game, and sacred life — the most contemptible stake in the mad lottery.

Not the Vaga men to idly speculate on causes! They knew full well the colonel's words, and were exalted still by the fervor of their sacrificial avowal, the noblest of mankind — to lay down life for a friend.

PINEGA

19th March, 1919.

C. G. Tours.

HQ: 3407, Following telegram repeated from Archangel quote Information as to future possible relief for this expedition would materially improve the morale of troops after their long winter of Field Service, and it would also assist me in making arrangements for the future. So far I have not received any official information as to prospects.

Signed Stewart unquote.

Repeated to G. H. Q. and Agware.

Wheeler.

“It has always been a cardinal axiom of the Allied and Associated Powers to avoid interference in the internal affairs of Russia. Their original intervention was made for the sole purpose of assisting those elements in Russia which wanted to continue the struggle against German autocracy, and to free their country from German rule, and in order to rescue the Czechoslovaks from the danger of annihilation at the hand of the Bolshevik forces.”

G. CLEMENCEAU.

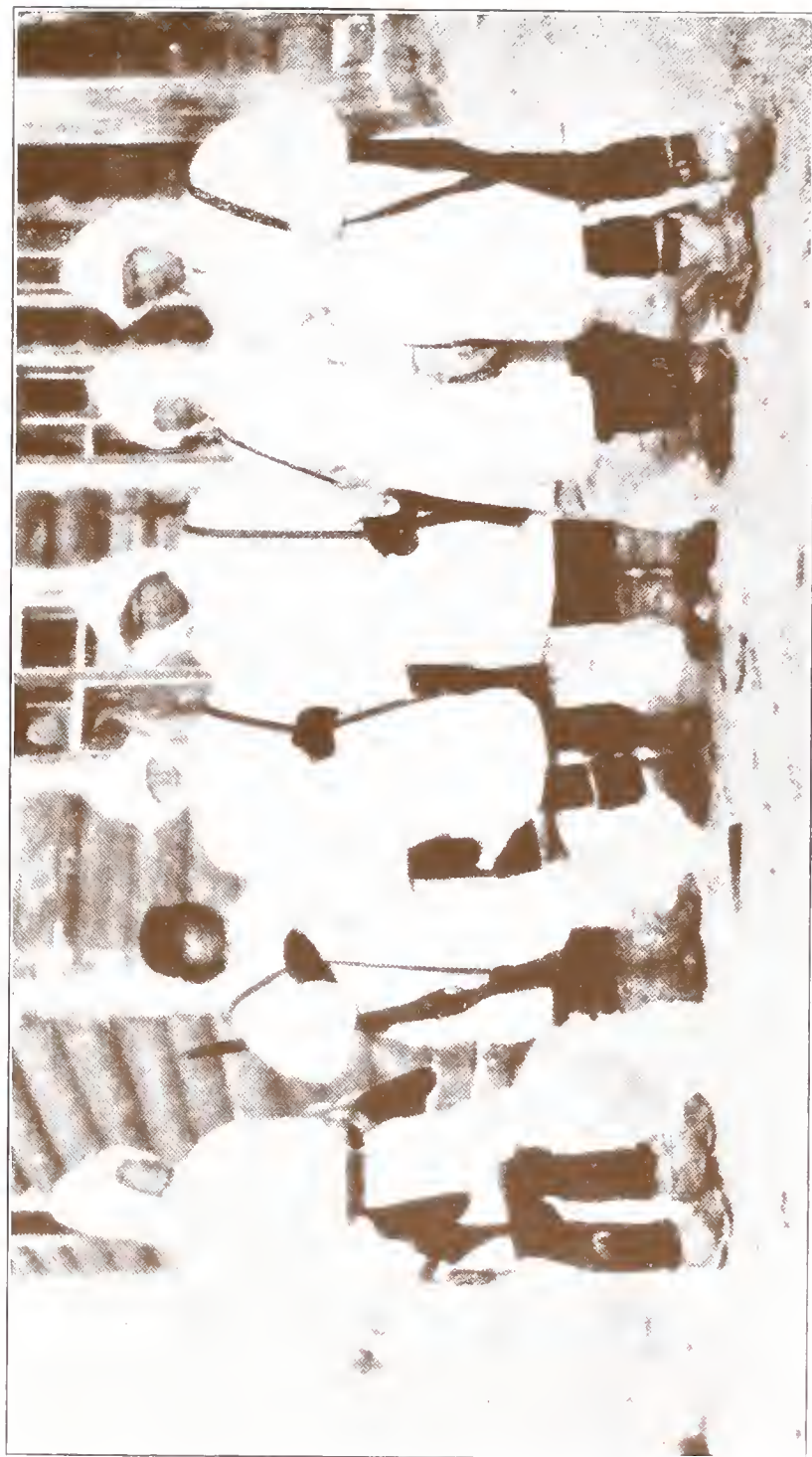
D. LLOYD GEORGE.

