

## **3rd D.I. ON THE MARNE RIVER, 15 JULY – 3 AUG. 1918**

From : 3rd Division, Summary of operation in the World War, A.B.M.C.

On June 14 the 3d Division announced a reorganization of its sector into two subsectors, to be held by the 30th Infantry on the right and 38th Infantry on the left. Two lines of defense were to be prepared. The first, which was to be held in case of attack, was a line, Moulins-northern edge of the wood north-west of Crézancy-Fossoy-Hill 186-Etampes. Observation posts were to be established in front of this line along the south bank of the river. The second line of defense was to be, Launay-le Rocq Ferme et Château-Fontaine aux Charmes-Nesles.

On June 15 the French Sixth Army announced a readjustment of its sector. The 3d Division was to extend to the left to the east exit of Château-Thierry. In order to hold the widened front, the 4th Infantry was to be returned to the division. The 7th Infantry was placed at the disposal of the American 2d Division, under which it operated until June 23.

Companies G and H, 30th Infantry, relieved the French in the vicinity of Chierry during the night of June 16-17, thus extending the sector of the 3d Division to Château-Thierry, exclusive. Companies G and H, 4th Infantry, were relieved by Companies L and M, 4th Infantry, on the night of June 18-19.

On June 17 the 30th Infantry completed the relief of the French units remaining near Barrage Ecluse and took over that part of the 38th Infantry's sector northwest of Fossoy. The divisional sector was now held, from right to left, by the 30th, 38th and 4th Infantry Regiments. These dispositions were confirmed in a defense plan issued by the 3d Division on June 18 to cover the change in sectors. Patrols secured identifications and prisoners on the north bank of the Marne during the period of readjustment of the sector. ]

The line of the 3d Division was held with routine reliefs and shifting of units until July 3, during which time the construction of defensive works was pushed. Patrols crossed the Marne and captured additional prisoners. The French 39th Division ordered the relief of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division, to the left of the 3d Division, on June 27. The French 125th Division ordered the relief of the French 20th Division, to the right, on June 28.

The 7th Infantry was placed under the control of the French XXXVIII Corps on June 28 and returned to the 3d Division on July 1 for front-line service. The divisional sector was extended to a point about 1 kilometer west of Varennes on July 3, and reorganized with the line held, from right to left, by the 6th and 5th Infantry Brigades with the 38th, 30th, 7th and 4th Infantry Regiments. This brought the organic elements of the brigades under their proper commands. Elements of the machine-gun battalions still remained with the French, while French artillery supported the 3d Division.]

During the period July 9.-14 the sector was held with routine reliefs, without change in the order of regiments. Work on defensive positions was pushed.

On July 8 the French 125th Division was transferred to the French III Corps. The 3d Division thus became the right division of the French XXXVIII Corps.

The 3d Field Artillery Brigade began to arrive on July 5, on which date the first batteries of the 76th Field Artillery went into position in the sector of its division. This regiment completed its movement on the following day; the 10th Field Artillery during the night of July 11-12; the 1st Battalion, 18th Field Artillery, on the night of July 13-14, and the remainder of this regiment was moving to positions on the night of July 14-15.

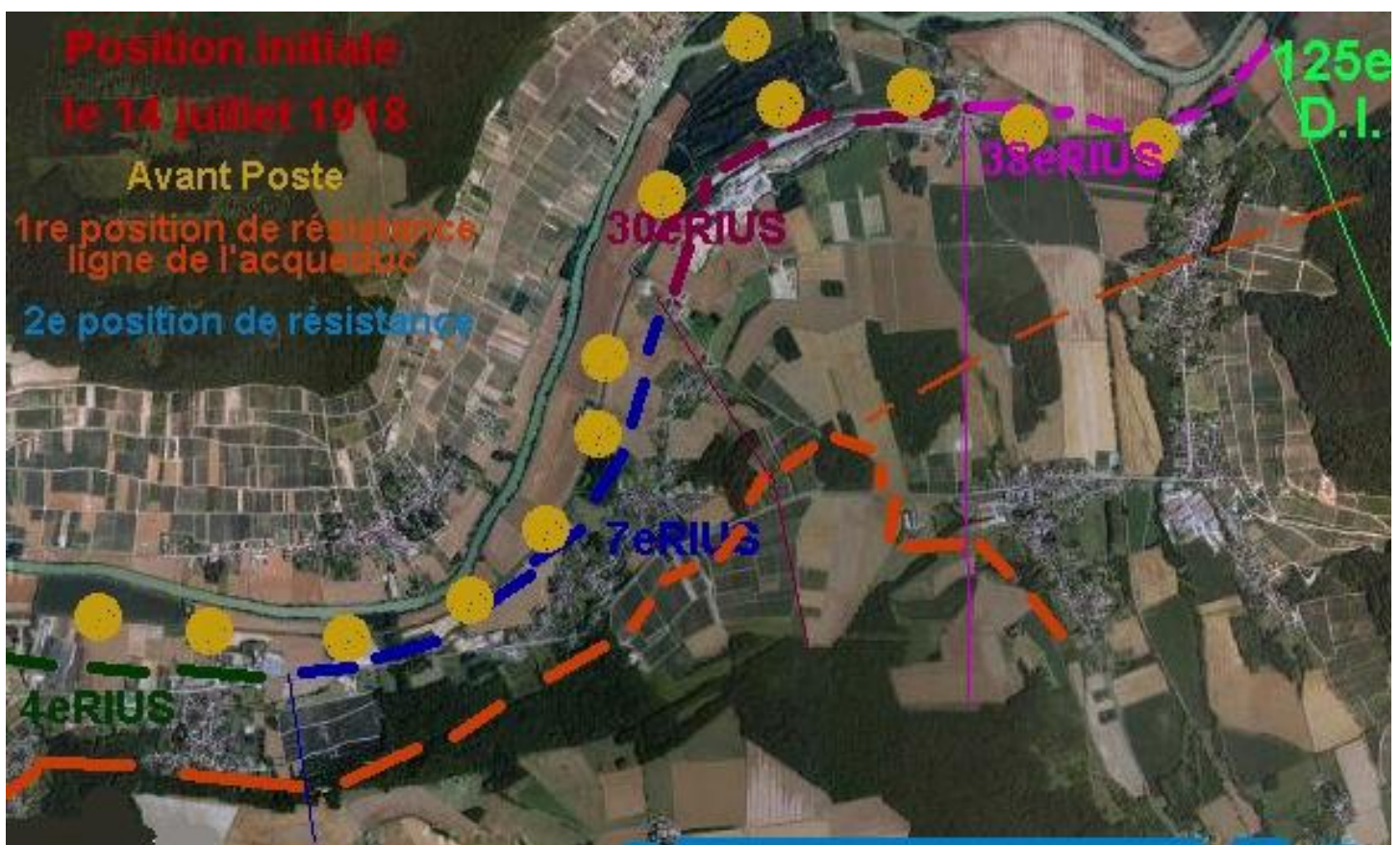
The German troops in the Marne salient were in an unfavourable situation. Their only rail communication was the rail-road through Soissons, which lay close to the west face of the salient, and would be cut by an Allied penetration in this area. On June 9 the Germans had made an unsuccessful attempt to widen the salient to the west and bring their lines closer to Paris by attacking between Montdidier and Noyon, about 35 kilometers northwest of Soissons. After the failure of the Montdidier-Noyon Offensive, they made plans to improve their situation by widening the salient to the east. One attack was to be launched east of Reims in the direction of Châlons-sur-Marne, east of Epernay, and one southwest of Reims in the direction of Epernay. These converging attacks, if successful, would turn the Allied positions about Reims on both flanks. Thus the Germans would gain dominating positions south of Reims and the important railroad communications

through the city itself. It was also anticipated that the French troops defending Paris might be separated from those in the vicinity of Verdun.

By this time, however, a sufficient number of American troops had arrived in France to permit the Allies to assume the offensive. Plans for an Allied and American attack against the Marne salient were prepared which were designed to take advantage of the faulty enemy communications. The French Tenth Army was to deliver the main attack. It was to drive eastward south of Soissons and cut the German communications through that place. In conjunction with this attack, the French Fifth Army was to attack the east face of the salient. Between these armies, the French Sixth Army was to apply pressure at the tip of the salient, and support with its left the main attack of the French Tenth Army. It was contemplated that a number of American divisions would be used in this offensive.

While preparations for this Allied and American offensive were being made, the German plans for their attacks east and southwest of Reims were discovered. The decision by the Germans to attack at these points was fortunate for their opponents, since it allowed the Allied and American attack, already planned, to be delivered as a counterstroke. Preparations were therefore made to meet the German attacks and to launch the counterattack as soon as the Germans had been definitely checked. The French were able to secure very definite information concerning the German plans. By July 7 they had learned that the offensive would involve the French Fourth Army in the Champagne east of Reims, and the French Fifth and Sixth Armies southwest of the city. On July 11 they were able to establish the approximate date upon which the offensive would be launched.

