AMERICAN OFFICERS TAKE PART IN ATTACK ON CROWN PRINCE'S FORCES

Form an Actual Part of the French Fighting Units That Took German Positions After They Had Been Pulverized by Artillery Fire—Although Men Dropped on Every Side Not an American Was Hit.

Paris—United States army officers assisted in the recent French drive against the crown prince to the north of Verdun when positions along a 15-mile front on both sides of the Meuse were wrested from the Germans.

This was the first action in which Americans, as part of the United States army, figured, and the brilliant, smashing, rapid success of General Petain's forces in this section is regarded as a happy augury of future activities of the American army.

The officers who were engaged were more than observers—the United States army has had representatives with the various forces in the field ever since the war started. The American officers formed an actual part of the French fighting units that bounded over the shell-shattered parapets ten minutes after dawn broke, and strode slowly forward toward the pulverized German positions, in the wake of the celebrated "creeping barrage" of artillery fire.

Steel helmets on their heads, revolvers in hand, their field glasses slung around their necks, gas masks handy, and their uniforms stripped of all marks denoting rank, the American officers accompanied the French platoon and battalion leaders, learning at first sight and directly under fire how crack "shock troops" are led into action in a modern offensive.

Although French soldiers fell dead and dying all around them, and a number of French officers were hit also, not one American was even wounded. They advanced from the original French positions south of the Mort Homme, on the left bank of the Meuse and south of Hill 344, on the right bank, clear up to the most advanced trenches captured by the wonderful French infantry.

Order Comes to Charge.

At half past four o'clock in the morning, after waiting all night in the front line positions, they heard the word passed along the trenches by the under officers for the men to get ready. They saw the war-caloused French soldiers shake themselves from slumber in the deep dugouts—sometimes 40 feet underground—where they had been sleeping, unmindful of the hideous uproar occasioned both by their own and the enemy artillery. They saw the "poilus" adjust their long, slender bayonets to their rifles and gingerly feel the hand grenades in the belts around their waists. And then they saw them line up along the firing step of the trench.

At a quarter to five the shrill whistles of the subofficers announced that the infantry attack was on—that the soldiers—mere flesh and blood—had started to finish and clinch the work performed by the thousands of giant guns in the rear.

Almost the first thing the Americans learned was that nowadays troops do not "charge" from trenches at "double quick time." In the first place, the condition of the ground over which the troops must advance is such that they cannot move rapidly. Pitted with shell craters, one to thirty feet deep, gouged with pits caused when monstrous mines were exploded, and knee deep in the most clinging mud in the world, the ground offers every obstacle to rapid moving.

And with the perfection of the "creeping barrage," troops cannot move faster than the curtain of fire which precedes them. This creeping barrage moves forward very slowly, as fast as the average man walks when he is not in a hurry. The first wave of attacking troops follows about 40 yards in the rear of the row of bursting shells.

Grab for Gas Masks.

Groping forward beside the French officers, the Americans staggered forward until one of their guides sniffed suspiciously, and hauled his gas mask out of its tin box, strapped around his waist. The Americans followed, and none too soon, as already the German batteries were lobbing over gas shells to try to break up the attack.

Two hundred yards forward and the Americans with the first attacking wave reached the former first line of German trenches. Little was left to differentiate the strip of convulsed earth from the rest of the terrain except that the litter of wood and accoutrements was deeper and a long, uncertain straggled line of distorted corpses marked where the Germans on duty in the trenches had been destroyed by the bombardment. Even as the Americans reached the trench a handful of German survivors crawled from the mouth of a caved-in dugout, their arms extended, screaming "Mercy, Kamerad." The men were taken prisoner and directed toward the rear, as the attacking wave continued its advance, a certain number of the troops being told off to handle the underground shelters and take prisoner such Germans as might come up.

Between the first and second line of German trenches it was even harder going than crossing No Man's Land. Here the work of the French artillery had been concentrated, and boyaus and communication trenches had been plowed to pieces by the giant high explosive French shells.

In the second line German trench, the number of corpses was greater, but there were a few Germans only wounded, who cried out for help. None of the survivors in the dugouts came up while the attacking wave halted a moment, and additional French pollus were told off to mount guard over the entrances to the abris.

Americans Under Fire.

It was a longer stretch between the second and third line German trenches and it was in this part of the attack that the Americans came under direct machine gun fire for the first time. Plodding along, and keeping the advancing line as nearly even as possible, they suddenly heard the rattle of a machine gun to the right, and everyone dropped in his tracks.

