

RARE COURAGE SHOWN BY KEYSTONE TROOPS IN BIG WAR OVERSEAS

This Is the Story of What Our Fighters Did in France to Uphold the State's Traditions as Nursery of Soldiers

LIST OF MEN KILLED IN ACTION IS TRIBUTE TO THE FIERCE VALOR WITH WHICH THEY FOUGHT

From Hill 204 to the Signing of the Armistice Our Fighters Were Still Found Pushing Forward, Doggedly Determined to Win the War

By BEN BOYDEN

HILL 204. It was a German stronghold, fashioned by the ruthless boche in that rolling French country which will go down to the ages as the Chateau-Thierry sector and scene of one of the world's greatest military operations.

From the heights of Hill 204 the boche dominated a wide stretch of territory near the town of Essomes and the Marne river, and French military experts held that it formed one of the outposts of the German army that was pressing on toward Paris in the latter days of June, 1918.

Many times the French had stormed the wooded heights, but always to be repulsed. In a word, Hill 204 stood out like a miniature Gibraltar.

German machine guns and field artillery guarded every approach to the stronghold. They taunted and challenged the French by keeping up an incessant and nasty fire, and every few hours a German raiding party would leave the area and harass the outposts of the 153d French regiment that stood between the hill and the roads to Paris.

Such was the situation in that sector on the afternoon of July 1, 1918.

Iron Division on Job In reserve and just behind the French lines in this sector the Iron Division of Pennsylvania, officially styled the Twenty-eighth Division, was waiting for the word that would send it into action against the Prussian guard.

Every man in the command, from Major General Charles H. Muir, the commander, to the newest recruit, felt ready for any test of war, but deep down in their hearts they felt that another fortnight would pass before the division would be given an opportunity to prove its fighting qualities.

Imagine the surprise of the Pennsylvania division when Colonel Matter, of the 153d French regiment, announced in the afternoon of July 1 that he would attack Hill 204 at 6 o'clock that evening and that 140 men in the Iron Division would be selected to aid in the attack.

The joy that swept through the network of trenches and dugouts knew no bounds and every unit in the division pressed a claim for the honor of going forward with the French.

Little did the doughboys know the real motive that prompted the evening attack against Hill 204.

Now that the war is over the story can be told by the officers who participated. Briefly, the morale of the French was weakening and drastic steps were being taken to bolster up the fading hopes and spirits of a heroic people.

"An attack will be made on Hill 204," said the French officers. "We will take two platoons of American doughboys with us and see how they fight. If they fight with valor and intelligence it will give our army in this sector of the line a new hope."

Select 140 Pennsylvanians

And with that thought in mind, Colonel Matter, after consulting with Iron Division officers, selected two platoons from the 11th Infantry. One hundred and forty Pennsylvanians made up these commands. One platoon was picked from A company and headed by Lieutenant Cedric C. Shenkel. It joined the French regiment. It had orders to operate on the eastern edge of the hill.

The second platoon, picked from B company, was commanded by Lieutenant John H. Benzt, and was ordered to operate on the western edge of the hill.

These were the first actual battle orders to be given the Iron Division. For nine months it had been training for the day when it would cross swords with the Prussians. The day had come and every man from Pennsylvania was proud and happy.

The old National Guard Division from Pennsylvania was to enter the battle for world freedom. How would it perform?

That was the question that was uppermost in the minds of the French. Since May 18 the Pennsylvanians had been on French soil, and for four weeks they had been subjected to shell fire and gas attacks. Many of them had been killed, but as yet they had not been sent into a real engagement.

Five minutes before Colonel Matter gave the order to go forward the Pennsylvanians were ready and at 6 o'clock the first man scrambled out of the trenches and started toward Hill 204.

Troops Did Not Falter The boche laid down a terrific machine gun and shell fire, but not once did the boys from the Keystone State falter. They held on with the same determination that their illustrious grandfathers exhibited at Gettysburg.

A few miles in the rear the ranking officers of the Iron Division were stretched out on the edge of a high plateau watching the battle. What they witnessed, in the flickering light of that evening, was proof that the Pennsylvania of National Guardsmen would fight; that its men were made of the right kind of soldier material, and that they were ready to give battle to the best in the Kaiser's army.

For three hours they fought, with a fury unsurpassed in the annals of the war. At 9 o'clock Colonel Matter ordered his troops to withdraw. He had won his objective, namely the creation of a new spirit among his troops.

