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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 6TH DIVISION DURING THE 3RD
PHASE OF THE MEUSE-ARGONNE.

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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 5TH DIVISION DURING THE 3RD PHASE OF
THE MEUSE-ARGONNE.

INTRODUCTION.

(1) Personal
Participation.

(1) In the latter part of November, 1917, the Fifth Division was organized, on paper, for "immediate service overseas." Its units were individually equipped and trained in the United States, until the last of March, when embarkation orders were received and they proceeded to France.

The division was assembled in the Barsur-Aube sector the first of May, 1918. There it underwent a period of training and on the first of June it was hurried to the Vosges Mountains to relieve the Twenty-first French Division, which was needed on the Marne. It remained in the Vosges during the summer and on the 17th of August carried out its first operation of the war, when it attacked and seized the town of Frapelle in the St. Die sector.

During the St. Mihiel Offensive it was the center division of General Liggett's First Corps. It was relieved on the 17th of September and, after a few days rest, was sent to a point southwest of Verdun to take part in the great Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

It was assigned to the Third Corps in the early part of October and entered the line during the Second Phase of the battle. During this phase it suffered many losses. The division commander and two regimental commanders were relieved. The majority of the battalion commanders were either killed or wounded, and numbers of its best junior officers and enlisted men were sent to Corps and Army Schools, and even back to the United States as instructors. So that, though replacements of many officers and over three thousand enlisted men were received, the division was still far below strength in both officers and men.

(2) The History of the A.E.F. - Thomas p.332.

(2) The general situation at the end of October was very favorable to the Allies. On the extreme north the Belgian Army had regained Ostend, Lille, Douai and Bruges and had cleared the Belgian Coast. The Franco-British drive was sweeping forward. The Italians had been successful and Austria had sued for peace. On the 30th of October an armistice was concluded with Turkey. Germany stood alone. (3) Ludendorff had gone and the Supreme Command was out of commission. The mutterings of the storm of revolution were growing louder in Germany, and the morale of the German Army and nation was breaking down.

(3) History of the Great War Vol.IV, p.402.

(4) Staff Ride of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

(4) The Americans between the Meuse and the Argonne had pushed forward through part of the Kriemhilde position and on the 31st of October the American Army held the line Grand Pre - Champigneulle - Landres et St. Georges - Aincreville, thence along the high ground south of the Andon creek to the Meuse, along the Meuse through Brioules to the Bois Cote de La Lemont where it joined the Seventeenth French Corps.

(5) Report of Commander-in-Chief. Nov. 20, 1918.

(5) The Fifth Division was the right flank division of the American Army. The Ninetieth Division was on its left, the Fifteenth French Division on its right. (6) The division, with the Ninth and Tenth Brigades in line from left to right, had been in its sector for five days, having relieved the Third Division on the 26th of October. These five days had been spent in making reconnaissances for the expected offensive and in exploiting the ground to the front. The division line ran from Aincreville eastward to the Meuse, then it turned southward following the Meuse to the Bois Cote De La Lemont on which its right rested.

(6) Personal Participation.

(7) French Military Maps Dun-Sur-Meuse 1/50,000 and 1/20,000 and Personal Participation.

(7) Just in front of the northern arm of the line was the Andon, a little stream about four feet deep, winding through a wide muddy valley. Clery-Le-Grand and Clery-Le-Petit, two towns situated on this stream were still held by the Germans. About a kilometer north

of Clery-Le-Petit is Hill 261 and a kilometer north of it is the little town of Doulecon. Just northwest of Doulecon is the Punch Bowl, a bowl like area from two to three kilometers in diameter with round topped Cote 216 in its center. It is completely shut in by high hills except on the east where it opens to the Meuse. On the heights of its northern edge is the Bois de Sassey, on the southwest is the Bois de Babiemont, while on the south the steep rising slopes of Andon Creek which form the southern rim of the bowl, are but slightly wooded.

The southern arm of the line faced the Meuse River. Along this entire front the Meuse flows in a valley from 800 to 1500 meters in width. From the western edge of this valley the hills rise in a gradual slope, bare of trees until the summits are reached. From the foot of these hills the plain of the Meuse stretches eastward, level as a billiard table, and slightly marshy. The plain is cut by two water obstacles: The Meuse River and the Canal de L'Est. The Meuse River is at this point a stream about eighty feet wide and from four to eight feet deep, with a light fringe of bushes lining the banks. The Canal lies from three to four hundred meters east of the river. It rises sharply about ten feet above the level of the plain, with its western bank bearing an oc-

occasional clump of bushes. The canal itself is about forty feet wide and ten feet deep. Its eastern bank rises abruptly for about twenty feet and then continues in a more gradual slope to the Heights of the Meuse. This slope is wooded and furnishes excellent cover for a defending force.

