

3rd D.I. ON THE MARNE RIVER, 1st JULY – 15 JULY 1918

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

May 30-31

When the German attack of May 27 was launched, the 3d Division was in the Châteauvillain Training Area, about 160 kilometers southeast of Château-Thierry. On May 30 the division, less artillery and engineers, was placed at the disposal of the French Group of Armies of the North for the purpose of defending the passages of the Marne River from Château-Thierry to Damery, some 35 kilometers to the east.

At 10:30 a. m., May 30, the 7th Machine-Gun Battalion, motorized, was ordered to move at once by road to Condé-en-Brie, about 12 kilometers southeast of Château-Thierry, where it was to report to the French for further orders. The remainder of the division, less motor transportation, was to move by rail to Montmirail, 25 kilometers southeast of Château-Thierry, from where it was to be deployed to defend the Marne crossings. The 7th Infantry was to go to Château-Thierry, the 38th Infantry to Ablois-St. Martin, the 4th and 30th Infantry Regiments to Condé-en-Brie, the 8th Machine-Gun Battalion to Crézancy, the 9th Machine-Gun Battalion to Ablois-St. Martin and Condé-en-Brie, and the 5th Field Signal Battalion to Condé-en-Brie. The motorized trains were to move to Bar-sur-Aube, protected by an advance guard and flank patrols on motorcycles.

The 7th Machine-Gun Battalion left La Ferté-sur-Aube at 2:30 p. m., (14h30) May 30, and arrived at Château-Thierry late in the evening of May 31. At this time the Germans were entering the northern outskirts of the town.

Under the personal instructions of the commander of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division, the 1st Section of Company A (two guns) was ordered across the river. Preceded by French infantry, which drove out the hostile advance posts, it went into position about 300 meters northeast of the bridge by which the road from the south crosses the north branch of the river. This position was held in conjunction with French infantry until the following day. The remainder of the guns of the battalion were placed along the south bank of the river from the same bridge to a point about 1,600 meters to the east. They were sited to cover the bridges which were then being prepared for demolition.

June 1

On June 1 the enemy, having already reached the Marne east of Château-Thierry, isolated that portion of the town north of the river by an advance to the west which resulted in the capture of Vaux and the slopes of Hill 204. The section of Company A, 7th Machine-Gun Battalion, north of the river, was ordered to withdraw with the French troops to the south bank about 11 p. m. (23h) The withdrawal was made by way of the railroad bridge, to the east, because the main stone bridge in the town was blown up before the troops could reach it. The Germans entered the town and occupied the north bank of the Marne during the evening. The 7th Machine-Gun Battalion held the crossings of the river in conjunction with French infantry. The sector was extended to the west end of the island.

Machine-gun units of the 3d Division remained in the town of Château-Thierry under French command until July 17 reliefs and changes of position being made by the 7th, 8th and 9th Machine-Gun Battalions during that time. On June 11 the sector was extended to the railroad bridge southwest of Château-Thierry.

The French Group of Armies of the North assigned the 3d Division to the French Sixth Army, which in turn assigned it to the French XXXVIII Corps. Taking up a position along the Marne, the center of this corps was marked by a line from east of Mont St. Pére to Fossoy. The corps was without contact with units to its flanks and was organizing its sector with whatever troops were available. It planned to use the 7th Infantry, 5th Infantry Brigade, in the right sector and the 38th Infantry, 6th Infantry Brigade; in the left sector. The two remaining regiments of the division, the 4th and 30th Infantry Regiments, were to be held in corps reserve.

In transmitting these instructions, the 3d Division ordered the 7th Infantry and the 8th Machine-Gun Battalion to report to the right sector and the 38th Infantry and the 9th Machine-Gun Battalion to the left sector. At this time the division did not control its regiments.

All elements of the 5th and 6th Infantry Brigades reported to the French on June 2 and 3. As the battalions arrived they were assigned to widely scattered positions in the French XXXVIII Corps.

