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to attack on the Southwest front it was too late to intervene. Napoleonic cavalry would have been disastrous for the Austro-Hungarian front in the first days of June. Yet, during all of 1916 the Russians never effectively employed their strong admirable cavalry forces. It is of no importance that a cavalry corps pursued the enemy into the depths of the Carpathian woods.

This missed opportunity of the cavalry—dissipated in many small secondary missions, instead of being held together for a great effort—robbed the Southwest front of the full fruit of the preliminary successes of the campaign in June 1916.

**COMBAT GROUP "SCHIMPF" AT LOUVAIN**

[Gefechtsgruppe Schimpf bei Löwen. By Oberleutnant Blecher. Militär-Wochenblatt, 18 December 1932]

Translated by Major A. Vollmer

[Note by Editor, Militär-Wochenblatt: Colonel von Schimpf distinguished himself in this campaign as leader of a unit of combined arms. From 28 to 31 August at St. Benoit on the right wing of the XV Army Corps (see Reichsarchiv work, III, pp. 280-288). On 6 November 1914 he fell at the head of his regiment, the last commander to be appointed before the War, just as 200 years before fell the first commander, Colonel von Forstner at Peterwardein on August 5, 1716.]

Peace-time exercises involving a reinforced infantry regiment are often based on the sudden assembly and arrival of reinforcements, or other troops not belonging to the division, who have been withdrawn from another point and are put at the disposal of the local commander. In 1914 there was an example of this, not common on the west front.

On 5 September 1914, German GHQ had withdrawn the XV Corps from its sector in the Vosges Mountains and initiated its march to the north. Starting on 9 September the troops of the XV Corps (including the 126th Infantry) departed in four transport trains through the Eifel Mountains and Belgium for northeastern France. The 1st and 2d Bns. 126th Inf. reached the point of debarkation, Busiany (NW of St. Quentin) without mishap on 12 and 16 September respectively—the MG Co. followed later. It was otherwise with the 3d Bn. 126th Inf. which was accompanied by the Regimental Commander von Schimpf with his staff. Their train coming from Herbestal—Liege was stopped at 2:00 PM on 11 September at Tirlemont and the troops detained on

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order of the Seventh Army HQ at Brussels. What had happened?

On 9 September 1914 the attack on Antwerp had begun. On that day Belgian forces in the field in front of the fortress had undertaken a sortie in force against the east flank of the German line of observation in front of Antwerp and against the main railroad center: Cologne—Liege—Brussels. It was learned that a total of 5 Bns., 1 Sq., and 4 Btries. of the army corps had been engaged in this vicinity. Maj. Gen. von Jacobi, commanding the 11th Reinforced Reserve Brigade, was in charge. His mission was to protect the railroad station at Louvain and the railroad: Tirlemont—Louvain—Brussels. The 3d Bns. of 99th and 172d Infantry, which had detrained 24 hours earlier, had already participated in an attack north of Louvain on 10 September. The Brigade Commander intended to attack the enemy on 12 September in the vicinity of Holsbeek—Thieldonck.

Under the command of Colonel von Schimpf, commanding the 8th Wurtemberg Infantry (126th Inf.), a detachment was constituted of the 3d Bn. of his regiment, the 8th Rhine Jäger Bn., and the 3d Bn. of the 99th Inf. This detachment was assembled at the Louvain railroad station where it stayed during the night of rain. This combat group Schimpf, which was further reinforced by a battery of 6th Reserve Field Artillery, was located at 5:30 AM on 12 September between Louvain and Willese at the north end of the city, ready to march through Herent on Thieldonck: 3d Bn. 126th Inf. in advance on the right, 8th Jägers in advance on the left, 3d Bn. 99th Inf. behind the Jägers. The 7th Marines reinforced (Lt. Col. von Bernuth) was to advance to the right of the detachment, the 11th Reserve Infantry Brigade (20th & 24th Res. Inf.) on the left.

When the Schimpf group reached Herent it was turned on Rotselaer by command of the brigade. It therefore crossed the canal south of Wymal on boats. The 3d Bn. 126th Inf. marched ahead along the railroad: Louvain—Aerschot; the 8th Jägers on the road: Louvain—Drie-Linden with the 3d Bn. 99th Inf. behind them. Lt. Col. von Bernuth encountered serious resistance south of Holsbeek. The 3d Bn. 126th Inf. was put at his disposal on request and thereupon received orders to take the woods between Holsbeek and Attenhoven which were occupied by the enemy. At 3:30 PM the 9th and

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10th Companies were developed for this purpose. They drove out the enemy (parts of 7th and 27th Belgian Bns.) and captured two machine guns. The 11th and 12th Cos. 126th Inf. went into bivouacs for the night at Kessel. With the other troops Colonel von Schimpf had meanwhile, after a short fight at Drie-Linden, occupied Rotselaer. This place was held in spite of heavy Belgian artillery fire. During the night (it was raining again) the 8th Jägers bivouacked at Rotselaer. The 3d Bn. 99th Inf. provided protection of the exits of the place. The adjacent troops on the right had driven out the enemy from Holsbeek and those on the left had reached the vicinity south of Wespelaer.

