

GERMANY STAKES WHOLE RESOURCES IN GIANT GAMBLE

Doubles or Quits Is Play of General Staff in Present Drive

INFANTRY COMES INTO OWN

Cavalry Also Reinstated in Open Warfare That Follows First Hun Plunge

NEW TACTICS BY BOTH SIDES

Attempt to Separate Allies Only Welds Them Together More Firmly Than Ever

[Here for the first time is a popular account of the entire first phase of the German offensive which has already developed into the biggest battle in history. It is based on the most authoritative and impartial information to be had.—Editor.]

Doubles or quits—that, as the on-lookers of the world see it, is the play being made this spring by the giant gamblers of the German Imperial Staff. It is a play familiar enough to all soldiers who have shared in or watched the dizzying games that are quite likely to follow on the heels of payday. They have all watched the tactics of some player who has made considerable inroads on the other fellows' piles, but who, for pressing reasons of his own, is anxious to get out of the game, so anxious that he is willing to stake everything on a single throw.

Doubles or quits. There is the meaning of the offensive that, on March 21 a little after midnight, launched a battle, which, in length of line and in numbers engaged, has developed into the greatest battle the world has ever known.

It will be a long time before history can weed out the mass of claims and counter-claims, and set down the actual figures of this battle. By April 13, according to Sir Douglas Haig's clarion call to his troops, the Germans had already thrown 106 divisions into the fight and that means, roughly, 1,500,000 men. They are credited with 200 divisions on the Western front and the Allies have professed to have something near numerical equality.

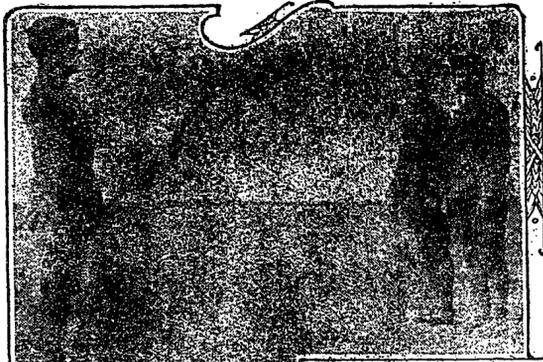
German Guess at Allied Strength

According to estimates openly made in the German press, the Allied special reserves number 60 divisions. 45 of them French and 15 of them English. These reserves which, some weeks ago, were placed at the disposition of General Foch and the Versailles Council, constitute the mysterious letter X in the German problem. What part, if any, of these reserves have already been thrown into the present battle? There is the factor about which the Germans know least and worry most.

Although the Battle of 1918—it has already spread too far to be known any longer as the Battle of Picardy—reached the end of its first phase with the check of the assault on Amiens on April 4, it is too early now to give any but a rough sketch of what happened. It is not too early, however, to point out some of the respects in which that first phase differed from any battle fought on the Western front since the first days of the war.

The greater part of that first phase was open warfare, mobile warfare such as the commanders and the troops in

ALL BUT THE KISS



Major Theodore Roosevelt Jr. and the Croix de Guerre awarded to him by the French Government.

These two pictures show Major Theodore Roosevelt Jr., engaged in his distinguished father's favorite pastime of pinning something on somebody. In this case the major isn't pinning sentimental epithets on the lieutenant and the sergeant; he is decorating them with the Croix de Guerre as a reward for their being "blooded men," men of my type, "exponents of stalwart Americanism" and neither "pussy-footers" nor "mollycoddlers." The lieutenant and sergeant look pleased, and well they might. So does the major; they're in his command.

stiles of those first few days, you can best guess from the fact that these cavalry divisions, when they were finally ordered back, could be allowed only a brief rest before being returned to the line further to the left.

Of heavy artillery, there was none worth mentioning in that first fortnight, for so swift and so tumultuous was the shift of the line that neither side had time to bring theirs into play. Trench mortars played some part and field pieces, and the British local reserves were written some day about the French division whose men hitched themselves to their field pieces and dragged them to a distance of four kilometers, then returned and hitched themselves to the caissons in order to bring up the shells.