WOODROW WILSON.

V. E. ORLANDO.

SAIONJI.

From note, dated 26th May, 1919, Allied and Associated Powers to Admiral Kolchak.



Patrols were often clad in white smocks

X

PINEGA

THE Orthodox Church of Russia is hated by the Soviets with an intense and vehement hatred, for the institution of kings was sustained by religion even more effectively than by the Imperial Guards. Therefore, no opportunity to deride reverend personages and sacred objects is ever neglected by the Bolsheviks, or to violate with leering and uncouth pleasure, the hallowed worship places.

Under the nimbose influence of Red Moscow, the religious precepts of the people will be snatched ruthlessly from them. Harsh and unyielding though these precepts be, they are the only note of spirituality in the life of the moujik, and without them he wallows in a mire of crass animalism. There was in Holy Russia many a homily in patience and honesty and humility; but will these homely virtues endure in the arid waste and the spiritless air of agnosticism?

At Pinega, some ninety miles east of Archangel (and nearly one hundred fifty on the devious road), the cleric party was well fortified; and the outstanding civic feature of the city was the ancient monastery, standing commandingly at the edge of Lake Soyla.

The Pinega monks were quite naturally opposed to the Bolsheviks, but the mayor was a Soviet, and the city was divided in allegiance between White Archangel and Red Moscow when the detachment of Americans came in October.

The Americans' presence shepherded the wavering ones to the fold. A company of Home Guards was organized, and from outward signs the cause of the Allies had ascended to triumph. But the surrounding Bolsheviki were far from disbanded. They gathered in much strength under the leadership of Kulikoff, a competent horsethief, and commenced to plunder the slender, household larders of the peasants in the lower Pinega valley, to whose succor a police force of thirty-five Americans and two hundred White Russians were dispatched in mid-November. This police party penetrated eighty miles southeast and took Karpagora, after an engagement, but early in December was overpowered by the returning Bolsheviki. A few of the Americans were killed, more wounded, and the rest went back to Pinega, posting the White Russians in outlying villages as they retired.

So critical was the outlook that another American detachment came the one hundred and fifty miles from Archangel, ten days' journey in the darkness and the cold. But, more important to Pinega than these Christmas reinforcements, was Joel R. Moore, who came with them, wearing the shoulder straps of an infantry captain for the time in being, but whose life profession was that of college instruction, as skilled in applied humanity as the classical Humanities, and possessed of tact and understanding and sympathy, and that indefinable gift of leadership. He organized the Russians for their own defense in this bloody internecine fight, and shamed their leaders to vivid consciousness of dreadful responsibility to their pitifully dependent people.

In February, a vicious and prolonged attack in conjunc-

tion with the great Vaga offensive was made on Pinega, but the defense was well held, and when the situation looked most strained, and the fall of the city almost sure, the Bolsheviks slackened and fell back without overt cause or reason for relenting in their fierce assault, just as they did on the Vaga when the life of the Expedition was the stake.

