

HOW 37TH AND 91ST AIDED FRENCH IN FREEING BELGIUM

End of War Saw Yankee Divisions Pointed Straight on Brussels Road

SCHELDTS CROSSING TOUGH

Capture of Audenarde, Scene of Former Great Battle, Achieved by Doughboys from Pacific Coast

Between the forested mountains of Alsace, here some of the American divisions served long tours of duty in quiet service to the flat and generally open southern plains of Belgium Flanders, there are great differences, not only in the topography of the country, but in the construction of the villages and the mode of life of the people.

Land With Bloody Past

But it is a land whose quiet beauty contrasts sharply with its bloody past. The villages, and particularly the farmhouses, are much more numerous than in the regions of the Argonne and the Oise, and the long, low-roofed buildings are generally constructed of red brick, bordered by rows of overhanging trees, stretch away for miles toward the slender spires of some village church, and here and there a windmill stands on the summit of the gentle hills, while the courses of the frequent canals and creeks are defined across the lowlands by fringes of bushy banks and poplars.

East of the devastated battle zone, extending from Nioport southward to Arras, the landscape is a picture of peace and beauty. All the country is neatly tilled or deeply grassed, the farms and villages lie nestled among fruit trees and gardens and the air is all of honeyed comfort above the humbled dwelling. It was into this land, more symbolic, perhaps, than any other in Europe of the struggle between the British and the German in one form or another, that the 37th and 91st Divisions were sent, shortly after the middle of October, from their hard battles between the Meuse and the Argonne.

The tide of battle in Flanders, as everywhere else, had been steady in the favor of the Allies since the initial attack, which, in this region, occurred on September 28. That attack had broken the German front between Ypres and Dixmude, and the line of the Belgian, British and French Armies operating in the Army Group of the King of the Belgians, until it came to the Scheldt, the whole coast was cleared, the west bank of the Scheldt River was occupied from Valenciennes to Avelghem by the 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 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