VAUX VILLAGE IN OUR HANDS

Swift Thrust at Night Secures the Key to Chateau-Thierry.

Barrage Reduced the Town to

AMERICAN GUNNERY SUPERB

Ruins and Prevented an
Early Counterattack.
TEUTONS BURIED IN CELLARS

"Mopping-Up" Parties of Amer-

Escaped Hand Grenades.

By EDWIN L. JAMES.

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icans Captured Those Who

WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY ON THE MARNE, July 2.—In

the most important military operation they have so far executed American troops last night captured the village of Vaux and the Bois de la Roche, west of Château-Thierry, and advanced their lines on a front of four kilometers, occupying strong strategic positions. The American line, which before took a sharp inward bend toward Le Thioley, and runs almost straight from him tesches to Hill 204.

The fight, much of whice

ly American guns, and our marker work won warm praise from Sierral officers.

American aviators in complete numbers took part in the operation guarding our advance apainst and attack of enemy airplanes and the scene practically are income boche fliers. After a fight of work

nessed, gave cloquent tribate to

lery. It was the first tirm and a

work to be expected from

five of our machines and a expense number of German airplance sevent

our machines are missing.

holding Château-Thierry.

The prisoners so far counted to ber some 450, including 10 the stretching from the village of Triangle, then north to the Bois Clerenbauts, across the Paris road, and running south of Vaux. Vaux was an important objective, being considered vital to the Germans for

Battle Area Thoroughly Mapped.

days. Our intelligence officers had

learned the exact details of the vil-

of every house and every cave, wine

The fight had been planned ten

lage. Maps of the two villages had been made on a large scale, showing not only every house, but the nature

cellar, or other retreat that might hide soldiers. These caves were known to harbor Germans and were certain to be their refuge. On these maps every battery had a number of houses to destroy, and every cave was assigned to some gunner, who was charged with closing the entrances. To the infantry were given maps of the villages, and to squads under Corporals was assigned the job of clearing up the cellars containing Germans, so many Americans being assigned to each cellar. At 6 o'clock yesterday morning our artillery let loose on Vaux. Guns scattered over a long stretch were centred on the unfortunate place. Then in merciless, methodical fashion we set to work to depopulate

Vaux of Germans. All morning our guns, big and little, pumped high explosives and gas into the village. The accuracy of aim was the same as that which gave rise to the saying that American naval gunners can hit a ten-cent piece at ten miles.

At noon the commander of the artillery reported that Vaux was on fire, and that every house had been hit at least once. Standing on a hill to the south, one could see the big

There was a cloud of yellow smoke,

bombardment did not halt at noon.

some little

guns

and the house was no more.

shells land in

All the afternoon

They were guns made in

block, after an early, supthe stry started. But first ery cange was lifted from Figure first creeping barrage Kee by Americans started . de area. This area had ि नरी into checkerboard such of which one of the Mediated ocen assigned to drop stells. At he stare of the barrage a ine of thells was drapped across the Henrest odes of the area. Three minthes later there was another line of thed to have yards further on. In ffices has a lieds felt about ten yards Result and antique curtain of steel Mandet which he German could live Texcept in a direct

Contain and sure that raking fire Went across they seea, and moving Minng after it went our infantry. From the first they found that the From the had been absolutely dethe whoel by our fire. With the ex-Tempion of a barrage that the Ger-Link is got down on some of our men Thist before they started, the first 1,000 yards of advance brought remarkably few casualties.

Our line started from a long ravine sheltered by trees. In front of the men was a large wheat field, with Vaux over beyond the northeast end, and the Bois de la Roche lying to the north of it. From a neighboring hill our infantrymen could be seen, their brown backs bobbing through the wheat field, with the curtain of shells ahead.

