

SECOND DAY'S DEATHS IN ARGONNE HEAVY

Machine Gun Battalions Lose Heavily in Sector.

HEROIC DETAILS ARE TOLD

Colin V. Dymont, Red Cross Searcher With 91st Division, Records Great Feats of Battle.

BY COLIN V. DYMONT,
American Red Cross Searcher With the 91st
Division.

SEVENTEENTH ARTICLE.

Just as the death and the fatal wounds of the first day of the 91st in the Argonne were heavier in the 24th and 24th infantry than they were in the 26th and 36th, so on the second day they were also heavier. The latter, the 15th brigade, on September 27, in what the writer is calling the battle of Eclifontaine, had nearly 100 men killed or fatally wounded. In the battle of Eclifontaine, just to the right, the 11th losses in dead were fewer than 50.

In the end, after the Argonne and after Belgium, the dead of the 91st and 26th were higher by more than 100 than those in the other two regiments, but up to the night of September 23, the 24th and 24th were mourning 120 more to one in the other brigade. It was on the fearful 28th, going to Genes, and on the 9th and 10th of October, in front of hill 253 and beyond, that the 24th and 36th died up their dead.

The 24th machine gun battalion, supporting the 15th brigade, lost a few more than the 24th machine gun battalion, supporting the 15th, and the 31th engineers, which are herein considered as a separate outfit although brigaded for the most part with the 15th, lost about equally with the 24th. That is, the 24th lost in excess of 80 in dead and the 24th and the engineers somewhat fewer than 50. The 24th machine gun battalion lost only six. It was a motorized outfit and in both the Argonne and Belgium was held in reserve for emergencies. Thus it was used on the right side, yet unlucky to get no chance to make a name for itself in the fighting, as its sister battalions did.

Battle Line Described.

While in this serial the battle of Eclifontaine seems to be distinguished from the battle of Eclifontaine, the four infantry regiments attacked in reality, at dawn of the 27th, in an unbroken line. At the morning jump-off, the line ran nearly northeast to southwest. The right, as has been described in the first serial, was held by the 15th, set out from the ridge opposite Eclifontaine and struck at the town and the orchard. The left, having slept on the 26th, very early, set out from the canyon.

Machine Gun Resistance Big.

It would have gladdened the parent states of the west if the machine guns climb out of the canyon and start across the plateau on the 27th. Roughly speaking, the 24th infantry attacked from the right of the 15th, and the 36th from the left. Each ran into machine gun and sniper resistance almost at once. The country ahead of the left wing was just a continuation of that open, rolling plateau, with thickets and occasional flats, that it had gone through the day before, northwest of the Bois de Cheppy. The thickets, the side hills, the embankments, provided fine shelter for snipers and gun nests.

The writer can scarcely have space in this serial to cover all the casualties of the left wing on this day; too many installments would be required; but to show the kind of battle it was and to describe a specimen set of experiences, he will begin with company M of the 26th. Company M on that day was commanded by Captain Charles Abercrombie of Portland, who had gone to an officers' school from his post as attorney in the trust department of the First National bank. The company today is commanded by Captain W. M. Ackley, who of Portland, a former machinist, a crack shot with numerous dead Hun to his credit and a good commander. Abercrombie died a brave westerner's death.

It was 7 A. M. when company M went up from its pits to the rolling plateau. From northwest and northeast, artillery opened and from 1500 yards to the front came a hail of machine gun fire. "All forward," yelled an officer and the men began one of those series of rushes that are used in machine gun fire. They had got 10 feet in the first rush when a bullet struck Private Emil A. Kicker in the neck, emerging at his back. He crawled back to a pit, was given first aid by Private Alva E. Diver, and died.

Wentley Also Die in Battle.

