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THE 140TH. INFANTRY IN THE
MEUSE-ARGONNE

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THE 140TH. INFANTRY IN THE MEUSE-ARGONNE.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The 140th. U. S. Infantry was made by the consolidation of the 3rd. and 6th. Missouri National Guard regiments at Camp Doniphan, Oklahoma on October 1, 1917. The 3rd. Missouri Infantry was the old Third of Kansas City, Mo. The 6th. Missouri Infantry was a new regiment raised in the small towns of central and southern Missouri.

2. More than one-half of the officers and men of the 140th. Inf. had seen service on the Mexican Border in 1916. The training at Camp Doniphan, OKLA. from October, 1917, to April, 1918, had been thorough and comprehensive. It had embraced open warfare, trench warfare under French instructors, bayonet fighting under expert British instructors, and finally, after the return from France of Major General William M. Wright, the commanding general of the 35th. Division, the new methods of attack in wave formations. This training at Camp Doniphan had been pushed so strenuously and unremittingly that the soldiers of this regiment and the others as well reached their highest pinnacle of training, went stale and slid back not less than three times. Fortunately, at the time the regiment left Camp Doniphan on April 12, 1918, for the port of embarkation, the training was on the uplift again and the morale was exceedingly high.

3. Upon arrival in France, the 35th Division was not held in the S.O.S. but went immediately into the British zone back of the Somme.

At Monchaux, France Col. William H. Colley with six officers and twenty noncommissioned officers of the 16th. Manchester Regiment, B.E.F. joined the regiment and intensive training went on in methods which the British had found to be right. This training included bayonet fighting, trench raids, the overcoming of centers of resistance and combat groups, all intended to prepare the regiment to enter the front on the new G.H.Q. line back of the Somme and probably with the British.

4. During the latter part of July and all of August, 1918 for nearly six weeks, the 140th occupied the front line trenches in the Vosges Mts. in Alsace. Here raids were made and hostile raids were resisted.

5. The regiment with the 35th Division was in reserve during the St. Mihiel Offensive. Its orders were to be ready to move from the Foret de Haye on fifteen minutes notice but the advance went so well that it was not necessary to order this reserve division into the action.

6. The men who made up the 140th. Infantry were practically all Missouri men. They were volunteers who had been ready to serve their country even before we entered the World War. They had not been drafted into the service nor had they enlisted for pay or for bonus. They had in months and years before the war given of themselves freely both physically, mentally, and financially. They were ready and fit when called upon to take part in the world's greatest battle, the Meuse-Argonne. Somebody once asked Bernard Shaw which five men he would save if the flood came again and only five could be rescued.

Shaw said that he would let everybody drown, leaving it to God to create

something better. That is easy cynicism. The Master Builder took people just as He found them and tried to help them to be better. We cannot improve upon His method. This was exactly what was done in taking those Missouri men and making soldiers and better soldiers of them.

7. From Foret de Haye back of St. Mihiel the regiment along with the division was moved by truck 100 miles to Eclair and from there marched to Camp Marquette in the Argonne Forest. The 35th Division relieved the 73rd. French Division on Sept. 22, 1918, leaving French

(1) From Vau-
quois Hill to
Exarment, Kans
more, Pg.72.

sentinels in the front line trenches to deceive the enemy. (1)

8. The 140th Inf. remained in Camp Marquette, most of the men

in old French barracks but many in tents, tents out under the trees.

The time was spent in cleaning all guns and preparing equipment.

The rifles were passed through the Mobile Ordnance Repair Co. which had come up to make all needed repairs. Service rifle and Chauchat ammunition was issued. Requisitions for needed supplies were in and were in process of being filled. Rifle and hand grenades had not yet arrived. Arrangements were made to have every one bathe and the soldiers were instructed to put on clean underwear after the date of going into action was learned. The lesson taught by the Japanese in the Russian-Japanese War to avoid infection when going into battle by having only clean clothing on so that in the case of being wounded clean instead of dirty patches of cloth would come in contact with the wound, was put on down to the men. Further effort was made to stimulate the fighting spirit and to put the morale up to a high pitch. A spiritual seriousness was manifest among

both officers and men. The chaplain's night services were crowded.

The importance and the greatness of the expected offensive were emphasized to the officers. The fact that there would be an attack along a line extending from the North Sea to the Swiss border and that this regiment was going in and had a recognized difficult hostile position to break through added to the determination to prepare thoroughly and to do their utmost.

9. A day or two before the day of going into the battle, a copy of LIFE came to the camp along with a delivery of mail from home. I remember noting a cartoon on the front cover which undertook to portray what the family back home was thinking of their soldier boy in France. In one corner the father's idea was shown; his boy was represented as being victorious on the battle field and was driving a German soldier at the point of his bayonet. The small brother's idea was that his soldier brother had the Kaiser captured and was on the point of thrusting him through with his bayonet. The mother saw her boy as being wounded and a Red Cross nurse hovering over him, administering to his needs and binding up his wound. The sister had the vision that her brother was standing in front of the assembled regiment and the colonel was pinning a D.S.C. on his breast. The last picture gave the sweetheart's mind's eye picture of what her soldier-lover was doing; he was standing on the corner of a French village, surrounded by a bevy of mademoiselles. I was impressed with the fact that none of them was right because there he was in the mud, sleeping in the open under a tree, simply doing his plain straight

duty. Doing your duty is usually easier than doing something else; people are disposed to ask too much credit for doing their duty.

GENERAL SITUATION.

10. The Meuse-Argonne Battle was one of many battles in the

General Offensive of 1918, so named by General Pershing. (2)
The American First Army which was to make the drive between the Meuse River and the Argonne Forest inclusive, was commanded in person by General John J. Pershing. The American IV Corps was east of the Meuse and was to hold their position while the III, V, and I Corps were to attack. (3)

11. The order of battle from right to left, Meuse River to include the Argonne Forest was the III Corps with the 33rd, 80th, and 4th divisions in line and the 3rd Division in reserve; the V Corps in the center with the 79th, 37th, and 91st divisions in line and the 32nd Division in reserve; and on the left the I Corps with the 35th, 28th, and 77th divisions to attack and with the 92nd Division in reserve. (4)

12. The I Corps to which the 35th Division belonged was commanded by Major General Hunter Liggett. The 35th Division was commanded by Major General Peter E. Traub. The 91st Division on the right of the 35th was commanded by Major General William H. Johnston; the division on the left, the 28th, was commanded by Major General Charles H. Muir. (5)

13. The 140th Infantry of 70th Brigade, was commanded by Lt. Col. Channing E. Delaplaine of the Regular Army. He took command on Sept. 23rd, three days prior to the battle. Col. Kirby Walker was assigned to the command of the 70th Brigade, relieving Brigadier General Charles I.

