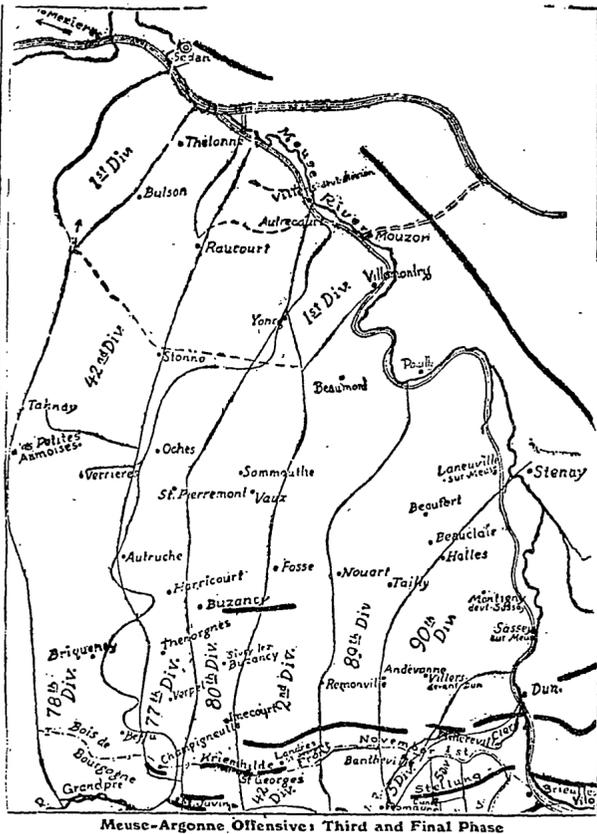


GERMAN DEFENSE COLLAPSED IN THIRD AND FINAL PHASE OF MEUSE-ARGONNE BATTLE

Continued from Page 1
forces, particularly since the middle of October, by the extreme difficulties of the attack, had, at all events, made it possible to bring up in force and with ample ammunition the artillery of all calibers, as well as generally to improve communications and the transportation of supplies of every kind.

rather heavy at the beginning of the attack, but it diminished rapidly in volume, and, though elements of ten different German divisions were reported in front before noon and though a heavy fog which came up early in the afternoon made it difficult to keep liaison between the several units, progress was nevertheless rapid, and by evening the front extended through the Bois de Barriecourt, about five kilometers north of the line of departure. Remonville had been captured during the day.



Meuse-Argonne Offensive: Third and Final Phase

Fire Delays Crossing
Taking Beaufort and pushing through the Forêt de Dieulet and the Forêt de Jaulnay on the 4th and 5th, the division occupied positions along the Meuse from Lanueville, opposite Stenay on the right, to the banks of the river on the other bank, on the left. But these positions were not seized soon enough to prevent the enemy from destroying the bridges, and the fire from the hills on the other bank was sufficiently severe to prevent any crossing during the succeeding four days.

Through the Kriemhilde Stellung
The two hours' artillery preparation laid by the 1st and 2nd Field Artillery Brigades, the machine guns of the 2nd and 4th Divisions and the protectors and Stokes mortars of Company D, of the 1st Infantry, were directed to fire over the canal east of the river, where they stayed though no shells could reach them till the next night, owing to the terrific fire poured down upon them by the enemy from the hills further east.

Resistance Only Slight
The progress from now on was rapid, and it was made against only slight resistance. Across a rolling country and through a succession of small villages the division advanced, taking Lion-devant-Dun on the 6th and Brandeville on the 7th. Moving in detachments which marched up and down the river, the 11th Infantry, on the right, and the 15th Infantry, on the left, took Lion-devant-Dun and Milly, all east of the river, beyond which the division now had a front of over eight kilometers.

Echo of Civil War Days
The division now faced a large tract of forested hills with a single road leading northward through them to Beaufort and the open country beyond it, overlooking the valley of the Meuse and after darkness had fallen on the evening of the 3rd, a novel maneuver was undertaken, involving the daring raids of the American Civil War.

Orders were now given to force the crossings of the Meuse, and the advance parties found the permanent bridges all blown up and encountered heavy machine gun and artillery fire from the east of the river, so that, although numerous efforts were made by patrols, no crossing was effected until November 10.

Path Cleared for 89th
So effective was the preliminary bombardment and the accompanying barrage upon the German front north of the Bois de Bantheville, in the sector of the 89th Division, that when the latter attacked, with the 35th Infantry on the right and the 35th, the 33rd and the 34th in the order named, most of the German machine gunners were killed or captured in their holes before they could get their guns into action.

Woods Cleaned Up
On the 4th and 5th, the flank divisions being still somewhat behind, a crossing of the river was not attempted, but the 5th Marines mopped up the Forêt de Jaulnay, in front of the 89th Division, and reconnoitered the destroyed bridges at Pouilly and in the hills during the night of the 5th-6th, word having been received that the 1st Division would pass through the 80th on the march to attack Mouzon, the 8th Infantry proceeded to protect the flank of the 1st Division by cleaning up the Bois de l'Espiole, the

Bois de Fond de Limon and the village of Villemontéry, all lying between the Meuse and the road to Mouzon along which the 1st Division would advance.
Next morning the 1st Division, passed, in security, and during the succeeding three days the 2nd Division held the positions already attained along the river. On the night of the 6th, the 2nd Engineers threw two foot bridges across at the Bois de l'Espiole, and two battalions of the 5th Marines, with two machine gun companies went over to the east bank under heavy fire, followed by a battalion of the 1st Division, to establish combat liaison with that division to the right.

