

1918 and God's Deliverance

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood” Isaiah 59:19



Poison Gas Casualties, April 1918¹

The Enemy in Flood

In early 1918, the Western Front was grim. ***“The enemy...in...flood”*** would make it worse. On March 21st 1918, the German Army attacked the British Army near the town of Amiens in northern France. The Germans fired over a million shells, broke through the British first and second lines and caused massive casualties. Many men were gassed. See figure.

The Standard of the LORD

But some units were able to fight back, including the 2nd Battalion the Green Howards, the Yorkshire Regiment, near the town of St Quentin. They resisted seven separate attacks on March 21st. Their CO was 25 year-old Captain Herbert Read², a yeoman farmer's son from Kirbymoorside in the then North Riding of Yorkshire. He described what happened.

“We fired like maniacs. Every round of ammunition had been distributed. The [machine] guns jammed; rifle bolts grew stiff and unworkable with the expansion of heat...In the height of this attack, while my heart was heavy with anxiety, I received a message from brigade. Surely reinforcements were coming to our aid? Or was I at length given permission to withdraw? Neither. [We were] to hold on to the last man.”

Providentially, the Green Howards were later ordered to fall back, which they did. Events in July 1918 showed that they had benefitted from Isaiah 59:19. ***“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.”*** God enabled the Green Howards to stand hard, literally. He was to do so with other defenders.

The Germans' advance in March stalled and was halted but in April 1918 they attacked again, in Flanders, with many veteran units transferred to the Western Front after the collapse of Russia. They got a surprise, as military historian Captain Cyril Falls³ explains.

“[The German] assault was smashed with heavy loss...At times the Germans fought brilliantly, but...the majority of the divisions from Russia had never faced the British, and found them unexpectedly tough. Yet the majority of the British troops were only shadows of the old army; [reinforcement] drafts largely consisting of lads between 18½ and 19 years of age, half-trained, immature, weakly led at the lowest level...[but] it must be said that these

lads, many of them none too well fed before enlistment, gave a good account of themselves.” That was God’s doing. **“God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty”** 1 Corinthians 1:27. The Germans attacked yet again in July against the British Army near Béthune and God intervened again as this eye-witness account reveals about the incident of *The White Cavalry*⁴.

The White Cavalry

“The following account of what occurred [in July], 1918, I (Captain Cecil...Hayward) can personally vouch for it as being true...I was responsible for the intelligence on this sector of the battle area...The whole British nation was called to prayer. The President of the United States summoned the American people to do likewise...”

God was already at work as the earlier repulses of the enemy showed. **“And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear”** Isaiah 65:24. God answered prayer in July 1918. **“The Spirit of the LORD”** Isaiah 59:19 again stemmed **“the enemy...in...flood.”** Captain Hayward observed the following.

“Enemy shell fire, which had been largely directed against the shattered town of Béthune, suddenly lifted and began to burst on a slight rise beyond its outskirts. This open ground was absolutely bare...yet the enemy gunfire broke on it with increasing fury, and was augmented by heavy bursts of masses of machine guns...We stood looking in astonishment.

““Fritz has gone balmy, Sir,” said [my] Sergeant, “what in the world is he peppering the naked ground for?”

Then, suddenly, the Germans broke and ran. Captain Hayward states:

“That...seemingly victorious army broke up into groups of frightened [fleeing] men...It was not long before my Sergeant arrived with two German officer prisoners...”

Captain Hayward took the following statement from the senior of the two German officers.

““The order had been given to advance...when Friedrich my lieutenant here said:

““Herr, Kapitan, just look at that open ground behind Béthune, there is a brigade of cavalry coming up through the smoke drifting across it...[but] they are all in white uniform and are mounted on white horses.”

““We saw the shells bursting amongst the horses and their riders...our machine guns opened a heavy fire...But they came quietly forward...not a single man or horse fell...”

““Then a great fear fell on me, and I turned to flee, yes I, an officer of the Prussian Guard fled, panic-stricken, and around me were hundreds of terrified men...all running...That is all I have to tell you...The German Army is broken...We are beaten, by the White Cavalry.””

On November 11th 1918, a little over 3 months later, the Great War ended. For Britain, the USA and their allies **“the LORD saved them by a great deliverance”** 1 Chronicles 11:14.

A Solemn Warning

Note again the wording of Isaiah 59:19 **“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.”** Most of the new versions change both the wording and the meaning. That kind of desecration will turn deliverance into damnation. This is God speaking. **“For ye have perverted the words of the living God...Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you...and cast you out of my presence”** Jeremiah 23:36, 39. Note well that **“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times”** Psalm 12:6. They are not to be trifled with. **“Take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore”** Deuteronomy 2:4.

References

¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chemical_weapons_in_World_War_I

² www.kirjasto.sci.fi/hread.htm, Purnell’s History of the First World War, Volume 6, Number 15, pp 2653ff

³ *The First World War* Cyril Falls, Longmans, 1960, p 320, 323

⁴ www.ensignmessage.com/archives/monsangel2.html