June 2-3

During the night of June 2-3 the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, with Company A, 8th Machine-Gun Battalion attached, under orders of the French 20th Division, took over the front line along the Marne in the vicinity of Courthiézy from a point about 1 kilometer southeast of Tréloup to Sauvigny.

During the same night the 38th Infantry, operating under the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division, placed two companies of the 2d Battalion in line near Fossoy, from a point about 1 kilometer southwest of Mont St. Père to a point about 700 meters west of Fossoy, relieving French units.

The 1st and 2d Battalions, 30th Infantry, were attached to the left subsector of the corps. In the afternoon of June 3 the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, took up a support position at Mont du Bonneil on the north bank of the Marne, 5 kilometers southwest of Château-Thierry, under orders of the French 4th Cavalry Division. The 4th Infantry and the remainder of the 30th Infantry formed the corps reserve.

During the night of June 3-4 the 6th Infantry Brigade extended west along the Marne to a point about 600 meters south-east of Brasles, the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry, relieving elements of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division in this area.

The Commanding General of the 3d Division was assigned to the command of the French XXXVIII Corps reserve, which now consisted of the 4th Infantry, the 30th Infantry, less two battalions, one regiment of French Territorials, one regiment of French cavalry and two companies of French engineers.

June 4

On June 4 the 7th Machine-Gun Battalion was relieved in Château-Thierry by Company A, 9th Machine-Gun Battalion, and a French unit. It moved to corps reserve.

Companies C and D, 30th Infantry, joined a mixed Franco-American detachment guarding the Marne bridges between Charly and La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, about 17 kilometers south-west of Château-Thierry. These units were not in the front line.

The French XXXVIII Corps reorganized its area into three sectors: the right and left front-line sectors already mentioned, and the "Sector of the Banks of the Marne" in which were the 1st and 2d Battalions, 30th Infantry.

June 5

The Aisne Defensive ended on June 5. The enemy had made a penetration of over 50 kilometers and had created a salient in the French lines, marked on the east by Reims, on the south by Château-Thierry and on the west by Soissons.

During the night of June 5-6 Company E, 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, which had been holding a support line at Mont du Bonneil, advanced and took over the section of the front line about 600 meters south of Monneaux, relieving a French cyclist company. Contact was established with troops of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division to the right, and with the American 9th Infantry, 2d Division, to the left.

At 5 p.m. the French XXXVIII Corps issued instructions for the reorganization of the sector, which was to be held by the French 20th, American 3d and French 10th Colonial Infantry Divisions, from right to left. The limits of the American sector were to be :

Right boundary: west edge of Bois de la Jute-Crézancy (incl.)-railroad station at Mézy (incl.).

Left boundary: Nesles (excl.)-les Evaux (excl.).

Troops assigned to the 3d Division were the American 38th and 4th Infantry Regiments, the 9th Machine-Gun Battalion, two battalions of French Colonials, eight batteries of French artillery and one half of a French engineer company.

Arrangements were to be made to replace the 4th Infantry by the 30th Infantry in order to assemble the American 6th Infantry Brigade. The 7th Infantry and 8th Machine-Gun Battalion remained in the sector of the French 20th Division, and the 30th Infantry in the sector of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division. Necessary infantry movements were to be completed by 2 p. m. (14h), June 6, at which time command was to pass to the 3d Division.

The 3d Division took over a portion of the Château-Thierry Sector on June 6, as prescribed by the French XXXVIII Corps, and commenced the work of organizing for defense with the mission of stopping any attempts by the enemy to cross the river and of driving back any who succeeded in crossing. The 6th Infantry Brigade took command of the front. The front line of defense was to be as close as possible to the river. A line of supports for the first line and a base for counterattacks was to be established along the line, Crézancy-Bois d'Aigremont-wood east of Blesmes-Hill 186-Nesles and wood to the east.

The 2d Battalion, 4th Infantry, took over the front line in the vicinity of Mézy during the night of June 6-7. French troops continued to hold a small portion of the front near Barrage Ecluse.