(2) Military History of the World War, Howland, Pg. 382.

(3) Secret Field Order No.

20. Hq. 1st Army, Sept. 20, 1918.

(4) Military History of the World War, Howland, Pg. 383.

(5) The History of the A.E.F. Thomas, Pg. 239.

(6) From Doni-
phen to Verdun,
Edwards, Pg.148.

Martin on Sept. 22nd, four days before the action. (6)

14. The three battalions of the 140th Infantry were commanded as follows: First, Major Fred L. Lemmon; Second, Major Warren L. Mabrey; and Third, Major Murray Davis. It just happened that the seniority of majors was coincident with the order of battalions, as given, namely, First, Second, Third.

THE TERRAIN

15. The country over which the American troops were to attack falls into three divisions; (a) the Valley of the Meuse, (b) the Valley of the Aire, and (c) the Argonne Forest. (7) The Meuse

(7) The Major
Operations of
the A.E.F. in
France, Pg.91.

River is the principal stream; it flows northwest. The commanding height of Montfaucon marks the divide between the Meuse and the Aire. The Aire River on the left boundary of the 35th Division sector, flows nearly parallel to the Meuse, cuts through the Argonne ridge, and flows west into the Aisne. The principal feature in this region is the high hill of Vauquois. The Argonne Ridge separates the Aire and the Aisne valleys; it is heavily wooded. The German front line on Hill 263 with Vauquois Hill made an exceedingly strong barrier to any move down the Aire valley. In the sector of the 35th Division there was a series of important wooded areas, among which are the Bois de Rossignol near Vauquois Hill and the Bois de Montrebeau just south of Exermont. The hills and ridges in this area run generally in an east and west direction and make a rolling country east and south of the Argonne Forest.

16. In the field of operations for the 140th Infantry the villages that figured the most were Cheppy, Very, Charpentry, Baulny, and Exermont. Chaudron Farm also played an important part. All of these towns were in ruins before this offensive and were practically obliterated during the battle.

DISPOSITIONS.

17. The American First Army was opposed by General von Gallwitz's Group. He had eleven divisions in line and five in reserve at the

outset of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. (8) Two German divisions were immediately in front of the 35th Division at the start but on

exceedingly bitter and stiff defense, particularly on the front of the 28th and 35th Divisions, with machine guns and with artillery. The

Germans made frequent counter attacks. (9)

18. The first hostile position in front of the 35th Division was known as the Hagen Stellung; the old front line had been modified and now served as an intermediate line and was known as the Hagen Stellung,

Nord. (10) The hostile positions against which the regiments of the 35th Division had to go are shown on the map attached as Plate I.

The wooded areas across the whole front were carefully organized as artillery positions, permitting cross fire everywhere. The German artillery in the Argonne Forest and on the heights east of the Meuse were in position to enfilade the lines of any attack. They also possessed excellent observation and as a result their fire was very accurate. The German Army was at its highest fighting efficiency

(8) Military History of the World War, Howland, Pg. 382.

(9) Military History of the World War, Howland, Pg. 385.

(10) The Major Operations of the A.E.F. in France, Pg. 92.

and the morale was still good, especially in the best of its divisions. The enemy fought with great courage and tactical efficiency.

19. The 140th Infantry was in the village, Eclairé and surrounding woods on Sept. 19th and 20th. During the night of Sept. 21st, the entire brigade marched northward to Camp Marquette in the Argonne Forest. The regiment was in the support brigade and remained in that camp until the night of Sept. 25th with the exception of the Machine Gun Company which was ordered to the front line to support the attack of the 69th Brigade. About 8 p.m. on Sept. 25th, the regiment less the Machine Gun Co. marched from Camp Marquette to a position about 1000 yards northwest of Aubreville so as to be in its position by four hours before
A hour. The distance was not far and the regiment was in position in
about three hours. The regiment was directed to dig in on the slope
of a hill immediately back of the line where it was to start its advance, with the battalions in the order in which they were to move out, namely, First, Second, and Third. See map, showing daily advance, attached as Plate II. The Trench Mortar and One Pounder sections were to follow the Third Battalion. The Machine Gun Co. had orders to join the regiment as it came up following the attack of the 69th Brigade. The 70th Brigade was the reserve brigade in the initial attack.

20. The enemy doubtless knew that there was movement of troops and his artillery placed fire of interdiction along the road while the regiment was marching to position. Shells exploded on the road in front of the troops and back of them and on either side but only once were there any casualties and that was when three men in Co. B were hit with fragments. Later during the fore part of the night, the enemy

kept up harassing fire and they had it so well placed that it was found to be necessary to bring the men farther up on the hill so that shells bursting in the valley below would not hit them, either direct or with fragments. Our men could then watch their shells burst without hurting anyone and that was a good occupation until our own artillery opened up with its fire of preparation and fire for demolition preceding the attack.

PLANS AND ORDERS.

21. The chief plan of the combined attack was as General Pershing said, "to draw the best German divisions to our front and to consume ~~(11) The We. line" (11) It had as its objective the Metziers-Sedan-Valenciennes~~ with Germany, Government Pub- Railrod which gave a means of lateral communication along the enemy's lication, Pg. 111.