No soldier who was in it will ever forget that mid-winter march from Archangel in gray days and cold, when the spruce trees cracked in the frost with the report of rifle shots; when the wind, a blaring blast, swept down and piled great billowy swells on the whitened trail, covered men head and foot like powdered, clownish figures, plastered their eyelids and nostrils grotesquely white with hoary frost, and flicked snow particles under headgear where they stung with the sting of pelting sand; other days when oppressive calm would stifle the air with the mystery of eternal stillness, jarringly profaned by the crunch of heavy, marching feet, the shambling of the little convoy ponies; and the tenacious trail would lower to great sheeted space, that swelled to the summit of long hills where village roofs were etched in steel on a burnished background, where the ineffectual sun strove vainly to thrust back imprisoning cloud curtains, slate hued and black.

Sometimes the way brought the soldiers through the phantom glade of a fairy forest, where delicately spun aigrettes and fragile, filmy plumes held by doubtful tenure on a limb would wave precariously in the wind and be lost in shapeless, irretrievable chaos of crumpled snow, but tens of thousands of others would fill their places, and inconceivable, bizarre festoons would spring to magic life; countless balloons and garlands and wreaths, and massive,

ponderous globes, all shaped by the infinite artistry of the frost in an endless profusion of enchanting wonderment.

Sometimes their canopy would be a lilac sea, with islands of suave saffron, and slender, garish emerald reefs, which could never escape the tristful quality of the haunting Russian skies, where tragedy and melodrama ever unfolded till night clasped in blackness the brief twilight of those doleful winter days.

Under their humble roofs, the patient people revealed a hospitality that was moving in its utter absence of guile. The cherished samovar would be brought forth from a covert trove to kindle the uninvited guests with steaming tea, and in the evening all the villagers would troop to the crowded huts to doff their hats and cross themselves with pious orisons, and gaze with never wearying gaze at the strangers from the far fabled land of miracle and hope. Years from now moujik grandmothers will group rapt children around the oven stoves to tell them of the strange Americanskis who once came so many miles in the dread winter cold to help afflicted Russia.

Out in the frigid night, the aurora of the north swung swaying evanescent curtains, now fluttering with faint ethereal light, now springing to flowing, colorful life again, and one could fancy that Thalia signaled from the night heavens a playful spectral heliograph, mocking these silly little men so far below, that strove to conquer the dread elements of that gaunt Northland.

But, if in the whole campaign the somber veil of tragedy was ever lifted, it was at this front where the altruistic intention of the Allies seemed to have caught the consciousness of the people (whether or not this intent was in fact

altruistic), they bore not only benevolence, but even humble touching gratitude towards their deliverers, and even undertook the burden of their own battles. Many Russians were lost in these battles for Pinega, but after the first expeditionary engagements not one American fell.

In January there was a massed assault, and when the fall of the city seemed almost sure, the Bolsheviks slackened and fell back, with their blade poised for the heart thrust.

But in March the defenses were safe in the competent hands of a regiment of White Russians, who were the defenders of their own towns, and the "Allied Legion" of no nation. Likewise there were two field guns with a Russian personnel of artillery, a unit of Russian machine gunners, carefully trained in the service of these rapid, death-dealing instruments of specialized modern war, and all these soldiers of Russia raised their heads high and proud as eagles, wearing no man's collar.

So it came that the Americans were free to take their leave for more pressing fronts and were given "Farewell and come again" from the hearts of the Pinega people, with generous, overflowing good will, abounding grateful acknowledgment of their genuine, upbuilding service. Perhaps this was more the conceived purpose of the Expedition to sustain the foundling democracy of Russia, to strengthen and instill solidarity and faith in the hearts and counsels of the Russian people, and to achieve such end by unsanguinary means. Perhaps the means might have been different and the melodrama never enacted if a college professor, with methods of applied humanity, had directed from the outset. But it is to offend the military to consider thus, and to be guilty of shameful heterodoxy.

RETREAT

“There is no use people raising prejudice against this expedition. Every one knows why it was sent. It was sent as part of our operations against Germany. It was vitally necessary to take every measure in regard to Russia during the war which would keep as many German troops as possible on the Russian front, and reduce that formidable movement of the German armies which carried more than a million men to the Western Front, and which culminated in that immense series of battles which began on the 21st March last year (1918).”