The men had progressed 300 or 400 yards when the next man was killed: a wealthy young business man of San Francisco with everything to live for. He was Corporal A. W. Nonnenmann. He was struck in the stomach. He lay on a small ridge about 20 feet from First Sergeant Willard C. Bonham, who called, having heard a "plump." "Did that bullet get you, Nonnenmann?" It was a minute or so before Nonnenmann answered. "Bonham, they got me." Bonham asked where; the corporal said, "through the stomach." The sergeant asked if he wanted his pack taken off, game to the last, said, "No, I'll be all right in a few minutes." Bonham then asked if he could get down from the hummock, the men not daring to get him because of machine gun fire. He replied, "I can't move, it hurts me too much." The sergeant told him to roll on his back if he could, and he said bravely, "I'll try." He did roll over and just then word came that company K of the 26th had flanked the machine gun, and company M was ordered ahead. Nonnenmann was still breathing as the company passed and is said to have lived about 30 minutes in all. His grave is on the plateau. About this time as he was making a rush, Private William C. Blair, of field, N. D. threw his arms across his stomach, doubled up, and sank down again. He died in just that position, probably instantly. While some men lived for a time with stomach wounds,

many died as quickly as if the heart had been struck. The company now crossed one plateau, went into a hollow, and out of the hollow to a second plateau, where, about 3 P. M., it lay at the crest of a rise on the front line. Two Hun riflemen were at work at the company's left. One was up in a tree; the other at the foot of the tree. They had wounded two men already and had shot the heel from the shoe of Lieutenant Leeper; and who knows how many more men they had shot? They were about 225 yards away and the company had out a patrol trying to find them, for snipers do not remain that close without being cleverly hidden unless they expect to die fighting, have a clear field for getting away at the last, or think they can "Kamerad."

Death is Last Straw.

About 3:30 P. M., one of them shot Ballard B. Powell, a corporal from Sacramento, piercing his heart. Powell was rushing toward a barbed wire entanglement, and fell 30 feet from it. His death was the last straw. An automatic gunner shot one sniper out of the tree, and Corporal Ray Wilson worked up close to the other one. "Kamerad," he shouted, as he sprang out. It was too late.

The company passed the barbed wire, crossed the great national highway at a point a mile southwest of Eclifontaine, and ran into other snipers. It was now two miles from its starting place, as the crow flies. Commanding the first platoon was Sergeant Charles Thompson Jr., of Novato, Cal., who crawled to the top of a little hill to take observations. He raised his head to look and was shot through the forehead.

Private Frank Gallagher had crawled up there with him. He too raised up to look. The sniper had had just time to throw in another cartridge. Gallagher was shot in the forehead. Both were instantly killed. The German riflemen on the 91st front were often dead shots.

Sergeant Louis Pedrioli of Modesto, Cal., meanwhile was struck in the legs by a shell. The right leg was part blown off, and the left was shattered. He dropped on his side, propped himself up on his right elbow, and called out to Private Frank Campodonico of Greasy, Cal., but Campodonico was then ordered forward and had to leave him. The company advanced about 200 yards, lay in a ravine until dark, then dug in. Left the Germans attack, it was ordered back to the very canyon slope, and did not go by the route where Pedrioli lay. Next morning, however, it came back that way and found him with a bullet through his head and his pistol and field glasses gone. Who fired the shot will never be known officially. It is a company theory that the Germans came over and put him out of his misery.

Wainio, Iiwa cco, Wash, by shellfire; Private Severo Eide, Daglan, N. D., by a bullet, and probably Peter Schmidt, Rose Creek, Minn., were killed on this day.

Abercrombie Story Told.

It remains to tell the sorry story of Abercrombie, the captain. The company was 50 yards across the national highway, when about 3:40 o'clock a shell came along. The Hun had begun about 3 to supplement his machine gun and rifle fire by much harder shellfire. This shell landed on the eyes of Private James Hammill and nearly took off the captain's right leg.

He was a big and a heavy man, and 16 in back. He was crawling on his hands and knees, trying to get up. He asked the boys to cut off his leg with their knives. Just as they started back, a shell fell so near he put up his hands to keep off the debris. He was afraid of being dropped on the way back, on account of the shelling, but the boys did not drop him. One of the privates said, "How much are you hurt, captain?" and he answered, "I think I'll lose both my legs." Captain F. S. Severo, assistant commander of company I, 25th, talked with him for a minute, but because of the stress of war could not stay. Major Cadwalter gave him a drink on the way back. He recognized Sergeant Davis when given first aid, and said, "Well, Davis, they got me."