From the bottom of a shell hole into which one American had tumbled with a French captain he helped the officer set up and discharge a rocket in the air, summoning an airplane to help spot the hidden machine gun which had escaped destruction by the preliminary bombardment. Meanwhile the French troops had been busy. From neighboring shell holes their machine guns, which they had dragged with them and set up, began to rattle as they sprayed the terrain ahead, searching for the German gun crew.

Soon a French airplane, then another, circled down from above, lower and lower, as the observers scrutinized the ground. One of the machines had descended to less than 500 feet, when the German machine gun rattled again, and, peering over the top of their shell hole, the French and American officers saw the barrel of the German gun aimed into the air as the crew ground out leaden bullets against the prying aviator. But the German's very fear of detection gave them away, for a French gun crew to the left had spotted the barrel, too, and in a moment was turning its fire upon the enemy. The airplane had climbed to safety and in a minute was dropping colored flares in the half light of the morning, directing its particular battery where to shoot.

Machine Gun Wrecked.

Almost immediately a big French shell whistled by, plumped against the ground just ahead and exploded, hurling a waterspout of mud and debris high into the air. Another signal and the next shell fell a little to the left. Another signal, and four shells—a salvo from the battery—dropped together around the spot where the German machine gun was emplaced. With a cry, the keen French observers sprang forward from their dugouts, dragging machine guns and accoutrements with them, and crept forward. As they approached the "strong point" where the German gun crew had been they began tossing hand grenades in among the ruins. The exploding bombs completed the wreckage. Then a bit of dirty white—probably a handkerchief—appeared falteringly above the spot, and the extended arms and the face and body of a German, his gray-green uniform spattered with mud, appeared. The French went forward, the American officers with them, to the spot where the machine gun had been.

All that was left of the concrete and steel "pill box" was some muddied debris, which might have been anything. A little twisted metal, looking for all the world like several smashed up umbrellas, was all that was left of the machine gun. Three of the crew of ten men were alive, and two of them were wounded. The other seven might have been heaps of rags instead of men.

Americans Go Forward.

The American officers continued forward with the French captain and the storming party, which had to hasten as best it could to catch up with the creeping barrage. They passed the third German line of trenches and then two extra lines of support trenches, and then they traversed the zone, criss-crossed with communication and supply trenches, where the German artillery had been emplaced, each gun in its little hidden spot, with room only for the muzzle to protrude. Scattered about, too, were the passages leading to the various underground dugouts, some of them large enough to accommodate 300 soldiers. They found the wreckage of German Red Cross stations advanced dressing points where the wounded were first bandaged. Then they came to the region of shell dumps, reservoirs where ammunition was kept, to be sent forward in little trucks on tiny railroads, down the winding trenches. Past all this and close up against the first trench line of the second German defensive position, they proceeded before they stopped. They had gained all their objectives of the day, and would be in danger of being shelled by their own artillery if they proceeded further.

See More Fighting.

While the French troops remained to consolidate the positions they had won, while they dug communicating passages between the line of shell holes they had decided to occupy and to open up communication trenches with the rear for bringing up supplies and guns, the American officers started back before the enemy's barrage began.

On the way back they saw more fighting; they saw French soldiers bombing treacherous Germans who had come out of their dugouts to fire on them from behind, and they saw long lines of German prisoners being marched down trenches in the direction of the "cages" further back. They saw the "brancardiers," as they call the stretcher bearers, circulating about the terrain, picking up friend and foe alike to be carried back and receive attention at the dressing stations. They saw French soldiers enter German dugouts and come out carrying German stretchers which they had found there. They saw them distribute the stretchers to the German prisoners and let them carry back German wounded.

ENGRAVE EMPTY SHELLS FOR THE RED CROSS

French artesans who are serving their country at the front have found a new way of raising funds for the Red Cross. They now utilize the empty shells by polishing the cases and then engraving the most beautiful designs on them. These cases so engraved are sold to souvenir hunters and the proceeds go to the French Red Cross fund. Thus the soldiers are serving their country in a two-fold capacity.