WINSTON CHURCHILL, *Secretary of State for War*, in the House of Commons, 3rd March, 1919.

XI

RETREAT

WHEN the appeal to patriotism failed, Archangel Province, under British direction, invoked conscription, and by the middle of June, twenty-two thousand Russian soldiers had been assembled by coercive means.

They thronged the backward villages through which the Americans passed on their way to disembarkation, and looked very fresh, like college youths, as they sauntered up and down to an eternal serenade of wheezing accordions, or with sacerdotal, marching chants, went swinging by in platoons and companies, these young conscripts, who knew so little of war and its harrowing disillusionment.

For the moment all breasts were filled with that contagious ardor that springs from every massed effort, no matter its end, but not one in a hundred knew or felt the call of patriotism for the coming conflict of Russian against Russian.

There was cause enough for the fight had it only been revealed to these pliant, guileless, peasant folk. For their country, weakened, helpless and faint from many war wounds, was being debased by vile and vicious poltroons who had stamped out the holy fires of the Revolution, nullified the Constituent Assembly, and stifled every voice of liberty with hands more remorseless than the cruel manacles of the Tsars.

The cause was there, but if their mentors sensed it, they manifested almost incredible obtuseness in failure to im-

part these moving eloquent reasons for the fight. They were silent about the odious exploitation of the masses under the crafty, artful guise of proletarianism; they said nothing of the wicked violation of sacred property rights, the unprincipled plundering, the trampling down by power maddened feet on all revolutionary enlightenment, the desecration of all things spiritual, the wanton derision of the church which had been the faith of the people and of their venerated, sainted fathers.

Here was reason enough for any Russian with exalted, holy devotion to lay down his life for his stricken country. But instead of such scathing and unequivocal indictment, the British dwelt upon the conduct of the Bolsheviks, shameful and faithless towards the Czecho-Slovaks, and gave out, with venomous vituperation, highly colored stories of enemy atrocities and cruel treatment of prisoners so patently over-extended that they failed to make a convincing impression even on the moujik mind.

So soon as navigation opened, there commenced an exodus of Russian officers to Archangel, sent by the British Command to lead the newly formed native legions. These officers came from the old Imperial Army, many were titled, proud of their high birth, and by every thought and training, and by every instinct, irreconcilably opposed to every notion of social equality; in short, irredentists of that heartless, arrogant, military class which a worn afflicted world had cast off in a travail of four years' agony and afflicting grief, and long suffering Russia had driven forever from her temples.

So the fresh formed conscript ranks were made conveniently vulnerable for Bolshevik propaganda, this new

weapon of warfare, invisible and treacherous, that on the Eastern Front had scored such havoc with the boasted discipline of the Germans. Soviet agents were everywhere, mingling with the people on the streets of Archangel, wearing the khaki of the newly organized soldiers, living with them, going through their drills, and fatigue and exercises, and ever with the passionate zeal of fanatics, feeding them the poisonous doctrines of Reddest Moscow, ceaselessly, night and day.

Now the innuendo was very plausible that these aristocrats of the Old School had returned to restore the Romanoffs, and that the British capitalists were leagued with them for the conquest of Russia and the enslavement of the common people. It was easy to argue that the British, always interested in the trading possibilities of Archangel, had come to exploit its resources. Otherwise why should they be so vitally concerned in this civil war of Russians? British officers were freely mingled with these Imperial officers, British Intelligence supervising the staff work and dispositions, and a liberal spreading of reliable British N. C. O.'s among the ranks, to keep a watchful eye on things and bolster the recruits in the stern trial of first battle.

The great majority of the British officers had no appetite for the business ahead. They were tired and homesick, weary and fed up with war for all time after four racking years of it. Moreover, they disliked everything Russian with a withering aversion, and in their forced association with the Russians, treated them with a disdainful condescension and that impersonal, inhuman lack of tolerance which is British beyond all imitation. Openly they distrusted their allied comrades, and sometimes when tired and ir-

ritable and nerve frayed, they said so, which did not make towards the establishment of an enthusiastic and permanent *entente*, for the educated Slav is an accomplished linguist, and sometimes he understood and did not easily forget when he was abused in English, and vehemently cursed as a "bloody Bolo."

