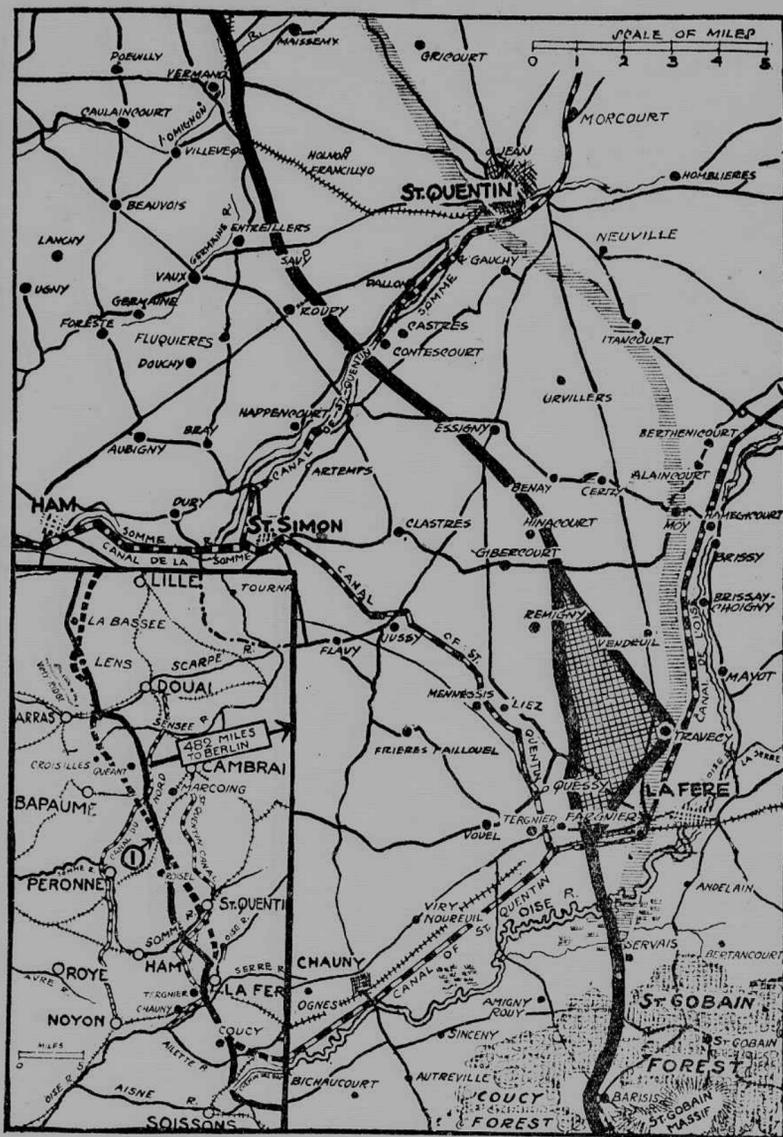


The Great War—1498th Day

OUTFLANKING LA FERÉ



prisoners have been taken from the Regiment Alexander and Regiment Augusta who have not only exhibited the greatest pleasure at being captured but actually urged the British to go on attacking and take as many Germans as possible, so as to end the war quickly.

Some idea of just what the average intelligent German soldier thinks of the war now may be gleaned from a letter written on August 29 by a non-commissioned officer to his brother in the ranks.

"I had to retreat through Galicia in 1916," says the writer, "and I know well enough what it means. It is perfectly obvious that you have had heavy casualties from a retirement of the kind you have been making, but it cannot be helped. You must be glad to be resting now, but you won't be allowed that satisfaction long, for a lot of men and material are needed now, and there isn't much of either."

Germany's Defeat Forecast "I am only interested in whether we are going to hold out longer than this winter. In my opinion the English will bring up such crowds of Americans and others next spring that we will be unable to stand the heavy pressure. Also, our enemies will have such a number of aircraft available that we shall not know where to find cover from this horror."

"Taking it all round, we are in a bad position, not only here at the front, but at home, too. Things are in a very bad way. And the Eastern problem crops up again. And I shall be interested to see whether the English will succeed in starting a mess there again. As far as I can hear we are again moving a great many troops to the East."

British in Old Trenches

In general the British are continuing to close in on the Hindenburg line by a series of small actions and manoeuvres. The lines in the northern part of the battle zone have now been advanced through the village of Trescault, three and one-half miles southwest of Marcoing, to the eastern edge of the place, where the troops are actually in the old British trenches facing the Hindenburg line.