The necessary installations for the counteroffensive and the concentration of troops were observed by the Germans prior to July 15. However, the latter believed that Allied reserves would be so depleted in resisting the German attack that danger of an Allied attack would not exist after July 15.



## July 15

The German offensive was launched shortly after midnight July 14. The action against this offensive is known as the Champagne-Marne Defensive. When the attack began, the 3d Division was holding the sector along the Marne with all infantry regiments in line; the 38th Infantry to Mézy (excl.); 30th Infantry to Le Ru Chailly Ferme (incl.); 7th Infantry to Blesmes (excl.); 4th Infantry to the divisional boundary just east of Château-Thierry.

There were several defensive lines. The outpost zone consisted of a line of observation posts along the Marne and a series of strong-points in the vicinity of the railroad track. The position of resistance included two defensive lines; the Aqueduct Line on the northern slope of the hills overlooking the river, and the Woods Line running through Janvier Ferme -le Souvrien Ferme-le Rocq Ferme et Château-Fontaine aux Charmes. Farther to the rear, the French Sixth Army was organizing still another line.

At midnight, July 14, the 6th Infantry Brigade, on the right, was deployed as follows:

<p>30th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) Companies B and C</p> <p>(Aqueduct Line) Companies A, K and D (Woods Line)</p> <p>Remainder of the regiment, plus Companies A and C, 38th Infantry</p>	<p>38th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) Companies G, H and E Company F (Aqueduct Line) Companies B and D (Woods Line)</p> <p>Remainder of the regiment, less Companies A and C</p>
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Elements of the 9th Machine-Gun Battalion and the 6th Engineers were distributed throughout the brigade in support of the infantry.

On the left, the 5th Infantry Brigade was deployed as follows:

<p>4th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) 2d Battalion, plus Company B</p> <p>(Aqueduct Line) 1st Battalion, less Company B, plus Company I (Woods Line) 3d Battalion, less Company I</p>	<p>7th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) Companies M, L and I being relieved by 2d Battalion (Aqueduct Line) Companies D and K (Woods Line) Companies A, B and C</p>
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Elements of the 8th Machine-Gun Battalion and the 6th Engineers were distributed throughout the brigade in support of the infantry. The 7th Machine-Gun Battalion was in corps reserve.

The German 10th Landwehr Division held the front opposite the 3d Division. It was to remain in place while the German 36th and 10th Divisions passed through its lines, crossed the Marne and made the attack. The approximate boundary between the divisions at the start of the attack was to be Le Surmelin Ruisseau, with the 10th Division on the west and the 36th Division on the east. The objective in the sector of the 3d Division was a line, point 2 kilometers south of St. Eugène-Grèves Ferme-le Rocq Ferme et Château-east of l'Herbennerie-Gland, the west limit of the front of the attack. The formation of the attacking divisions was to be as follows:

<p>German 36th Division 128th Infantry 5th Grenadiers 175th Infantry</p>	<p>German 10th Division 6th Grenadiers 398th Infantry 47th Infantry</p>
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The German 36th Division was to cross the Marne east of Courtemont-Varenes and west of Varenes, and attack in a south-westerly direction. The 10th Division was to cross the river in front of Mézy and Le Rû Chailly Ferme, outflank Fossoy from the east and capture Bois d'Aigremont.

The offensive was to open with a heavy bombardment starting at 12:10 a. m. (0h10), July 15. At 1:50 a. m. (1h50) the construction of bridges and ferries across the Marne was to start. The infantry was to cross by these facilities as soon as they were ready and advance behind a rolling barrage, which was to start from the railroad at 3:50 a. m. (3h50)

The time of the impending attack was learned from prisoners captured early in the evening of July 14 by the French Fourth Army. This information was distributed to all concerned in time for the Allied artillery to open fire by midnight, July 14. At 11:25 p. m. (23h25), July 14, the 3d Division was ordered to lay an artillery counterpreparation on the Marne and on enemy routes of approach. This fire commenced about 11:45 p. m. (23h45) and continued for a half hour. The German bombardment began as scheduled at 12:10 a. m. (0h10). On the right, Company E, 38th Infantry, defeated all attempts of the German 36th Division to cross the river in its front. This division had suffered severely from the American and French counterpreparation; nevertheless, it succeeded in crossing in force in the sector of the French 125th Division to the east, and advanced rapidly to the south and southwest of Varenes. By 4 a. m. the German 5th Grenadier Regiment was advancing along the road and around the foot of the hill just east of Moulins, in rear of Company E, 38th Infantry. Company F, 38th Infantry, advanced to meet them at 4:30 a. m. and, after several counterattacks, succeeded in holding the hillside east of Moulins. On the crest of the ridge, east of Moulin Ruiné Signal, the Germans pressed to the south. At 5:15 a. m. Company B, 38th Infantry, ordered its working details in the vicinity of Paroy to be ready for immediate action. The enemy was observed debouching from the wood northeast of Paroy, and Company B, with part of Company D, took up a position south of Launay, where they became engaged in a fire fight. At 5:55 a. m. the 1st Battalion ordered Companies B and D to occupy the Aqueduct Line. They moved out about 7 a. m., passing through Paroy, and during the forenoon counter-attacked against the German 175th Infantry near Moulin Ruiné Signal, advancing some distance to the east of that point and clearing that part of the sector of the 3d Division.

The 3d Battalion, 38th Infantry, which had been alerted early in the morning, occupied the Woods Line north and north-east of Connigis. During the forenoon the battalion became engaged and drove off enemy troops who had penetrated into the ravine east of Launay.

At 10:37 a. m. the right wing of the German 36th Division had been driven back to the line, Moulin Ruiné Signal-western edge of Varenes-northwest to the river. The enemy ordered his reserves to move from Reuilly and Sauvigny and attack west toward Le Surmelin Ruisseau.

In the German 10th Division, the 6th Grenadier Regiment crossed the Marne on both sides of Mézy on the front of Company G, 38th Infantry, and Company C, 30th Infantry. The south bank of the river was reached by 2:40 a. m. and at 3:30 a. m. the enemy held the railroad embankment to the east of the Mézy railroad station under heavy fire from the front and flanks. At 4:15 a. m. this force was counterattacked by Companies G and H, 38th Infantry, and driven back across the river, the remnants of the regiment reaching the north bank at 5 a. m. West of Mézy some Germans infiltrated as far as the railroad, but the village was held until later in the morning by a platoon of Company C, 30th Infantry, and two machine guns of the Machine-Gun Company, 30th Infantry.

Farther to the west, the German 398th Infantry assembled on the north bank of the Marne at midnight and shortly thereafter started to cross on the front of Company B, 30th Infantry, by means of ferries and bridges. The German regiment employed two battalions in the front line and one in support. By 4 a. m. the crossing had been effected and the advance to the railroad taken up. Heavy losses were sustained from the American counterpreparation fire and in crossing the river. As a result, its support battalion had to be placed in the center of the line. The railroad was reached, and by 5 a. m. the regiment was prepared for another advance. Both flanks were exposed.

This advance overran the forward elements of Company B, 30th Infantry. However, detachments of the Machine-Gun Company, 30th Infantry, still held out near the destroyed bridge below Mont St. Père and on the railroad west of Le Rû Chailly Ferme. Elements of the 7th Infantry held their positions near the farm. A platoon of Company I, 7th Infantry, had been relieved at the farm by a platoon of Company F before midnight, and had started for the rear, but during the early morning returned to the position.

The German 47th Infantry, in reserve of the German 10th Division, was ordered to follow the attacking regiments and cross the river on a bridge that was being built at the eastern end of Mont St. Père island, in front of Company C, 30th Infantry. After being delayed a short time while the bridge was completed, the 1st Battalion crossed the river at 4 a. m. Elements of Company C, 30th Infantry, inflicted such heavy losses on it that the advance was stopped about 200 meters south of the river and the survivors retreated to the north bank.

On account of the delay in completing the bridge, the 3d Battalion, German 47th Infantry, was ordered to cross at a ferry west of Mézy. On leaving the eastern outskirts of Mont St. Père, it came under artillery fire and such heavy machinegun fire from the vicinity of the ruined bridge and Mézy that the ferry could not be reached, and the battalion scattered in the woods north of Chartèves.

The 2d Battalion, German 47th Infantry, was ordered to follow the 1st Battalion across the bridge at Mont St. Père. Seeing that the 1st Battalion was being driven back by Company C, 30th Infantry, the 2d Battalion halted at the southern edge of Mont St. Père and sent its machine-gun company to the river to assist the 1st Battalion.