During the night of June 6-7 Company E, 30th Infantry, engaged in an attack on Monneaux in connection with an attack on Hill 204 by troops of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division. The American 9th Infantry, 2d Division, was ordered to advance its right in conforming to the movement. The line was advanced about 1 kilometer. Company E, 30th Infantry, passed through Monneaux and established the line to the northeast, in contact with troops to both flanks.

The French 10th Colonial Infantry Division was ordered to capture Hill 204 as soon as possible. This operation was executed by the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, in conjunction with a battalion of the 10th Colonial Infantry Division, to the right. The attack was to be made at 9 p. m. (21h), June 7, at which time Company E was to hold its position north of Monneaux and Company F was to pass through the line and attack the west and southwest edge of Bois de la Cote 204.

The attack started on time, but after progressing a short distance, was ordered delayed an hour. The advance was resumed about 10 p. m. (22h) and at midnight the attack was still in progress.

The 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, and Company A, 8th Machine-Gun Battalion, in the front line near Courthiézy, were relieved by the French during the night of June 7-8, and moved back to a support position near Janvier Ferme.

By noon, June 8, Company F, 30th Infantry, had partially gained its objective, though the northwest edge of Bois de la Cote 204 had not been reached. Midnight June 8 found the company with two platoons in the southwest edge of the wood and two platoons between Company E and Vaux. This line was outposted, and was in contact with the troops to the right and left.

The period June 8-14 was spent in making the changes necessary to reassemble the elements of the 6th Infantry Brigade. The battalions of the 30th Infantry, were to be relieved by battalions of the 4th Infantry. In a relief within the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division, the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was relieved on Hill 204 about 4 a. m., June 9, by a battalion of the French 52d Colonial Infantry. This battalion rejoined the 6th Infantry Brigade on June 14. The 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, reported to the brigade on June 10 and took over the line held by the 2d Battalion, 4th Infantry, near Mézy on June 12. The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, rejoined the 6th Infantry Brigade on June 11.

During the night of June 8-9 the 2d Battalion and Machine-Gun Company, 7th Infantry, relieved troops of the French 20th Division in the front line near Reuilly from Sauvigny to a point 750 meters north of Reuilly. This position was held until the night of June 10-11, when they were relieved by the French. The 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, relieved troops of the French 10th Colonial Infantry Division in the front line in the woods on Hill 204 during the night of June 13-14, holding this position until withdrawn during the night of June 17-18. The relief of the 7th Infantry from the front line in the sector of the French 20th Division was accomplished so that the regiment could be moved to the west and used to guard the Marne bridges between Charly and La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. The move was completed on June 11 and the regiment was attached to the French 164th Division, French XXI Corps.

On June 11 the 6th Engineers reported to the division for duty. The French XXXVIII Corps relieved the French engineer detachment on duty with the Americans and took one American engineer battalion for work on the second defensive position. On the same day the corps ordered the 3d Division to obtain information of the enemy situation by sending reconnaissance patrols north of the river.

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.

June 15 - 18

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.]

June 19 - July 3

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.

July 4 - 14

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.

