

# Armor Races Up as Heavy Guns Shell Cologne

6,500 German Troops  
Defy Commanders and  
Lay Down Arms

By the United Press  
PARIS, Feb. 27 — Speedy American mobile forces charged into the rim of the Ruhr valley and the outposts of Cologne today in advances up to nine miles through the staggering German defenses of the Rhineland.

Front dispatches said the entire German battlefield west of the Rhine had broken open under the impact of a bold onrush by the American 1st and 9th armies.

The troops of Lt. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges and Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson were storming the Erfi river line less than eight miles from Cologne. The momentum of the drive appeared to be swamping that last natural barrier before the Rhine.

From Gen. Simpson's headquarters United Press Correspondent James McGilley reported that 8th army pace setters raced forward nine miles to the area southwest of Muenchen-Gladbach, westernmost factory city of the Ruhr, and clamped an assault arc against that stronghold with simultaneous advances southeast of it.

Shock troops were fighting in Rheinisdahlen, five miles southwest of Muenchen-Gladbach, while the wings of an enveloping maneuver swept around the larger city.

Supreme headquarters reported that elements of the 9th and 11th German panzer divisions reinforced the five divisions manning the Ruhr river line when the Allies struck last Friday.

The Germans show signs of disorganization and panic despite the reinforcement, SHAEF sources said.

Capt. Ludwig Gortorius, German military commentator, admitted that the Allies had driven to the Erfi river, and said the river valley north of Eindhoven, due west of Cologne, was a scene of an "embittered struggle."

Towns after town on the short-lived Rhineland was falling to the advancing tanks without a struggle and thousands of stunned, thoroughly-beaten Germans were laying down their arms in defiance of their high command's orders to stand and die in the Ruhr-Rhine corridor.

More than 6,500 Germans surrendered on the entire western front in the last twenty-four hours, most of them to the 1st and 9th armies, swelling the prisoner bag to about 11,000 in forty-eight hours.

Vanguards of the 8th army on the northern flank of the offensive line swept forward six miles in a few hours this morning, on top of a five-mile gain in the preceding twenty-four hours.

Armored and infantry units pacing the drive fought their way to within two and one-half miles of Muenchen-Gladbach, westernmost factory city in Germany's industrial Ruhr valley.

**First Land Bombardment**  
Their big guns already were pounding the city in the first land bombardment of the Ruhr since the war began, and the bewildered Germans appeared to have little or nothing in the area to stem the American advance.

At the center of the assault front, giant 155-millimeter Long Toms of the 1st army poured shells into the ruins of Cologne, Germany's fourth city, and fast-rolling tank columns were probing the Erfi line in preparation for a thrust across to the Rhine.

Field dispatches quoted American staff officers as saying that the entire German defensive system had broken down and that the front was disintegrating into

Continued on Page 8, Column 4

## 1945-02-27 Armor races forward. 30th attacks PART ONE

Clipped By:



criswest  
Sat, Dec 2, 2017