(12) The History of the A. E.F., Thomas, Pg. 234.

front and made possible the rapid shifting of divisions and the furnishing of supplies to the German Army in France. The taking of this railroad would close the entrances to France and would make possible the capture of the German Army which remained as there would be no way to get them out. (12)

22. The general/^{plan} of the 35th Division was to attack with 91st Division of the 5th Corps on the right and the 28th Division on the left on "D" day at "H" hour. It developed that "D" day was Sept. 26, 1918 and "H" hour was 5:30 a.m. The boundaries of the zone of action of the 35th Division were:

Right (east) boundary:	VAUQUOIS (inclusive)
	VERY (inclusive)
	ECLISFONTAINE (exclusive)

Right (east) boundary: SOMMERANCE (inclusive)
(continued) ST. GEORGES (inclusive)
IMECOURT

Left (west) boundary: BOUREUILLES (exclusive)
VARENNES (exclusive)
MONTBLAINVILLE (exclusive)
APREMONT (exclusive)
FLEVILLE (inclusive)
ST. JUVIN (exclusive)

23. The order stated that the 35th Division would attack in column of brigades, regiments side by side, each with one battalion in the first line, one in support, and one in reserve. The 69th Brigade with one battalion, the 2nd Bn. of 139th Infantry, of the 70th Brigade was to lead the attack. The 70th Brigade less one battalion, was the reserve and the division order directed that it follow the leading brigade "at not more than 2 kilometers." The leading battalions were to avoid VAUQUOIS and the Bois de ROSSIGNOL, passing them by the flank. The 140th Infantry thus became the right regiment of the reserve and followed the 138th Infantry. The 139th Infantry was on the left of the 140th. The 137th Infantry was the left regiment of the attacking brigade. The regimental limits of the right regiment were on the east, the right limit of the division and on the west or left, the western edge of VAUQUOIS HILL, Hill 207, CHEPPY, EXERMONT, and SOMMERANCE.

24. The objectives for this offensive as given in the division order were: CORPS OBJECTIVE - The heights southeast of CHARPENTRY connecting points 02.6 - 75.4 and 05.8 - 77.9.

AMERICAN ARMY OBJECTIVE - A line through l'ESPERANCE - HILL MONTREBEAU -
La NEUVILLE le COMTE Fme.

THE COMBINED ARMY FIRST PHASE LINE - Line east of FLEVILLE.

COMBINED ARMY FIRST OBJECTIVE - Line 1 kilometer south of line

(13) Field Or-
ders, No. 44,
Hq. 35th Div.
Sept. 24, 1918.

connecting CHAMPIGNEULLE - IMECOURT. (13)

25. The division order went to Brigade Commanders and the brigade order based upon it was issued in the early morning of Sept. 25th and delivered to the regiment in the fore part of that day. The brigade order carried all the essential factors of the division order and provided that the troops would be in position at H-4 hours.

26. All field officers of the division were assembled at Division Headquarters at Grange le Comte Ferme in the late afternoon of Sept. 25th. General Traub had his Chief of Staff read the order for the attack and he announced that the attack would start at 5:30 the following morning, thus giving notice of "D" day and "H" hour. The general went over the plans/^{and}made an exhortation for loyal and faithful action upon the battle field. He gave out the information that his old friend and classmate would have a squadron of the 2nd. Cavalry on the field to "expedite your movement forward." He urged his unit commanders to lead their organizations and to accompany their advanced elements. He gave the positive direction that anyone who gave an order to retreat, no matter who, should be shot upon the spot. All officers showed deep seriousness in their faces and I am sure that all realized the full significance of the responsibilities resting upon them.

27. It was dark by the time the officers of the 140th Infantry

got back to the regiment. Final preparations had to be made as the march to position must be made that night. Officers' bedding and clothing rolls and enlisted men's packs and every thing surplus had to be stored. All this equipment was placed in one of the barracks at Camp Marquette to be left there until the regiment should return from the battle. The men were going into action with stripped packs and two days' emergency rations. The hand and rifle grenades had been delivered late that afternoon but had not been issued to the men. That had to be done and was accomplished just prior to marching away from the camp.

As the regiment had arrived at its position of readiness, immediately back of where it would move out in the morning, the regimental order was delivered orally by Col. Delaplane to his battalion commanders who had been assembled in a dug-out on the side of the hill. The situation was well understood by all the majors but the issuance of the formal order by the regimental commander gave exactly the right touch. The colonel knew the seriousness of the forthcoming battle and at the conclusion of his order he said, "And I wish you success."

29. The battalion commanders made what reconnaissance they could of the position where the march would start and issued their orders to their company commanders. The main thing to determine was proper position, sector, and direction. The approach march had to be made by compass bearing as there were woods to go through and it developed that there was much smoke and a dense fog to penetrate.

OPERATIONS.

30. The artillery began its fire of preparation for the Meuse-Argonne Offensive at 11 p.m. on Sept. 25th, when 3,928 guns of all calibers from the 75's to the 14 inch railroad guns opened up on the enemy defenses. This was a terrific bombardment and during the succeeding six hours the barbed wire, the trenches, the concrete emplacements, and enemy positions

(14) The History of the A. E. F., Thomas, Pg. 244. were torn to pieces. (14) This artillery fire to destroy the German defenses and to prepare for the attack of the infantry at 5:30 in the morning was, of course, along the entire American front.

31. At 4:20 a.m., Sept. 26th the divisional artillery opened up.

~~From every hill and from every cluster of woods the guns were surging~~

forth. At 5:20 a.m. ~~our own guns ceased firing on the enemy barbed~~ wire and position targets, and at 5:30, "H" hour, they opened up on

(15) The Artilleryman, Lee, Pg. 94. the rolling barrage which was to precede the infantry. (15) The boom of the big guns some distance in our rear and those to the eastward toward Verdun continued until the time for the attack.

32. At precisely 5:30 a.m., the battalion commander of the First Battalion which was to lead the 140th Infantry gave the command, "Move out", and the Scout Platoon of the First Battalion started the march towards the enemy's lines, followed at 200 yards by the battalion, Companies A and B in the first line and C and D in the second line, all companies advancing in platoon columns or what was then called "Artillery Formation". The second line or as then called "wave" followed the first at 100 yards. The battalion commander, his staff and headquarters, marched mid-way between the two lines and opposite the center, with wide intervals

and somewhat staggered. The march was made on a compass bearing of 350° through a thick fog. The orders were to follow the 138th Inf. at 1000 meters, keeping contact with the 91st Division on the right and the 139th Inf. on the left. The dense fog and the smoke from the artillery fire made the marching very difficult. The other two battalions and other units of the 140th followed the First Battalion in similar formation. There was considerable hostile artillery fire, apparently coming from the Bois de CHEPPY, three kilometers to the south of the village of CHEPPY. However, there were surprisingly few casualties. One woods had to be gone through which had been

~~sheltered with gas. There were some snits necessary before the enemy's~~
~~original position was reached. The 137th Inf. was leading its~~
fighting at VAUQUOIS HILL and other parts of the enemy's first position. The map attached as Plate I shows the first, intermediate, second, and part of the third hostile positions.