The Heights of the Meuse, in the sector opposite that occupied by the Fifth Division, consists of a range of steep wooded hills extending from the Meuse to the Woevre lowlands. (8) Dun is the northernmost height of the range. From that eminence, in a line running eastward the Meuse Heights terminate in a series of serrated bluffs. This escarpment rises from sixty to a hundred and fifty meters above the river basin which, on the north, opens up into a broad rolling plain partly covered by the Woevre Forest. There is one northern outguard for these heights, for rising abruptly out of the plain a kilometer north of the escarpment and three kilometers east of the river, is Cote St. Germain, a saddle shaped ridge three kilometers long sparsely dotted with woods.

(8) History
of the 5th
Division.
p. 227.

(9) F.O. No.
44, 3rd Corps.
30 Oct. '18.

(9) In the drive which was to commence, on the 1st of November, the mission of the Third Corps was to advance in the general direction of Stenay and to assist the Seventeenth French Corps, on the right, in the prompt occupation of the Heights of the Meuse. (10) The Fifth Division

(10) F.O. No.
45, 3rd Corps,
1 Nov. '18.

was ordered to hold its line, protect the right flank of

the Ninetieth Division, with which contact was to be maintained, and to make a reconnaissance along the Meuse River with a view to formulating plans for a crossing.

NARRATIVE.

(11) History
of the A.E.F.
Thomas.p.334.

(11) At 5:30 A.M., November 1st, following the most dense protective barrage that had ever been put down on the front of the American Army, the seven front line divisions moved forward in the attack, and were successful all along the line.

(12) Statement
of Brig.Gen.
J.C.Castner, 9th
Brigade.

(12) Keeping in touch with the Ninetieth Division on its left, the Ninth Brigade attacked on its front with regiments abreast, Sixtieth Infantry on the right, Sixty-first Infantry (less one battalion, which was attached to the Ninetieth Division) on the left. (13)

(13) Statement
of Capt.E.O.
Patrick.14th
M.G.Bn.

The Sixtieth Infantry, attacking in a northerly direction with artillery support, took Clery-le-Grand, driving the enemy in disorder over hill 261 and (14) effectively mopping up the town with phosphorus grenades. (15) While the attack on Clery-le-Grand was in progress a company of

(14) Statement
of Capt.R.C.
Hamilton, 60th
Inf.

(15) History of
61st Inf.p.16.

the Sixty-first Infantry with a platoon of machine guns moved forward against the Bois-de-Babiemont. Covered by heavy overhead machine gun fire they forced their way to the edge of the woods. Here they were stopped and were forced to dig in.

(16) Statement of
Capt. E.D. Patrick.
14th M.G. Bn.

(16) In the afternoon, that part of the Sixtieth Infantry which had taken Clery-le-Grand, aided by machine gun barrages from the high ground south of the Andon, attacked and about dark succeeded in reaching the crest of Hill 261.

(17) Personal
Participation.

(17) On the right of the sector, which was held by the Tenth Brigade, with the Sixth Infantry in the line and the Eleventh Infantry in reserve, there was no action. This brigade simply stood fast, keeping in touch with the troops on the right and left, and constantly making reconnaissances for the crossing of the river.

(18) History
of the 60th
Infantry.
p. 37.

(18) During the night of November 1st-2nd the Sixtieth Infantry had pushed forward under cover of the darkness and at daylight, following a short artillery preparation, took the town of Clery-le-Petit and the eastern slope of Hill 261. Immediately after the town was taken, the enemy barrage from the heights across the river, fell upon it and many casualties resulted. However, the troops dug in and remained in this position which was one of the key points to the crossing of the river.

(19) History of
the 5th Div.
p. 195.

(19) During the morning the Sixty-first Infantry continued its attack on the Bois-de-Babimont. Overcoming scattered machine gun resistance, it took the

woods and advanced to the rim of the Punchbowl. On account of flanking fire from the left they were unable to advance further so they dug in. ~~carrying light pontons.~~ The Fifth Division now held all of the high ground west of the Meuse within its sector.

(20) Statement
Lt. Col. C.H.
Hodges, 6th Inf.

(20) The Tenth Brigade made no movement during the day of the 2nd of November. That night, however, orders were received for the Sixth Infantry to send a patrol of not more than two companies across the river. About 3:00 A.M. two companies, with a detachment of engineers carrying the light ponton bridge equipment, moved down to Brioules and started the laying of the first bridge across the Meuse. The bridge was completed at dawn and one rifle company with the engineers started across. At this instant the movement was discovered by the enemy and heavy machine gun fire was opened on the bridge. The engineers and the company then on the bridge, dashed forward across the open river bottom to the cover afforded by the canal bank. The other company took cover behind the railroad bank near the foot bridge.

