

# BIG GUNS SHELL SAARBRUECKEN; YANKS CLOSE IN

## Black Smoke Rises Over City.

BY SEYMOUR KORMAN.

(Chicago Tribune Press Service.)

WITH THE U. S. 70TH INFANTRY DIVISION NEAR SAARBRUECKEN, March 16.—American shells today were plowing into the southern section of Saarbruecken, largest city on the Saar river, on this second day of the 7th army's new offensive. From a hill could be seen the riflemen of Maj. Gen. Allison J. Barnett's division as they edged forward and came under fire from the Siegfried line, which rims Saarbruecken below the river.

Our big guns and howitzers, sending their shells hundreds of yards ahead of the infantry, were aiming at German artillery in the town and also striving to knock out factories and coal mines still operating there.

The counter-battery fire was having its effect as there were only spasmodic retorts from the German field guns. And as our shells struck industrial targets, there formed above the city a layer of smoke as black as the fuel which comes from rich veins in the earth around here.

### Town Is Powerful Fort.

The Siegfried line pillboxes and other strongpoints here are well placed, with many angled and interlocking fields of fire. Saarbruecken is a powerful bastion against ground forces attempting to take it from the south side of the river.

Not all the Siegfried line positions are in the open. Some of them, it has been discovered, are camouflaged in innocent looking houses.

As we watched from the hilltop, a detachment of the 70th's doughboys carefully approached one of those domestic appearing structures. The infantry men were alert for machine gun fire which might come from the windows, but they apparently hadn't expected the terrific hail of shells from a self-propelled gun behind the house.

### Some Yanks Fall

Some of the Americans fell, dead or wounded; the others scurried back to the protection of a wood.

Then one of our tank destroyers rolled forward and fired point blank at the house. The wooden walls were torn apart by the first shell, and it was disclosed they had sheltered a concrete pillbox.

The tank destroyer's next shell crashed against the pillbox. Several Germans tumbled out, dead. Others ran, and were cut down by rifle and machine gun fire.

The crew of the German self-propelled gun got it about 100 yards away when another tank destroyer blast stopped the vehicle. The crew leaped into a ditch, out of the line of shell fire, and the Americans dropped mortar shells around them with unobserved results.

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