33. During the approach march, the regiment had a short delay caused by Companies A and C of the 137th Inf. occupying a position in the woods directly in our route of march. Upon reconnaissance, the Battalion Commander of the First Battalion learned that these two companies were part of the reserve of the 69th Brigade and were holding there, awaiting orders. He further learned that the main attack had progressed beyond the hostile first position and hence he attached these two companies of the 137th Inf. to his command and proceeded on the march with six companies. Later these two companies were put

into the attack on VARENNES when word came back that support was needed there. After they had been committed to that action, they came under their own commanders.

34. The 140th Infantry crossed the original front lines at about 8:00 a.m., part of the regiment passing to the right of VAUQUOIS HILL and all but one company of the remainder to the left. Co. D went over the hill to make certain about its complete and thorough mopping up. From this point our first prisoners of this engagement were sent to the rear. Contact with the 91st Division was maintained throughout the day by patrols from the right flank companies. Towards evening, a patrol from Co. "A" connected with the 363rd. Inf. of 91st Division in the town of VERT. The regiment passed through and to the right of CHAFFI and went on to a ridge nearly west of VERY when it was halted by approaching the 138th Inf. ^{which} had stopped its advance. The night of Sept. 26th was spent on the reverse slopes of the hills at this point.

35. The orders for the second day were for the 140th Inf. to pass through, or leap-frog as it was called, the 138th Inf. which regiment had stood the brunt of the fighting during the first day. This was the day when the orders for the attack got mixed at Division Headquarters. The first orders provided that the attack for the morning would start at 8:30 after a three hours' artillery fire of preparation. The division chief of staff issued orders to that effect. Then when the Commanding General studied the Corps order, he found that the attack was scheduled to be made at 5:30 a.m. He endeavored to get the first orders changed but there was much confusion and uncertainty. The compromise plan

was to advance at 6:30 a.m. but the regimental commander received orders at 5.05 a.m. to attack at 5:30 after a five minutes' barrage on the hostile machine gun nests. The barrage failed to come, due to the

(16) From Don- mixture of orders setting the time. (16)
iphan to Ver-
dun, Edwards,
Pg.59.

36. For this attack two battalions were put on the line, the Second taking position on the right of the First and the Third Battalion followed in support. Both leading battalions advanced in skirmish line with two waves, preceded by their scout platoons. The order of companies in the lines was reversed from what it had been the day before. The 138th Inf. and its outposts were passed and the 140th advanced about

one kilometer when the entire line of the division was held up by
~~terrific fire of artillery and machine guns.~~ Unhampered by fire from

our guns, German machine guns in great numbers laid a withering fire across the flat top of Hill 218 while our men were pushing through the thick wire entanglements. Enemy machine guns in CHARPENTRY and surrounding that town and along the road running northeast could place a deadly grazing fire on any advancing troops. It seemed as though the whole country was alive with machine guns. The nature of the ground over which the advance was made can be seen on the accompanying panoramic sketch which is attached as Plate III. Meantime heavy artillery fire came on our lines and over them from the hills to the north and northwest and from the ridges in the Argonne Forest to our left.

37. During the day there was no further advance made by the 140th nor the 139th on the left nor by the 91st Division on the right. Finally

at 6:10 p.m. the battalion commanders on the assault line received delayed orders to renew the attack at 5:30 p.m. The attack was to follow tanks. The tanks operating with the 140th Inf. were French tanks, manned by American soldiers but under French officers. The French tank commander was about frantic in trying to control his American tank men. It was a poor arrangement. The regiment was moving within ten minutes after receiving the order. The two battalions in the attacking line went surging ahead, cleaned out the machine gun nests which had held them up and took no prisoners, captured a battery of light artillery, and kept going until they could not see to fight any longer. The Second Battalion halted for the night on and in the vicinity of Hill 231, just west of ECLISFONTAINE. The First Battalion continued the advance until about 9:00 p.m. and went well beyond the l'ESPERANCE-CHAUDRON FARM-ECLISFONTAINE road when it was found that the Second Battalion was not keeping up and that the 139th Inf. had stopped its advance some distance to the rear. The First Battalion then stood out by itself and it was time to halt and provide protection for the night. The battalion had to take care of itself. Outposts were put out; the area to the right back to the Second Battalion was patrolled; connection was made back to the 139th Inf. and one company from that regiment was brought up approximately to the First Battalion's line. The battalion dug in for the night, beyond the road and northeast of CHAUDRON FARM and about 1000 meters east of MONTREBEAU WOODS. See the map attached as Plate I for the positions. The battalion was concealed by a surrounding horse-shoe shaped woods and while it was the foremost element towards the enemy of the whole

division during that night yet it was in position to put up a good fight if necessary. The chief incident during the night was the taking and the putting out of action two artillery guns and the gunners who were firing from a clump of trees behind us. The First Battalion lost contact with regimental headquarters during this advance and did not reestablish communication until 1.00 a.m.

38. Dawn of Sept. 28th found the 35th Division lying in front of BAULNY and CHARPENTRY, from 500 to 800 yards back of the road which runs from l'ESPERANCE past CHAUDRON FARM to ECLISFONTAINE, except the First

~~and Second battalions of the 140th Infantry which were in the positions described in the preceding paragraph.~~ Another attack was ordered for

the morning of Sept. 28th and as usual was to start at 5:30 a.m. There had been two days of very hard and weary fighting and three nights during which sleep was impossible. The men were tired physically but they were not exhausted; there was still plenty of fight left in them. The order for the attack as applied to the regiment on this morning at first affected only the Second and Third battalions because the First Battalion was already holding an advanced position. On this morning the Third Battalion was put into the attacking line for the first time. The Second and Third battalions advanced, each with one company from the 130th Machine Gun Battalion attached. The First Battalion fought a holding action while the other two battalions were coming up. Very little progress was made up to 8:00 O'clock and then a concentration of artillery and machine gun fire held up the attacking battalions and gave the First Battalion a very lively fight in which it suffered many casualties.

In fact the losses this morning were heavy throughout the regiment. The regiment dug in. A panoramic sketch of the portion of the Meuse-Argonne Battle Field over which the regiment fought is attached as Plate IV.