(21) Operation
Report of C.G.
5th Div. 21
Nov. 18. Par.
40.

(22) Statement
Capt. M.E. Olm-
stead, 61st
Infantry.

(21) On the 3rd of November Corps orders extended the division zone of action to include the Punchbowl and also returned the First Battalion of the Sixty-first Infantry, which had been attached to the Ninetieth Division. (22) This battalion, advancing from the west

mopped up the Punchbowl and captured the central mount and Doulecon. The front of the Division sector now faced the Meuse from one flank to the other.

(23) F.O. No.
49, 3rd Army
Corps.

(23) In the afternoon orders came directing the division to turn eastward, force a crossing of the Meuse River, seize the heights beyond and establish a bridge head for the crossing of the rest of the Army. (24)

(24) Statement
of Lt. Col.
C.H. Hodges,
6th Inf.

This order had been anticipated by the Division Commander when, on the preceding night, he ordered not more than two companies of the Sixth Infantry to cross. He now authorized the use of the entire battalion for the attempt.

During the day the company, under the canal bank, remained pinned to the ground, the troops west of the Meuse being unable to give them any assistance. As soon as darkness fell, a company was sent across the Meuse to reinforce them, another was put in position along the railroad bank near the foot bridge, while a third, with the machine gun company, was placed in Brioules. Engineers with more foot bridge material joined the companies at the canal bank and two small foot bridges were quietly and rapidly pushed across the canal at a point about two hundred meters north of the bridge across the river. The Germans permitted the work to go forward without interruption and not until one bridge was completed and the units had started across, did the German fire open up. Then it opened in earnest. Every machine gunner on the bank turned his weapon on the crossing.

The range was exact and all of the men on the bridge were killed. It was out of the question to attempt to cross in the face of this fire. The men took cover along the canal bank and opened a heavy fire with rifles, automatic rifles and even with grenades, attempting to silence the machine guns. Our own machine guns and light mortars in Breiulles combed the slopes of the hills opposite, but the Germans could not be silenced. Another attempt to cross later in the night proved equally futile, and day found the little group again clinging to the bank of the canal, not forty yards away from an overwhelmingly superior force of the enemy.

(25) Statement
of Col. F. B.
Hawkins, 60th
Inf.

(26) Mono-
graph, 5th
Div. Capt.
J. W. Viner,
p. 14.

(25) The bridge material for the Ninth Brigade did not arrive during the night of the 3rd-4th of November and no attempt was made by this brigade to cross. (26) The equipment began to arrive after daylight on November 4th, but it was not until afternoon that sufficient material for the construction of a bridge had arrived. The enemy across from Clery-le-Petit was very quiet, patrols were sent along the river bank to feel him out and artillery and machine guns fired on possible enemy positions. No enemy fire could be drawn. As it appeared that the Germans had abandoned the hills on the other side it was decided to cross in broad daylight.

(27) History
of 5th Div.
p. 211.

(27) At 4:00 P.M. the selected hour, a company of en-

gineers carried forward the canvas pontoons just north of the point where the river is joined by the canal. One battalion of the Sixtieth and one of the Sixty-first, took positions along the shore to protect the engineers, and to cross as soon as it was possible to do so. Our artillery and machine guns searched the slopes across the river to keep down possible enemy fire.

The enemy had not left! No sooner had the engineers started floating the pontoons than all kinds of hostile fire came down on the working parties and the protecting troops. As fast as the canvas boats were put into position, they were cut away and sunk by artillery and machine gun fire. Casualties were terrific. The commander of the protecting battalion from the Sixtieth Infantry was killed. By dark the supply of boats was exhausted and the forces had to desist until more pontoons arrived.

(28) History of
6th Inf. p.18.

(28) Up the river opposite Brioules the two companies of the Sixth with the detachment of engineers, crouching behind the canal bank, were unable to move. Throughout the day they remained there, while our artillery directed by an officer in the belfry tower in Brioules pounded the eastern bank of the canal.

(29) Statement
of Lt. Col. C. H.
Hodges, 6th Inf.

(29) Under cover of approaching darkness a platoon of machine guns was moved across the river to the canal, and the battalion again prepared to attack. Careful plans

were made and detachments were placed at the ends of the bridges prepared to rush them. Suddenly the canal bank was manned, and a burst of fire was opened with all available weapons. Under cover of this fire, the detachments rushed across, being quickly followed by the rest of the men in the two companies on the bank. Firing as they advanced, the units deployed and pushed forward clearing up the ground to the front and to either flank. The machine gun nests were wiped out and a bridge head was established. We had gained our first foothold across the Meuse.

(30) Statement
of Capt. G. L.
Hortman, 6th
Inf.