The advance started at 6 o'clock, and at 6:25 the first of our men entered the village of Vaux. By 6:40 they had gone through the woods, gaining all their objectives. stormy petrels took Vaux in cleanup style. Squads were ready with their hand grenades to mop up the xellars, but many of these had been xlosed by our fire, and the Germans had been buried in them. From othpers the Germans came out and surrendered. In some there was difficulty, and in that case our men threw in hand grenades in great numbers. Generally, if there were any Germans left, they surrendered. There is a strong probability that, when all the prisoners captured are **accounted for, the total will be above 50**0.

Every action connected with the attack was most efficient. Four hours after the men went over the top American telephone lines were working from Vaux back to our headquarters. By 7:30 our ambulances were running into the wrecked village.

Gunfire Terrific, Prisoners Say.

The German prisoners agree that the American artillery work was light in seeing women and children terrific. In the operation we used running through the streets at the many thousand high-explosive and dead of night to find safety in shel-A wounded German ters. gas shells. brought in about 10 o'clock said that in the morning there had been 4,000 Germans in the village, but casualties were one cat and one litafter the barrage started some had the girl's doll, which was blown to been withdrawn, leaving only those who could be sheltered in sixty-eight caves in the village. He said the cave in which he took refuge was wrecked by an American shell and that he lay wounded for six hours until the Americans came in, when one of them heard him yelling "Kamerad!" He said that for twelve hours the bombardment of Vaux had been hell and that the Germans were glad when the artil-Hery stopped and the attack came.

While some of the Germans were badly demoralized, others put up a stiff fight with machine guns on the northern edge of the village. There were thirteen there which the Amercans captured after killing the icrews, largely with rifles and grenades.

Eloquent tribute to the effectiveness of our artillery fire is given in the fact that no counterattack was made. It is the almost invariable fule for the German to launch a **Fébunterat**tack after a successful stroke has been made against him. But all day yesterday our long-range guns were dumping big shells on his back areas, and this kept up during and right after the attack. Up to 3 o'clock this morning there was no sign of a counterattack.

The Americans have reached their objectives and are fast digging in. They hold the railroad just north of Vaux, and the line runs west between the edge of the Bois de la Roche and the railroad track. I saw a number of men brought back slightly wounded. All were in high spirits; generally they are very much disgusted at the luck which takes them into hospital for some weeks while the show is on.

Many stories are told of deeds of individual bravery when the members of these famous regiments got