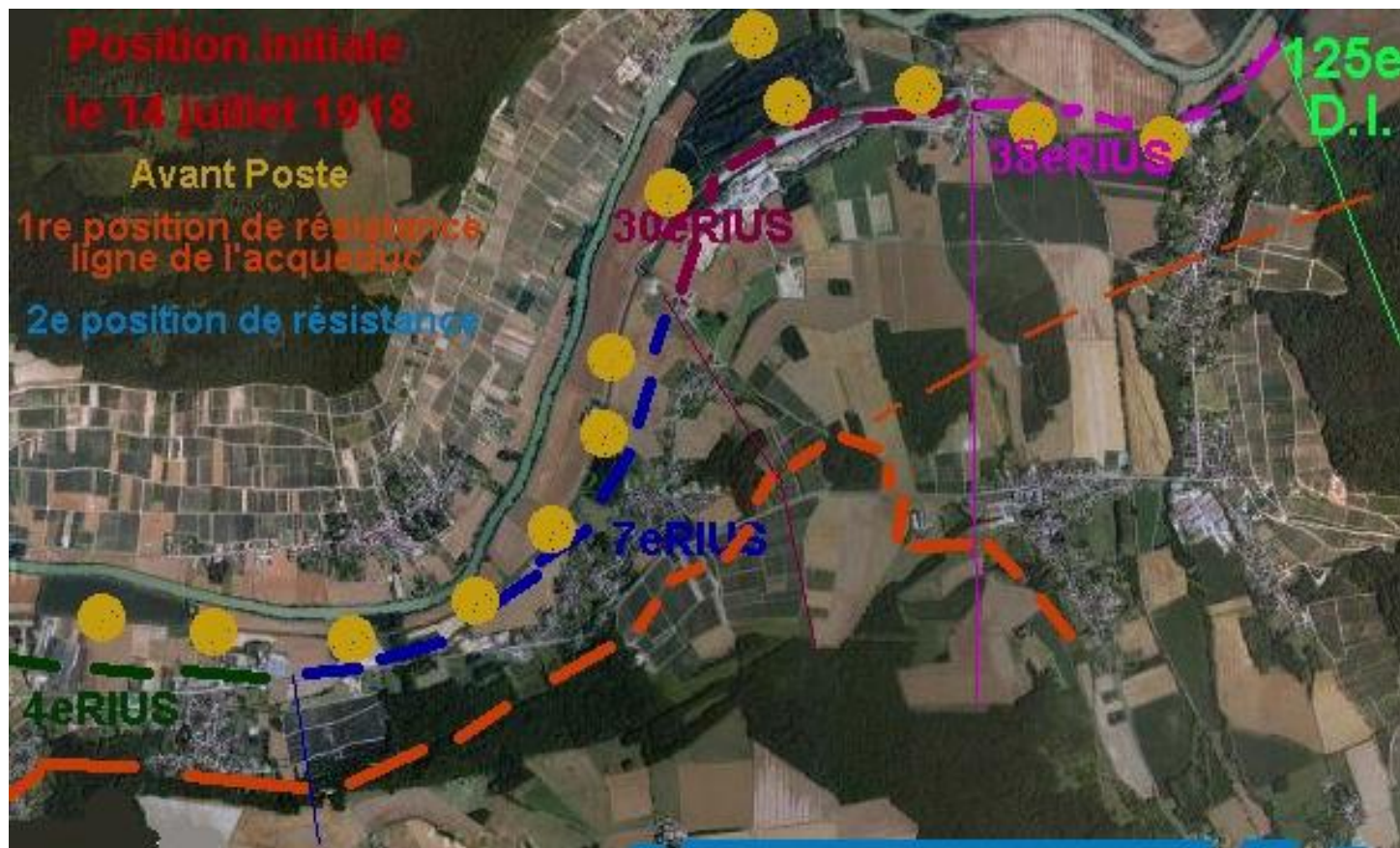
The 3d Field Artillery Brigade began to arrive on July 5, on which date the first batteries of the 76th Field Artillery went into position in the sector of its division. This regiment completed its movement on the following day; the 10th Field Artillery during the night of July 11-12; the 1st Battalion,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

30th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) Companies B and C	38th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) Companies G, H and E Company F
(Aqueduct Line) Companies A, K and D	(Aqueduct Line) Companies B and D
(Woods Line)	(Woods Line)
Remainder of the regiment, plus Companies A and C, 30th Infantry	Remainder of the regiment, less Companies A and C, 38th Infantry

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:

4th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) 2d Battalion, plus Company B	7th INFANTRY (Outpost Zone) Companies M, L and I being relieved by 2d Battalion
(Aqueduct Line) 1st Battalion, less Company B, plus Company I	(Aqueduct Line) Companies D and K
(Woods Line) 3d Battalion, less Company I	(Woods Line) Companies A, B and C

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:

German 36th Division 128th Infantry 5th Grenadiers 175th Infantry	German 10th Division 6th Grenadiers 398th Infantry 47th Infantry
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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 Varennes-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.