Shortly after 5 a. m. the German 398th Infantry attacked from the railroad. The 1st Battalion was sent against the elements of the 30th and 7th Infantry Regiments that were enfilading the line from the south. This advance outflanked the position at Le Rû Chailly Ferme, but by 9 a. m. it was stopped by elements of Companies I and F, 7th Infantry, at the northern edge of Fossoy and the woods to the east. The 2d and 3d Battalions, German 398th Infantry, advanced south-east, but were stopped a short distance in front of the positions held by Companies D, K and A, 30th Infantry. One patrol entered the woods east of Fossoy and the woods south of L'Herbennerie, while another reached the woods north of Crézancy. This latter position, on the Aqueduct Line, had been evacuated by Company D, 30th Infantry, under the belief that it was outflanked. By 9 a. m. all offensive action of the German 398th Infantry Regiment ceased and it made plans to hold the ground gained.

About 9 a. m. the 3d Division attached the 3d Battalion, 4th Infantry, less Company I to the 30th Infantry. It was promptly put on the march to Bois d'Aigremont.

The two battalions of the 7th Infantry, the 2d and 3d, which had been caught in the bombardment in the midst of a relief, initiated plans to hold the position and prevent a farther enemy advance to the west. A line extending from the main highway east of Fossoy along the eastern and northern edges of Fossoy to the railroad embankment northwest of the town was established during the morning by units of both battalions. At 8:10 a. m. the 2d and 3d Battalions, German 47th Infantry, were ordered to cross the river west of Le Rû Chailly Ferme. They were then to attack northeast against the positions held by elements of Companies B and C, 30th Infantry, along the railroad and in the woods to the north of the railroad. At the same time the survivors of the 1st Battalion were to attack from the north.

On account of the exposed route of march from Mont St. Père to the crossing, the orders were changed, and the two battalions were ordered to cross at the Mont St. Père bridge and enter the line between the 6th Grenadiers and the 398th Infantry. It was not then known to the Germans that the 6th Grenadiers had been forced back across the river.

The 2d Battalion, German 47th Infantry, crossed the Marne about 8:45 a. m. and began to advance toward the railroad, extending its front to gain contact with the 6th Grenadiers to the east and the 398th Infantry to the west. The 3d Battalion did not cross at this time.

This attack was opposed by platoons of Company C and the Machine-Gun Company, 30th Infantry, which were still holding the riverbank and the patches of woods as far back as the railroad. In the meantime these platoons had been taken in the rear by the advance of the German 398th Infantry to the high ground to the south, and were fired on by their own supporting artillery. The platoons retired, capturing a large detachment of the German 47th Infantry along the railroad west of Mézy and another group of the enemy in the fields south of Mézy.

The movement of the German 47th Infantry toward Mézy was also opposed by machine guns of the 30th Infantry in Mézy, and by a detachment in the vicinity of the railroad station composed of the Stokes-Mortar Platoon and a platoon of Company C, 30th Infantry. These troops had withdrawn from Mézy about 8 a. m. and had taken up a position along the railroad between the station and the road leading in from the south, where they were joined by part of Company G, 38th Infantry, about 10:30 a. m. The combined force held the

position around the southern outskirts of Mézy until 4:30 p. m. (16h30), repulsing efforts of the German 47th Infantry to extend to the east.

At 11 a. m. the German 398th Infantry was attacked on the flanks by the detachments near Mézy and Fossoy and was forced to withdraw to the line of the railroad. This movement was completed at 2 p. m., except for a detachment of machine guns which was left at Le Rû Chailly Ferme. Contact was established with the 2d Battalion, German 47th Infantry, which had reached the railroad about 12:15 p. m. and was in position there with its left company refused to face Mézy.

Shortly before this enemy withdrawal started, Company K, 30th Infantry, withdrew from the woods northwest of Crézancy to the Woods Line in the northern part of Bois d'Aigremont. During the late afternoon Company A, 30th Infantry, withdrew from its position in the woods east and southeast of Le Rû Chailly Ferme and moved to a position in reserve. These withdrawals left the Aqueduct Line unoccupied in the sector of the 30th Infantry.

On the right of the 3d Division, the action of the 38th Infantry threatened the right flank of the German 36th Division. At 2:50 p. m. the latter placed the three battalions of the 175th Infantry in front line and asked for reinforcements. The 372d Infantry, 10th I.andwehr Division, was ordered to cross the river at Passy-sur-Marne and push forward in the direction of Le Surmelin Ruisseau.

Later in the afternoon the German 36th Division continued its attack against the right flank of the 38th Infantry with three regiments in line, but at the end of the day it had been unable to capture the western slope of the high ridge south of Varennes or to drive the Americans beyond the Surmelin.

During the afternoon the forward companies of the 38th Infantry remained in their original positions along the railroad and on the hill at Moulin Ruiné Signal, while the 3d Battalion held its position on the Woods Line. Company M, on the extreme right of the battalion, organized a line facing east toward Les Etangs Ferme and repulsed an attack when the French lost the farm during the afternoon. The next company to the left, Company L, also became engaged with Germans who entered the ravine east of Launay.

At 2:15 p. m. (14h15) the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry, was ordered to withdraw one company from the vicinity of Moulin Ruiné Signal and place it in position along the west bank of Le Surmelin Ruisseau north of Crézancy, facing east. Company D took up this position and held it until about 8 p. m. (20h)

At 2:20 p. m. (14h20) the 2d Battalion, 38th Infantry, was ordered to withdraw to the Aqueduct Line and place two companies along Le Surmelin Ruisseau facing east. The withdrawal was made in two groups simultaneously about 4:30 p. m. (16h30) Company H, followed by Company G, moved south along Le Surmelin Ruisseau and took position along the stream in the vicinity of Paroy. Company E retired up the slope east of Moulins and took a position with Companies B and F on the Aqueduct Line and east of Moulins. The detachment of Company C and the Stokes-Mortar Platoon, 30th Infantry, withdrew with Company G, 38th Infantry.

At noon the French 73d Division, which had been assigned to the French XXXVIII Corps, was ordered to counterattack from in rear of the 3d Division in a north-easterly direction across Le Surmelin Ruisseau in order to stop the advance of the enemy. This counterattack was made at 7:30 p. m. (19h30), but met a German attack and made very little progress. Les Etangs Ferme, however, was retaken by French troops and liaison established with Company M, 38th Infantry.

After the withdrawal of the German 398th Infantry to the railroad at 2 p. m. (14h), the German 10th Division engaged in no further offensive operations south of the railway. The 2d Battalion, German 47th Infantry, placed an outpost in the woods north of Crézancy. The 3d Battalion crossed the Marne at 7 p. m. (19h) and occupied the village of Mézy during the evening.

About 9 p. m. (21h) the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry, less Companies A and C, was ordered to take a position on the Woods Line. Company D moved back to the vicinity of Le Souvrien Ferme shortly afterward. Company B remained on the hill west of Moulin Ruiné Signal until the morning of the 16th, when it took up a position on the Woods Line in the vicinity of Connigis.