It had been determined before the opening of navigation that all American forces should be withdrawn and the campaign abandoned. The reason for this was not revealed to the troops just as the cause of the Expedition had never been mentioned, and every man in American uniform sensed a gaping moral void on the part of his Country. Certain death from the Bolsheviks awaited those loyal Russians who had placed their trust in the promised salvation of the Allied leaders and the American authorities at least seemed blind to their manifest duty to the Archangel government. It was an awkward situation for the statesmen, but unavoidable under the circumstances—and Archangel was a long distance removed from Washington. Anyway, the British held on—they would have to attend to uncomfortable details. We were going to clear out, and clear out we did.

The problem of evacuation was a disturbing one. There was a clamor in England as insistent as that which echoed from America to get out of Russia and get out without delay. This might have been done, and the British might have abandoned these thousands of Russian people who, trusting in the courage, the steadfastness, and the honor of the Allies, had cast their lot with them for better or for worse. But, instead of deserting the country without

ceremony as we did, a frank disclosure of the situation was made to the press in England, and a call was issued for volunteers to rescue British soldiers at Archangel. A mixed brigade of venturesome men who were wearied by peace time tedium and longed again for the thrill of war, and others who were out of work and could get no other employment, was raised by this method, but to muster the full quota for relief it was necessary to add a like number of Regulars, in all approximately eight thousand men. Each brigade had two infantry battalions, units of artillery, airplanes, machine gun corps and engineers, and the first echelon, commanded by Brigadier General G. W. Grogan, Victoria Cross, reached Archangel at the end of May. The rest, under Brigadier L. W. Sadleir Jackson, came on the 10th June, and the ships that brought them carried away the Americans.

To the civil mind an evacuation, especially by sea, seems a simple matter. The civilian thinks of it merely as a packing off to the ships, disregarding the losses involved to make short shift and get away. But in complicated, modern war, there are countless perplexing details in the final movement of an army. Massive, ponderous ordnance and munitions and supplies must be assembled with prodigious labor, transported or destroyed. And it is necessary to hold the enemy off till the last retreating file has mounted the gang plank and put off far to sea. Also, in the case of Archangel, it was an involved problem to attend to the civilian population.

The British government laid open the offer to transport every Archangel resident apprehensive of the Bolsheviks, and to provide employment for them in other lands. It

was expected that vast numbers would avail themselves of this opportunity and would flee from the approaching reign of horrors, but when the time came only sixty-five hundred and thirty-five came forward for expatriation, and these were all sent to South Russia and the Baltic States.

When all was in readiness, General Ironside planned to safeguard the retreat by administering a sharp "disengaging blow," like Sir John Moore dealt the French at Corunna one hundred years before, which would shake the enemy's morale and disabuse him of any notion of following the retreating troops to the waterside.

The Czechs had fused with Admiral Kolchak's armies. Under the leadership of General Gaida, they formed his right wing and were beyond Perm, some three hundred miles east of Viatka. It was thought that these friendly Siberian forces could take Viatka, advance up the railway to Kotlas, and join there with the Archangel Russians. Thereupon the British, leisurely and in security, could return down the river to the waiting transports and sail homeward.

So Kotlas, which had been the original objective of the River Column, became the objective once more. The Admiralty dispatched to Archangel a flotilla of gunboats, monitors, mine sweepers and many other craft for the transportation of troops and supplies to act as auxiliaries for the infantry, and again the Dvina became a scene of skeltering preparations for war.

On the 20th June, the disengaging offensive began; the British and Archangel troops attacked across the river from the Allied position at Toulgas, and gained complete victory, capturing two hundred prisoners, many machine guns and

three field guns. But now word came from the south that the Bolsheviks there had concentrated in great forces against Kolchak and had utterly routed him, that he was fleeing east, had already retired as far as Yetakerinburg, and all hope would have to be given up of effecting a junction with the Siberian army.