In the south Australian troops have advanced in the area from Vermand to the outskirts of Attilly, on the edge of Holnon Wood, from the other side of which the whole of the flat country up to the famous German defensive positions and the spires of St. Quentin are clearly visible.

In the centre the British have gained a footing in Pezière and Epéhy, and this morning an attack was launched against the enemy trenches northwest of Pezière.

The enemy positions were stormed during a downpour of rain. The troops are reported to have gained their objective, although the advance was made over ground covered with oozy, slippery mud.

German Attacks Repulsed

The enemy has delivered several small counter attacks. The line west of Gouzeaucourt was attacked last night, but the advancing Germans were met with a withering machine gun fire and were repulsed everywhere except at one place where they managed to penetrate a British post at the crossroads known as Dead Man's Corner.

Another party tried to enter the British trenches southwest of Meuvres, but was repulsed with comparatively heavy casualties.

The enemy delivered a hurricane bombardment in the Seneffe Valley last night, and soon after the British posts north of Ecoust-St. Quentin were attacked and some of them were withdrawn.

In the north British patrols have penetrated through Pont-de-Nieppe without meeting with opposition. In this area the Germans apparently have withdrawn for some distance.

More posts were established by the British south of the river Lys during yesterday evening and last night.

A heavy rain still is falling over the whole area and many of the smaller streams have been flooded. In the Flanders lowlands the ground has become almost impassable. There are no signs of the weather clearing. Luckily, in the Somme region the ground made most difficult by the fall of heavy rain has been left behind by the advancing British.

Allied Armies Now Face Four Lines Of Strong Defence

WITH THE FRENCH ARMY IN FRANCE, Tuesday, Sept. 10.—The rapidity of the splendid operation that wrested the initiative of the battle from the Germans and drove them behind their defensive lines of 1917 to recuperate their forces and reconstitute their shattered divisions is no longer the proper basis for calculating the speed of progress. The Allies are now in front of obstacles that do not appear on ordinary maps, by which the general reader follows changes of the battlefield. No maps show them in all their detail, but enough is known of them to reconstitute them in a general way.

First is the Hindenburg line system of field fortifications, which the Germans built by the forced labor of prisoners of war and French and Belgian civilians. It runs from Lens southeastward to the Aisne north of Rheims by way of Quant, St. Quentin, La Fère and the St. Gobain forest. It consists of an elaborate system of trenches, multiple lines of barbed-wire entanglements, concrete positions for artillery, blockhouses for machine guns, shelters for the infantry, and is further protected by flooded stretches of country where the means were available for that purpose.

Second line of defence runs from the fortress of Lille to the stronghold of Metz, generally parallel with the Hindenburg line, to the region north of Rheims and at distances varying from seven to twenty miles. From Soissons north of Rheims it runs southeastward, joining the old front north of Verdun and continuing from there to Metz. There are secondary lines at-

ached to this system, notably along the Escaut River from Cambrai, north through the valleys of the Oise and the Serre, and northeastward from La Fère along the Sappe River north of Rheims.

A third line of defence runs from the Scarpe River, south of Lille, to the Meuse, near Sedan, then southeastward to the iron region of the basin of Briey, which it protects from the west and the south, and joining the second line at the Moselle. There are secondary defence works to this line also in the region of Verdun.

A fourth line, as yet uncompleted, is intended to furnish a further defence between the Escaut, near the Belgian frontier, and the Meuse at Givet.

Strong Refuge for Retiring Armies Each one of these lines furnishes a strong refuge for armies obliged to retire upon it. The lines also offer to forces dwindling in numbers the advantage of progressively shortening the battlefield.

The first of the lines has already been broken between Quant and Drocourt. The development of this success may determine the question whether the Germans can oblige the Allies to revert to trench warfare. The one's second line of defence almost touches the Hindenburg line at Cambrai, just below the breach the British forces have made in it. If they are able to join the two lines there the Germans will still have an uninterrupted defensive position, in which the second line enters for only the distance from Lille to Cambrai, being continued to the Chemin des Dames by the Hindenburg line.

Fresh Troops Fail To Stop Advance of Gen. Humbert's Army WITH THE FRENCH ARMY IN FRANCE, Sept. 10 (11:00 P. M.).—The Germans have relieved several of their tired divisions in the region of Vauxaillon, on the front north of the Aisne, and with some of their best troops are making a strong effort to stop the further eastward progress of the French. The attempt has been without success, however, as the French forces took some additional lines of trenches in this region to-day, gaining ground also to the northeast of La Faux.