"The Yankees were great fighters; brave, resourceful and furious." When more arrived the tide of Germans sweeping toward Paris would be checked for all time and France cleared of the enemy.

The Pennsylvanians in the 11th Infantry had fought a good fight. One hundred and forty went into the fray and nearly fifty had been hit. Of that number nine had been killed. Another, Private Leon C. McCuiston, of A company, had been mortally wounded. He died the next day.

Nine Killed, Many Hit In the engagement the following men sacrificed their lives and Pennsylvania inscribed their names on its scroll of honor:

Sergeant George A. Amole, Corporal Steve Graves, Privates Ensel Maxwell and Mattio Vaccano, all of A company. From B company, Corporals Ralph W. Uhlman and Raymond Wholoman and Privates Finley B. Taylor, Wilmer Manning and August J. Scholz.

What the death of these valiant boys from Pennsylvania meant to the cause of humanity is told by Colonel Matter. In a letter sent to Major General Charles H. Muir he described the action and expressed, in behalf of the French, the belief "that with such admirable soldiers as yours and ours the defeat of the Germans is certain in the near future." His letter follows:

I have the honor to inform you that the detachment of your regiment which you have been so good as to put at my disposal for the attack of July 1, has shown in its baptism of fire an admirable attitude.

The detachment was placed with the second battalion of the 153d,

Joined in Turning Point of War at St. Agnan

Philadelphians Made Glorious History in Assisting French Halt Last Great Drive on Paris

CONVINCED that the Pennsylvanians were ready for any test, the French decided to give them positions somewhat in advance, and to do this were forced to split the division.

The Fifty-fifth Infantry Brigade, consisting of the 109th and 110th Regiments (old Philadelphia units), found itself on the morning of July 5 near St. Agnan.

Twelve miles to the left was the Fifty-sixth Brigade, consisting of the 111th and 112th Infantry Regiments. The 108th Machine-Gun Battalion was attached to the Fifty-fifth Brigade.

St. Agnan, like the town of Chateau Thierry, a few miles to the left, was an important key to the road to Paris. It must be held at any price.

French strategists had figured that the Germans would make a desperate attack at St. Agnan and their calculations proved true, for on the night of July 14 the Germans, in preparation for their fifth and last drive on Paris, laid down a terrific barrage.

At dusk the next morning "hell

which had as its mission the taking of the woods on Hill 204.

The platoon from Company A operated on the eastern edge of the woods; the platoon from Company B on the western edge. At the hour "H" (6 p. m.), the assaulting troops left the trenches where they had been staying in order to allow artillery preparation on Hill 204.

From the beginning of the attack the American detachments were marked by their ardor, bravery and enthusiasm.

In spite of the firing of the enemy's heavy and light machine guns, trench mortars and riflesmen placed in trees, these men bravely threw themselves on their adversaries.

A fierce hand-to-hand contest immediately took place in the thick and almost impenetrable woods, where each man sought his man. The combat was violent, and your men never ceased during all the operation to arouse the enthusiasm and admiration of their French comrades by their magnificent behavior.

Hand-to-Hand Struggle

Lieutenant Schenkel, especially, distinguished himself during this combat, making a great impression on his troops and our soldiers. Led by his ardor, with seven men, the lieutenant found himself surrounded on all sides. This detachment cut its way through by using the butts of their rifles and bayonets on the enemy's ranks, and succeeded in rejoining their comrades; Lieutenant Schenkel himself killing, with a pistol shot, a German officer.

The attitude of all American ranks, especially the noncommissioned officers, was also noticeable. Of six noncommissioned officers participating in the attack, five have fallen gloriously, killed or wounded. All officers, noncommissioned officers and privates were superb in their enthusiasm and courage.

I would appreciate very much if you would bring to the knowledge of your regiment the splendid conduct of your men, who fought for the first time with us, and let everybody know that with such admirable soldiers as yours, and ours, the defeat of the Germans is certain in the near future.

(Signed) MATTER. The commanding general of the Thirty-ninth French Division added:

I join with all my heart the sentiments of admiration which Colonel Matter expresses for the valiant troops which have just given to ours a splendid example of bravery.

I join my salutations and respect to the brave men who have fallen on the field of honor, the number of which is, unhappily, great. (Signed) POUJIN.

This letter, so warm in its praise, was received on the morning of July 4, a fitting day for the Pennsylvanians to receive such a noteworthy letter.