So the importance of taking Kotlas waned, but even if Kolchak had not failed the advance could have gone little further, for it was found that due to the light snowfall of the previous winter, the waters of Dvina were low, beyond all precedent, and the British flotilla could follow no farther upstream.

Most discouraging of all, treachery broke out in all quarters from the allied Russian troops. On the 7th July a battalion held in reserve on the river mutinied in the night and murdered three British and four Russian officers as they slept; four other officers were seriously wounded. On the 22nd July the whole Onega detachment went over to the Bolsheviks, and the safety of Archangel became seriously jeopardized from this west port. Nearly at the same time British firing squads suppressed a revolt on the Railway front before the Russian mutineers gained the upper hand.

Many of the British officers had passed through all the harrowing fires of France, but here was a form of peril new in the experience of the most hardened ones—base betrayal by the sentinel who kept the black watches of the night, and treachery in the heart of the citadel from hands stretched forth in friendship. The brave man, standing on his feet and facing the end, does not fear advancing death; but now it lurked in hiding, it descended in the night

and struck from the dark upon unconscious sleep, so that tired soldiers dared not rest, and the strain snapped nerves of steel.

A few weeks before these outrages, Toulgas was given over to a defense that was entirely Russian. Shortly afterward, in the uncertain light of early morning, on the 25th April, there was a wild commotion, and, following interminable confused firing that sounded from all quarters of the village streets, a lamp message flashed across the Dvina to the Allied position at Kurgoman: "We are completely surrounded; the Bolos are attacking in five places." Shortly thereafter, through a fusillade of bullets, a Russian officer, with two men, effected a passage of the river in a small boat, and told the shameful story of how nine officers had been murdered as they slept and bloody Toulgas delivered by faithless Russian soldiers to the waiting Bolsheviks in the woods. Through a prodigy of bravery by a handful of loyal artillery men, the guns were pulled back to Shusiga, ten miles downstream, but it was not until the middle of May that Toulgas was retaken, and while it stayed in enemy hands, the Allied position was alarmingly critical with the right flank over the Dvina completely turned.

Thus, with mutiny breaking out in all quarters, the virulent propaganda of the Bolsheviks bore malignant fruit beyond their most sanguine hopes, and the situation was menacing enough to alarm the most conservative in Allied Councils. Had it not been for the two splendid reinforcing brigades, the often imperiled life of the Expedition would have been destroyed at last. The British War Office for once became thoroughly apprehensive. General, Lord Rawlinson was sent to preside over the leavetaking, and



Major-General Sir William E. Ironside

fresh reinforcements, two battalions of infantry, two machine gun companies, two batteries of Royal Field Artillery, one engineer company, and five tanks were rushed to Archangel from England.

The intention had been to complete the evacuation just before the closing of navigation in late October, but now it was seen that this might be too late, and in the present urgency no time could be lost. "The disengaging blow" was delivered on the 10th August by Jackson's sterling brigade, a little beyond Seltzo, the furthestmost south achieved on the Dvina by the little River Column almost a year before. Two thousand prisoners were captured, eighteen guns and many machine guns, and the rout was complete. With the enemy now safely at bay, the British turned the defenses over to the Archangel authorities, who persisted in staying, although they were advised that it was suicidal to do so, and "friendly intervention" was brought to an inglorious, albeit an unbloody, close on the 27th September, eleven months after the Armistice that had outlawed the rule of warring strife as the arbitrament of discordant nations.

When the last troop ships trailed off to drooping skies, a bearded moujik sat in the stern of a flat boat directing four broad backed women at the oars. The recumbent coxswain waved a languid gesture across Archangel Bay where tiny ships were bearing off to the north; and four oars poised in mid-air as the laboring crew turned with dull Slavic contemplation to regard the parting foreigners, and the end of their peculiar expedition. But only for a moment, there was more important business in hand than idle

gazing at Englishskis, however queer they might be. A gruff command, and the freighted craft continued its slow toiling course to the market place, the overlord resumed his interrupted smoke of good Allied cigarettes and the Englishskis were dismissed from memory. This was the leave-taking.

