

Allies Closing In From Three Sides On Desperate Foe

American Tank Columns in Chartres Area; British, American Encirclement Extended; Von Kluge Trying to Save Bulk of Forces

Supreme Headquarters, A.E.F., Aug. 12.—British and Canadian troops have eliminated the German salient between the Orne and Laize rivers, linking up at the town of Barbery, six miles northeast of Thury-Harcourt, it was officially announced to-day.

Supreme Headquarters, A.E.F., Aug. 12.—(BUP)—The German 7th Army of perhaps 100,000 men reeled back toward the Seine and Paris from the Normandy pocket to-day under triphammer attacks by British and American armies which recaptured hotly-contested Mortain and were closing in on the hard-pressed Germans from three sides. The British 2nd and American 1st Armies struck out in a vast encirclement drive in Normandy while another American spearhead in Brittany forced the Loire river and drove 10 miles south along the roads to the submarine base of La Rochelle and the big port of Bordeaux, 75 and 170 miles below Nantes. Secrecy cloaked the progress of the American tank columns spearheading directly toward Paris. Most quarters doubted an American radio station's report that the Americans already had reached the outskirts of Paris, though the columns were believed in the vicinity of Chartres, 46 miles southwest of the capital, and Chateaudun, 26 miles farther south.

Through Alencon

American forces raised the threat of encirclement over the German 7th Army with a thrust north from Le Mans that, according to Radio Algiers, already has carried through Alencon, 29 miles above Le Mans, to within 34 miles due south of Falaise, under assault by British

and Canadian forces in Normandy. German withdrawals in the face of intensified British, Canadian and American attacks all

Allied Supreme Headquarters, Aug. 12.—(AP)—American thrusts out of Le Mans have the Germans so much in the dark that secrecy is of paramount importance, headquarters said to-day.

around the rim of the Normandy pocket indicated, however, that German Marshal Walter von Kluge was attempting to extricate the bulk of his forces before the Allies can complete the encirclement.

American forces at the base of the pocket, some 41 miles behind the Alencon-Falaise line, recaptured Mortain, 19 miles east of Avranches, after breaking a German counter-attack in a week-long see-saw battle. It was the fifth time Mortain had changed hands.

General Advances

General advances of up to a mile and a quarter were reported all around the Mortain area as the Germans began their long-anticipated fighting withdrawal. One column midway between Mortain and Vire drove to the vicinity of Vengeons, three miles east of Gathemo.

East of Vire, British 2nd Army infantry punched ahead 1,000 to 2,000 yards on a six-mile front despite determined enemy opposition, while the 2nd Army troops farther east captured two hills, identified

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only as Nos. 262 and 229, near St. Pierre-la-Vieille.

British patrols thrusting out from their bridgehead across the Orne river linked up with Canadian forces at Barbery, 11½ miles south of Caen, virtually eliminating the German pocket between the Orne and Laize rivers.

Canadians Move Up

In new thrusts toward Falaise, 20 miles south of Caen, Canadian troops threw pontoon bridges across the river Laize under cover of darkness and pushed a mile toward Barbery and then continued south. Here they made contact with a British 2nd Army force driving from their bridgehead on the east bank of the Orne.

The British advance carried through the Cinglais forest south of Caen and liberated Thury-Harcourt, 14 miles south southwest of Caen, nearby St. Martin-De Sallen and Esson, a mile and a half southeast of Thury-Harcourt.

British United Press War Correspondent Richard D. McMillan reported from the front that the Cinglais forest was a "forest of dead" with German corpses heaped in mounds. Most of the enemy troops were killed in the record 6,000-ton aerial bombardment which preceded the latest phase of the offensive below Caen earlier this week.

Take Record Toll

McMillan said the bombing also took a record toll of German material. Every hundred yards or so, there was a charred German vehicle. So many tanks were knocked out, he said, "it makes you wonder if they have any left."

Scottish and English forces made further progress along the main road from Caen to Paris near Vimont, seven miles southeast of Caen, despite intensive minefields, but the latest advance was not detailed.

Leaflets Dropped

In the south at isolated Brest, St. Nazaire and Lorient, Brittany submarine and naval bases, continued to hold out despite overwhelming odds. Marauders dropped 4,000,000 leaflets on the three ports last night calling upon the garrisons to surrender to save useless bloodshed.

A motley German force also was resisting all American attacks on an underground citadel in liberated St. Malo, a fishing port on the north coast of Brittany.

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