

GUNS OF U.S. 7TH ARMY SHELLING KARLSRUHE

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fished Duren bridge. The Roer at Duren is 150 feet wide and running bank full.

A front dispatch said Lt. Gen. Alexander Patch's 7th Army made its lightning advance to the Palatine border, north of Seltz, which fell Tuesday.

The German radio said shells were falling in Karlsruhe, capital of Baden Province, as Patch's 8 and 10-inch guns duelled with enemy artillery apparently emplaced in the Siegfried Line.

Fire Is Sporadic
The Germans who had resisted strongly along the Seltz River northwest of Seltz and to the west at Niederroeren until daybreak, pulled out so swiftly that only sporadic small-arms fire impeded the American rush during the day.

Other 7th Army divisions, in a neck-and-neck race to the Reich from Northeastern Alsace, were little more than a half mile from the border. Farther west the old Maginot fortress town of Bieche was believed abandoned after the 7th virtually encircled it with a lunge to within three miles of the Saar border.

In their thrust up the Rhine Valley, the Americans overran nearly a dozen towns and were challenging the Germans at a sector where a break through the Siegfried Line would imperil not only Karlsruhe but such industrial cities as Ludwigshafen, 33 miles farther north.

Nazis Open Attack
It was permitted to disclose that the Germans had rushed fresh troops across the Rhine in South Central Alsace and had launched attacks on the Americans north of Colmar and on the French to the south, apparently in an attempt to relieve the pressure against Karlsruhe. A front dispatch said the attacks on the American positions were worked off.

The U.S. 3rd Army pushed a mile into Germany near Sarreguimines and broke into the Reich at a new point south of Neller Gallbach, six miles east of Sarreguimines, and lashed deeper into the Siegfried Line to the west. The Germans appeared to be withdrawing artillery even deeper into the Saar in the face of this pressure.

The U.S. 1st and 9th armies—the latter ending its recent lull—struck in concert, knocked off three strong points and drove the enemy across the flooded Roer River, consolidating the American hold on the Roer Valley northward from the Eschweiler-Duren leg of the highway to Cologne.

Surprise Push Made
Some 14 miles southwest of Duren, parts of two 1st Army divisions in a gain of nearly a mile overran most of Kesternich in a surprise push up both banks of the Roer before the Germans recovered and—taking full advantage of the hilly, river-cut terrain—fought back fiercely.

The 1st Army's 83rd Division captured Guerzenich, a suburban village across the Roer from Duren.

Just to the north, the 9th Infantry Division of the 1st Army pushed eastward from newly captured Mariaweller and reached the Roer across from Duren.

Slightly farther north the 104th Division routed the Germans from Schioproven, which had been converted into a base for counterblows. Clearing the area around it, the 104th advanced to the Roer east of Pler and Merken.

Attacks Resumed
Only a mile north, the 9th Army resumed its attacks and pushed the Germans from Vich-

hofen, two miles south of a second Roer dikelet at Juelich.

South of the Hurtgen Forest, the Germans were cleared from nearly all the houses in Kesternich, three-fourths of a mile beyond last reported positions in Wednesday's American surprise attack.

The Germans were making a determined stand to keep the Americans off high ground northeast of Rollesbroich, while to the south in the area east of Monechau road blocks, mine fields and barbed wire slowed the initial pace of advance.

Between that sector and Duren, the 5th Armored Division and elements of the 53d Infantry after clearing Gei and Strass extended their holdings in an arc about a half mile east of Gei, which is four miles south of Duren.

Infantry Slowed
Infantry was slowed to a slugging, foot-by-foot advance, however, around Bergstein and Vossenack, seven and nine miles south of Duren, a front dispatch said.

On the 3rd Army front the 9th Division showed 500 yards of its wedge in the Siegfried Line, taking eight fortified houses and several pillboxes.

Three miles north of Saarlautern, the 9th Division sent more tanks across the Saar and wiped out small enemy salients thrust into its Dillingen bridgehead. Two counterattacks were beaten back, and enemy artillery fire again was on a reduced scale.

A lull persisted along the British-Canadian front in Eastern Holland.

Pacific Chiefs Will Confer

MELBOURNE, Dec. 15 (Plyday) (P)—Adm. Sir Bruce Fraser, commander-in-chief of the British Pacific fleet, today left to confer with Adm. Chester Nimitz, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

Britain Denies Stettinius Visit

LONDON, Dec. 14 (P)—A Foreign Office commentator said today there was no confirmation of a report that Secretary Stettinius is coming here for talks.

"Although I have no knowledge that arrangements have been made or are being made for such a conference," the commentator said, "we naturally would welcome Stettinius."

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1944-12-15 83rd captures Guerzenich

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