Two miles back, at Very, was a dressing station in a half-wrecked stone building. Wrecked Very was constantly shelled, including the dressing station. The captain reached there two hours after the shell came. He went back through the hospitals, and is said to have lived till October 11. This shell struck the greatest loss of life, not only in the 91st, but in the whole war.

The company went to bed in the shallow pits on the canyon-side, near where it had slept the night before. It had cleaned out its share of two miles of front, which again in the morning was to advance through easily, and it had lost 11 in dead. Thus passed a specimen day in a specimen company on the left wing of the 91st in the battle of Eclifontaine.

OFFICIAL CASUALTY LIST

WASHINGTON, April 24.—Casualties reported comprise 288 names: Killed in action, 3; died from wounds, 6; died of accident and other causes, 14; died of disease, 57; wounded severely, 15; wounded (degree undetermined), 29; wounded slightly, 291.



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Hippodrome.

A PORTLAND boy, Hal Germanus, is featured in the act which is of paramount interest on the new Hippodrome bill. This is a musical revue called "A Cycle of Mirth," and several pretty, talented girls add interest in songs and dancing. The featured girl is a dainty blonde named Ann Butler, whose work has been admired here before. Mr. Germanus is one of the younger dancing vocalists in vaudeville and his work proves extremely diverting. The act is full of song specialities with dance interludes.

Pendleton Colonel Honored.

PENDLETON, Or., April 24.—(Special.)—Colonel Harry A. Hegeman, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Hegeman of this city, is one of the 400 colonels who have been decorated with the distinguished service cross for work in France. Col. Hegeman organized and was in charge of the repair service of the motor transport service abroad and made a remarkable record in that work.

Clay and Robinson have an out-of-the-ordinary act called "The Girl and the Wop" which is replete with fresh and entertaining comedy ideas. The Kurtys aggregation of two men and one phenomenally strong woman establish a record for excellence and original method in a very fine gymnastic novelty. A bicycle and unicycle achievement is offered by Wheelock and Hay, whose adventures on the wheels are amazing. "Hold Up Your Hands" is the title of the photo feature with Margarita Fischer in her best in a five-act comedy of refinement and good fun.

Militia to Be Demobilized.

EUGENE, Or., April 24.—(Special.)—The four companies of state militia located in Eugene will be demobilized some time during the next few days, according to Lieutenant-Colonel R. A.

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Reliance Life Insurance Company of Pittsburgh

of Pittsburgh, in the state of Pennsylvania, on the 31st day of December, 1918, made to the insurance commissioner of the state of Oregon, pursuant to Act 1917, Chapter 103.

Capital.

Amount of capital stock paid up	1,000,000.00
Total premium income	331,878.18
Interest, dividends and rents received during the year	368,897.62
Income from other sources received during the year	219,589.21
Total income	3,968,728.00

Paid for losses, endowments, annuities and surrenders during the year 1,037,028.32 |

Dividends paid to policyholders during the year 118,696.59 |

Dividends paid on capital stock during the year 86,600.00 |

Commissions and salaries paid during the year 1,026,541.76 |

Taxes, licenses and fees paid during the year 93,701.25 |

Amount of all other expenses (less) during the year 258,348.38 |

Total expenditures 2,758,283.00 |

Assets.

Value of real estate owned (market value)	162,598.40
Value of stocks and bonds owned (market or amortized value)	5,097,302.15
Loans on mortgages and collateral, etc.	1,007,469.98
Premium notes and policy loans cash in banks and on hand	1,292,648.81
Net uncollected and deferred premiums	508,174.25
Other assets (net)	146,441.41
Total assets	8,798,974.65
Total assets admitted in Oregon	8,798,974.65

Liabilities.

Net reserves	7,231,352.00
Total policy claims unpaid	62,310.47
All other liabilities	204,312.18
Total liabilities, exclusive of capital stock of \$1,000,000	7,897,974.65
Total insurance in force December 31, 1918	\$102,841,263.00

Business in Oregon for the Year.

Total insurance written during the year	169,000.00
Gross premiums received during the year	31,696.32
Premiums returned during the year	35.54
Losses paid during the year	1,000.00
Losses incurred during the year	1,999.00
Total amount of insurance outstanding in Oregon December 31, 1918	815,214.00

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Statutory resident attorney for service: HALL S. LISK.

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