

March 15, 1918

AMERICANS MAKE FIRST RAIDS INTO GERMAN TRENCHES

Two Lorraine Sectors Are Scenes of Invasion of Enemy's Lines

SHELLS PLAY MIGHTY JAZZ

Doughboys Gain Their Objective and Return with Prisoners in 47 Minutes

MUD-SPATTERED COLONEL GAY

Sergeant Rises to Profanity When Big Guns Batter Pillbox that He Wanted to Take

The past seven days have witnessed the first American raids into German trenches. American patrolling parties had previously gone up to the German wire, but had not penetrated the enemy's front line. Now, however, American troops have actually fought in the German defense system.

The raids in question took place in both of our sectors in Lorraine. Following is an account of the raid in our sector near Luneville, by Lincoln Eyre, staff correspondent of *The New York World*, who watched the Americans go across from a front line observation post:

I had barely reached an infantry observation post and glued my eye to a narrow slit giving upon No Man's Land when there was a sudden, sinister pause in the barrage. Our machine guns alone held sway during a scarcely perceptible interval. I made out our wire apparently right under my nose, but the German trenches were lost in the smoke and fog hanging over the bruised landscape. Only an occasional Boche shell crashed into the muddy ground, to explode in a muddy, black cloud.

American Barrage Lifts

Our own batteries had lifted their barrage and shoved it back on the enemy's second line. His batteries were being mightily deluged, too, which was doubtless why his harassing fire had died away. The hammer beat of our quickfirers was the loudest note in the discordant jazzband of projectiles.

I wondered where our infantry were. Suddenly, they appeared, clambering up the departure steps and stepping briskly through the wire.

FIRST AMERICANS TRENCH RAID

Colonel Mud-Begrimed, But Happy

The captain smilingly turned the Germans over to an alert youngster to herd back to regimental headquarters through the bayou. Thinking I would get the news more quickly at battalion headquarters, I plowed back behind the prisoners.

Roaming about in the darkness, I came upon the colonel who had led the American group on the left in the attack. He was clotted with mud, but beaming with satisfaction. Here is what he told me:

"When my watch showed 5:05, we couldn't see a thing on account of the smoke from the German barrage, although the barrage itself had lifted. However, we knew it must be O.K., so we started off.

"It was pretty rough going—my foot never touched earth that had not been churned up by shells—but we made the 300 yards between our trenches and the Germans in 18 minutes, which wasn't bad at all.

"The French were splendid, right alongside us every step of the way. From the time we went through our wire until we got back we didn't have a single casualty. Thank our guns for that.

"Well, we got to their trenches and found that the birds had flown. After peeking around for 20 minutes, the best we could discover were two wounded Boches left behind in a shattered dugout.

Not Usually Profane

"We were a pretty disappointed lot, but the sorest of all was an old sergeant. He was cussing away to beat the band.

"'Colonel,' he told me, 'I just can't help it, though I'm not usually a profane man. Look at what the artillery done to that there pillbox. Just smashed it to bits, that's all. Damn 'em! That was my pillbox! Why couldn't they leave it to me?'

"The pillbox he was talking about had been a machine gun nest until our gunners got busy with it. The German trenches were magnificently built, but they could not stand up under our bombardment. Even the dugouts, built with 15 inch thick concrete, were badly battered.

"After 20 minutes we went back as uneventfully as we had come out. It was just 5:52 by my watch when I dropped into our trench again, so we were gone altogether 47 minutes."