In the continuation of the attack on 13 September the brigade ordered the Schimpf group to take Werchter. The detachment leader advanced at 7 o'clock at Rotselaer, the 8th Jägers in advance. Just south of Werchter the Jäger point came under fire. The Battalion developed for attack between the Deiner and the road: Rotselaer—Werchter, the 3d Bn. 99th Inf. adjacent on the left. Met by rifle and machine gun fire, the 3d Bn. 99th Inf., after a short fire-fight, routed the Belgians who demolished the two canal bridges and withdrew to the north. The 12th Co. 99th Inf. crossed the canal on a hastily improvised bridge and organized the north end of the village for defense. The Jägers followed. The 9th and 11th Companies 99th Inf. rehabilitated the bridges. This was accomplished by 2:00 PM notwithstanding continuous artillery fire. The batteries supported the attack from a position south of the canal. The 3d Bn. 126th Inf. had acted as advance guard to protect the march of the Bernuth unit on Aerschot which was found clear of enemy. It was then released to the Schimpf group, whose commander withdrew it as reserve through Rotselaer to the south edge of Werchter. Towards evening the 11th Reserve Brigade stood on the line: Werchter—Haecht. The enemy now evacuated the north banks of the Demer and Dyle. At 6:00 PM the Schimpf combat group was relieved by the 24th Reserve Infantry. It marched back to Louvain, bivouacked at 10:00 PM near the railroad station, and was broken up on 14 September when its units were again entrained.

A hastily constituted organization, whose three chief elements were hardly acquainted with each other, had worked

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as a unit under difficult conditions, as was to be expected from the unified training of the German Army, and achieved success.

#### COMBAT METHODS OF A FRENCH INFANTRY COMPANY

[Organisation und Kampfweise einer französischen Kompanie. Militär-Wochenblatt, 18 January 1933.]

Abstracted by Major A. Vollmer

The purpose of this study is to get away from the training practice of opposing our (German) forces by enemy units of the same training and organization as our own. If this error were persisted in, a false impression would be created. It would not be realized, for example, that the French "group" (squad) (light MGs and riflemen) normally occupy in attack and defense a front of only 50 m. in width and depth, or that in each such group there is a rifle grenadier.

#### I. COMBAT SQUAD

1. *Organization and equipment.*—Lowest unit the squad, led by NCO armed with rifle. His substitute, a lance corporal, likewise armed with a rifle. Squad composed of light MGs and riflemen. Leader of light MGs is another substitute for squad leader. To the light MGs belong: 1 gunner, 1 loader, 3 ammunition carriers. The first two armed with pistol, the last 3 with carbines. The riflemen are composed of 1 expert (leader), 3 riflemen, 1 rifle grenadier. All riflemen are equipped with rifles and hand grenades. All personnel carry entrenching tools.

2. *Characteristics of the weapons.*—(a) The light machine gun (model 1924, caliber 7.5 mm.) is about equivalent to German light machine gun. Cartridges are held in a rigid strip of 25. Rapidity (normally 600 shots per minute) can be decreased to 450. Weapon is suitable for single shots or continuous fire. Capable of aimed fire in darkness, dust, or fog if prepared for same during good visibility. Has bipod in front and support under butt. Can be employed for antiaircraft. Weight, total 9 kg.

(b) Rifle and carbine.—Various models in use, more or less comparable to German types. Newest model 1916. Magazine holds 5 cartridges. Length 1.3 m., weight 4 kg.

(c) Pistol.—Various models used. Oldest 1873. Newest is of 7.6 mm. caliber. It holds 7 rounds and weighs 720 g. loaded.

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(d) Ammunition.—Type and effectiveness comparable to German.

(e) Hand grenades.—There are handle and egg types. Former are generally used for smoke or gas. Latter have sub-types for defense and attack. Handle types have average range of 30 m, an effective area of only 8 to 10 m. Egg types scatter fragments over 100 m.

(f) Rifle grenades are fired from dischargers which can be set on each carbine and rifle. Range 80-170 m.

3. *Approach march*.—Normal squad formation in file. Only exceptionally in line to take advantage of cover. Advance is by bounds, utilizing cover afforded, under direction of platoon leader, or solely under control of squad leader. If the squad is in front at the head of the platoon it takes up combat formation, the riflemen going several meters ahead and deploying for reconnaissance. The squad leader then stays between riflemen and machine gunners so as to keep both constantly in sight. The width and depth of this formation must not exceed 100 m. Whenever the squad advances on a flank the riflemen advance in echelon.

4. *Contact*.—As soon as the advance draws enemy fire the riflemen act as scouts. They try to determine whence the fire comes and to continue their advance. If this is impossible they stay prostrate under cover and avoid masking their own machine gun fire. Squad leader puts MG into position in order to shoot between scouts, or he advances it to line of scouts. He orders opening of fire according to instructions of platoon leader who is marching at head of one of the points. If the enemy suspends firing, or withdraws, the advance is again resumed. The light machine gun follows hard behind the riflemen, always prepared to go into position again. In any other case the squad remains in place. Since contact has been gained the squad leader awaits platoon leader's orders.

5. *Attack*.—The squad attacks in half squads or in line. The former is employed if the fire fight is being restricted to MGs. Normally, fire is opened as soon as it is thought that the distance from the enemy is less than 1200 m. A line is chosen up to 400 m. from the enemy, if riflemen are to begin firing. Width and depth of the squad in the attack not to exceed 50 m. The squad advances piecemeal. If advance without fire is impossible then fire and movement alternate. The squad leader constantly seeks covered routes of advance.