

Le Panorama de la guerre de 1914
1915/07/01
Source gallica.bnf.fr

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A Glorious Feat of Arms

The Germans were occupying Vauquois, and they turned this village in the Argonne into a veritable fortress. On 28 February French troops attacked the enemy there but were not able to reach and dislodge them. On 1 March, everyone, officers and soldiers was resolved to finish it. Shortly after dawn the attack resumed; it had to be decisive this time. At 2:35 of the afternoon, our battalions penetrated the village after one of the greatest assaults of the entire campaign. The enemy counterattacked in vain until 5 March. We are in Vauquois, and we will hold it.

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An observation post (Vauquois woods)

All that remains of a house in Vauquois

Near Vauquois

The village was built on a butte from which, at 130 meters height, it dominates the valley. Here one sees a sunken road guarded by a small observation post that leads to Vauquois.

Last Memory of a Brave Man

The soldier with the gray beard, who is standing to the left in this photo while in front a poilu¹ is being shaved, is Collignon, councilor of state and former secretary-general of the president,² fifty-eight years old, volunteer since the start of the war. He was killed at Vauquois, falling bravely on the field of battle.

Our Heroes at Vauquois

The capture of this village allowed many brave men to prove themselves such as these volunteers, emulated by Collignon, who had sworn to reach the church in Vauquois to be the first to plant our flag, and who kept his word. Here one sees the bodies of three French soldiers fallen on the hillside.

¹Slang name for a French soldier in World War I

²Henri Paul François Marie Collignon (1856-1915) held the office of secretary-general. The position in the French Republic meant that he was the closest collaborator of the president and often called the “vice-president” because of the office’s powers.