Repeated counter attacks in this vi-

By yesterday's advance north of the Oise, indicated by cross-cross shading, the French outflanked La Fère on the north, swinging halfway round the city, and cut into the Hindenburg line, shown as a shaded belt. The solid line represents the present battle area.

British troops advanced slightly near Epéhy (1), indicated in the key map. The dash line in the key is the Hindenburg position, the solid line the fighting zone.

"Orange Gas Bombs" Now Used by Germans

WITH THE BRITISH ARMIES IN FRANCE, Sept. 11.—Just before the British launched their attack this morning on the enemy trenches northwest of Pezière, below Gouzeaucourt, the Germans for the first time employed a new kind of projectile in an effort to drive the New Zealand troops from nearby positions.

The projectiles, which were about the size of oranges, were fired at short range in salvos of from 200 to 300 each, and were sprinkled over an area of two to three acres. These projectiles burst into flame as they hit the ground and gave off gas.

Attached to this system, notably along the Escaut River from Cambrai, north through the valleys of the Oise and the Serre, and northeastward from La Fère along the Sappe River north of Rheims.

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city were repulsed. The enemy reacted violently north of the Oise, but also without stopping the progress of General Humbert's troops toward the road from La Fère to St. Quentin, which they now hold from La Fère two miles northward to Travecy. The wooded region of Vendeuil also fell into their hands.

The same system that destroyed Chateau Bethanourt, to the west of Guisard, on September 6 and the cathedral at Neule shortly afterward was used freely at Ham, and Noyon is being utilized by the Germans in preparation for the destruction of villages north and northeast of Rheims.

Prisoners who worked with a detachment of pioneers placing mines under church pillars in that region say the Germans are making ready to raze all the towns to the ground.

Traps are being laid by use of the same system in the forest of St. Gobain and in the region of Laon, while all the crossroads in those regions, according to the captives, are being heavily mined. Some of these preparations for wholesale destruction are behind the Hindenburg line.

French Plant 'Em, Huns Raise 'Em, We Eat 'Em Real War Vegetables Find Way to Americans' Tables After Varied Careers (Correspondence of The Associated Press.) WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY IN FRANCE, Aug. 27.—Vegetables planted by the French, cultivated by the Germans and gathered by the Americans were served at many American soldiers' messes during the first two weeks of August after the district south of Fismes and the Vesle had been cleared of Germans.

When the Americans advanced north of the Marne they encountered many vegetable tracts in which beans, lettuce, carrots, potatoes and other garden truck were merely awaiting their turn at the table. They had been planted by the French before the Germans came, and the German soldiers did an excellent job of cultivating the gardens in anticipation of enough vegetables to supply them all summer.

Foe's Loss Severe in Futile Attacks on U. S. At Mt. Rouge Plateau

AMERICAN FORCES ON THE AISNE FRONT, Sept. 10 (delayed).—The Germans this evening were still attacking on the Mont Rouge plateau with desperate determination. The losses of the enemy in the last three days must have been appalling.

The German attacks—whether directed against Manteuil, Lauffaux or Vauxaillon—have been for the recovery of the ridge line at Mont de Lauffaux, which was captured by General Mangin's troops, with whom the Americans are fighting, before the Germans realized of what immense importance it was to them, or at least before they were able to take adequate steps to defend it.

How the German troops have been hurried here to attempt its recovery is evidenced by the fact that as many as five German regiments were represented among eighty prisoners taken yesterday.

This morning two fresh attacks were launched on either side of Nanteuil. Both were beaten back with severe losses.

Prisoners taken in this region, although they fought remarkably well, all showed complete despondency and more than one when captured remarked: "Thank God, it's all over."

Pershing Urges Men To Mix Caution With Gallantry in Rescues (By The Associated Press.) WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY IN FRANCE, Sept. 11.—Such a large proportion of the American casualties in recent actions has been due to gallant attempts to rescue wounded officers and men by unarmoured comrades that General Pershing has been compelled to issue a general order calling attention to the fact that the regulations prohibit members of the fighting force to leave their proper position, even for this purpose.

Stating that voluntary acts, however gallant and meritorious, in going forward to rescue fallen comrades too often has led to the needless sacrifice of the bravest men, the order explains that the loss of an officer, non-commissioned officer or man by such conduct might deprive a detachment of a leader upon whom command might depend, thus robbing the wounded of ultimate success.

The order concludes with the direction that every proper effort is to be made to rescue wounded and place them in safety.

Two Airmen Killed in Canada GRIMSBY, Ont., Sept. 11.—Second Lieutenant R. L. Jacks, pilot, an American, of 2220 Santa Fe Avenue, Los Angeles, and Cadet H. W. Botfield, a passenger, of McGregor, Manitoba, were killed in an airplane accident at Beausville to-day.