(30) While the enemy's attention and fire was being drawn to the foot bridges, another battalion crossed the river and equipped with improvised rafts and telegraph poles, lashed together, it quietly crossed the canal about four hundred meters above the other crossing. Moving to the right it took up a position for an attack on Bois-de-Chatillon at daylight. The remainder of the Sixth, crossing at the foot bridges, was closely followed by the Eleventh and by daylight the entire Tenth Brigade had crossed and was established on the eastern side of the canal.

(31) History
of the 5th
Div. p. 215.

(31) In the Ninth Brigade sector when darkness fell the battalions of the Sixtieth and Sixty-first, which had been so badly shot up in the afternoon, were relieved

by fresh battalions of the two regiments and these were moved up the river about a kilometer to continue the attempt to cross. The Colonel of the Sixty-first was placed in direct command of these troops and was charged with the crossing. (32) During the night more pontoons were sent to Clery-le-Petit and one bridge was thrown across the river and two more thrown across the canal.

(32) Operation
Report of the
C.G. 5th Div.
Par. 48.

(33) The enemy was still present in force, and as soon as the engineers were discovered bridging the canal the whole area was drenched with fire from the heights. Between bursts of fire the engineers continued to work on the bridges and by dawn parts of two companies, one from the Sixtieth and one from the Sixty-first were across the canal, while a battalion of the Sixtieth and two companies from the Sixty-first were between the canal and the river in a very exposed position. Both bridges had been broken or sunk and there was no way to cross the canal. A captain of the Sixtieth Infantry, seeing the situation and observing a part of his company across the canal, called upon his men to follow him, jumped into the canal and swam across. He joined those of his men who were already across, and moved forward driving the enemy over Hill 260, while the men of the Sixty-first on the left advanced on Hill 292.

(33) History of
5th Div. p.213.

(34) Personal
Participation.

(34) Thus the morning of November 5th found the

(35)History
of the 6th
Inf.p.22.

division across the river attacking in a northeasterly direction. The regiments were abreast in the following order from right to left: Sixth, Eleventh, Sixtieth, and Sixty-first. (35) During the day the Sixth Infantry attacked with one battalion through the Bois-de-Chatillon and overcoming machine gun resistance, took Cote 252 and Hill 228. The regiment reached the Liny-Vilosnes Road and there dug in, sending a strong combat patrol toward Vilosnes to cover the flank of the division.

(36)History
of 5th Div.
p. 217.

(36) The Eleventh Infantry, which had crossed behind the Sixth, advanced northeast on Liny and the town was enveloped and captured. The garrison of Liny, retiring over Hill 260 was followed up and the Eleventh connected up with the Sixtieth on the hill. At Liny the Colonel of the Eleventh Infantry received a message from the Brigade Commander directing him to disregard previous instructions and to take the stronghold of Dun which was the all important objective. It was not known, at the time the message was sent, that the Ninth Brigade had succeeded in its crossing. The regiment was immediately faced to the north and started toward Dun. It passed to the west of Bois-de-Bussy and Bois-de-Chencis. When it reached the vicinity of Dun it found the town occupied by the Sixty-first Infantry so it again faced to the east and started toward Murvaux. It did not proceed far however, as it was

stopped about a kilometer east of Dun by heavy machine gun fire and was forced to dig in.

(37)History of
60th Inf.p.40.

(37) The battalion of the Sixtieth, which had driven the enemy eastward over Hill 260, remained in position on the hill throughout the day. It was joined in that position in the late afternoon by another battalion of the regiment.

(38)History of
61st Inf.p. 23.

(38) One battalion of the Sixty-first attacked and took Hill 292, while another battalion of the regiment, passing to the west of the hill advanced on Dun and took the town about noon. After Dun was taken the Sixty-first continued its advance in a northeasterly direction across the wide, flat river bottom toward Milly. This advance was opposed by artillery and machine guns on Cote St. Germain and the hills to the east, but was continued, and before night Milly was taken.

(39)History of
5th Div.p.221.

(39) The end of the first days fighting across the Meuse found the banks and the first series of heights secure to our troops from north of Dun to just above Vilosnes.

(40)History of
5th Div. p. 223.

(40) During the night of the 5th of November a heavy pontoon bridge, capable of supporting trucks and heavy artillery, was thrown across the river at Dun and by daylight was open for traffic.

(41)Operation
Report C.G.
5th Div.Par.55.

(41) At eight o'clock the following morning the

(42) History
of 5th Div. p. 225.

attack was resumed. (42) The direction of attack was northeast and the mission was to clear all the heights in the sector. The division was "going it alone," for the French on the right and the Ninetieth Division on the left, had not yet crossed the river. (43) The One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Infantry, of the Thirty-second Division, had been attached to the Fifth Division the night before. It was used to protect the right flank.

(43) P.O.#51,
3rd Army Corps
& Operation Re-
port C.G. 5th
Div. Par. 58.