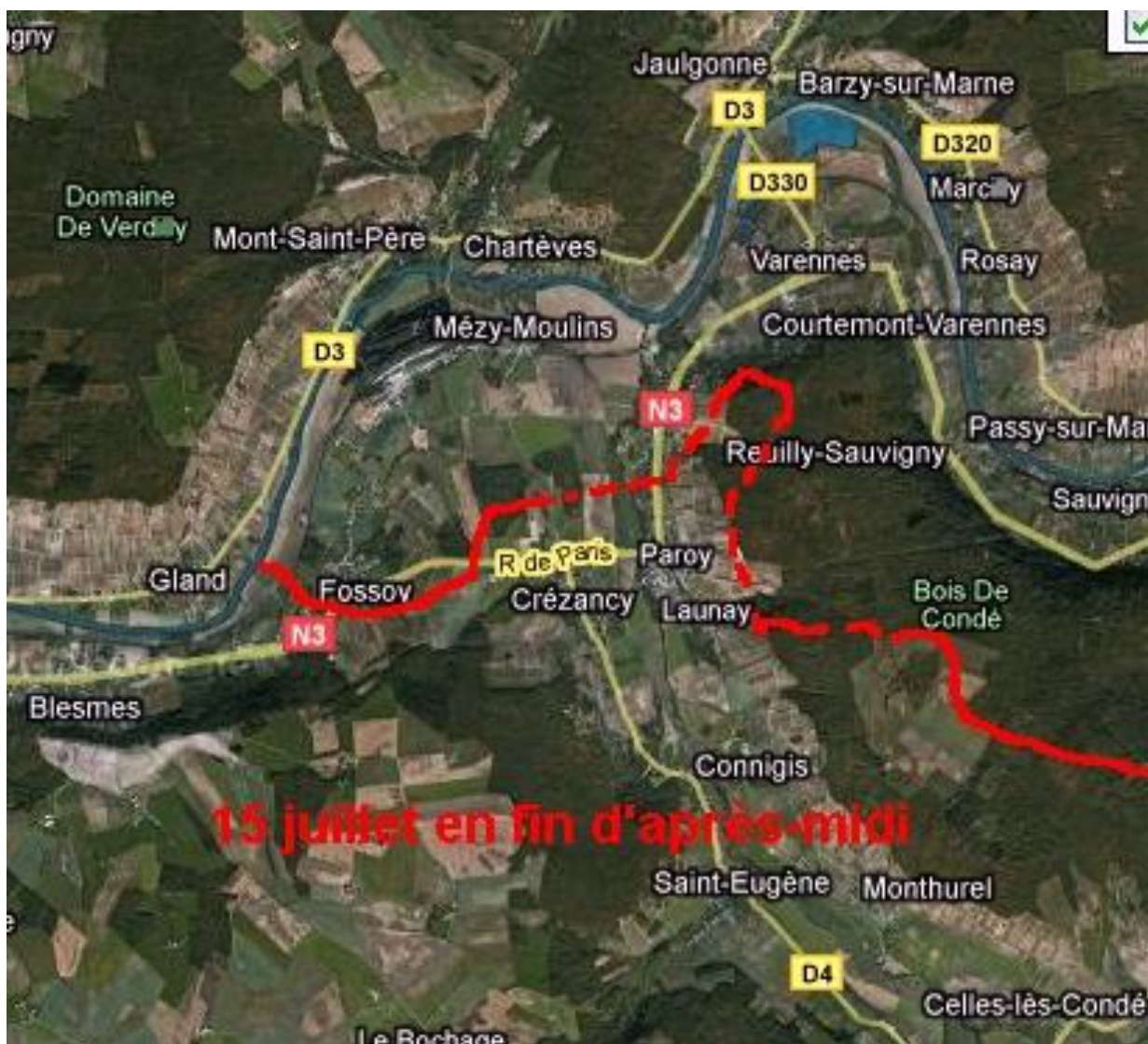
At 11 p. m. (23h) the 2d Battalion, 38th Infantry, was ordered to move to a position in reserve. In compliance, Companies G and H took a position in the woods southwest of St. Eugène; Company F withdrew from the hill west of Moulin Ruiné Signal at 4:30 a. m., July 16; and Company E fell back at 1 p. m.



At midnight, July 15, the front line of the 38th Infantry was held by the 3d Battalion east of Launay and by Companies P, E and F, on the hill east of Moulins.

the German 36th and 10th Divisions were ordered to make a joint attack at 9:30 p. m. (21h) for the purpose of capturing the Surmelin valley, but the order was cancelled, and at 6:30 p. m. (18h30) the 36th Division was instructed to organize for defense, and the 10th Division to withdraw to the north bank of the Marne. The 5th Grenadiers occupied the woods at the mouth of Le Surmelin Ruisseau, northeast of Moulins.

During the afternoon and evening the 30th and 7th Infantry Regiments endeavoured to reoccupy the former front line. The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, counterattacked at 3 p. m. (15h) from its position in reserve near Grèves Ferme through Bois d'Aigremont toward Fossoy and Mézy. This attack was broken up in Bois d'Aigremont by hostile artillery fire, although two companies reached Fossoy after dark. Patrols from Company M, 7th Infantry, were sent to La Bretonnerie Ferme, Le Rû Chailly Ferme and into the woods east of Fossoy, and found them free of the enemy.



During the afternoon the 30th Infantry ordered Company A of the 38th Infantry, elements of the 3d Battalion of the 4th Infantry, and Companies L and G of the 30th Infantry, in order from right to left, to attack and reoccupy Crézancy, the woods to the northwest and the woods east of Fossoy. Before the advance began, information was received that the attack of the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, had failed. Company I, 30th Infantry, was therefore added to the attacking force and ordered to take Fossoy.

This movement started about 8 p. m. (20h) with the following results: Company A, 38th Infantry, with two platoons of Company M, 4th Infantry, moved to the woods southwest of Crézancy, with combat groups on a

hill 300 meters north of the position; two platoons of Company L, 30th Infantry, reoccupied the woods northwest of Crézancy, starting at 11 p. m. (23h) and getting into position at 1 a. m.; Company G, 30th Infantry, established contact with patrols of the 7th Infantry in the woods east of Fossoy and dug in 50 meters south of the road; Company I, 30th Infantry, arrived in Fossoy where it held two platoons in support of the 7th Infantry.

The 2d Battalion, 111 Infantry, 28th Division, was attached to the 30th Infantry and was en route to Bois d'Aigremont at midnight, July 15.

Meanwhile, on the 40 kilometer front of attack in Champagne east of Reims, the enemy met with only slight success, and the line of the French Fourth Army remained intact. On the other hand, on the 40-kilometer front of the French Fifth and Sixth Armies west of Reims, the Germans pushed back the French and Italian divisions for 8 kilometers and were successful except where opposed by the American 3d Division. The enemy ordered a continuation of the attack for July 16, except on the front of the 3d Division. The French Sixth Army ordered a counterattack by five French divisions to be executed on July 16 east of the sector held by the 3d Division.

## July 16

At 9:30 a. m., July 16, the French XXXVIII Corps ordered the 3d Division to push its outposts back to the Marne and reoccupy its former positions in front of Fossoy and Crézancy; to block the Surmelin valley, facing to the north, in front of Crézancy and Paroy; and to organize strongly the left bank of Le Surmelin Ruisseau, facing to the east, by pushing outposts as far forward as possible on the right bank of the stream. In the sector of the 38th Infantry, Companies B, E and F retired from the vicinity of Moulin Ruiné Signal during the day of the 16th, and the entire line of the 3d Battalion, 38th Infantry, became the front. Two companies of the French 346th Infantry located in Bois de la Jute were attached to the 38th Infantry to be used in maintaining liaison with the French to the right. The enemy made no organized attack, although he penetrated to Moulins and the vicinity of Paroy, and stopped in front of the 3d Battalion line.

At 3 a.m. the 2d Battalion, 111th Infantry (28e DI US), reached Bois d'Aigremont and was ordered by the 30th Infantry to advance from Bois d'Aigremont, relieve elements of the 2d and 3d Battalions, 30th Infantry, and clean up and occupy the ground to the river between the lines running north and south through Crézancy and Fossoy. The advance started about 2 p. m. (14h) under heavy artillery fire, with the Crézancy-Fossoy road as a first objective. This was reached and the advance continued into the woods to the north, where Company L, 30th Infantry, was relieved along the northern edge of the woods after midnight, July 16. During the early morning two platoons of Company A and two platoons of Company E, 7th Infantry, occupied La Bretonnerie Ferme.

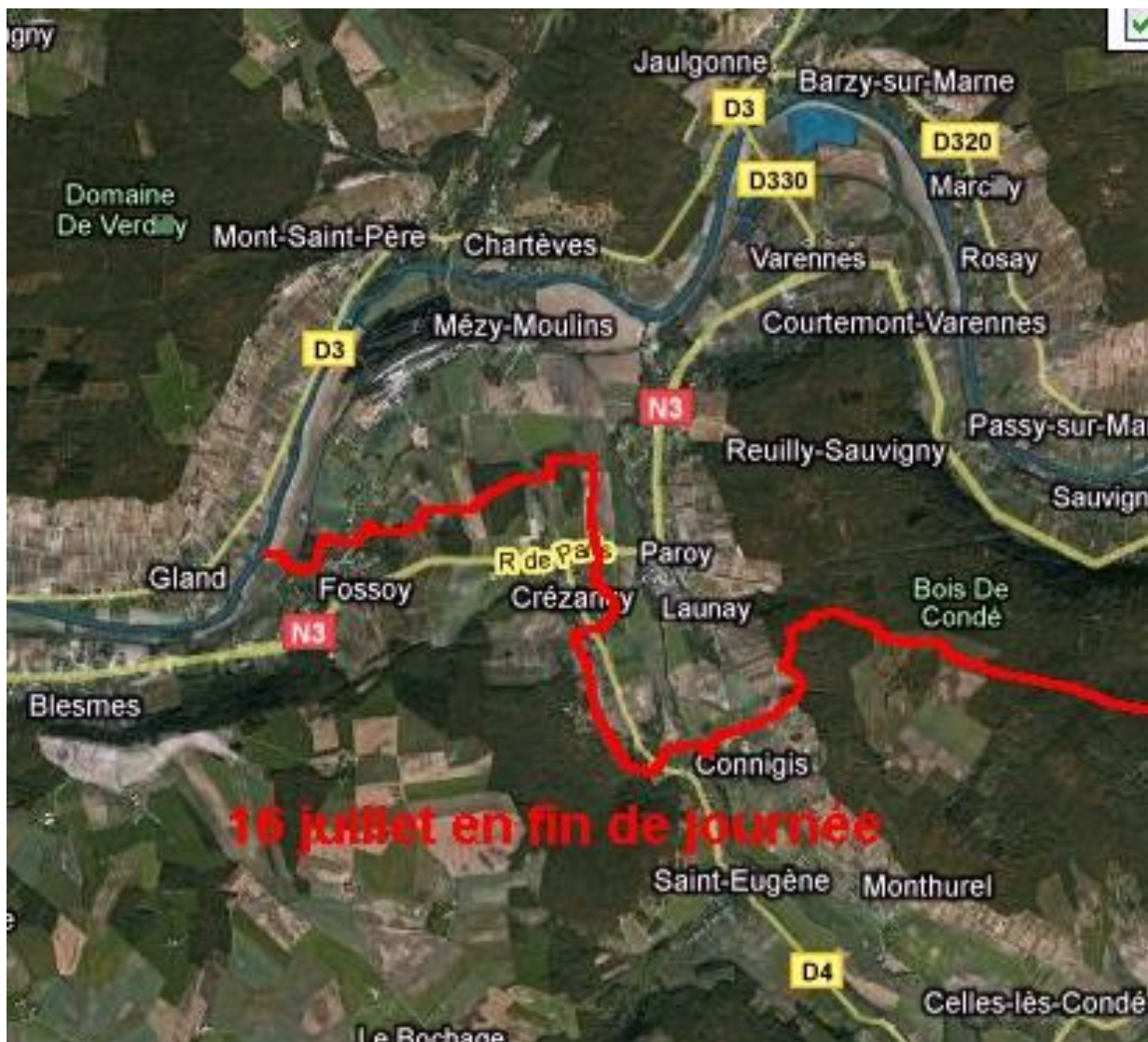
The 5th Infantry Brigade ordered the 7th Infantry to push a force into the woods east of Fossoy and ascertain definitely if there were enemy troops still in that vicinity. At 7:30 p. m. (19h30) one platoon of Company M and three platoons of Company H, 7th Infantry, were ordered to take up a position and hold the high ground in front of Bois d'Aigremont. These platoons moved out from the eastern edge of Fossoy at 9:13 p.m. (21h13) and by 10 p.m. (22h) had taken up a position in the woods formerly held by Company A, 30th Infantry, 1 kilometer northeast of Fossoy. During the night of the 16th and early morning of the 17th, patrols from this detachment established contact with Company A, 7th Infantry, at La Bretonnerie Ferme, and also covered the railroad track as far as Mézy.