39. At 9:45 a.m. the tanks came up and the advance was resumed. The enemy fire which met the tanks and the 140th Inf. which advanced with them was far more deadly than it had been before. The advance was very slow. The men were occasionally able to use their rifles against machine gunners; our automatic riflemen and machine gunners kept up almost constant fire but our artillery was practically silent.

~~The 140th Inf. advanced but it paid a heavy price in casualties.~~
the advancing battalions came up, the First Battalion joined in the attack and further advance was made until the regiment reached a line where its left was just about due north of CHAUDRON FARM and east of MONTREBEAU WOODS. See map attached as Plate I. In this position the regiment caught the full blast of battle. Artillery was used against it with both direct and indirect fire; machine guns hurled their rain of bullets from three sides. Enemy air planes in large numbers flew over and bombed and machine-gunned our lines. The 140th Inf. held this advanced line that night.

40. From the time the morning advance started, the regimental commander had gotten lost from the regiment but the attack continued. (17) From Doniphan to Verdun, Ed-wards, Pgs. 107 and 108, Second Battalion controlled the advance. After they had reached the copies of messages. First Battalion position, the Battalion Commander of the First Battalion

exercised command over the three battalions which was all of the regiment at the forward position; regimental headquarters and other units of the regiment were back somewhere. The Regimental Commander got back to his headquarters in the early morning of the next day.

41. During the afternoon of Sept. 28th, we were again sure of our contact with the 91st Division. A captain commanding the Scout Platoon of their left regiment came to the P. C. of the First Battalion and reported their location. At that time there was considerable gap between the 91st. Div. and the 140th Inf. of the 35th Div. and their left was from one to two kilometers behind our right. Again during the night contact was made with Co. M, 361st Inf., of 91st Div. at which time our patrols reported them as being about one kilometer to our right rear. These patrols encountered considerable enemy resistance in that gap.

42. The attack on the 28th was so difficult, the hostile fire so severe, the counter attacks so frequent, and the losses so heavy that it took real stamina on the part of both officers and soldiers to withstand all that they had to endure. From captured prisoners it was learned that German troops from the following divisions had been fighting the 35th Division: 1st and 5th Guard Divisions, 37th and 52nd Divisions, and the 2nd Landwehr Division. With the exception of the last named division, the Kaiser had no better troops. (18) Self control and power of will played some part in the success of the severe fighting encountered on all sides. One of Napoleon's field marshals had to go into some extraordinarily hard fighting. He felt a shakiness about his knees; there was a sickness in his stomach;

(18) The
Artillery-
man, Lee,
Pg. 150.

and there was a lump in his throat. He felt/^{the}terribleness of what he had to go into and he knew that he was going. He looked down upon his trembling legs and shaking knees. He sized himself up and then his will said to his physical body, "You tremble body but you would tremble more if you knew where I am going to take you." No doubt the exercise of the power of will over material things, enabled our officers and men to go through all that they had to endure during that bitter fighting.

43. The fourth day of the fighting in this great battle was Sunday, Sept. 29th. It was a dreary Sunday morning that opened on ~~the old 240th Infantry. It had been a night of fighting and the~~ division line which had been established the night before had been shelled continuously during the night. There were many dead and wounded men through and on either side of MONTREBEAU WOODS. Many of the wounded had been waiting since the day before to be evacuated. Many died from the exposure because they could not be taken care of.

44. Once more an attack was ordered for 5:30 a.m. There had been no good opportunity for reorganization. This morning the whole scheme of things seemed to be to take EXERMONT and to advance to Hill 240 north of the town. Just why there should have been so much keenness to capture EXERMONT could not then and cannot now be seen. There was nothing there. The town was no good. It lay in a basin with hills on all sides and three of those sides were occupied by German soldiers. Nevertheless, the Commanding General of the 80th Division was determined that the town should be taken and his

personal representative, Col. Hamilton S. Hawkins, was on the battle field to see that it was done. Col. Hawkins had been chief of staff of the division but he had been relieved on Sept. 27th and Col. Jens Bugge made chief of staff. Col. Louis M. Nuttman, commanding the 69th Brigade was also there because both brigades had been ordered to take the ruined village. The blunder in the order for this morning was in directing all units to go to EXERMONT. With artillery preparation and with time given for reorganization maneuver could have been made against the German positions and especially against

~~Hill 240 after the capture of which the Germans had the tower because we later learned that the Germans had controlled it.~~

45. The orders for Sept. 29th had directed that the 138th Inf. now operating as part of the 70th Brigade, would go through the 140th and lead the attack. That regiment had not been in the fight since the first day. The orders reached them too late and they did not come up. Soon after 6:00 a.m. Col. Hawkins and Col. Nuttman ordered the 140th Inf. to make the attack and off it went. The Second and Third battalions were in the assaulting line and the First Battalion was designated as mopping up battalion and was to follow the attacking lines. (19) At this point Col. Kirby Walker, commanding the 70th Brigade to which the 140th belonged, came up and not knowing that part of the regiment was already fighting through to EXERMONT ordered the First Battalion to reform and to attack at 8:10 a.m. This attack was also successful and the First Battalion organized a line about

(19) Statement made by Major John W. Armour.

~~400 yards long along the road leading northeast from EXERMONT. Two~~

companies of the 139th Inf. came up on this line later and the line was being augmented by soldiers infiltrating through from the rear. This was a good position and could have been held indefinitely. All that was now needed was to keep the line reinforced and to extend on the west of the town, leaving the town itself alone. (20)

(20) State-
ments by
Lt.Col.J.E.
Rieger,139
and Maj.J.W.
Armour,140.

46. About 3:00 p.m. Col. Delaplane who had been in EXERMONT re-

ceived a message which he showed to the Battalion Commander of the First Battalion, ordering all troops to fall back on a line established by the 110th Engineers, 35th Division. The officers in the front lines did not know there was such a line and the message did not state where it was. A map attached as Plate V shows the 35th Division salient and the positions of the 140th Inf. and other regiments on Sept. 29th. From the map it can be plainly seen that the 35th Division was well advanced and possibly too far advanced. The delineation of the German line on Sept. 29th as shown on this map also shows how easily the enemy could place enfilade fire down the left flank of our lines and could even catch them in the rear. This hostile fire coming from the rear often gave the impression that our own artillery was firing short. The withdrawal was made in fairly good order as far as the 140th Inf. was concerned. The two companies of the 139th Inf. on the right covered the withdrawal and then pulled back, fighting all the way.