General Muir supplemented it with the following note, which was read to every unit in the division:

The division commander desires to congratulate the two platoons participating in the attack of July 1 upon the receipt of such splendid commendations from the regimental and division commander under whom they served. He believes that the action of these men is but an example of what the whole Twenty-eighth (Keystone) Division will show when opportunity offers.

By command of General Muir. EDWARD L. KING, Colonel, General Staff, Chief of Staff.

On swept the Germans, and for three days the Fifty-fifth Infantry brigade, of the Iron Division, gave them battle. The Pennsylvanians were not alone, because the French were in that sector, but the fighting of the Pennsylvanians gave the French a new spirit and the Prussians were held.

Fighting Was Terrible

The fighting was terrific and just as important from a military viewpoint as the fighting of the marines in the Belleau Wood. The Germans were making a desperate effort to break through St. Agnan and press on to Paris. The Pennsylvanians were ordered to stop them. They did and no troops could do more.

On the afternoon of July 18, the Germans were turned backward in this section of the line and from that day to November 11 they continued to fall back.

The Iron Division participated in a score of other battles, but never did it acquit itself with greater glory than in the engagement from July 15 to 18.

In this battle the Fifty-sixth brigade, 103d Engineers and other outfits in the division did not get in contact with German infantry. Despite that they were subjected to a heavy shell fire and sustained many casualties.

List Killed in Action

Fate decreed that the 109th and 110th were to pay the price and start the German war machine on its way to Berlin and ignoble surrender a few months later. The price paid to accomplish this end is emphasized in the following casualty list. It is a list of the men killed

THEY measured up to the gigantic task assigned to them. They paid a big price for their valor, but they never flinched. Today they are veterans, and no troops in the world are superior to them. —General Muir's Tribute to the Twenty-Eighth Division.



THE MAN THEY FONDLY CALL UNCLE CHARLEY



Major General Charles H. Muir, commanding the Twenty-eighth Division, in which the former Pennsylvania National Guard units were incorporated

and upon the 109th and 110th regiments, dug in at St. Agnan, fell the responsibility of holding them on this part of the line.

In the first few minutes of the battle, the 109th, commanded by Colonel Millard D. Brown, of Philadelphia, had lost approximately 400 men, but not once did the Philadelphians entertain the idea of giving ground.

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28th Division Sentry First Casualty; Shot by Prowler

The first Iron Division soldier to sustain a wound after the United States entered the war was John McManara, a private in G Company, old First Regiment (109th Infantry).

McManara, whose home is at 2039 Amber street, this city, responded to the call of his country at the outbreak of the war, and went with his command to Reading, where he did guard duty at the Lebanon Valley bridge.

On the night of April 7, 1917, he was shot by a marauder, but his wound did not prove serious, and after receiving treatment at a dressing station the soldier returned to duty. Three shots were fired at McManara, two going wild. The third, fired by the marauder, who was ambushed in a clump of trees, struck the soldier in the right arm.

in action during the three days' fighting: WILLIAM C. ARNOLD, sergeant, Company C, Signal Battalion.

JOSEPH H. BOWE, wagoner, 103d Engineers' Train.

CLARENCE D. ARMSTRONG, private, Company C, 112th Infantry.

CHARLES M. NITTEHOUSE, corporal, Company C, 112th Infantry.

ALBERT E. SWANSON, private, Company F, 112th Infantry.

OREN C. BERLIN, private, Company F, 112th Infantry.

ELMER M. MURDOCK, private, Company F, 112th Infantry.

FRANK P. HOLMON, private, Company F, 112th Infantry.

RAYMOND J. MALOY, corporal, machine-gun company, 110th Infantry.

ALEXANDER DETIGIO, private, machine-gun company, 110th Infantry.

RUPERT REESE, private, Company F, 103d Engineers.

CLAYTON D. SWEETSER, sergeant, Company F, 103d Engineers.

ROBERT KENNEDY, Company A, 110th Infantry.

WALTER PICKFORD, private, Company A, 110th Infantry.

JOHN W. BOYD, private, Company A, 110th Infantry.

JOHN C. CARRICK, sergeant, Company A, 110th Infantry.

FRANCESCO MANNARINI, private, Company A, 110th Infantry.

ARTHUR MARQUAND, private, headquarters company, 110th Infantry.

FRANK R. HOLLINS, private, Company F, 109th Infantry.