But, above all, it was an infantry battle, a battle fought prominently with rifles and machine guns. Those who, unlike General Pershing, have sadly sung the requiem of the rifle, relating its sorry decline from the great American weapon of offense to a mere impediment, did not foresee the battle of 1918. The greatest of the great weapons for such shell-hole battles as Verdun and the Chemin des Dames, gave way once more to the rifle, and it was with the rifle that the men fought during that first week, fighting on with its bayonet when their ammunition ran out, fighting on with their naked fists when their guns were lost in the scuffle.

One reason why the rifle was able to achieve so spectacular a reinstatement was because the fighting was over dry ground, it is mud which, clogging the delicate mechanism, disables the rifle. Here there was no mud for the German offensive, though it was boldly started on the very day of the vernal equinox, was carried on through ten days of air miraculously clear, ten days under skies miraculously serene.

The Allied aeroplanes, too, had new work to do. To an extent never before approached, they became an actual fighting arm during this battle. They did infantry work, swooping down within 40 or 50 yards of the German troops

and hand grenades. They might rely to some slight extent on trench mortars, but, for the most part, they were to use the rifle and the machine gun. They were to ignore any isolated centers of resistance which the receding British might leave in their wake, for these would be dealt with as soon as possible by special troops who should bring up the rear with flame-throwers and hand grenades.

The infantry was merely to advance and keep on advancing. They were to move ahead in wave after wave after wave. The first line was to drop in its tracks at a designated distance, push up the rifle and machine gun sights to the maximum and open fire, shooting blindly and without pause. The second line was to pass through the first, drop in its tracks a little way ahead and duplicate the tactics. The third wave was to pass through the first and second and follow suit. It was hoped that, however heavy the cost to the attacking infantry, the British local reserves, which might be expected to be preparing to enter the battle, would be caught somewhere in this indiscriminate barrage and be ridden with bullets.

That was the German plan—to empty the first British trenches with poison gas and to riddle the British local reserves with a blind, indiscriminate, bullet barrage. That was the plan and, in certain parts of the line, it seems to have worked.

Of what happened over the whole battlefield in the fortnight that followed, of the battle in perspective, only the roughest sketch can be given here.

Where Germany Hit Hardest

The Germans threw the greatest force of their attack against the British line at a point just north of its juncture with the French, and the British line, as their own communications admit, was broken. As a collapse of a dam, with the Germans pouring through, but rather as the opening of a door, 30 kilometers wide with its hinge at Arras and its other edge at Chateau Thierry, there was the view of the path along the Oise Valley to Paris. The pressure was applied, the door began to swing and the Germans shoved hard. It was the French task to close that door or, at least, to barricade past all hope of passage the "HISTORY" will tell some day just why that door opened. While the Third Army under General Byng held splendidly, the Fifth Army under General Gough gave way. He has since been recalled, but history will tell how he had only 13 divisions with which to oppose the 29 and later the 40 which von Hutler hurled against them. In men he was ultimately outnumbered nearly four to one and in guns nearly two to one. History will remind the reader that the support trenches of General Gough's second position had not yet been completed when the battle started and that the army thus thrown suddenly on the defensive had known nothing but offensive warfare for more than three years—the three years that ran from the second battle of Ypres in the spring of 1915.

Fighting With His Men

It will record the brilliance of a retreat in which two-thirds of the guns were saved, and it will tell countless stories of extraordinary individual heroism, with perhaps one outstanding picture, amid the smoke of battle, of a corps commander, a general, down on the ground, rifle in hand, fighting shoulder to shoulder with his men. It will give, at last, a definite account of the losses. The Germans say they were heavy, but not nearly so heavy as they were. And the scores of prisoners taken is made up of many men not captured in the fight, but sick and wounded men picked up in hospitals, which there was not time to evacuate.