(44) Statement
of Capt.

(44) The Sixth Infantry, with the Liny-Vilosnes Road as the line of departure, attacked toward the Bois-de-Sartelle. In this attack, made by the First Battalion, excellent use of marching fire was made. This marching fire is not fire from the hip or fire executed while the firer advances, as many people erroneously believe, but is a method of fire in which the rifleman, after each round, takes about twenty steps forward, stops, aims, and fires. The attack progressed favorably and by noon, Bois-de-Sartelle and Hill 284 were taken. The battalion ✓ stopped on Hill 284 to reorganize, and a passage of lines was executed by the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Infantry.

(45) Statement of
Capt. G.S. Hartman,
6th Infantry.

(45) Vilosnes and the high ground to the east of it was a menace to the division, as it was strongly organized by the enemy which was opposing the French on the west of the Meuse. The Sixth therefore sent a detachment to the south to drive the enemy out of Vilosnes. Ap-

proaching the town from the northeast the detachment took the Germans in the rear and captured them. The French were now able to cross and Vilosnes was occupied.

(46) History of 5th Div.p.251. (46) The One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Infantry, which had passed through the Sixth at noon, encountered resistance from the north and the woods in the front. It made very slow progress until the advance of the Eleventh on the left drove the enemy from the woods. They were then able to advance through Bois-de-Sivry and before dark reached Hill 358.

(47) History of 5th Div.p.229. (47) On the left of the Sixth the Eleventh advanced on a three kilometer front with three battalions in the line. The line of departure was the Bois-de-Dun and the Bois-de-Chenois. This advance swept eastward, overcoming artillery and machine gun resistance and by night was on a line through Bois-de-Corrol and Bois-de-Fontaines. Though this regiment with a very wide front made exceptional gains, the resistance it was forced to overcome was by no means faint, as is shown by the fact that on this day it alone captured three six-inch guns, six seventy-fives and over a hundred machine guns.

(48) History of 5th Div.p. 231. (48) In the left part of the division sector the Sixtieth and Sixty-first attacked, each with one battalion in the line. The Sixtieth advanced toward Murvaux and the Sixty-first toward Lion. These regiments

(49) Statement
of Maj. J. A. Dae,
14th M. G. Bn.

were to make a concerted attack on Cote St. Germain, which lies between the two towns. (49) Aided by the direct overhead fire of machine guns, placed in Milly and on the heights east of Dun, these regiments advanced over the open plain to assault the hill. They were met by heavy machine gun and artillery fire, but continued forward, the Sixtieth Infantry advancing from the south and the Sixty-first from the west. This hill was well organized and was an extremely strong position. It would have probably held out for a considerable time had there not occurred one of those peculiar incidents which sometimes take place in battle.

(50) History of
5th Div. p. 233.

(50) A combat patrol of Co. "B", Sixty-first Infantry lost its direction in the fog and ended up at the Camp des Romains at the extreme northern end of the hill. This seeming encircling movement caused consternation among the enemy, which withdrew to the north and permitted our assaulting troops to advance. The patrol was captured, but the assaulting battalions now had a foothold on the hill. They were unable to advance, however, past the narrow neck of the ridge where they were forced to dig in.

(51) Statement of
Maj. J. A. Doe, 14th
Inf.

(51) While the battalion of the Sixty-first was making its attack on Cote St. Germain one of its companies attacked toward Lion. Soon after this attack

started the advance was stopped by light machine gun fire from Lion. This town was apparently held by a company of Infantry. While the attacking troops and machine guns from the vicinity of Milly poured in a heavy fire a rifle section was worked around to the right rear of the enemy and caused them to withdraw. This encircling movement by the section was made in rushes of about twenty-five yards over flat terrain. A wounded prisoner later stated that the Germans were unable to stop the section because the men rose and moved so rapidly it was impossible to aim and fire.

(52)History of
61st Inf.p. 24.

(52) After Lion was taken it was heavily shelled by the enemy. This caused the company which had captured it to withdraw to the edge of the town where it dug in for the night.

(53)Personal
Participation.

(53) During the afternoon German Aviators gave a great deal of trouble in attempting to bomb the heavy bridge across the river and in machine gunning the traffic on the roads. It was finally necessary to send the Divisional Machine Gun Battalion to Doulecon for anti-aircraft protection.

(54)Operation
Report C.G.5th
Div.Par. 60.