DESTROYED ORCHARDS WITH "INSECTICIDES"

Meridian, Miss.—In France, when the Germans retreated, they cut down fruit trees. In Mississippi, it is charged, German sympathizers have found an easier means of blasting the fruit producers. Two men were arrested near here charged with selling to fruit growers and farmers insecticide, which, when applied to the trees, killed them. One orchard of 500 peach trees is a total loss. One of 400 trees, three of 100 and two of 500 trees have been badly damaged. The farmers believe German sympathizers are responsible.

·ROAD· BUILDING

ROYAL LINE IN A DEMOCRACY

"Roads Rule the World—Not Kings or Congresses, Not Courts, Nor Constables or Soldiers."

In an argument for good roads some wise man, whose name has been lost, made use of the following: "Roads rule the world—not kings, nor congresses, nor courts, nor constables, not ships nor soldiers. The road is the only royal line in a democracy, the only legislature that never changes, the only court that never sleeps, the only army that never quits, the first-aid to the redemption of any nation, the exodus from stagnation in any society, the call from savagery in any tribe, the high priest of prosperity, after the order of Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of life. The road is umpire in every war, and when the new map is made, it simply pushes on its great campaign of help, hope, brotherhood, efficiency and peace."

The value of good roads may be better understood when it is known that the average cost to farmers of the United States to transport produce to market is more than 23 cents per ton per mile. These figures do not include the cost of breakage of harness or vehicles. The cost per ton per mile over hard-surfaced roads is less than half the present average.

GAINER BY IMPROVED ROADS

Careful Analysis Shows Greatest Gain Over Present Conditions Is Man on Branch Road.

The development of sentiment for issuing bonds to build permanent roads has brought to the surface many questions which require careful consideration and demand clearly stated and convincing replies. Of these, the one recurring most frequently is: "What advantage is there in a bond issue for the farmer who lives several miles from one of the improved roads?"

At first glance it would seem that the man living directly upon the improved road obtains the greatest benefits, but careful analysis proves that the greatest gain over present conditions is the man on the side road. With the limited road and bridge funds usually available in any township and the necessity of keeping the main highways at least in passable condition, little or nothing is left for working upon the less traveled roads. As repair expense practically ceases when permanent roads are built, the road and bridge funds formerly spent on main roads will be released for use upon the side roads.

In addition, money spent upon these side roads will go five times as far, or do five times as much work, as

Soil Road in North Carolina.

when it was spent upon the roads where heavy travel quickly wiped out every trace of the improvement. A reasonable amount of road and bridge money used in ditching and dragging side roads will place them in condition to carry the comparatively light traffic that passes over them to the main highway. The man on the side road will have, in place of a continuous haul through the mud from farm to town, a much-improved surface from farm to the main highway and a highly improved road, maintained at much less expense to the township or county, the remainder of the way to his town or market.—Farm Engineering.

Drag After Rain.

Drag the road as soon after every rain as possible, but not when the mud is in such a condition as to stick to the drag.

Attention to Road Drag.

If we would pay more attention to the road drag, we would have better roads.

Powder for Cabbage Worms.

For cabbage worms: Mix one part of fresh Persian insect powder with four parts of air-slaked lime, and dust it on the plants at regular intervals.

Don't Pay to Scrimp.

It doesn't pay to go to the expense of cows, stables, land, utensils, etc., for dairy work, then scrimp the cows.

Don't Use Whip.

Don't use the whip too freely on a horse that shies. Patience and kindness will do better.

WASHINGTON CITY SIDELIGHTS

Specialist in All Matters of National Defense

WASHINGTON.—He might be a matinee idol, for he has the raven-black hair and the flashing black eyes and the pearly white teeth—but he is not. He is Grosvenor Clarkson, secretary of the council of national defense.

He is the Adonis of all of America's war makers.

Still a man of youth, Clarkson carries upon his shoulders great burdens, and his face betrays the fact. In the street he walks, always with a furrowed brow, deep in thought. In his office he is found most frequently, silent and thoughtful. When he came to Washington he was a young man. Under the pressure of war work he is rapidly growing old.

The career of Clarkson has been a varied one. He came originally from Des Moines, Ia., where he was engaged in newspaper work. He heard the siren call of the large Eastern cities, however. He wanted to work and mingle with the rushing throngs of America's metropolis, and he went to New York.

Clarkson fitted in with the hustle and the bustle of New York, for Clarkson was a hustler. He went into the advertising business and made a name for himself as a man "with a punch," a man who could put anything across. Then there came the great American movement for preparedness. Those who were financing the movement saw in Clarkson a man who could appeal to the American people in a manner which would attract them. Clarkson became the publicity man behind the movement. When the war came, Clarkson was taken into the council of national defense.