47. The 140th Inf. got back to the "Engineers Line" about 6:00 p.m. and there dug in for the night. This new line established by the

110th Engineers as Division Reserve was on the ridge north of BAULNY and extending northeast and south of CHAUDRON FARM. See map attached as Plate I. The withdrawal of our advanced units from EXERMONT and from the enemy's immediate front, evidently encouraged the Germans to a new effort and a heavy artillery fire was experienced and their counter attack was developing.

48. On the fifth day, Sept. 30th, the 35th Division established itself on its new line and organized for defense. The first phase of the battle was over. Two counter attacks were easily repulsed. About dark the enemy started putting over mustard gas. It was a very cold night and as the shells were scattered over a large area, there were not many mustard casualties. If the next morning should be warm, then the mustard gas would give trouble. During the night orders were received that the 35th Division would be relieved by the First Division before daylight of Oct. 1st. The relief of the 140th Inf. was completed about 4:00 a.m. The regiment went back in platoon columns to a field about one kilometer north of VAUQUOIS and remained there about twenty-four hours. The 140th then started on its march to MARATS le GRANDE where it rested for a week. On Oct. 10th the regiment moved north again and on Oct. 12th it was in the trenches southeast of VERDUN, taking over the SOMMEDIÈVE SECTOR from the French. We were relieved from these trenches on the night of Nov. 6/7 by units of the 81st Division and pulled out to get ready for the contemplated METZ offensive which was stopped by the Armistice on Nov. 11, 1918.

GAINS AND LOSSES

49. The 140th Infantry advanced $12\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers through enemy territory and against strongly defended positions and fought a determined, stubborn and courageous enemy and met and defeated units of the best divisions in the German Army. The German troops opposed to the 35th Division realized that this division gave them some of the hardest

(21) Battle fighting that they had ever experienced. (21) This regiment made of the Meuse- the farthest advance of any units of the 35th Division. They estab- Argonne, Maj. lished a new front and held a line over 10 kilometers forward beyond Herman von Giehl, In- fantry Jour- nal, Aug. 21. the enemy's original front line. This was the line organized for de- fense and held by the 35th Division and turned over to the First Division

(22) From on Oct. 1st. (22) Vauquois to 50. The gains of the 35th Division compare very favorably with those Exermont, Ken- amore, Pg. 240; of the 1st Division which relieved it. The 1st Div. was in the line The Artillery- man, Lee, Pg. ten days from Oct. 1st to 11th. The first three days up to Oct. 4th 188. were spent in preparation and no advance was made; during the next seven days there was a succession of attacks and during this period the division

(23) The His- advanced 7 kilometers. (23) The 1st Division lost 9,387 officers tory of the and men and the 35th Division lost 7,414 officers and men in five days' A.E.F., Thom- as, Pg. 317. fighting. The losses of the 35th Division in the Meuse-Argonne are exceeded only by the 1st and 3rd divisions. The 35th Div. stands third of all American divisions in casualties in this battle. No greater advance was made on the whole American front in the three days, Sept. 26 to 28, inclusive, than that credited to the 35th Division. No other

division in the American Army made a greater advance during the same period of time, nor so great in any equal length of time during the first and second phases of the Meuse-Argonne Battle, Sept. 26, to Nov. 1. (24)

(24) Official G.H.Q. map, with report of Gen. Pershing, Nov. 20, 1918.

51. The War Department figures give the following losses for the 140th Infantry: killed or died of wounds, 9 officers and 239 men; wounded severely, 7 officers and 485 men; wounded slightly, 46 officers and 802 men; wounded, degree unknown, 188 men; total casualties, killed and wounded, 82 officers and 1714 men. In ad-

~~dition there were captured by the enemy 2 officers and 45 men.~~
The 140th Infantry had suffered terribly but it was still a regiment.

(25) From Doniphan to Verdun, Edwards, Pg. 96.

It came out of the Meuse-Argonne a veteran regiment. (25)

ANALYSIS and CRITICISM.

52. After an exhaustive study Col. Conrad H. Lanza, Field Artillery, deduced the following reasons for the failure of the 35th Division to carry out the attack ordered for Sept. 29th against EXERMONT and its defenses: (a) Scattering and intermingling of units, due to continuous, heavy fighting on the three preceding days, partly in fog and at night, together with the severe losses sustained; (b) Orders from division and brigade, issued late at night, requiring the renewal of the attack before daylight, without allowing time for reorganization; (c) Lack of artillery support; and (d) Lack of liaison within the division, failure to keep track of important units and headquarters, with consequent delay in delivering orders. Col. Lanza is quoted in

(26) The 35th
Division on
Sept. 29th, 1918,
Col. Conrad H.
Lanza, F.A.,
U.S. Army.

in the following statement: "So far as the officers and men were concerned, it seems that they bravely attempted to carry out the attack ordered, but failed through the poor leadership." (26)

53. The necessity for training of officers, especially of higher rank, in leadership was evident all through the action. Tactical knowledge does not make a leader. There is such a thing as commanding through force of character. The training of officers in leadership does not imply that they are to become platoon and squad leaders. There is leadership in a large sense that was noticeably lacking in the regiments, brigades, and the division.

I have no idea that the Commanding General of the 35th Div. meant for his brigade commanders, his colonels, and his majors to actually and literally lead the most advanced elements of their commands when he made a statement to that effect at the time the field officers of the division were assembled the evening before entering the battle. However, his statement was apparently misinterpreted by a number of officers during the action.

54. It was hard on the 140th to have its brigade and regimental commanders changed four and three days, respectively, prior to going into this big battle. It is highly probable that commanding officers who were thoroughly ^{familiar} with their organizations and the plans and knew their officers and were known by them could have done better.

55. Companies F, H, I, and J were without captains and lieutenants were short in all companies. The regiment should have had 106 officers but there were only 78 with the regiment on the morning the regiment went into the Meuse-Argonne. The S.O.S. was full of officers who

could have been used to advantage but who were not yet assigned to any organization.

56. The regimental commander should not have permitted himself to wander off so that he became lost from the regiment for over a day during the most difficult attack. The regiment was there but its commander could not be found.

57. There was failure to use the special units, like the trench mortars and the one-pounders and the machine gun company was not used to full advantage. Unfamiliarity with the use of these weapons on the part of the regimental commander was doubtless responsible.

