

AMERICANS FORCE MEUSE CROSSING

Use pontoons captured at Marne to win way over river

WEST BANK IS CLEARED

Engineers, working in cold water to armpits, build bridges under fire

By EDWIN L. JAMES Special Cable to Evening Public Ledger Copyright, 1918, by New York Times Co.

Accepting the challenge of the Germans, who threw in heavy reserves in an attempt to hold the line on the Meuse from Rivy to the north, the American First Army turned eastward yesterday, cleared the west bank of the river from Rivy up to beyond Pouilly and, using pontoons thrown across in the dark hours of early morning, effected passage across the Meuse at three points below Stenay. Pershing's men crossed in force, throwing the Germans back from their defense on the Canal de l'Est, east of the Meuse.

Our sweep took us through the forest of Dieulet. We cleaned up Lanueville, took Cesse and Luzay and pushed on to the outskirts of Letanne, reaching the west bank across from Martincourt, Inor and Pouilly.

General Liggett's men last night were fighting on the outskirts of Stenay, less than one kilometer distant from the main part of the town.

In the center we broke the new German line of resistance running from Stenay to Omont when we pushed beyond Beaumont on the north of the Beaumont-Stonne highway, cleaning out the Bois de St. Perremont.

Our attack on the left carried out the line to Tannay and on beyond into the Bois du Mont Dieu, and the lower end of the forest of Masarin.

Our troops in the region of Stenay are four miles from the main Longuevilly-Metz-Sedan railroad line and twelve miles from the Belgian frontier. In the region of Stenay our front line is some eleven miles from Sedan, historic interest in which is peculiarly keen as applied to the present situation.

Dun Reported Evacuated Dun is reported to have been evacuated by the enemy. At last reports some Germans were still in Stenay, but in a perilous situation because of our advance. For weeks the German command has been issuing orders that Americans are not on any account to be allowed to cross the Meuse.

It appears to have been their plan to withdraw on our left while holding our right on the Meuse. Our sudden and successful attack has smashed this defense line at a vital point, for a considerable advance in the region of Stenay would give an opportunity for squeezing the enemy out of the strong hills north-east of Verdun. Up to yesterday the Germans who hold the east bank of the Meuse more or less impeded our rapid advance on the other side of the river.

There is a story of staying qualities and bravery of both doughboys and engineers in the crossing of the Meuse. Monday we forced the river and got small detachments across, which the Germans drove back. Twice we got a bridge over, only to have it destroyed. Under cover of intense darkness Monday night we got a large number of pontoons along the west bank and, starting soon after midnight, our engineers threw three bridges across near Brioules, many of them working in cold water up to their armpits.

Hearing a noise, the Germans started machine-gun and artillery fire going. We rushed patrols across, which met the German patrols and beat them back. The German counter-attack after the crossing also was stopped.

By this time enemy shells had wrecked one of the bridges, so the engineers put across a fourth to give the requisite three. By the time it was daylight our men were marching across in force. I am not permitted to tell how many thousand we had over at noon.

To the north, near Chery-le-Petit, we effected another crossing and still one more was made. Despite continuous shelling all day, we used the crossings with little interruption of serious consequence. Our troops which crossed met heavy fighting all afternoon as they pushed the Germans back over the canal, where hundreds of the enemy were drowned.

"WITHOUT CONSIDERATION," GERMAN EVACUATION ORDER

Retreating Troops Ordered to Ruthlessly Seize All Men, Horses and Cattle—Soldiers Ordered to Be Captured in Sabotage Program

By EDWIN L. JAMES Special Cable to Evening Public Ledger Copyright, 1918, by New York Times Co.

With the American Army in France, Nov. 1 (delayed).

Fearing an attack and realizing that in the present military situation it would mean an Allied advance, the Germans were today systematically withdrawing war materials from the front, taking away everything not strictly for immediate defensive use.

Not only were they doing that, but they were also stripping villages and towns which might be seized by Americans. Horses were being corralled and driven rearward. All implements and food useful to them were being stored. Moreover, all the male civilian population between the ages of fourteen and sixty were being rounded up and carried away.

With so much talk of evacuation, one may call attention to the following order just captured by the Second Army which relates to the treatment of territory behind the retreating armies. It is in German and reads: "The evacuation of territory behind the retreating armies, as well as of cattle, has been only partially carried out because of the small number of population and the reduced forces at the command of the local commandants. The co-operation of troops, therefore, is necessary."