To North of Incecourt
On the other hand the 31st Infantry, at the right of the sector keeping pretty well up with the 2nd Division, advanced through Incecourt and several kilometers north of it, clearing that side of the sector to within a short distance south of Sivry, but getting so far beyond the other flank that troops of the reserve brigade had to fill the gap between.

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occasionally became serious, during the following two days the division progressed through Vaux-en-Dieulet, Sommauthe and the Bois de Four into the Bois des Portes Gerache. From this line at 2:30 o'clock on the morning of the 5th, the right marched on Beaumont, and at 6:30 a.m. reached that town, excepting one battalion, which struck north to the Beaumont-Stonne road at La Thibaudine farm, north of which, about 9 a.m., it was checked by machine gun fire.

Meantime, the 31st Infantry, on the left, had put in a hard night fighting its way north through the Bois de Pierremont, the Bois de la Barthe and the Bois de Grande Dieulet, reaching the west of La Thibaudine farm, however, about 9 in the morning. The next night the front went forward to a line extending from the north edge of Beaumont to a point just north of Yoncu, on which line at 6:30 a.m. of the 6th, the 1st Division, less the advance element of the 80th Division and pushed on rapidly toward Mouzon, the 80th Division retiring for rest to the vicinity of Cornay.

Enemy Turned in Ravine
It was not altogether unfamiliar ground which the 7th Division occupied on coming into line for the second time in front of Champignuelles, for it was quite near to the front line from which it had retired on October 12. The German positions in Champignuelles and the ravine just east of it, leading up from the Agron river into the sector of the 80th Division, were very formidable and the preliminary bombardment did not reduce them.

The plan of the divisional command for enveloping the troublesome ravine by passing troops around it through the 80th Division sector was not accomplished the first day, and little progress was made. But on November 2 the 30th Infantry flanked and cleared the ravine and got to the Moulin de Champignuelles, a kilometer up the river north of the village, completely turning the enemy out of his positions.

The forward progress was rapid, and at nightfall of the 2nd the front was on the road between Buzancy and Harriecourt. During the following days much artillery and machine gun resistance was encountered, but, with the constant and skillful assistance of batteries of 75 and 155 millimeter guns following in close support, the infantry pushed its way on through St. Pierremont, Oches, Stenay, La Bosque and Flaba, and after overcoming especially strong opposition in and around Raucourt, Harriecourt and Autrecourt, found itself at 6 p.m. of November 6 on the heights overlooking the Meuse just above Sedan.

Fighting all night, the division completely cleared these heights within its sector and even threw patrols across the river near Villers-devant-Mouzon. The Engineers promptly got foot bridges across, and at nightfall on the 7th one installation of the 89th Infantry was over and occupying the heights above Ambion.

Their position here, however, was considered too hazardous by the First Corps command, and they were withdrawn, pa-

troops only remaining on the east bank, while the division held the other shore in force, from the edge of Mouzon to Pont Maugis, three kilometers above Sedan, until the morning of the armistice.

In accordance with the general plan, the artillery of the 78th Division prepared for the attack of November 1 on the previous day by soaking the eastern edge of the Bois de Bourgoigne with yperite gas. Though they did not attack the edge of the forest which they were to cross next morning, the 30th and 31st Infantry had a very hard time, nevertheless, owing to the failure of the 77th Division to take Champignuelles that day.

Bols des Loges Taken at Last
At evening these two regiments were still south of the Bois des Loges, having suffered very severe losses, despite the fact that the 31st Infantry, to their left, had lent all the assistance possible by forcing its way into the gap between the Bois de Bourgoigne and the northeastern edge of the Bois des Loges. That evening at midnight that night the enemy, compelled by the break through further east, began withdrawing; the 31st Infantry, on the extreme left, advanced rapidly to its first day's objective, and early in the morning the 30th and 31st Infantry went all day, straight through the deserted Bois des Loges which had balked them for so long and at such heavy cost.

Pushing northward with the bulk of their remaining combat strength, the two regiments last mentioned flanked Boffu and made their way into the Bois de Boffu, took Briquancy in the afternoon and at dusk were a kilometer north of that village. On the 3rd, though the French had advanced far into the western edges of the woods the day before, efforts to get into contact with them at Boul-aux-Bois were unsuccessful because the enemy had mined and blown up the roads. But the enemy was driven back to the Bois de Boffu from all the Bourgoigne massif, and finally, at about noon, still driving northward, American and French patrols met at dusk, after dark, at Châtillon-sur-Bar.

Left Flank Near Bar Valley
Keeping pace with the 77th Division on its right and, like the latter, encountering only occasional resistance, the isolated machine gun nests which could generally be outflanked without serious loss or delay, the 78th Division now pressed on with its left flank near the valley of the Bar river, down which, the French were moving, occupying in succession Germent, Authe, Briculles-sur-Bar, Verrières and Les Petites Armoises.

Under these orders next day the 16th Infantry reached a front just south of Sedan, the 28th Infantry, one on the hills between the vicinity of Villers-devant-Mouzon and Autrecourt. In spite of the strenuous exertions involved in these movements, under rush orders from the Corps the 1st Division on the night of the 6th-7th made a forced march on Sedan across the sectors of the 7th and 42nd Divisions on November 4. The 1st Division had a final experience of active service, consisting chiefly of hard marching, for having followed and passed through the 80th Division on November 4, it pursued its march eight on ten kilometers through the 80th Division on November 4, overlooking the Meuse from the vicinity of Villers-devant-Mouzon and Autrecourt.

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