(54) The task of clearing the heights continued on the 7th of November. The Sixth Infantry remained in reserve consolidating its position in the right rear of the division. The One Hundred and Twenty-eighth, which was opposed by fresh troops that had been brought up

to stem the rush of the Americans, was able to advance about a kilometer when the machine gun resistance became so great that further advance could not be made and the regiment dug in. On its left the Eleventh, still on a perilously extended front fought through the southern edge of the Bois de Brandeville and the Bois du Corrol. (55) When the northern edge of the Bois du Corrol was reached the battalions were reorganized and the attack continued, the left battalion attacking La Sentinelle. This battalion was unable to advance further than the ravine in front of La Sentinelle during the day. When night fell another battalion was moved up on the right for the attack the following morning.

(55) Statement
of Capt. G.W.
Griner, 15th
M.G. Bn.

(56) The Sixtieth Infantry advanced up the valley south-east of Cote St. Germain driving the Germans into the Woevre Forest.

(56) History of
5th Div. p. 237.

(57) The Sixty-first Infantry on Cote St. Germain attacked in a northeasterly direction. The enemy was driven off of the hill and it was organized for the defense of the front and left flank of the division.

(57) History of
61st Inf. p. 25.

(58) On November 8th the Tenth Brigade completed its task of conquering the heights. The Sixth Infantry, covered by artillery moved forward on the right flank and took hills 388 and 378 overlooking Brandeville and organized the captured ground. (59) The One Hundred

(58) History of
5th Div. p. 237.

(59) History of
32nd Div. p. 121.
and Statement
of Lt. Col. Hodges, 6th Inf.

and twenty-eighth pushing forward on the left of the Sixth met heavy resistance on the heights west of Brandeville. This was overcome and the town occupied. The regiment then reverted to the reserve and the Sixth took over its part of the line.

(60) Statement of
Capt. G.W. Griner,
15th M.G. Bn.

(60) The two battalions of the Eleventh Infantry which were facing La Sentinelle attacked straight forward. Machine guns which had been placed in the Bois du Corrol delivered overhead fire across the ravine onto the western slope of La Sentinelle. The Germans placed most of their strength against the right battalion and the left battalion covered by machine gun fire pushed across the ravine and took the height. The enemy resistance now slackened and while the left battalion pushed forward the right battalion swung to the south and connected with the Sixth Infantry on the eastern edge of the heights.

(61) Personal
Participation.

(61) The Ninth Brigade spent this day in organizing its sector, extending its line to the river, and in sending patrols out on the left flank and into the Woevre Forest. The patrols on the left established liaison with the Ninetieth Division, which had not yet crossed the river.

(62) Operation
Report of C.G.
5th Div. Par. 67.

(62) Reconnaissance on November 9th established the fact that the enemy on the right had withdrawn. Pursuit in the zone of action of the Tenth Brigade was immediately

ordered. The Eleventh Infantry led the advance with the Sixth in support. The One Hundred and Twenty-eighth was ordered to rejoin its own division which was then relieving the French on the right.

Advancing rapidly the Eleventh encountered the rear guard of the enemy near the Bois de Moncel. About dark this was forced across the Loison River and Remoiville and Louppy were taken. (63) The rear battalion of the Eleventh, swinging to the right at the road junction in the Bois de Remoiville proceeded toward Jametz. At about midnight, after forcing a crossing of the Loison in the face of resistance the town was taken.

(63) Statement
of Capt. G. W.
Griner, 15th
M. G. Bn.

(64) In the Ninth Brigade sector the Sixty-first Infantry had been ordered to send a detachment from Milly northward along the Meuse to capture Mouzay and establish a bridge head for the Ninetieth Division. At daybreak two companies supported by a platoon of machine guns proceeded on this mission. No serious resistance was encountered until Chateau Charmois was reached. At this point the enemy resisted, but after a sharp fight was driven out and the advance continued. At Mouzay, the German position, which was organized to prevent the crossing of the river and canal was taken in the flank and rear and the town was taken. The remainder of the battalion was sent to Mouzay at dusk and the town was

(64) History of
the 61st Inf.
p. 26.

organized to defend the bridge.

(65) Operation
Report of C.G.
5th Div. Par. 71.

(65) On the night of the 9th of November both regiments of the Ninth Brigade were directed to push forward through the Woevre Forest. (66) This forest proved to be a jungle of trees, heavy underbrush and swamps with all trails knee deep in mud.

(67) History of
60th Inf. p. 43.

(67) The Sixtieth Infantry started forward about midnight. Throwing out a small advance guard, the entire regiment advanced in single file as fast as the muddy road would permit. (68) At 8:00 A.M., Nov. 10th the Sixtieth was at the junction of the forest road and the northern road through the woods. Patrols were sent to the right and left to establish liaison with the Eleventh and Sixty-first, but without result. The advance was continued until about noon, when at the edge of the clearing in the northeastern edge of the woods just west of Juvigny enemy resistance, probably on outguard, was encountered. A strong attack drove the Germans from the forest, but was unsuccessful in reaching the high ground in the vicinity of Juvigny/^{and} it was necessary to pull back to the edge of the woods and dig in for the night.

