

# Twirled a Cane as He Led Assault of French

## Captain of Eleventh Company is Decorated With Croix de Guerre for Coolness and Bravery in Leading the Charge

By HENRY WOOD  
(United Press Staff Correspondent)

WITH THE FRENCH ARMIES, Jan. 12.—Captain Lassouquere, commanding the Eleventh Company of one of the regiments that recaptured Douaumont last August, today was decorated with the Croix de Guerre in recognition of his coolness and bravery in leading his men to the assault, while calmly twirling a cane.

Since the beginning of the present war French officers have ceased carrying a sword except on dress parade, owing to its utter uselessness as a weapon. In leading an attack they carry as a rule merely their revolver. Between dress parade and infantry assaults they frequently carry only a cane.

In planning the assault on Fort Douaumont, the French staff worked out in advance every detail, even down to the pace the men were to follow in order not to advance faster than the barrage of artillery fire under cover of which the men were to go forward. The pace pre-established for Captain Lassouquere's company was a rather

surely one. A moment before the assault for the men to scramble out of the trenches Captain Lassouquere mounted the parapet, and adjusting his monocle so that he could survey the field of operations, walked calmly up and down twirling his cane in his fingers.

When the precise moment for the assault came, he turned quietly to his men in the trenches and remarked in an even tone of voice: "All right, Mes Enfants, we're off." Then as the men came out the captain nonchalantly preceded them, twirling his cane with all the nonchalance of a Parisian dandy on the boulevard. Reassured to the fullest extent by the coolness of their leader, the men followed until, at the precise moment, arranged in advance by the staff officers, the company, always screened by the French artillery barrage fire, arrived within striking distance of the objective assigned to them.

With the same precision the French artillery barrage at that moment leaped forward, leaving the German position exposed to the attack of the advancing infantry company. Throwing aside his cane and drawing his revolver, the captain gave the cry of: "En avant, Mes Enfants," and a moment later the entire company was safely installed in the German position with all the latter's defenders either dead or imprisoned.

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