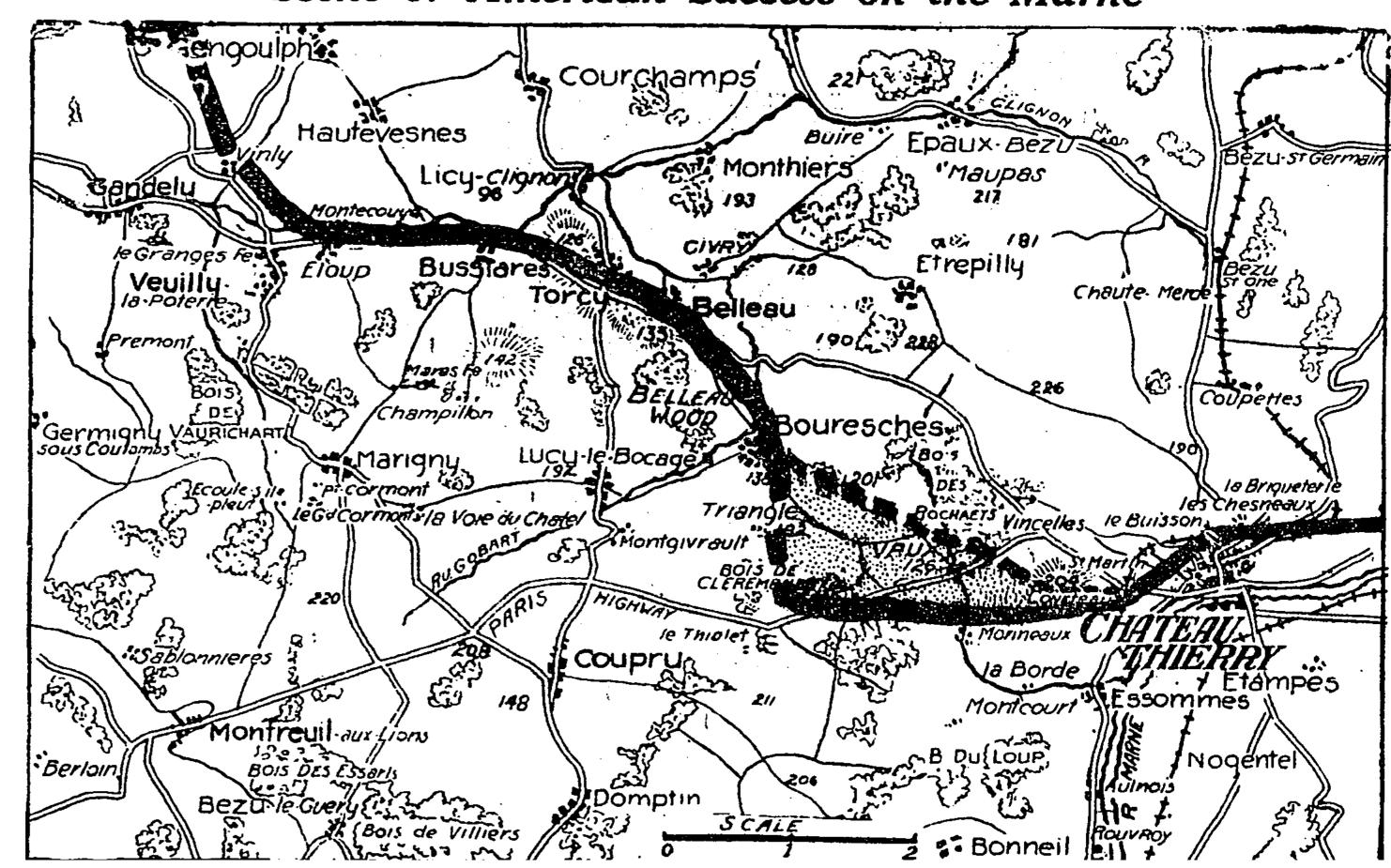
at close range with the Germans. Considering the size of the action, the number of our casualties is remarkably small—probably not [deleted] what those of the Germans were. Most of the damage to the attacking force was done in the Bois de la Roche by German machine guns, all of which were afterward put out of commission.

American Kills 3 German Gunners.

One American soldier got around behind a machine gun which was doing bad work, and clubbed the crew out of business. Another American soldier killed three German gunners single-handed.

The Germans said the attack was mething of a novelty and took

Scene of American Success on the Marne



As the result of an attack maniched monday evening against German positions west of Château-Thierry, after a violent bombardment by guns made in their own country, American troops captured the village of Vaux and the Bois de la Roche, and wiped out a salient nearly a mile deep, having a front of about two and one-half miles. The territory thus taken is indicated by the stippled area adjoining the battle-line.

them by surprise. They did not expect it after an artillery bombardment of the sort they had experienced, and said they were not prepared for an attack.

When the Americans, just one month ago, took over this sector the line ran, ragged and full of deep little salients, from south of Brussiares through Lucy-le-Bocage and Le Thiolet, and thence south of Hill 204. A glance at the map shows today a strong, straight line from Brussiares to Hill 204.

Last night's action by the Americans accompanied one by the French on our right in the vicinity of Hill 204, the results of which have not yet been fully reported to the Americans.

As I returned just now from the front I ran into a German air raid on the town. The air was sliced in every direction by great searchlights, and the stars were rivaled by exploding shrapnel shells. As I got nearer the town I could see the explosions as the boches laid some German eggs.

For the last week they have been dropping bombs in an area far back of the American sector, with no practical damage except to ruin many hours of good sleep and scare women and children. To soldiers used to shelling at the front these air raids seem nothing in the way of danger, but are examples of the German de-

Last night the Germans dropped seven bombs in this town. The total bits. This loss does not include the damage done to sleep and windowpanes. .