(68) Statement
of Capt. E.D.
Patrick, 14th
M.G. Bn.

(69) History of
61st Inf. p. 28.

(69) On the left the Sixty-first had swung eastward from the Chateau Charmois toward Juvigny. On approaching the hills probably a quarter of the

way from Chateau Charmois to Juvigny the advance troops were forced to halt by a murderous machine gun fire from the left front. (70) At daylight the attempt to advance was continued and was successful after one battalion had deployed on the left, facing north on a line running east and west. With this protection the rest of the regiment was able to push on over the hills to the east. By night the line ran along the eastern edge of the Woevre Forest, connecting up with the Sixtieth Infantry on the right.

(70)History of
5th Div. p.245.

(71) The Tenth Brigade had made no attempt to advance during the day. A battalion of the Sixth had relieved the Eleventh in Jametz and was organizing the right of the sector while the Eleventh organized Remoiville and Louppy. Patrols sent out from each regiment found the Germans well organized north of the Loison.

(71)History of
5th Div.P. 247.

(72) November 11th found the Fifth Division in position along the line Jametz-Remoiville-Louppy and the eastern edge of the Woevre Forest prepared to push forward toward Montmedy and Longuyon. This contemplated movement was never made for early that morning the following order was received by each unit of the division:

(72)History of
5th Div.p. 251.

" Hq. 5th Division,
11 November 1918.
8 Hours.

FIELD ORDER,

No. 76.

1. Field Order #75, these headquarters, is revoked.
2. Hostilities will cease along the whole front at 11 hours, 11 November 1918, Paris time.
3. No allied troops will pass the line reached by them at that hour and date until further orders.
4. All communication with the enemy, both before and after termination of hostilities, is absolutely forbidden. In case of violation of this order, the severest disciplinary measures will be taken. Any officer offending will be sent to these headquarters under guard.
5. Every emphasis will be laid on the fact that the arrangement is an armistice only and not a peace.
6. There must not be the slightest relaxation of vigilance. Troops must be prepared at any moment for further operations.
7. During the armistice should any one from the enemy's position approach our line with a white flag, he will be received by an officer, blind-folded, and conducted to the nearest battalion P.C., where he will be detained and the fact of his arrival communicated as promptly as possible to these headquarters for instructions. Pending receipt of these instructions, no conversation will be had with the person, or party, who has thus

presented himself, except by the officer who has received him, and his conversation will be limited to finding out the purpose for which he was sent.

8. Special steps will be taken by all commanders to insure the strictest discipline, and that all troops are in readiness and fully prepared for any eventualities. Brigade commanders will personally inspect all organizations with the foregoing in view."

The war was ended.

The division during the last eleven days of the war had taken thirty-seven pieces of artillery, four hundred machine guns and over eleven hundred prisoners. It had forced two rivers and a canal in the face of opposition. It had driven a stubborn enemy from one hundred and ninety (190) square kilometers of territory and had pushed forward and for two days and nights it had held a line of twenty kilometers with the enemy on the right, left and in front.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM.

This was a highly successful operation, hence any criticism must necessarily be weak, for no one can say that it would have certainly been successful had it been conducted differently. However, during the study of the operation, certain features have impressed themselves on the mind.

It is difficult to understand just why higher command

decided to attempt the crossing in this sector. For miles down the river from Dun and up the river from Vilosnes the eastern bank of the river is fairly open while between these two towns the terrain is excellent for defense, being covered with rugged hills and woods. It would seem that many lives would have been saved had the attempt been made in the French sector or that of the Ninetieth Division.

The general plan of the division was a good one. It delayed in attempting the crossing until its troops occupied all the high ground in the sector west of the Meuse. It planned to send over small detachments in several places and then to rush the rest of the division over protected by their fire. It planned to use its entire artillery supplemented by the borrowed artillery of the Ninetieth Division, to search out the enemy artillery and machine guns on the heights and to pin the enemy on the eastern bank to the ground. That this was not entirely successful, was due to the excellent defensive terrain rather than to lack of efficiency on the part of the artillery.

The technique of the crossing was not of the best. Probably no officer or man directly interested in the crossing had ever had one minute of training in the technique of river crossings. There was no time to take the men to the rear areas and train them as the Germans were able to do on the Marne. It was necessary to make the crossing at once, con-

sequently methods of crossing had to be improvised.

When the Ninth Brigade committed two battalions to the crossing in broad daylight, it invited failure. It is true that all day the enemy had been baited with patrols and had refused to give its position away. However, it is not believed that the failure of the Germans to reply to fire during the day was sufficient evidence that they had withdrawn from the heights. The brigade could easily have delayed until darkness when it might have crossed with very few casualties.

