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Fierce Fight at Vauquois
Strategic Position Won by French after Six Days of Battle

PARIS, March 14. Official advices from the front describing the occupation of Vauquois, in the Argonne region, by the French say:

" After several days of desperate fighting the French troops took possession of the plateau and half the village of Vauquois on the eastern outskirts of the Argonne and have been able to prevent the Germans from making use of this important strategic position to their own advantage."

Vauquois lies in the high country not far from Cheppy and Montfaucon, on a height overlooking the Aire River between the Hesse and Argonne forests. This place served the Germans as a post of observation.

"The Germans," says the statement issued regarding these operations, "were thus able at will to direct a hot fire in any direction against the valley roads through which our provision trains and troops were forced to travel, and the surrounding country was rendered increasingly difficult owing to the marshy ground along the Aire.

"The first assault occurred on Feb. 28, and after the fiercest kind of street fighting--every inch of ground being disputed--the French succeeded in gaining a footing on the plateau and in occupying half the village.

"They were obliged, however, to evacuate the village the following night owing to strong German counter-attacks.

"On March 1 the French troops renewed the assault in greater strength. Three regiments participated in the course of the afternoon, and we again occupied part of the now ruined village. Fierce hand-to-hand encounters ensued, and four German counter-attacks were repulsed. The enemy sustained heavy losses, and we took 200 prisoners.

"During the following day, despite every effort on the part of the enemy, the French maintained themselves in the positions they had won, until March 5, when the Germans, after a heavy attack, finally abandoned hope of driving the French out of Vauquois.

"The German counter-attacks were carried out with fury, and the number of reinforcements brought up indicated the extent of the French success. German prisoners told of the havoc wrought by the French artillery, and non-commissioned officers paid tribute to the improvement of the French infantry since the beginning of the war."