During the day, on the front east of Reims, the Germans continued their attempts to break through the French Fourth Army, but without success. West of Reims and east of the 3d Division sector the German advance continued, although slowed up somewhat by the French counterattack.

Preparations for the counteroffensive against the Marne salient continued. In order to enable the French Sixth Army to concentrate on this phase of the battle, the French Ninth Army was ordered to take tactical control of that part of the French Sixth Army on the south bank of the Marne. Its mission was to stop further progress of the German attack and drive the enemy back across the river. Thus the French Ninth Army would be interposed between the French Fifth and Sixth Armies. However, this arrangement was to be temporary. As



soon as the Germans had been forced to withdraw from the south bank of the Marne, and the attack on the salient proper on this front had begun, these troops were to revert to the French Sixth Army.



## July 17

The French Ninth Army took command of the French XXXVIII Corps at 8 a. m., July 17. The French 73d Division took command of the sector of the French 125th Division in which it had been operating since the 14th.

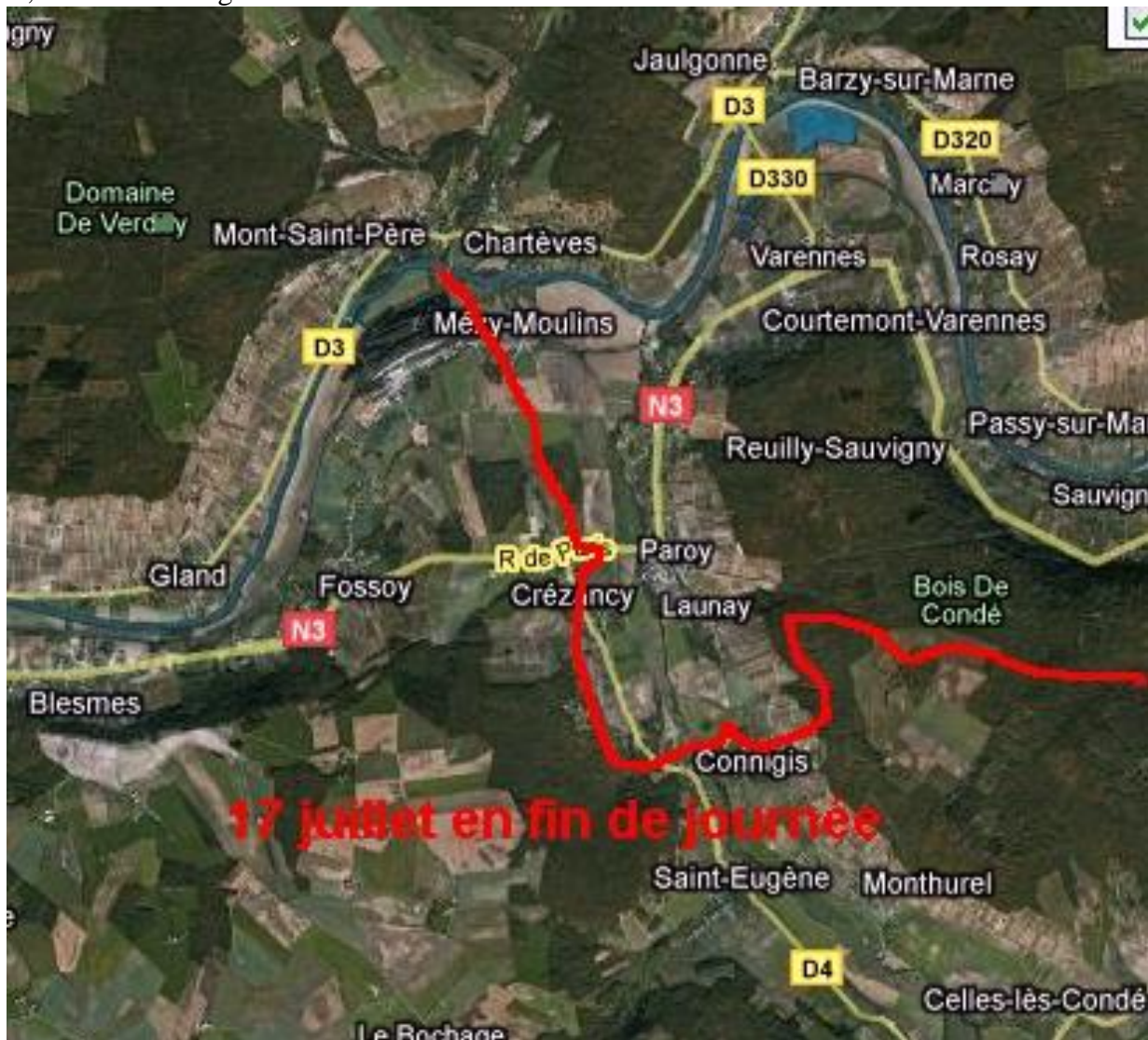
In the 3d Division, the only activity on the 17th was in the sector of the 30th Infantry, where the 2d Battalion, 111th Infantry, having relieved the detachments of the 7th Infantry east of Fossoy, moved forward to the railroad track and sent patrols along the river. This reestablished the former front of the 30th Infantry. The 1st Battalion, 111th Infantry, reported to the 30th Infantry in Bois d' Aigremont.

Company K, 4th Infantry, and Companies A and C, 38th Infantry, were released from attachment to the 30th Infantry during the day.

Thus ended the 3d Division's participation in the Champagne-Marne Defensive. The great German offensive begun on July 15 was completely spent by the 17th, the day's effort resulting in only small gains southwest of Reims.

On July 17 the Allies and Americans made their final preparations for the counteroffensive to be launched on July 18, which is known as the Aisne-Marne Offensive. The plans, as finally adopted, contemplated that

the French Sixth and Tenth Armies would attack the west face of the salient between Château-Thierry and Soissons, thus threatening the German communications.