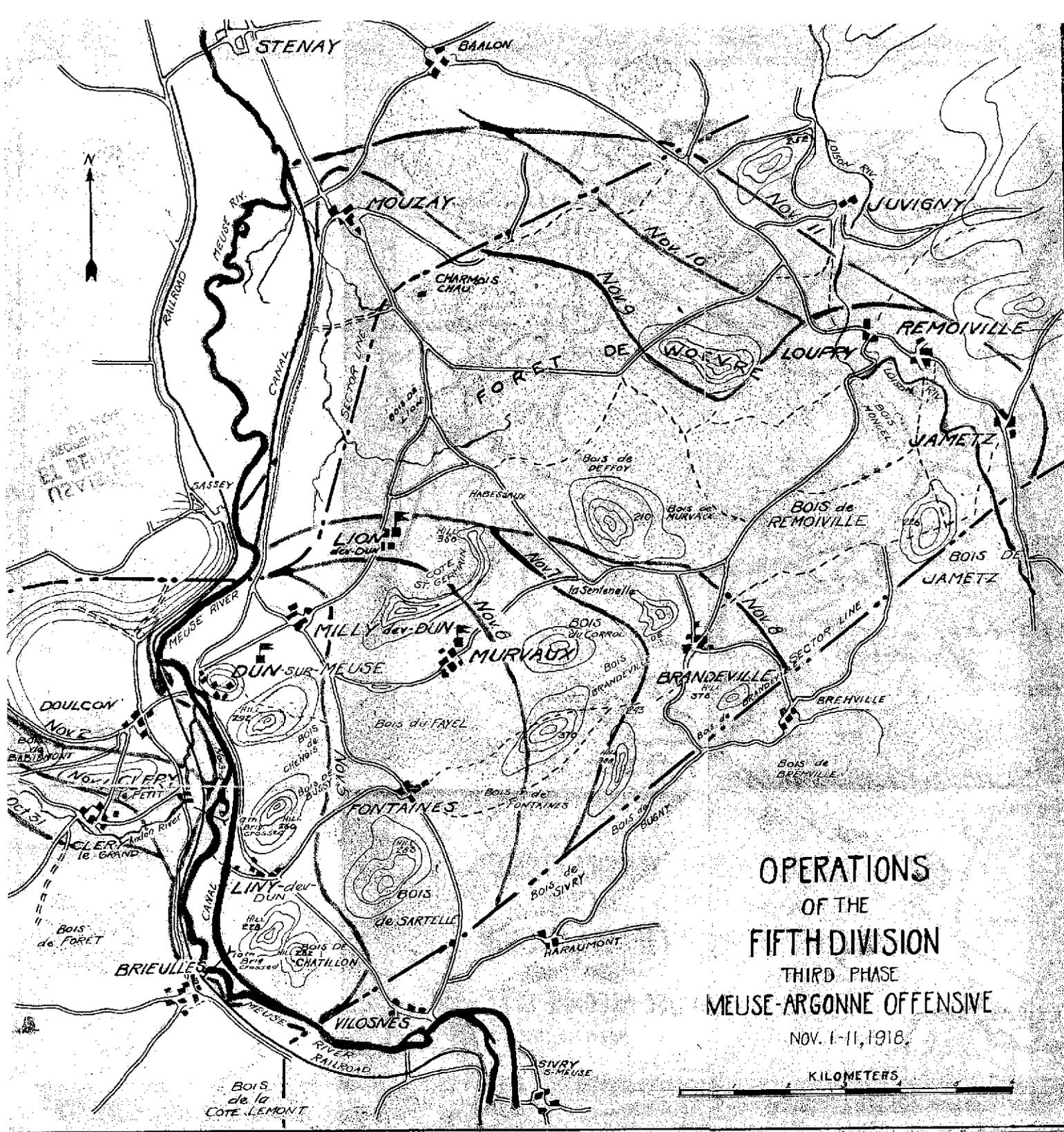
The plan of the brigade to alternate battalions of each of its regiments in the crossing and that of the Colonel of the Sixty-first, who was in direct control of the crossing to alternate the companies of these battalions caused confusion. It would seem that had the brigade followed the plan of the Tenth Brigade and crossed one regiment to cover the crossing of the other units would have remained intact and no confusion would have resulted.

After the river was crossed, a regiment of artillery was attached to each brigade, and acted directly under the orders of the Brigade Commander. This disposition was sound, as it saved much time in getting fire put down when needed by any unit.

At the beginning of the operation an accompanying gun was attached to each infantry battalion. If the accompanying gun, as now used by us, is feasible this was an ideal

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OPERATIONS
 OF THE
 FIFTH DIVISION
 THIRD PHASE
 MEUSE-ARGONNE OFFENSIVE
 NOV. 1-11, 1918.

KILOMETERS