NICHOLAS EUABZIO, private, Company F, 109th Infantry.

PRESTON H. CARROLL, private, Company F, 109th Infantry.

EDWARD MCINTIRE, private, Company H, 109th Infantry.

EARL D. CHANSLOR, private, machine-gun company, 109th Infantry.

THOMAS R. ESPEY, private, machine-gun company, 109th Infantry.

chine-gun company, 109th Infantry.

JOHN M. PALLA, cook, supply company, 109th Infantry.

WILLIAM H. STARKEY, sergeant, Company B, 109th Infantry.

ALFRED R. CAMPBELL, private, Company A, 103d Engineers.

WILLIAM C. ORR, second lieutenant, Company E, 112th Infantry.

SAMUEL J. McCULLOUGH, private, Company M, 112th Infantry.

MATHIAS J. HESTER, private, Company M, 112th Infantry.

HARRY F. WALTZ, private, Company E, 112th Infantry.

JOSEPH HALL, private, Company E, 112th Infantry.

CLARENCE E. BOYD, private, Company E, 112th Infantry.

DANIEL V. COON, corporal, Company E, 112th Infantry.

GEORGE W. REESE, corporal, Company E, 112th Infantry.

WILLIAM M. GEARTY, captain, Company A, 109th Infantry.

WILLIAM J. BANHOF, private, Co. C, 109th Infantry.

JAMES MULLER, corporal, Company F, 109th Infantry.

JOSEPH LEVANOVITCH, private, Company K, 109th Infantry.

JOHN BOLTON, private, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion.

WILLARD MACHNER, private, Company D, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion.

PHOEN STAGER, private, Company D, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion.

WALTER R. MURRAY, Y. M. C. A. secretary, attached to 109th Infantry.

JOHN F. BRIGMAN, corporal, Company D, 103d Engineers.

ANDREW J. McCREADY, Company D, 103d Engineers.

AMOS W. MORRIS, private, Company D, 103d Engineers.

JOHN H. MILLER, private, Company D, 103d Engineers.

FRANK KUTCH, private, Company D, 103d Engineers.

NORMAN A. REED, private, Company D, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion.

FRANK A. HARRIS, sergeant, Company D, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion.

EVERETT J. BUSHWELLER, private, Company A, 103d Engineers.

ALBERT MULLERSHOEN, private, Company A, 103d Engineers.

CLYDE A. C. LITTLE, private, Company A, 103d Engineers.

WILLIAM S. ROTAN, private, Company A, 103d Engineers.

RICHARD HARTLEY, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

PHILLIP R. GOODRIDGE, bugler, Company A, 109th Infantry.

FRANCIS B. HOWARD, corporal, Company A, 109th Infantry.

FRANK C. LUBRISKI, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

JOHN LAUDENSLAGER, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

CATALDO CARLETTA, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

FRANCIS L. CADILLE, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

JAMES G. FLEMING, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

FRANK GRENDA, private, Company A, 109th Infantry.

HARRY C. DINNER, private, Company B, 109th Infantry.

JOHN C. GRAFF, private, Company D, 109th Infantry.

RAYMOND J. MALOY, corporal, machine-gun company, 110th Infantry.

ALEXANDER DETIGIO, private, machine-gun company, 110th Infantry.

RUPERT REESE, private, Company F, 103d Engineers.

CLAYTON D. SWEETSER, sergeant, Company F, 103d Engineers.

ROBERT KENNEDY, Company A, 110th Infantry.

WALTER PICKFORD, private, Company A, 110th Infantry.

JOHN VISOSKY, private, Company B, 109th Infantry. MICHAEL E. HOWARD, private, Company D, 103d Engineers. WALTER M. STARZYNSKI, private, Company C, 110th Infantry. ANTHONY HARRIS, private, Company D, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion.

FRANK R. SCHANING, corporal, Company A, 110th Infantry. JAMES MULCH, private, Company D, 109th Infantry. H. Q. GRIFFIN, second lieutenant, Company B, 109th Infantry. PETER YOHODA, private, Company B, 109th Infantry. JOSEPH DODOZK, private, Company B, 109th Infantry.

FRANCIS K. CONLEY, private, Company K, 109th Infantry. HUGH F. DOUGHERTY, private, Company K, 109th Infantry. JAMES R. MONTGOMERY, private, Company K, 109th Infantry. HAROLD E. GOULD, sergeant, Company K, 109th Infantry. WILLMAN, corporal, Company L, 109th Infantry.