But the door had opened and it was not until March 29 that one could say, as General Foch did later, that the German advance had been halted. The cap had been closed, into it the French had thrown, with the greatest rapidity, two small armies under General Fayolle, who had commanded their forces in Italy.

March 29, then, might be considered as marking the end of the first phase, but there was a tremendous though fruitless offensive on the last two days of the month and later a vigorous drive on April 4 toward Amiens before the battle shifted to the north. Let us say that the first phase ended with the single day's battle on the roads that converge towards Amiens, an attack which brought the German within nine miles of that city, but which inflicted upon them the heaviest losses

AMERICAN ENGINEERS IN "CAREY'S CHICKENS"

The commander of the American bridge and railway engineers to whom chance brought the opportunity to pitch in and help the British resist the first onslaught of the great drive in Picardy has received this letter from General Pershing:

"The Commander-in-Chief has noted with great satisfaction the fine conduct of the officers and men of your regiment during the recent German offensive as testified to by the British army and corps commanders. That certain adds some details to the account which, in the columns of this newspaper last week, related the story of those engineers who threw down their tools and caught up their rifles in the first stormy days of the present battle. We know now that the American engineers had their part in the immortal army which General Carey improvised from everywhere, and which will go down in history as 'Carey's Chickens.' Orderlies, cooks and many another unpracticed man had his chance at the real thing in the ranks of 'Carey's Chickens' and the American en-

gineers held an infantry sub-sector for a week. To their commanding officer, General Rawlinson, on behalf of the British, has sent a cordial letter which he winds up by saying:

"I consider your work in the line to be greatly enhanced by the fact that for six weeks previous to taking your place in the front line your men had been working at such high pressure erecting heavy bridges on the Somme. My best congratulations."

When General Muller, commanding a British cavalry division, commending congratulations and thanks from his superiors, he shared them immediately with the American engineers who had fought with that division in the line on March 30—"fought most gallantly," the British general said.

To one American engineer caught in the great offensive fell the task of destroying the engineer dump which would be left in the wake of the receding British army and they were busy at this and trench-laying until March 27, came and with it the assembling of "Carey's Chickens."

WAR SECRETARY BIDS GODSPEED TO A.E.F.

Commander-in-Chief Adds Appreciation to Mr. Baker's Letter

Secretary of War Baker's impressions of the work already accomplished by the members of the A. E. F. and his appreciation of their share in the building of "a great Army to vindicate a great cause" are made public in the following letter addressed to the officers and men of the American Expeditionary Forces in France:

"After a thorough inspection of the American Expeditionary Forces, I am returning to the United States, with fresh enthusiasm, to speed the transportation of the remainder of the great Army of which you are the vanguard. What I have seen here gives the comfortable assurance that plans for the effectiveness of our fighting forces and for the comfort and welfare of the men have been broadly made and vigorously executed. Our schools and systems of instruction are adding to the general soldier training the specialized knowledge which developed among our French and British associates during the four years of heroic action which they have displayed from the beginning of the war.

"Fortunately, the relations between our soldiers and those of the British and French are uniformly cordial and happy, and the welcome of the civil population of France has been met by our soldiers with the same respect and return. "We are building a great Army to vindicate a great cause, and the spirit which you are showing, the courage, the resourcefulness and the zeal for the performance of duty both as soldiers and as men is not only promising of military success, but it is worthy of the traditions of America and of the Allied Armies with which we are associated. Press on!"

The letter has been given out as a general order, which will be read to each company and separate detachment at the first assembly after its receipt. To it the Commander-in-Chief, A. E. F., adds the following commendation:

"In adding his own high appreciation of the splendid spirit of our Army, the Commander-in-Chief wishes to impress upon officers and men of all ranks a keen sense of the serious obligations which rest upon them, while at the same time giving them fresh assurance of his complete confidence in their loyalty, their courage, and their sincere devotion to duty."

they had known since the bitterness of Verdun.