Huns Scatter Mines In Path of Retreat

WITH THE FRENCH ARMY IN FRANCE, Sept. 10.—Prisoners recently captured by the French have thrown light upon the work of destruction undertaken by the retreating Germans with the aid of extremely slow fuses that produce an explosion of mines days and even weeks after the Teutons have evacuated a locality.

The same system that destroyed Chateau Bethanourt, to the west of Guisard, on September 6 and the cathedral at Neule shortly afterward was used freely at Ham, and Noyon is being utilized by the Germans in preparation for the destruction of villages north and northeast of Rheims.

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German Raid Fails to Break U. S.-French Line (By The Associated Press.) WITH THE AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRANCE, Sept. 10 (5 P. M.).—At 5:30 o'clock this morning the Germans began a heavy artillery action on the American front lines in the Vosges region, sending over some 200 projectiles from their mine throwers and a thousand heavy calibre shells. At 6:20 o'clock the enemy opened up a strong fire on the communication trenches.

Reports from two observation stations were that sixty Germans were observed entering their own lines wounded, but no reports from the American front lines had been received at this hour. It seems probable that the raid, which developed after the artillery fire, was beaten off, with casualties to the enemy.

French Want Board to Verify German Violations PARIS, Sept. 11.—The French government has resolved to confide to an international committee, on which all the Entente powers will be represented, the task of authenticating all violations of the law of nations which the Germans have been guilty of on the Western front, says the "Echo de Paris."

Military Comment

By William L. McPherson (Copyright, 1918, New York Tribune Inc.)

THE most biting criticism yet made of the great German offensive of 1918 comes from Lieutenant General Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven, the deputy chief of the German General Staff. He calls it an "abortive offensive." Who could have said anything more injurious to German military prestige or more destructive of the omniscient tradition of the German High Command?

Post-mortems are generally matters of morbid curiosity. But Lieutenant General Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven's remark will make many Germans wonder if, after all, the great Hindenburg-Ludendorff gamble of 1918 was really worth while. It was a gamble against time—a bid for a decision in advance of the arrival of the American armies. Ludendorff's influence forced the throw out of the dice box. There is more than a suspicion that the Kaiser, backed by a minority of the German inner military clique, opposed it.

There are many Allied military experts who still maintain that the Ludendorff offensive was justified—that but for blunders in execution it would have severed the British and French armies and carried the Germans both to Paris and to the Channel ports. But such speculation gets nowhere. It ignores the most important result of the offensive from the Allied point of view—the immediate unification of Allied command.

The selection of Foch as generalissimo, forced by Ludendorff's great initial success, gave the Allies the power to hold fast before Paris and the Channel ports. Ludendorff grossly misjudged the defensive strength of the Allied armies under a single competent head. He went on misjudging it, as well as the value of the American contribution to the fighting front, until he fell into the fatal trap in the Marne salient.

History will condemn the Ludendorff gamble as a great illusion. Germany is now condemned to a defensive war, in which, von Freytag-Loringhoven still claims, she will show her "invincibility." But in what a vastly more fortunate position would the Germans now be for defensive operations if they had elected last March to stand fast on the Hindenburg line and to devote their surplus strength to stabilizing their position in Russia! Without Allied unity of command and without a speeding up of the American overseas movement Allied operations in the summer of 1918 would probably simply have paralleled those of the summer of 1917.

Now the German shock troops have been depleted, German morale has been immensely lowered by a series of humiliating defeats and the whole German position in France has been imperilled. The Hindenburg line has been smashed and is passing into history. The chief concern of the German High Command is now to find a shorter and safer line and to escape the effects of the dilution of defensive strength necessitated by Foch's strategy of varied attack and grand scale infiltration.

Yesterday the French reached Travecy, a village in the Oise Valley two miles directly north of La Fère. It lies on the railroad from La Fère up the Oise and is close to the Oise Canal and to the river bank. So far as it protected La Fère the old Hindenburg line has therefore ceased to exist. It is still held further up the west bank of the Oise to Moy. But this position can be threatened by a French advance past La Fère up the east bank of the Oise, as well as from the new French front just west of Moy.

The British, in spite of recent rains and strong German counter attacks, advanced yesterday north of Epéhy—to the west of Le Catelet. Le Catelet is covered by the Hindenburg line. They also made progress near Verdun, three miles north-west of St. Quentin. On most of the battle line there has been a necessary halt since Sunday from new offensive preparations.

