

December 11, 1914

The New York Evening Journal

NELLIE BLY AT THE FRONT

How Wounded Are Cared For

10 SHOTS TO KILL 10 MEN

The following is a continuation of the article by Miss Nellie Bly, special correspondent for the Evening Journal, on the firing line at Przemyśl, Austria:

Przemysl, Nov. 1 – “Do you see those brave Tyroleans?” asked another officer pointing to a front line on the right. “Three months ago they were 2,000. To-day they are 80. Seven officers were killed and seven replaced them. They are dead. Seven new ones are here.”

All over the valley and hill, making black spots on the still green sward, are holes which mark where Russian grenades struck. They bury themselves yards in the earth, leaving a hole and the splatter of black mud to show where they struck.

“The Russians are splendid at firing one shot after another and landing them in a straight line close to each other,” another captain told me. “They know where and how to shoot. They have shot our soldiers in advance of red Cross ambulances and those in the rear, but never have they shot the red Cross wagons.”

“But stories are told to the contrary,” I said.

RED CROSS STATIONS ARE EXPOSED TO RUSS FIRE.

“I believe they arise from accidental or unknown shooting,” he explained. “We have two Red Cross stations, you see. There is one right under our trenches. The wounded are taken there for first aid and over there, two miles away, they are taken for second aid, or, when imperative, operations. If the Russians fire upon our men in the trenches, they can scarcely avoid hitting our Red Cross station. If they fire upon our kitchen and trains and supplies, they can scarcely avoid hitting our second hospital, which is located among them. They did once hit the second and killed two soldiers.”

Prince Schonburg personally handed the medals to each hero. The soldier's name was called out and he responded, presented himself before the Prince and saluted. The fine, honest blue eyes of the soldiers would gaze with fearless straightness into the eyes of their princely superior. The Prince would hand them the medals, shake hands with them, and they would step back for an officer to pin the medals over their loyal hearts.

I could not learn what had been done to win all these decorations. One rather shocked my nerves, though I know this is war. One soldier told his captain that he would kill ten Russians with ten shots. He did, one after another.

Many medals were not presented, those for whom they were intended being either in the hospitals or dead.

REFRESHMENTS SERVED IN COMMANDER'S QUARTERS.

After the ceremonies, we were all presented to Prince Schonburg. He smiled at me and asked me if I came all the way from America to see the war in Austria. He speaks English perfectly. He then invited us to have refreshments in their quarters. The soldiers filed off in one direction and we went the other. We inspected the cave dwellings and trenches. Every trench was filled with straw. The commander's cave was dug out of the hill, roofed with logs, covered with earth, and had a small stove of brick. A bed was made of boards and straw.

A kitchen, dining room and officers' quarters were built the same way. They were all wonderfully warm and clean. Doubtless the officers could live in them many months without suffering. It is the men in the grave-like trenches who endure and die.

I had the great pleasure of speaking to the commander of the army. I was shown the telephone cave and introduced to the operator. A captain suggested I should speak to the commander of the regiment. I put the apparatus over my head and picked up the heavy receiver.

"Hello! Who is this?" I called to some one.

"Hello! Who is this?" came back in English. The voice showed surprise.

WELCOMED BY COMMANDER OVER FIELD TELEPHONE.

"I am Nellie Bly, a journalist from New York," I said.

"Oh! You are welcome," said the unknown.

"Thank you. I wish Austria success. Good-by."

“Then we were led to the dining room. In that straw-lined cave is a table surrounded by benches. On it was a dish filled with ham, another with bread, a bottle of water, a bottle of red wine, and a plate of cheese. Cups of hot tea, with the usual spoonful of rum, were also served. It helped to warm our blood.