What had the Germans accomplished? They had retaken a stretch of French soil corresponding roughly to the stretch they yielded up by their own retreat last September. They had inflicted heavy losses and, in the process, suffered losses still heavier. They had not separated the French and British armies. Rather had they welded them more firmly together, for under the shock of the assault, the Allied forces were fused under a single command, as diverse elements in a chemical jar can be instantaneously synthesized by an electric current. Thus ended the lack of Allied unity on which the Kaiser had openly gloated and counted for success.

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NATIONAL POLITICS STILL LACKS COLOR

No Clue to Lines on Which Congressional Battles Will Be Fought

[By Cable to THE STARS AND STRIPES.] NEW YORK, April 18.—National politics still remains without color or form. The newspapers have dropped discussion of the Wisconsin election, and nothing else has occurred to indicate the lines on which the Republicans and Democrats will fight out the congressional elections this autumn.

The New York State legislature has adjourned after successfully avoiding all issues that might make campaign material. The question of municipal ownership has been left to a Senate committee for a report to the next legislature.

The Federal prohibition amendment was sidestepped entirely, which throws the light into the next session. The restoration of the Senate nominating conventions system to replace the present primaries failed of passage. This will undoubtedly make the Federal prohibition amendment the big fighting point of next autumn's campaign with municipal ownership and other measures advanced by the Socialist party also prominent.

This will make New York politics nationally important.

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TWO MOTHERS' SONS

This morning, when the postman stopped to make his morning call, He left a bunch of papers, but no letters came at all, And a woman's heart was heavy as she hurried up the stairs (For here is where she always went when troubled with her cares), And her soul was filled with anguish as she took a little cry, For she thought she'd get a letter ere another day passed by, Through the day she worked in silence, there was sadness in her glance, For a mother had no letter from her boy in France.

This morning, when the postman stopped to make another call, He left a soldier's letter that was welcome more of all; And a woman's fingers trembled as she tore the envelope, To scan the lines which held so much of cheer and love and hope; And sunshine all that day was stamped upon her loving face, As she swept and cleansed with vigor all around the place, And the dirt that lurked in corners didn't have a fighting chance, For a mother had a letter from her boy in France.

Pvt. PHIL LEWIS, M. D., in the "Beaumont Bull."

this theater of the war had not known since the early free-for-all days of the Marne and the Yser, open warfare in which hand grenades were forgotten and heavy artillery left behind, in which cavalry and infantry once more came into their own, in which, above all else, the good, old-fashioned rifle came into its own. Toward the end of the phase the lines began to stabilize, the troops to burrow in, the heavy guns to arrive.

Back to Mobile Warfare

For a time, however, it was mobile warfare in which troops swept across country at lightning speed compared with the advances in trench warfare which could almost be measured by inches. How rapid was the movement can best be judged from the experience of one unit of French cavalry which was sent forward to help close the gap that had been made in the line.

That unit received its warning on the night of March 21 and by the next night were near the front. Their orders were to advance rapidly to the banks of the Crozat Canal, the waterway that connects the Somme with the Oise, and there take up positions as reinforcements behind the British line. But though their advance sections had reached that point during the night of March 22, the morning light showed no British there at all. The French troops found themselves face to face with other troops, but the other troops were German.

These French reinforcements were cavalrymen who had ridden, horses and all in auto trucks as far as the trucks would go and then made the rest of the distance on horseback. For the horse, too, came into his own once more when open warfare was revived on the plains of Picardy. They were French cavalrymen to whom fell the honor of stopping the Germans on the heights north of the Oise.

They fought dismounted, it is true, but they could reach their positions in time without their horses. Once there, they fought against repeated attacks made by troops that outnumbered them three or four to one, fought for four days without anything to eat, without anything to drink, without respite of any kind except in ammunition. How stern were the neces-

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