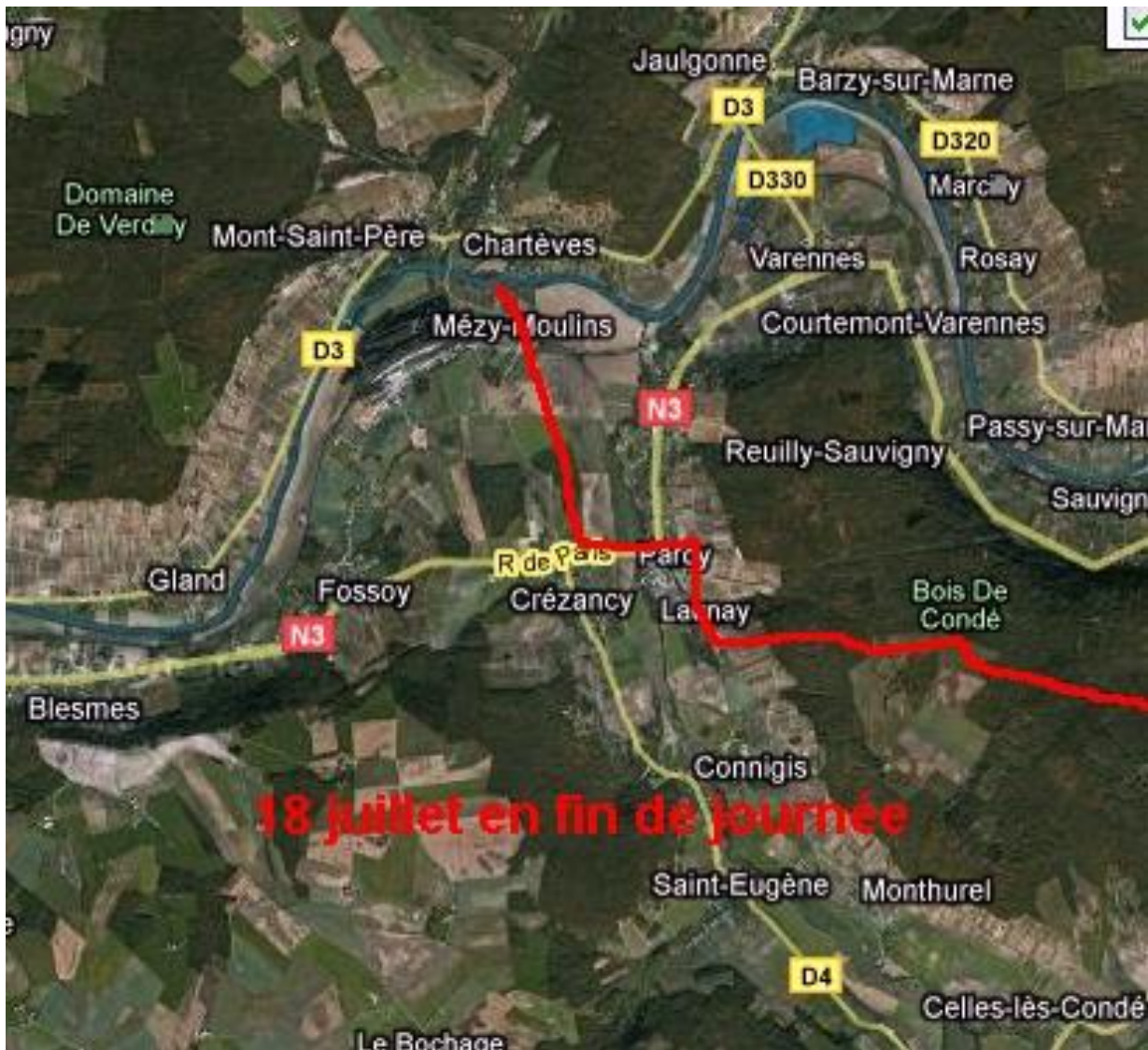


The French Fourth Army, east of Reims, and the French Fifth Army, southwest of the city, were to regain all ground taken by the Germans since July 15. The French Ninth Army was to drive the enemy north of the Marne. The troops under the command of the French Ninth Army were then to revert to the French Sixth Army, and the French Fifth, Sixth and Tenth Armies were to continue the offensive to reduce the Marne salient. The artillery preparation of the French Fourth Army was to begin at 4 a. m.; that of the French Fifth and Ninth Armies at 5 a. m.

## July 18

At 4:35 a. m., July 18, the French Sixth and Tenth Armies launched their counteroffensive. The attack took the enemy by surprise, and penetrated his lines between Soissons and Château-Thierry to such an extent that his main artery of communication was seriously endangered. The German High Command at once ordered a retirement to the north bank of the Marne. This retirement was to be effected during the night of July 19-20. No offensive activity other than artillery fire beginning at 5 a. m. was ordered for the 3d Division on the 18th. The division ordered the Aqueduct and Woods Lines organized for defense. In the sector of the 38th Infantry, the Aqueduct Line was modified by being moved forward to Paroy and Launay, which towns were reoccupied about 9:30 p. m. (21h30) by Company B.





This connected the 3d Battalion, 38th Infantry, with the 2d Battalion, 111th Infantry, in Crézancy. Companies L and M, 4th Infantry, were transferred from the 30th Infantry to division reserve. The 3d Battalion and Headquarters, 111th Infantry, reported during the day, and completed the relief of the 30th Infantry at 12:30 a. m. (0h30), July 19.

## July 19

On the 19th the mission of the division remained unchanged. Its positions were held and active patrolling carried out in front of the line of resistance. During the night of July 19-20 the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, relieved the 111th Infantry, which rejoined its brigade. The divisional zone was now held by the 38th, 7th and 4th Infantry Regiments, from right to left.

The American and Allied attack on the west face of the salient continued with success and the French Ninth Army cautioned its troops to be on the alert for a German withdrawal.

On July 19th the Germans decided to withdraw from the Marne salient. They evacuated the south bank of the Marne during the night of July 19-20. Four defensive lines were laid out in the salient, which were to mark the successive stages of the movement. South of Soissons, these lines were nearly identical, but between the Ourcq and the Marne and around to Reims, there was to be a progressive withdrawal of the front.

## July 20

An attack made early in the morning of July 20 by the French to the east of the 3d Division disclosed the German retirement. At 9 a. m. the division was ordered by telephone to mop up the south bank of the Marne in cooperation with the French 73d Division. The 38th Infantry took up the advance and occupied Varennes and the railroad to the west with elements of the 1st and 3d Battalions in line from right to left. The attack on the west face of the salient continued on the 20th with favourable results. The French XXXVIII Corps was returned to the French Sixth Army, and at 5 p. m. (17h) ordered the 3d Division to send its left regiment, the 4th Infantry, across the Marne, capture Brasles and establish itself in the southwest corner of Bois de Barbillon. The other regiments were to send strong patrols across the river between Chartèves and Gland and establish bridgeheads so that Bois de Barbillon could be attacked from the south and east.

## July 21

In accordance with the plan for evacuating the Marne salient, the German units opposite the 3d Division withdrew during the night of July 20-21 to a position, the main line of resistance of which, extended from Chartèves to the ridge north of Mont St. Père, east of La Cense à Dieu, and on to the northwest. The forward limit of the outpost zone was southwest of Mont St. Père, along a line to Breteuil Ferme.

At 9:15 a. m., July 21, the French XXXVIII Corps announced that the enemy was withdrawing in complete disorder and ordered a vigorous pursuit to be started at once. The corps had in line the American 3d Division and the French 39th Division, from right to left. To the right of the 3d Division was the French 73d Division of the French Ninth Army. The 3d Division was to cross the Marne as quickly as possible, invest Bois de Barbillon from the east, and attack in a northeasterly direction in the following zone of action:

Right boundary: Barzy-sur-Marne (excl.)-west edge of Forêt de Ris (incl.)-Ronchères (incl.).

Left boundary: Brasles (incl.)--la Théoderie (incl.)-La Tieulerie Ferme (incl.)-crossroads 800 meters west of the church in Le Charmel.

Acting on these instructions, the 3d Division issued orders at 2 p. m. for the 38th and 7th Infantry Regiments to assemble in the vicinity of Crézancy and Fossoy, cross the Marne near Mézy and lead the advance with the 38th Infantry on the right. The 4th Infantry was ordered to cross the river at Château Thierry and then move through Brasles and clean up the southern and eastern edges of Bois de Barbillon, following the 7th Infantry. The 30th Infantry was ordered to cross at Mézy and follow the 38th Infantry. Bridges were to be constructed in the vicinity of Mézy by the 6th Engineers.

Companies B and F, 6th Engineers, were prevented from bridging the Marne at Mézy during daylight of July 21 by machine-gun and artillery fire. About dark Company B moved west to Fossoy and succeeded in erecting a footbridge near that town during the night. Company F succeeded in building a footbridge near Mézy after dark, protected by fire from a mixed detachment of engineers and troops of the 38th Infantry. These bridging operations were facilitated by the activity farther west where, pursuant to verbal orders, the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, crossed the Marne at Château-Thierry and Chierry at 9:30 a. m. and advanced to Brasles. The 2d and 3d Battalions crossed near Chierry about noon behind the 1st Battalion. Two companies of the 1st Battalion occupied Mont St. Père at 10:30 p. m. (22h30) and drove enemy machine guns out of the southwestern part of Chartèves. The 2d and 3d Battalions occupied a position in Bois de Barbillon west of Mont St. Père.