58. It is practically impossible to reorganize during the fighting and out of the question in the darkness of woods and while being shelled. Time was never given nor afforded to reorganize the units prior to renewing the attacks. Relief for reorganization at the end of the five days' fighting was absolutely necessary. After the second day time should have been given for reorganization and to permit the artillery to get ready to support the attacks of the infantry.

59. Conflicting orders as to the time for the attack and orders that are delivered after the hour for the attack to start or within a few minutes of the time can only result in confusion and more or less disaster. When there is a mixture of orders, the artillery does not know what to do and the infantry suffers both through failure in being properly supported and in getting off in a hurry

without full preparation.

60. Infantry needs training with tanks in order to be able to successfully follow tanks in an attack. The 140th had never had any such training. They were used to fairly good advantage because the battalion commanders in the 140th knew enough to have a skirmish line follow the tanks when they were going against machine gun nests and in the advance.

61. The division order for the initial attack that the reserve follow "at not more than two kilometers" should have stated instead that the reserve would follow at not less than one kilometer. This would be more certain to get organization in depth.

62. A four battalion front for the first day would have been more logical. It was used on the second day. The formation of brigades in column resulted in confusion and necessitated a reorganization of brigades and a reassignment of regiments to brigades. However, this did not affect the 140th Inf. as it stayed in the 70th Brigade all through.

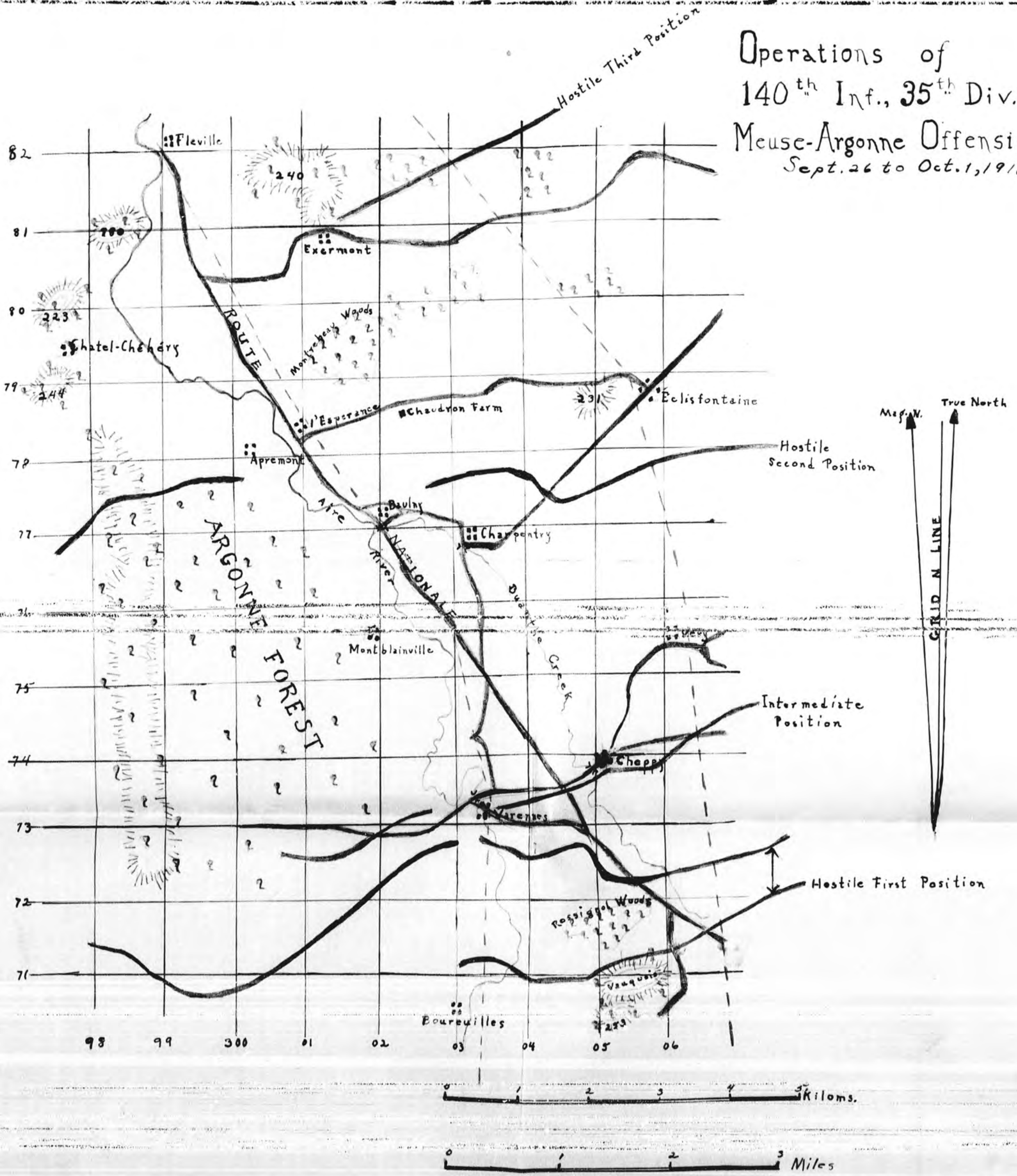
63. The attack for every morning was directed to be 5:30 a.m. whether or not there was artillery support or barrage or whether or not preparation had been completed to make the attack.

