

The Battle of Cantigny.

The Story of Our American People—Horne, U. S. Publishing Co. They (Americans) defended the French trenches near the city of Nancy (November 1917) and they were tested in a successful trial assault at Cantigny (May 1918). But these were mere preliminaries, trifles, when compared with the giant warfare that was to follow. *** Then the Germans made another great massed attack along the Marne (July 15). Again the Americans aided in hurling them back, holding firm against heavy forces at Chateau Thierry and elsewhere, wherever our men were stationed. This was the turning point of the war.

"Some may consider the Battle of Cantigny a mere preliminary or trifle. It had the greatest possible effect on the future of the war—and the Germans. The question was general: Will the American soldier fight? They called our men 'pork soldiers.' Did nothing but eat. The victory at Cantigny gave morale to the Allies; and to the German, a sample of the American.

"It looks like the Germans gained their objective at Chateau-Thierry. In

going as far as they did they made a very bad salient. Had von Boehn stood and stabilized, there would

have been no place on the front like Soissons, where an allied drive would produce decisive results. The Soissons drive exactly reversed conditions as regards lines of communication and gave Foch the initiative.

"Some idea how we aided in 'hurling them back' may be gained from the fact that one American shock division was moved in three different directions in three successive mornings, returning to the place it left each night—then the forced march and surprise attack at Soissons.

The "Failure" of the German Drives

Advanced American History—Forman, The Century Co. The first (German) drive was a failure. *** The Germans made two more drives, but both times they were foiled. About the middle of July, realizing that the great offensive movement had spent its force, they gradually began to draw back toward their frontiers, fighting as they retired.

"These four drives were not failures unless it is considered that the enemy went too far. In March they drove on a 50-mile front for about 25 miles and threatened the great British base of supplies at Amiens. In April they drove some 17 miles toward Merville. In May they drove on a 50-mile front for 40 miles to Chateau-Thierry. Next on a 50-mile front from Montdidier to Noyen and gained 6 miles. The Rheims drive followed.

The "Lull" in Mid-July, 1918.

Political and Social History of the United States—Schlesinger, Macmillan. As their (German) exertions came to a lull, Foch in mid-July unexpectedly launched a mighty counter-offensive. Once more the American troops contributed their utmost toward victory. On the 18th, in cooperation with the picked French troops, they made a successful drive on Soissons.

"If the author means by 'lull' the 'la' and 'lu' a mother sings to put her baby to sleep, he selected the wrong word. It did not sound like a lullaby to me! He should have placed the letters 'h' and 'e' before 'll' and I would not argue the point.

"On July 15 the Germans launched their fifth and last drive on a front of 75 miles reaching from Chateau-Thierry to Argonne Forest. At night the sky was filled with sheet lightning. Men seemed to be lost in a wilderness of confusion. In this turmoil one faculty was clear: The objective! Gain the objective!

"Divisions of shock troops were being rushed somewhere. The Gordon Highlanders! The Moroccans! The Americans! Forced marches all night in rain and mud. We were glad it was raining. No planes tonight. Hiding thousands of soldiers in the great forests during the day. The attack must be a surprise!"