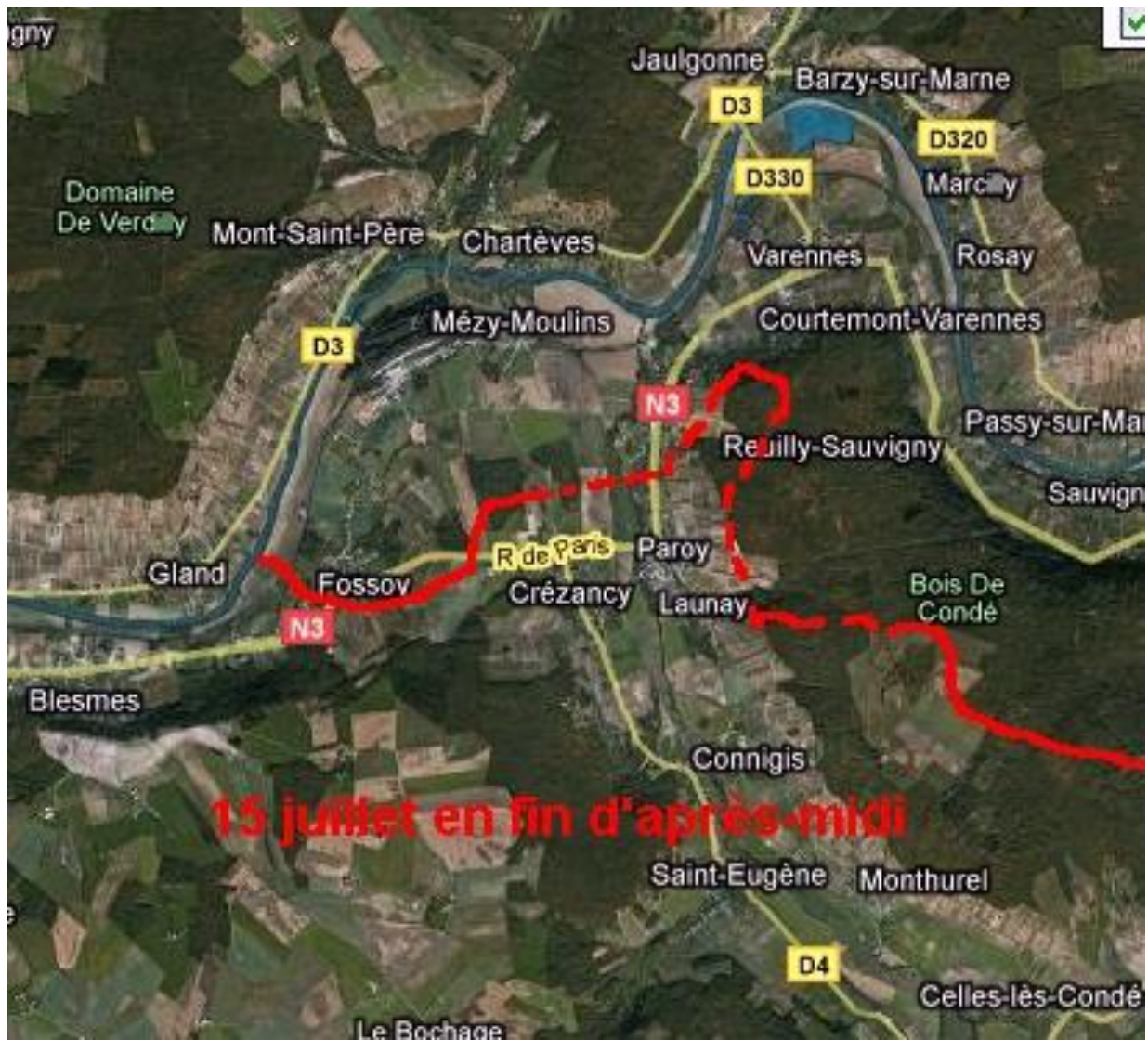
About 9 p. m. (21h) the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry, less Companies A and C, was ordered to take a position on the Woods Line. Company D moved back to the vicinity of Le Souvrien Ferme shortly afterward. Company B remained on the hill west of Moulin Ruiné Signal until the morning of the 16th, when it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