Company B, 7th Infantry, crossed the river by boat near Le Rû Chailly Ferme late in the afternoon and took up a covering position facing Mont St. Père. Companies C and D, 7th Infantry, also crossed here during the night, while Company A crossed near Mézy under machine-gun fire. These units were not in the front line. The 38th Infantry assembled in the vicinity of Mézy after dark and remained there until early the next morning waiting for the bridge to be completed.

To the east of the 3d Division, the French 73d Division was also preparing to cross the river. To the west, the French 39th Division had attacked in the morning, advanced through Bois de Barbillon, and captured La Cense à Dieu. Later in the day the enemy drove the French out of La Cense à Dieu.

The front of the 3d Division south of the Marne was held during the night of July 21-22 by the 38th Infantry. North of the Marne, it was held by the 4th Infantry.

In its instructions for the following day the French XXXVIII Corps made no change in the mission already assigned. The zone of action of the 3d Division was changed to the following;

Right boundary: Jaulgonne (incl.)-le Charmel Château (incl.)-a point 500 meters east of Villardelle Ferme-east edge of Ronchères-east edge of Cierges.

Left boundary: La Tieulerie Ferme (incl.)-southeast edge of La Vente Jean Guillaume wood-east edge of Courmont-west edge of Cierges.

## July 22

Because of the narrow front, the 3d Division was to advance with only one regiment in the front line. The right flank was to be prepared to meet an attack from Forêt de Ris.

The 3d Division continued its operations on July 22 under the plan issued on the previous day. The 3d Battalion, 38th Infantry, crossed the Marne at Mézy at 4 a. m. and advanced up the hill northeast of Chartèves toward Les Franquets Ferme. The 1st Battalion crossed the river at Mézy about 6 a. m. and advanced along the river road and hillside toward Jaulgonne. The 2d Battalion crossed at 8:30 a. m. and followed the 1st Battalion. The latter captured the town of Jaulgonne during the morning, and shortly after noon started to march in advanceguard formation toward Le Charmel. The battalion penetrated the German position as far as the northern part of Le Charmel, the advance guard arriving in the village about 1:15 p. m. Being unsupported on both flanks, the battalion fell back by successive withdrawals to Jaulgonne. It took up a position about 5 p. m. in the northern edge of the village and on the hill to the northwest, where contact was established with the 3d Battalion.

The 3d Battalion, 38th Infantry, cleaned up the ridge north-east of Chartèves, as far as the woods south and southwest of Les Franquets Ferme. The battalion was unsupported on the left and moved that flank back to the clearing in the woods about 2 kilometers northeast of Chartèves.

The 2d Battalion advanced from Mézy toward Jaulgonne and then into the woods west of that town, in support of the other two battalions. Elements of the battalion entered the front line.

In the 4th Infantry, the 1st Battalion moved northeast from Mont St. Père, captured Moulin Doly, and was stopped about 500 meters north of that point, where it dug in. The 2d Battalion, in support, moved out during the afternoon and became engaged west of Moulin Doly. The battalion bivouacked for the night in the vicinity of crossroads 197. The 3d Battalion remained in Mont St. Père.

The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, moved from Mont St. Père during the afternoon and passed through the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, north of Moulin Doly. The head of the column was stopped about 600 meters south of La Tieulerie Ferme. The 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, crossed the Marne during the morning and followed in support of the 1st Battalion. Wheeling to the northwest, it captured La Théoderie. These two battalions were in the front line. The 3d Battalion crossed the Marne and remained in Mont St. Père.

The formation of the division at this time was as follows :

5TH INFANTRY BRIGADE		6TH INFANTRY BRIGADE	
7th Infantry		38th Infantry	
2d Battalion	1st Battalion	3d Battalion	1st Battalion
4th Infantry		2d Battalion	
2d Battalion	1st Battalion	3d Battalion, 4th Infantry	
		3d Battalion, 7th Infantry	
		DIVISION RESERVE	
		30th Infantry	

To the right of the 3d Division, the French 73d Division crossed the Marne and captured Rozay and Hill 226. There was no front-line contact with the 3d Division. To the left, the French 39th Division advanced its right flank to the northern edge of Bois du Chanois, where it was in contact with the 7th Infantry.



The French XXXVIII Corps ordered the attack continued on July 23 at 3:55 a. m. The enemy front was to be broken by the exploitation of local attacks. Points chosen for attack were to receive a 10-minute artillery preparation just prior to H-hour.

In compliance with the corps orders, the 3d Division ordered the 5th Infantry Brigade to advance on the road, Mont St. Père-point 210-point 224.-le Charmel, with the 4th Infantry leading. The 7th Infantry was to act as left-flank guard. The 6th Infantry Brigade, less the 30th Infantry, was to remain in place until the 5th Infantry Brigade was slightly ahead of it, when it was to advance on the Jaulgonne-le Charmel road, providing its own flank protection. The 30th Infantry, as division reserve, was to continue to move toward Mézy, and be prepared to cross the Marne.

## July 23

The 6th Infantry Brigade made no advance on July 23, the line of the 38th Infantry remaining the same as on the preceding night.

In the 5th Infantry Brigade, the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, advanced from its position south of La Tieulerie Ferme during the early morning through Bois de Mont l'Evêque and reached the edge of the woods south and west of the farm buildings. The 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, ordered to relieve the 1st Battalion, advanced northwest through Bois de Mont l'Evêque to the vicinity of Grange Marie Ferme, later falling back to the southern edge of Bois de Mont l'Evêque. The relief of the 1st Battalion was accomplished later during the night.

The 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, advanced at 4 a. m. from the vicinity of Moulin Doly toward Les Franquets Ferme, but was stopped by machine-gun fire from that point and the woods to the west. The battalion withdrew a short distance into the woods and entrenched. The 2d Battalion, 4th Infantry, was ordered to proceed northeast from crossroads 197 and extend the left of the 1st Battalion. This battalion was held up by fire from La Tieulerie Ferme, which was finally captured by Company H. The remainder of the battalion dug in across the valley to the south of the farm.

The formation of the battalions of the 5th Infantry Brigade at this time was as follows :

### 5TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

1st Bn, 7th Inf

2d Bn, 4th Inf

1st Bn, 4<sup>th</sup> Inf

3d Bn, 7h Inf

3d Bn, 4th Inf

2d Bn, 7th Inf

To the right, the French 73d Division had occupied Barzy-sur-Marne, where the 3d Division established liaison by a mixed post. To the left, the French 39th Division had advanced to the south of Grange Marie Ferme.

The French XXXVIII Corps ordered an attack for 4:05 a. m., July 24, preceded by a 10-minute artillery preparation. The 3d Division was assigned the line, Le Charmel Château-le Charmel, as its objective. Based on these instructions, the attack order of the 3d Division, issued at 11 a. m., directed the 5th Infantry Brigade to advance in liaison with the French and occupy the position north of Les Franquets Ferme. There was to be no advance by the 6th Infantry Brigade. The 30th Infantry was to relieve the 38th Infantry, and protect the right flank. The advancing troops were to halt at noon and entrench, unless there were indications of a rapid enemy retirement.

## July 24

During the night of July 23-24, in accordance with their plans for the evacuation of the Marne salient, the German opposing the French XXXVIII Corps withdrew to a line Vincelles-l'Hérolle-le Charmel-Beuvardes. In the 5th Infantry Brigade, the 4th Infantry attacked at 8 a. m. along the western slope of the ridge toward Le Charmel with the 3d, 2d and 1st Battalions in column in that order: The leading battalion dug in along the northern edge of wood No. 10 (part of Bois du Charmel), about 1,200 meters southwest of Le Charmel.

The 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, advanced on the left of the 4th Infantry at 9 a. m. and took up a position in Forêt de Fère northeast of La Tieulerie Ferme, but not in the front line.

In the 6th Infantry Brigade, the 30th Infantry had relieved the 38th Infantry during the night of July 23-24. The 2d Battalion, plus Companies A and B, took over the lines in arid around Jaulgonne. The 3d Battalion, plus Companies C and D, took over the lines on the ridge south and southwest of Les Franquets Ferme. The 30th Infantry received orders at 7:30 a. m. to advance at 9 a. m. The 2d Battalion, with attached companies, moved forward at 11:30 a. m. on both sides of the Jaulgonne-le Charmel road, cleaning up machine-gun resistance. About 2 p. m. a mixed detachment crossed Ruisseau de la Belle Aulne. Being unsupported, it fell back about 6 p. m. and established a line east and north of Argentol. Parts of Companies A and B, attached to the 2d Battalion, advanced to the west of the Jaulgonne-le Charmel road and reached the northern edge of Bois du Charmel. Later in the afternoon these companies took up a position near the northern edge of the wood where they remained until the morning of July 25, when they rejoined the 2d Battalion near Argentol.