As secretary of the council he finds himself with the sturdy task of handling the enthusiastic spirit of thousands of Americans who want to help. He is a sort of official buffer—the man who separates the sheep from the goats and who considers the weight of the various propositions of help that are put up daily to the council of national defense.

Every moment of the day Clarkson is available. To him come appeals for aid from every war administrator in Washington. He is the one man who has at his finger-tips the mass of knowledge concerning people and things that makes it possible for him to always recommend the right man to do the right thing.

The burden of his work is showing upon Clarkson; but he throws it off occasionally and takes himself to a tennis court, where he forgets the war and his worries and displays his ability as a racqueter.

Girls Add to Lure of the Soda-Water Fountain

PRETTY girls, neat in bib and tucker, are soon to take the places of red-headed and gawky youths of the sterner sex as dispensers of soda water and other liquid refreshments in Washington. Half a dozen establishments in Washington have already made the change, which will undoubtedly make them so popular with the male contingent that all others will follow the example.

An unprecedented shortage of soda "jerkers" of the male variety has caused the proprietors of such establishments to insert advertisements for girls to act as dispensers at soda water and refreshment stands.

The ease with which an experienced boy attendant at such places can get employment has made them exceedingly "cocky," so the proprietors have apparently with one accord decided to dispense with male "slingers."

Once the girls get the jobs, there will probably be no return to boys as dispensers, for the substitution of the neater, sweeter maidens who serve drinks with an alluring smile worth the price of many drinks will, undoubtedly, prove so popular with the patrons that no fountain owner will dare to return to the unattractive male attendant.

While girls may possibly be employed for slightly less than the figures mentioned above, the law says they shall work only eight hours a day. This last mentioned fact is probably one reason why they have not been more extensively employed as attendants in the past.

There is now an unprecedented shortage of soda "jerkers" and the experienced youth has no trouble in getting a job. Many are of draft age, and have been called to the colors. Others have volunteered for military service. Higher wages given in practically all trades have caused hundreds to forsake the calling for positions as semiskilled carpenters.

Eastern Artist Is at Work on Famous Capitol Frieze

A LARGE, cagelike, wooden structure, suspended from the balcony in the rotunda of the capitol, attracts the attention of every visitor these days. The answer to the invariable question is that Charles Ayer Whipple, an artist of New York and Boston, is at work on a proposed continuation of the famous Brumidi-Costaggini frieze, which ends abruptly with a group representing the discovery of gold in California.

Mr. Whipple has received permission from the joint committee on library of congress to place in the vacant space his suggestion for completing the circle. He is working this out in such manner that if congress does not approve the work can be erased or taken down. The episodes in American history chosen by Mr. Whipple are the invention of the locomotive and the application of steam to travel and transportation; the development of electricity; the freeing of Cuba; the building of the Panama canal, and the development of the modern battleship and the airplane.

The capitol rotunda frieze was started by Constantino Brumidi, who carried his work to the group representing Penn's treaty with the Indians. After his death Filipo Costaggini carried out the idea, beginning with the three Indians at the left side of the Penn group. His last group represents the discovery of gold in California. Costaggini died in 1907, and since then no work has been attempted on the frieze.

Infallible Signs Prove "Passing of Summer"

INFALLIBLE signs of autumn are daily appearing on the streets of the national capital with the result that a favorite topic of conversation in hotel lobby groups is the "passing of summer." Perhaps winter's advance press agents are not so competent as those of Dame Summer's, for it is a certainty that the latter season is heralded much more auspiciously than the former.

Be that as it may, however, there are certain "ill" things, both seen and unseen, which unfailingly register the annual near deceasement of Old Sol's piercing reign.

For instance, when a feller begins to see his companions searching through their last year's vest pocket for a yellow pawn ticket bearing the meaning inscription "one overcoat" they may feel safe to wager their all that the warning "falling of the leaves, leaves," has not been without fruitful result.

Then, too, the appearance of golden pumpkins in the glassed window of your favorite lunchroom all tends to steady your wavering reasoning.

And to clinch it all you pick up your morning newspaper and see an article about world series dope. Then you remember how you shivered on the autumn afternoon when you attended those historic games last season (this is deep humor if you are a Washingtonian) and are honest to goodnessly convinced that the "passing of summer" is something that must be reckoned with.