Germany weakened her Eastern front to pursue her offensive in France. Now she is reaping the consequences in the East. Communication was reestablished a few days ago between Vladivostok and Samara. The rear of the Czecho-Slovaks has been secured. White Guard and peasant anti-Bolshevik forces have taken Nijni-Novgorod and Volgograd. Great Russia is therefore rapidly passing out of the control of the pro-German Soviet government in Moscow. Soon, while fighting to cover their exodus from France, the Germans will be compelled to face the recrudescence of the Russian peril.

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The Official Statements

FRENCH PARIS (NIGHT).—A German counter attack southeast of Ropy (near St. Quentin) was repulsed.

In the region of Lauffaux and Celles-sur-Aisne six enemy attempts to reach our positions were repulsed.

PARIS (DAY).—There has been activity by the artillery at different points on the front of the Aisne and Vesle and in the Champagne.

BRITISH LONDON (NIGHT).—We carried out a successful local operation early this morning north of Epéhy, advancing our line in this locality and capturing a number of prisoners. Some progress has been made by our troops during the day on the southern portion of the battlefield in the neighborhood of Vermand.

An attack attempted by the enemy this afternoon against one of our posts west of Gouzeaucourt was repulsed by machine gun fire.

Local fighting also has taken place northwest of Hulluch and south of La Bassée Canal, as the result of which we captured a few prisoners and established posts in the enemy's former position.

The hostile artillery has developed considerable activity this evening in the Havrincourt Wood sector.

LONDON (DAY).—We advanced our lines yesterday in the direction of Attilly and Vermand.

In the evening the enemy again strongly attacked our positions on the ridge west of Gouzeaucourt. Sharp fighting followed, as a result of which the attack was completely beaten off except at one point, where one of the British posts remained in the enemy's possession.

Local fighting took place yesterday afternoon and evening in the neighborhood of Moguères and at Ecourt-St. Quentin. In the former case an attack by a strong party of the enemy succeeded in entering our trenches, but was repulsed by our counter attack. At Ecourt-St. Quentin also the enemy was repulsed after stiff fighting.

We advanced our line slightly during the night west of Erquingham (west of Armentières).

GERMAN BERLIN (NIGHT).—The day was quiet on the battlefield.

BERLIN (DAY).—During the repulse of English partial advances south of Ypres and north of La Bassée Canal we took prisoners.

South of the Péronne-Cambrai road fresh English attacks again led to violent fighting south of Gouzeaucourt and round Epéhy. The enemy reached our first lines at a few points. We drove him back in counter attacks. Three hundred prisoners remained in our hands.

Partial attacks by the French on both sides of the Ham-St. Quentin road, delivered by surprise after artillery preparation, were repulsed.

There was local fighting north of the Ailette River.

AMERICAN (Sept. 11).—Section A.—In the course of successful raids in Lorraine our detachments penetrated the enemy's trenches, inflicting losses and capturing prisoners. (Sept. 10).—Section A.—Except for

artillery fighting in the Lorraine and in the Vosges the day passed quietly in the sectors occupied by our troops.

Section B.—The following details of a strong hostile raid in the Woëvre, reported in American official communiqué Number 116, have been reported. At 4:30 o'clock, morning of September 7, approximately 200 enemy infantry, accompanied by twenty pioneers, raided our lines between Fliry and Limey. A box barrage was laid down 200 metres south of the Metz road. The raiding party entered the sector and then rushed the outpost group, which retired, firing toward the enemy. Dividing into three detachments, the enemy tried to encircle this group, but a deployed platoon succeeded in routing them successfully, causing them to retire.

Seven of the enemy were captured, two of whom were wounded. Three of the enemy were killed in their trenches and it is believed there are several others dead in No Man's Land. The combat group states that they saw many enemy wounded being carried off by their own men. Only one of our men was captured and he succeeded in escaping before the enemy could get him back to their lines.

Interrogation of the prisoners captured established that the raid was made in order to get prisoners for identification of the opposing troops. As no prisoners had been taken for a considerable time it was decided that a large raiding party should be sent out, made up of units from each regiment of the German division in that sector. Volunteers were asked for, but as none was obtained men were conscripted for the raid.

A second hostile raid on the same day in the same sector was also repulsed. Our casualties in the two encounters were exceptionally light.

ITALIAN ROME (Sept. 10).—In the Dossò Casmo region, north of Mount Altissimo, repeated attempts of hostile attacks failed under our fire. The enemy sustained heavy losses. In the Alano basin one of our parties raided the enemy line, overcoming the sentinels and putting to flight a strong enemy detachment that came to their help. Our party returned, bringing some prisoners.

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