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IT WAS DOUGHB0YS
(AND NOT MARINES)
WHO WON AT
CHATEAUM THIERRY

IT was the dough-boys, and not the
marines, it appears, who stopt the Hun
at Château-Thierry, on his last and nearest
advance toward Paris. Credit for that feat
has heretofore usually been bestowed on
the United States marines, altho they have
never claimed it and have plenty of glory
without it. Now comes the machine-gun
battalion of the Seventh Infantry in the
Third Division and lays claim to the
honor. It is said that in the scrap at
Belleau Wood the marines were pretty well
used up, and the commander of the Seventh
offered to relieve them so they could re-
organize their ranks. Thus it came about
that in the fight at Château-Thierry, which
probably will go on record as the turning-
point of the war, the marines were in the
rear and it was the doughty machine-
gunners of the Seventh who turned the
trick. The story of the part taken by them
in this engagement is told in The Watch on
the Rhine, a paper published by the
American Army of Occupation in Germany,
from which we quote as follows:

The 7th Machine-Gun Battalion, being
motorized, traveled overland in small
Ford trucks from its training area in the
vicinity of Château Villain, and reached
Château-Thierry late in the afternoon on
May 31. Positions were immediately
taken up in that historic city, part of
which was already occupied by the enemy.
After a thorough reconnoissance each
company was given a mission. The
general mission was to repulse any at-
tempt of the enemy to advance on Château-
Thierry by the bridges entering the city.

About one o'clock in the morning of
June 2 a detachment of this battalion was
sent forward from its position on the north side
of the river and fell back across the large
bridge. In the meantime the enemy had
formed in considerable strength on the
north end of the bridge and attempted to
enter into Château-Thierry. This bridge
was then blown up and caused the im-
mediate failure of the enemy attack.

General Marchand, commanding the
10th French Corps, then made the
following statement after the action:

"On May 31, the 7th Machine-Gun
Battalion, U.S. A., had just arrived with its
automobiles. It installed itself in a canton-
ment to the south of Château-Thierry.

"At 3:30 P.M. the enemy threatened
to take Château-Thierry, attempting to
flank the town on our left, where an
opening had occurred.

"The unit was immediately thrown into
Château-Thierry at the same time as a
Colonial Infantry Battalion which was in
the same cantonment with it.

"Immediately the Americans reinforced
the entire bridge, especially at the approaches of the bridge. Their courage and skill as marksmen evoked the admiration of all.

"Crushed by our fire, the enemy hesitated and, as a result of counter-attacks, vigorously supported by the American machine guns, they were thrown beyond the edges of the town.

"Château-Thierry remained entirely in our hands."

On the next day, June 1, the Hunns renewed their attack, advancing against the bridge held by the Americans, masking their movements by the use of smoke bombs. At the same time they opened a fearful bombardment on the town. The Americans maintained their position, however, for General Marchand continued:

"The American machine guns held the south bank. They formed a protection for the withdrawal of the troops retiring from the northern section for the purpose of crossing the bridge prior to its destruction.

"Here again the courage of the Americans was beyond all praise. The Colonials themselves, the accustomed to acts of bravery, were struck by the wonderful morale in the face of fire, the impassibility and the extraordinary sang-froid of their allies.

"In a combat in the street and at night, where coolness, is one of the principal military virtues, the Americans only could play this rôle. Their watchfulness never failed them and, with their machine guns playing upon the roads of entrance and the destroyed bridges and foot-bridges, they prevented any repairs by the enemy.

"The losses of the 7th Machine-Gun Battalion, U. S. A., had been heavy, but not out of proportion to the great services they rendered nor to the bloody losses which they inflicted on the Boches.

"They will be relieved at the same time as the French troops, at the side of whom they fought (this evening). The French Command, knowing their just pride, feared they would have humiliated these valiant troops if they had offered them rest sooner than their French companions in the fight.

"The episode of Château-Thierry will remain one of the very fine deeds of this war. It is a pleasure for all of us to certify that our valiant allies with us participated in this event—our bonds of affection and of confidence will be strengthened by the same pride which we share in common.

"At the present time the Germans, without doubt severely tested, dare not rest on the northern part of Château-Thierry, which, however, we no longer occupy. The bullets which the American guns are sending do not give the Boches any taste to take up a residence there."

In recognition of their exploits at Château-Thierry the colors of the 7th Machine-Gun Battalion have been decor-
ated with the Croix de Guerre and the battalion was cited by Marshal Pétain, of France, as follows:

"The 7th Machine-Gun Battalion barred to the enemy the passage of the Marne. In the course of violent combat, particularly on May 31 and June 1, it disputed foot by foot with the Germans the northern outskirts of Château-Thierry, and covered itself with incomparable glory, thanks to its valor and to its skill, costing the enemy sanguinary losses."

"The Great General Headquarters,
"24 November, 1918.
"PÉTAJN,
"The Marshal of France,
"Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies of the East."

The 7th Machine-Gun Battalion has, therefore, added a brilliant page to the history of an already famous and historic place in France, and the members of this battalion can be proud of the fact that they prevented the crossing over the Marne, defeating the enemy at a most critical time in the history of this great war. When we read of this, the second battle of the Marne, and later of the third battle of the Marne, which took place in the middle of July, 1918, we record the valiant fighting by units of the Third Division. Only two divisions of the American Army ever fought on the Marne, namely, the Third Division and units of the Twenty-eighth Division, the latter units attached to the Third Division and to the French during the third battle of the Marne."