On the evening of 12th October, 1919, the last of the Allied forces set sail from Murmansk for England; four months afterward, on the 20th February, the Bolsheviks recaptured Archangel.

Nearly four months earlier the last of the Americans set sail on the 26th day of June, 1919, and as the paling shores mingled with the distant sky line and faded from sight, so too the fever of this troublous, little war with Russia abated, yielding to the gentle ministrations of memory's cooling twilight.

With the Americans, at least, there remained no shred of illusion. When Winston Churchill told the Commons that Archangel, with one lone American regiment, the few battle retrieved soldiers of England, and a single battalion of disaffected Frenchmen, had kept many German divisions in the East, and played an important part in the last battles, he laid a flattering unction to the soul of British statescraft; but his insincere words did not deceive the American soldier, for the American soldier was mentally and emotionally paralyzed beyond deception, and a conviction of blunder was only strengthened by this and other clumsy explanations vouchsafed by Allied statesmen; by the guilt-laden silence of America.

Germany was never concerned with Archangel. There was no evidence of German participation in the campaign;

no evidence that our petty hostilities with the Bolsheviks had ever benefited Foch on the Western theater.

We had waged war upon Russia. Whether willfully or unwillingly, our country had engaged in an unprovoked intensive, inglorious, little armed conflict which had ended in disaster and disgrace. Perhaps this was a laudable thing to do. Perhaps it is always idealistic and praiseworthy to intervene for self-conceived righteousness in the internal affairs of another nation, as England might have done in the case of the American Confederacy, and as we did in the case of this civil war among the Russians. It is easy enough to enter the battle lists, but, once in, it is not so easy to withdraw from the fight with self-respect unsullied and honor undefiled.

So Archangel proved, with its sullied record to blight forever the good name of America when soldiers gather to tell of the Great War, and, great as the cost of the campaign had been with 2,485 casualties¹ of killed and wounded and sickened men, its financial loss, over ten times the price paid Russia for the vast dominions of Alaska, there was not a man in the ranks who did not sense the disgrace in our ignoble desertion, there was not an American officer who would not have chosen to have left his bones bleaching white beneath Archangel snows, than been a living witness to the ignominious way in which his country quit and slunk away.

All felt a personal sense of poignant shame for the failure to see the game through to its uttermost bitter end, or else seek expiation by honest avowal of wrong and humble contrition. It was an inexorable dilemma, one that

¹ Chief Surgeon's Report.

took the staunchest courage, no matter which course was followed. Perhaps the higher courage would have been the admission of culpable fault. But we took neither course. We merely wilted from Archangel and came away.

On the homeward troopships, among the ice floes of the White Sea, the taunting unspoken reproach galled most bitterly of all, for we left our British allies to extricate themselves from the miserable mess as best they could, and with no explanation and never a sustaining word we left them.

Many trying things in the campaign had aroused the Americans to intemperate speech, which now to recall they would have surrendered all they possessed. Incompetence and tactlessness, and seeming lack of understanding and sympathy by those in power, to which the soldiers of England appeared indifferent, never failed to draw the intense, iconoclastic fire of the Americans. The difference lay in the national atmosphere of the two countries, the divergence in character and traditions, born and nurtured under the republican and the older order. They are a different people from us, the British, though the blood strain be the same. The glory of baseball is lost on them; they play the tedious cricket; but, when the fight is on, the quality of the bulldog, once at grips to hang on with set teeth till death, is British; blinded to all save the solid grimness of the task in hand, their brains seem dull to those imaginative flights which are the curse of the Western soldier.

Thus ended America's share of the war with Russia. At Brest the "mutinous" regiment was shunted in fragments over the seas to America, and in the homeland, these soldiers

who had borne arms in conflict six months after the Armistice, were shooed off to civilian life, and the whole embarrassing matter was expunged from the war record.

All inquiry concerning the Expedition has been met by specious pleas in evasive avoidance. No peace was ever made with Russia, as no state of war had ever been recognized, and the legalists might well contend that all who engaged in it are open to indictment for manslaughter, for the enterprise will always remain a depraved one with status of a freebooters' excursion.