WILLIAM L. NEEL, corporal, Company C, 109th Infantry. WILLIAM DOLAN, private, Company C, 109th Infantry. JAMES H. PATTEN, corporal, Company D, 109th Infantry. JAMES R. MONTGOMERY, private, Company K, 109th Infantry. SAMUEL LUKATSKY, private, Company K, 109th Infantry. RODNEY JOHNSON, private, Company K, 109th Infantry.

FRANK P. HEALY, private, Company E, 112th Infantry. ARTHUR V. DRAKE, private, Company K, 109th Infantry. HARRY F. WOOD, corporal, Company K, 109th Infantry. JACQUES FIESHTER, corporal, Company K, 109th Infantry. THOMAS B. KELLY, sergeant, Company K, 109th Infantry. DAVID FRIEDMAN, private, Company D, 103d Engineers.

JAMES C. ROLLEY, JR., private, Company B, 103d Engineers. JAMES T. EVANS, private, Company F, 111th Infantry. HERBERT W. ALLISON, private, Company C, 111th Infantry.

Germans Start Retreat

Hundreds were wounded and scores reported missing when the Germans began their retreat on the evening of July 18, but not a man in the division would have escaped the action. It was the turning point in the war, and the Iron Division had played an important role.

It would be unfair to cite the heroic deeds of the regiments without citing a few personalities. All proved brave, but among the thousands who participated in the three days' engagement it is doubtful if any man came through with a more lustrous record than Colonel Edward Martin. In that engagement he was a major and in command of a battalion.

When the Germans struck his regiment—the 110th—Major Martin drew his revolver and yelled: "I'll shoot the first man who gives ground." Major Martin's determination to stem the German tide inspired the doughboys, and caused many of the men to perform unusual feats of heroism.

One of the men who demonstrated the fighting qualities of the Pennsylvania division was Captain W. C. Truxal, commander of "C" company, 110th. Out of 250 men commanded by Truxal, there were more than 180 casualties. Truxal was surrounded when reforming his lines and taken prisoner.

Walter Murray, a Y. M. C. A. secretary, assigned to the 109th Infantry, stuck by his command and was killed by shell fire. Find "Man of Mystery" That a German spy in the ranks of the 109th Infantry was killed by his own countrymen is the belief expressed by many officers, for when the burial squads began their tasks on the morning of July 19, a man of mystery was discovered.

Lying on the field and dressed in a French uniform was Arsene Guentel. A German bayonet had pierced his heart. The French never succeeded in solving the mystery of Arsene Guentel and to this day the real identity of the soldier is

IRON DIVISION'S BATTLE LOSSES GREATEST AMONG GUARD UNITS

Lieutenant Colonel Clewett, assistant chief of staff of the Iron Division, furnishes the latest official casualty figures on the entire division.

The figures are as follows: Killed in action—Sixty-two officers, 1761 men. Died of wounds—Thirty-six officers, 671 men. Died of disease—Six officers, 200 men. Died of other causes—Five officers, 110 men. Total loss by death—109 officers, 2742 men. Missing and prisoners—1174 officers and men. Severely wounded—114 officers and 3704 men. Slightly wounded—139 officers, 5811 men. Wounded, degree undetermined—Ninety-two officers, 3785 men. Total wounded—396 officers, 13,350 men. Grand total, dead and wounded—505 officers, 16,092 men. Grand total, all casualties—17,717 officers and men.

This was a greater number of casualties than suffered by any divisions except the First, Second and Third Divisions, made up of regular army men and marines.

(Casualties by units as prepared by the War Department three months ago. Latest figures will swell casualty list of each organization.)

The casualties of this division, not including wounded, were:

Table with columns: Units, Killed in action, Died of wounds, Died of disease, Died of other causes, Total. Rows include 109th Infantry Regiment, 110th Infantry Regiment, 111th Infantry Regiment, 112th Infantry Regiment, 107th Machine-Gun Battalion, 108th Machine-Gun Battalion, 109th Machine-Gun Battalion, 107th Artillery Regiment, 108th Artillery Regiment, 109th Artillery Regiment, 103d Trench Mortar Battery, 103d Engineers Regiment, and Totals.

Totals: 1544 Killed in action, 553 Died of wounds, 1174 Died of disease, 612 Died of other causes, 3890 Total.