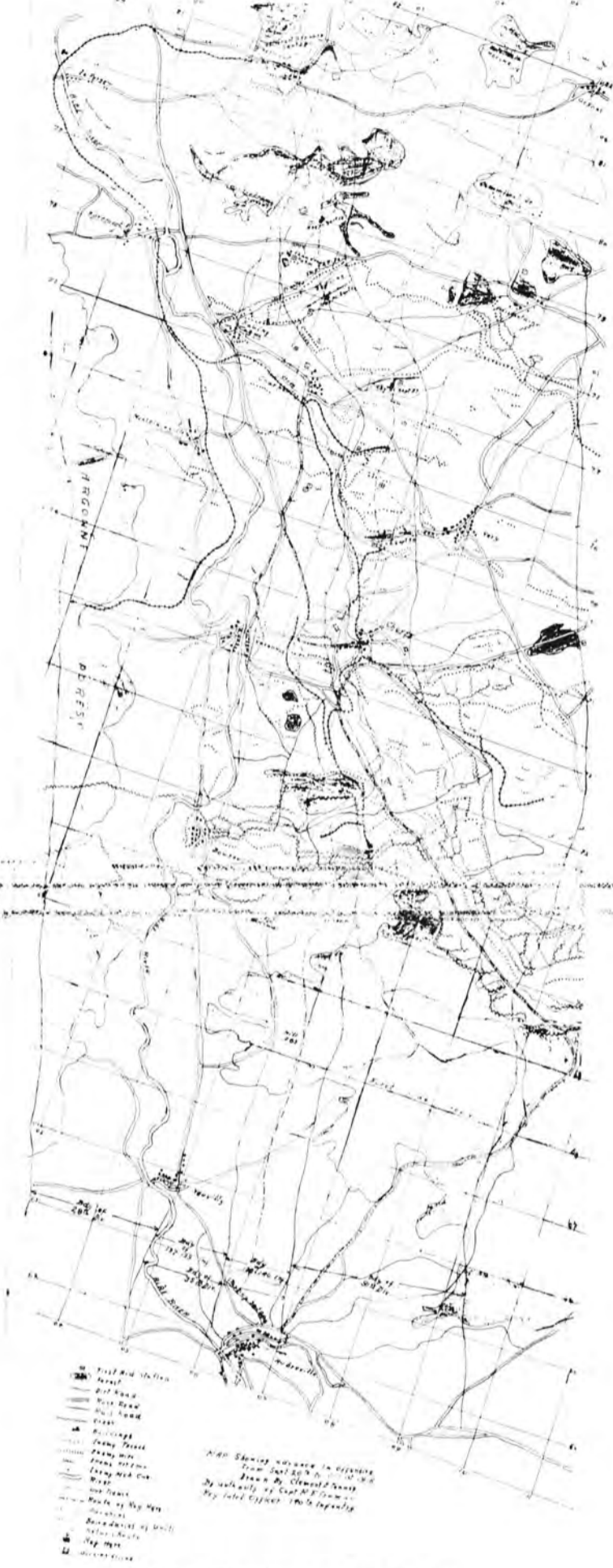
64. It was not at all necessary to send troops into EXERMONT on Sept. 29th. It is poor policy and bad tactics to send troops into a basin where they can be shot up from the surrounding hills. Maneuver against the enemy positions and the capture of them would have resulted in the taking of the town.

LESSONS.

65. A knowledge of human nature is necessary to strong leadership. Leadership is closely associated with the exercise of command.
66. After forty-eight hours in action units must be reorganized and sooner if opportunity permits. Withdrawal of troops is more likely to become necessary through failure to reorganize than from exhaustion.
67. Personal reconnaissance of positions of readiness should be made prior to going into action. This is especially true before entering a big battle. This is a factor in preventing confusion and loss of control.
68. ~~The tactical principal of formation in depth was not observed.~~
Supports and reserves should not crowd too closely upon forward units.
69. Communication, both laterally and in depth, must be maintained. The difficulty of exercising control of large units should be recognized and loss of control guarded against.
70. There is absolute necessity for artillery support in order to prevent unnecessary losses in the infantry. The need of accompanying guns for infantry battalions has been demonstrated.
71. Full use should be made of all special units which are either a part of a regiment or attached to it.
72. In a division a four battalion front is the logical formation.
73. The deadly effect of enfilade fire was proven over and over again.
74. Infantry must follow tanks when operating against emplacements or in an attack.
75. Rifle fire alone is not adequate against hidden machine guns.

Operations of
 140th Inf., 35th Div.
 Meuse-Argonne Offensive
 Sept. 26 to Oct. 1, 1918





MAP SHOWING DAILY ADVANCE From Aubreville to Exermont

PAIDOMIC SMITHY



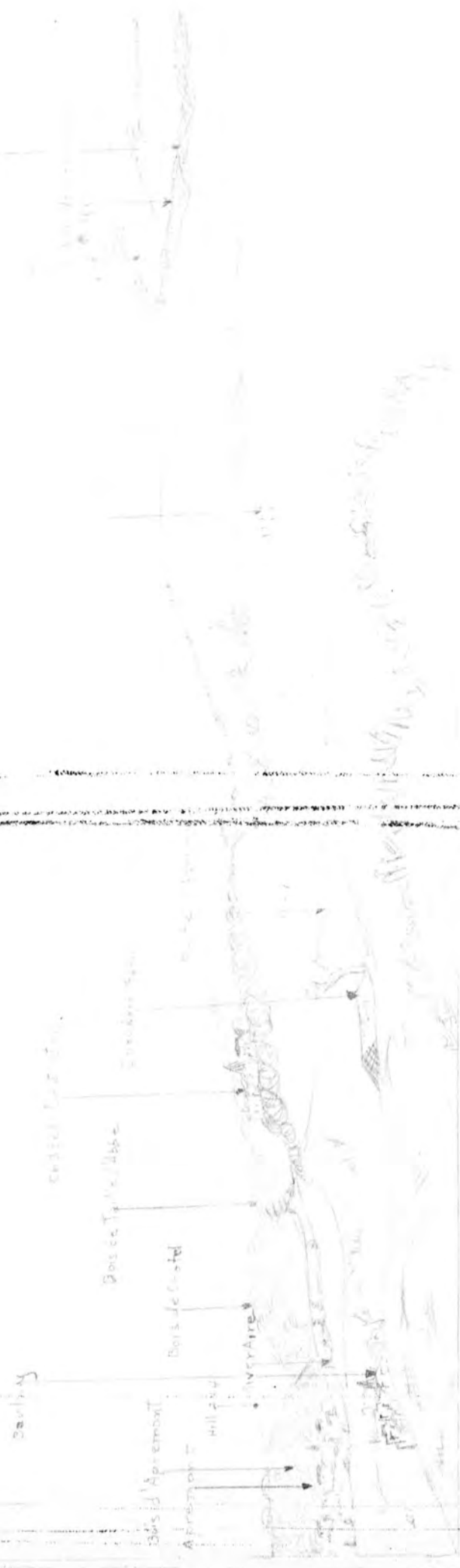
PAIDOMIC B



PAIDOMIC SMITHY

PAIDOMIC B

Map of the ...
St. ...



Looking N.E. from Bois de l'Église
As shown by the ...

Bois de l'Église

The 35th Division Salient on

Sept. 29, 1918