The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, advanced from the woods southwest of Les Franquets Ferme along the ridge toward Le Charmel. Overcoming machine-gun resistance, the battalion reached the buildings in the southwestern edge of Le Charmel and wood No. 10 where a front-line position was organized he afternoon. To the east, the French 4th Division, which was relieving the French 73d Division, entered Forêt de Ris. There was no front line contact with the 3d Division. To the west, the French 39th Division reached the eastern edge of Forêt de Fère where it was in contact with the 3d Division.

The French XXXVIII Corps, believing that the enemy was making a hurried retreat, ordered the pursuit to be pushed. Cavalry was to be ready to pass through the infantry at daybreak, July 25.

The 3rd Division ordered the advance to be continued at 4 a.m. by all elements of the 5th Infantry Brigade. The 30th Infantry was to be relieved by a passage of lines. The 5th Infantry, Brigade issued orders at 2:30 a. m., July 25, for an advance in two columns, the 7th Infantry on the right and the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry on the left.

## July 25

The 7th Infantry, with the 3d Battalion leading, advanced east at 7:30 a. m., July 25, with the object of passing through the lines of the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, and continuing the attack in the right portion of the divisional zone. The leading battalion came under heavy artillery fire in the vicinity of Argentol and developed strong resistance in the woods to the east of that place. The battalion took up the position formerly held by the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, which had withdrawn during the night. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry, came under shellfire in Bois du Charmel, and halted.

The 3d Battalion, 4th Infantry, advanced at 6 a. m. and by evening had taken and occupied Le Charmel. During the evening. the 2d Battalion, 4th Infantry, was moved into the village to help hold it against counterattack.

To the right, where the French Fifth Army had relieved the French Ninth Army, the French 4th Division advanced to the ravine of Ruisseau de la Belle Aulne in Forêt de Ris without contact with the 3d Division. To the left, the French 39th Division reached the highway separating Forêt de Fère and La Vente Jean Guillaume wood, where contact was established with the 3d Division.

## July 26

The French XXXVIII Corps ordered an attack at 10 a. m; July 26, to be made by one regiment of the French 39th Division and two battalions of the 3d Division, with the capture of La Vente Jean Guillaume wood and the ridge north of La Fosse Ferme as objectives. This advance was to be supported on the left by the American 42d Division of the American I Corps.

The attack started at 4:50 p. m. The 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, were the assault elements in the zone of the 3d Division. The French 39th Division could not advance. The two

battalions of the 3d Division reached Le Charmel, but could not advance beyond the village. They were withdrawn from Le Charmel after dark.

Liaison with the French 4th Division, which also failed to advance, was established east of Argentol.

The French Sixth Army planned to cross the Ourcq River, 5 kilometers northeast of Le Charmel, in an attack to start at 9:40 p. m., July 27. In the French XXXVIII Corps, the attack was to be made by the American 55th Infantry Brigade, 28th Division, which was to advance in two columns through the American 3d and French 39th Divisions at 9:40 p. m. It was to cover the entire corps front. The mission of the 3d Division in the attack was to protect the right flank of the corps by occupying with two battalions of the 5th Infantry Brigade the two northern corners of Forêt de Ris and the village of Ronchères.

## July 27

During the night of July 26-27 the enemy withdrew to the Ourcq. Rear guards well supplied with machine guns covered the withdrawal. The German retirement opposite the French XXXVIII Corps was first observed about 8 a. m. The French 39th Division took up the pursuit promptly, reaching Courmont at 4 p. m.

Meanwhile, at 11 :15 a. m. the French XXXVIII Corps issued telephonic instructions to the 3d Division to advance immediately to the northern edge of Forêt de Ris, to Ronchères and to the southwestern edge of Bois Meunière. At 1 p. m. division orders were issued.

The 5th Infantry Brigade advanced shortly thereafter with the 3d Battalion, 4th Infantry, leading. Machine-gun resistance at Le Charmel Château was eliminated by patrols from the 2d and 3d Battalions, and the 3d Battalion continued on to Villardelle Ferme. At 8:30 p. m. instructions were issued by the division to organize a line from the northwestern corner of the Forêt de Ris to Cote 190, southeast of Courmont.

Accordingly, the 5th Infantry Brigade advanced the 3d Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry, to the line from Villardelle Ferme to Cote 190, and ordered the 7th Infantry to hold a line from Villardelle Ferme to Ruisseau de la Belle Aulne. This latter was not a front-line position. Contact was established to both flanks.

Because of the changed situation, the attack planned for the night of July 27 by the French Sixth Army was cancelled and the American 28th Division was ordered to relieve the French 39th division. While this relief was in progress, the French XXXVIII Corps ordered the 28th Division to carry out the original plan and attack at 11 p. m., July 27. The relief was not accomplished in time to make this attack.

Additional instructions from the corps directed the advance guards to maintain close contact with the enemy. If he did not make a stand on the line of the Ourcq they were to push on to the Vesle River; about 19 kilometers north of Courmont.

## July 28

At 5:45 a.m., July 28, the 3d Division ordered the 5th Infantry Brigade to advance at once along the Ronchères-Cierges road with the mission of reaching the Vesle River during the day.

With the 3d Battalion, 4th Infantry, leading, the 5th Infantry Brigade crossed the Ourcq and, about 3 p. m., captured Ronchères. This attack was assisted on the right by the French 4th Division which was in close liaison with the Americans. To the left the American 28th Division reached the Ourcq River during the morning.

Pursuant to orders from the French XXXVIII Corps the 3d Division, at 2:30 p. m., ordered the 5th Infantry Brigade to continue its attack, with Bois des Grimpettes and the high ground east of Cierges as objectives. The advance was to be made in conjunction with flank divisions. This order was transmitted to the 3d Battalion, 4th Infantry, which pushed on for several hundred meters north of Ronchères, where it was held up by machine-gun and artillery fire. Contact was established with the French 4th Division by patrols, but there was no front-line contact with the American 28th Division.

The French XXXVIII Corps directed the 3d Division to continue the attack at 3:40 a. m., July 29, without change in objectives. Orders of the 3d Division made no change in distribution of troops and set no time for the resumption of the advance.

## July 29

The 4th Infantry attacked at 6:50 a. m., with the 2d Battalion leading, supported by the 1st Battalion. The advance reached the northern edge of Hill 226 and Les 18 Arpents ravine, where it was stopped by fire from Bois Meunière and Bois des Grimpettes. The attack was made in conjunction with flank divisions, which also made but slight gains. Contact was established with the French, but there was no front-line liaison with the 28th Division, which had advanced to the southwestern slope of Cote 188.

## July 30

The 3d Division, less artillery, was relieved by the American 32d Division during the night of July 29-30, the relief of the front-line elements of the 4th Infantry being completed after midnight. Command of the zone of advance passed to the 32d Division at 11 a. m., July 30. The 3d Division, less artillery, assembled in the vicinity of Château-Thierry, south of the Marne, in reserve of the French XXXVIII Corps. The 3d Field Artillery Brigade supported the 32d Division until August 2. The 3d Battalion, 18th Field Artillery, remained in support of the 32d Division until August 12.

## July 31 – Aug. 2

The evacuation of the Marne salient by the Germans continued according to schedule, the final phase of the retreat being a withdrawal to the north banks of the Aisne and Vesle rivers. This movement was executed in two stages, the first on the night of August 1-2, when a small bridgehead was occupied south of the Vesle, and the second on the night of August 2-3, when the main body crossed the Vesle. Strong outposts established south of the river were to fight for the possession of the Vesle valley, and the north bank was to be held at all costs. Any Allied troops who crossed the river were to be counterattacked promptly and driven back to the south bank.

Upon discovering the German withdrawal, the French ordered a vigorous pursuit by advance guards composed of all arms. The main body of the troops, however, was not to become engaged unless serious resistance was encountered, and was not to cross the Vesle River until the advance guards were firmly established on the north bank.

The 6th Infantry Brigade was detached from the 3d Division on August 2, and ordered to join the French III Corps, which was advancing from the Ourcq to the Vesle River to the right of the French XXXVIII Corps.

## Aug. 3

The brigade moved by truck during the night of August 2-3 to the west of Goussancourt, 13 kilometers south of St. Gilles, and reported to the French III Corps, which directed it to move to the vicinity of St. Gilles. The brigade order issued at 4:50 p. m. designated the 38th Infantry to lead the march. Movement was started at 6:30 p. m.

Acting on information that its advance guards had crossed the Ardre River at Courville and St. Gilles and were in contact with the enemy on the line, La Cense Ferme-Hill 179- Chézelles Ferme (about 750 meters southwest of Fismes), the French III Corps issued orders at 8 p. m. for the 6th Infantry Brigade to form the main body of the left column of the corps and follow the advance guards. The latter were to push on across the Vesle during the night. If this could not be accomplished, there was to be a general attack for the purpose of forcing a crossing to commence at 3:30 a. m., August 4. The boundary between the two columns was to be: east edge of small woods 1 kilometer east of St. Gilles-Hill 179-Villette, all to the 6th Infantry Brigade.