Reports were received late in the day that the Germans were hurriedly pulling back their light artillery from heights just ahead of our forces in the defense northeast of Verdun at the forest of Woivre, which resist attacks from the south and west. Our successful crossing of the river, of course, makes a menace from the north and west.

Captured pontoons used Incidentally, the pontoons used in the crossing were those captured on the Marne in July. When the Third and Twenty-eighth Divisions on July 15 met the last great German drive and hurled hundreds of sheet-steel boats, which they had crossed. After we captured Lanueville Monday, the Germans saw up the bridge over the river at Stenay.

By special contrivance they attempted to dam the bridge by filling arches of the bridge, but met with only partial success, our bridges holding over the widening stream. This flooding also added to the difficulties of bridging the canal east of the river, which was finally accomplished at a number of strategic points, enabling the Americans to cross over land land pursue the Germans to the hills.

Aviators report heavy movements behind the German lines east of the Meuse, indicating that re-inforcements have been shifted to a new attack front.

The Germans are leaving an immense amount of material in our hands, of which a survey cannot yet be made. Thousands and thousands of shells have been left, with nearly 200 guns and several thousand machine guns.

The Germans are leaving the country desolated, civilians having been moved north in weeks ago. We have not learned definitely whether there are civilians in Stenay, but believe there are not. The Hun has despoiled all villages, taking away or destroying everything of value, leaving a dreary waste behind him, and daily adding to the size of his job when on the day of reckoning he sets about repairing the damage he has done in France.

A few hours' good weather the last two days gave our airplanes an awaited opportunity. We bagged thirty planes Monday and twenty-seven yesterday. Sixty bombers, protected by 100 pursuit planes, bombed Montmedy Monday, and yesterday forty bombers, protected by about seventy-five planes, repeated this mission.

Reconnaissance planes did good work all day and German re-inforcements coming up east of the Meuse were continually harassed by our aerial machine gunners.

By the Associated Press With the American Army Northwest of Verdun, Nov. 6. Marshal Foch has sent this telegram to General Pershing: "The operations begun on the 1st of November by the First American army already have assured, thanks to the valor of the high command and to the energy and bravery of the troops, results of the greatest importance. "I am happy to send you my warmest congratulations on the success of the operations."

Foch Sends Telegram of Thanks to Pershing

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IRISH QUESTION SHELVED

Commons Rejects Motion Providing for Self-Determination

London, Nov. 6.—After a discussion lasting all throughout the day the House of Commons yesterday rejected, by a vote of 186 to 115, a motion, made by John Dillon, chairman of the Nationalist party, that the Irish question should be settled without delay on President Wilson's principle of self-determination.

As first proposed the motion asked that Great Britain should not enter the peace conference until the Irish question was settled. This met with vigorous opposition from Edward Shortt, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Andrew Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who argued that the war had raised questions far transcending home rule. Mr. Dillon then consented to amend his motion.

The purpose in view cannot be accomplished except by proceeding without the slightest consideration. This order was issued after the Germans began to talk of their willingness to evacuate territory. This, perhaps, was the kind of evacuation they were talking about—no horse to be left in the country—all food to be seized.

The division commander will on this account issue orders to all units to search each district systematically and deliver under guard to the commandant's headquarters concerned all men from 14 to 60 years old, together with all cattle for transportation.

A concentration camp will be established near each headquarters for the cattle to be taken to the nearest slaughter house. All cattle fit for food will be seized. Houses will be formed in columns and will be used by headquarters for the collection of provisions of all sorts. The headquarters auxiliary services will direct the work of these columns.

If more horses are found, these may be used to complete the authorized strength of the horses of the unit concerned. No horse will be left in the country.

Next to this, Lloyd George's description of how the Versailles conclusion regarding Germany's application for an armistice were transmitted to President Wilson with the request that he inform Germany that application as to terms should be made to Foch aroused the most cheering.

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FOCH NOW COMMANDS ALLIES ON ALL FRONTS

Announcement in Parliament Is Cheered as Are Terms of Armistice

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It is significant of the temper of the British nation as represented by Parliament that the two points in the announcements made by Premier Lloyd George in the House of Commons and Lord Curzon in the House of Lords which aroused the greatest applause were the fourth military clause in the armistice with Austria giving the Allies the free use of Austro-Hungarian communications for continued prosecution of the war against Germany and the statement that Marshal Foch has been unanimously placed at the head of all the forces operating against Germany on all fronts.

Next to this, Lloyd George's description of how the Versailles conclusion regarding Germany's application for an armistice were transmitted to President Wilson with the request that he inform Germany that application as to terms should be made to Foch aroused the most cheering.

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