At Corbela sat an aged woman with ghastly face, gray as the dirty *platok* that framed it, her gaunt chin resting on a hand, bony and hideous from relentless toil. With failing despairing eyes, she saw in the dwindling snows only the dissolution of winter, quite blinded to buoyant spring that with tufts of brown turf bursts boisterously through the southern hill slopes, like heedless youth that with surging, eager, passionate desire presses on the reluctant heels of death to life's fulfillment.

Outside the hut a young moujik, with the handsome physique of first unsullied manhood, and the credulous eyes of a child, curiously watching the north marching Americans; a giant of masked strength, needing only the key of trained intelligence to unloose immeasurable dynamic force that might some day rule the world.

Kindle the liberating torch of enlightenment in the nether regions of the Slavs, strike from the millions the shackles of serfdom ignorance, and from the pestilential ashes of present degrading Bolshevism, Russia, the giant, in stupendous power, rises phoenixlike to Jupiter.

To the Russian people we owe a debt that can never be paid except in deepest and very humble gratitude; for, when those gray hosts swept over Belgium and Northern France, Russia invaded Prussia, threatened the gates of Koenigsberg, routed the Austrians in a smashing blow at Lemberg, and, when the German aggressive movement was at its culminating height, drew off to the east two Army Corps and a Cavalry Division from von Kluck's right wing, a fatal diversion of the German forces which enabled Joffre, closing in the breach at the Marne, to save Paris and turn the advance into a complete retirement.

This great battle of the Marne marked the initial phase of the war, and completely frustrated the cherished Berlin plan of gaining quick victory by tactics of overwhelming surprise.

Many anxious months followed as England slowly transformed her energies from peaceful pursuits to those of war, and during this prolonged, crucial time the Russians never wavered from the attack. They massed for repeated hammering offensives in Poland, in Masturia and east of the Vistula in Galicia, so that the German Imperial Staff could never develop full strength, but had to be content with a holding campaign in the West while marshalling most forces to oppose the menacing East.

Not until the beginning of 1916, because of the Russians, could another effort of masses be made. Then every available man was concentrated with the Crown Prince's army as he smashed at Verdun to bring France to her knees, but when the assault was at its height, again obedient to her trust, and faithful, Russia sprang to the attack with such heroism and such devoted and reckless courage, that

the controlling German combat divisions which might have gained the fortress had to be diverted from Verdun to Galicia.

Yet again at the commencement of 1917, at Mitau, and, in the summer of that year, when the British Empire assembled its legions at the Somme, Brussiloff struck south to the Carpathian passes, and it was only when Russia collapsed exhausted, and ghoulish Bolshevism looted the prostrate stricken gladiator, that the united German armies marshalled in full strength for a crushing blow. *Only then did Germany have numerical superiority in the West.*

We can gain an impression of what might have happened from the fury of that La Fère-Arras offensive, which shocked the world by its blighting trail of spectral horrors; hardly a British Division was left intact, and France reeled and staggered in a nausea of mortal weakness until Clemenceau in agony cried out to the Allies for sustaining support.

All might have ended then, had it not been for America, but America could never have come, had it not been for the Russian sacrifice in the early days, when the German Divisions, fresh and recklessly rash, were filled with the lust of battle conquest, and the German leaders, careless of casualties, flung their men to death with a high and free hand.

It is well to remember these things when we boast (a little noisily) that American arms won the great war. No one nation won this appalling contest of the nations embattled at Esdraelon, and, great as our offering was, how small it was and how feebly comparable to that of Russia who laid down the lives of more men than all we sent to France, and paid a ghastly toll in crippled, maimed and

battle losses, a million souls beyond the sum of our whole military effort!

A joint Resolution, providing for any needed explanations and reparations which may be due from this country for our invasion of Russian territory was introduced in the United States Senate at the second session Sixty-sixth Congress by Senator France, 27th February, 1920.

**FOR THE USE
OF THIS BOOK!**

Archangel; The American war
with Russia.

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