

Role of american troops in the second battle of the marne report example

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



One of the most important milestones for American intervention in the First World War was at the Second Battle of the Marne, which ran from July 15, 1918 to August 6, 1918. Following the collapse of the Great Offensive, American troops took part in a massive defense of the Marne, in an attempt to keep the German army from being able to cross Chateau-Thierry and make it into Paris. While the Allies were largely made up of weary French and British commanders and soldiers, the Second Battle of the Marne represented the first major battle for the American forces during a major European conflict. Their success in this battle helped to pave the way for many others, the Second Battle of the Marne showcasing America's ability to stand on its own as a viable military force. By taking part in what is largely considered to be the most important battle of the First World War, American troops survived a harrowing battle to become an integral part in the creation of the counter-offensive that would end up winning the war for the Allies.

The Role of American Troops

When viewing the role of the American troops at the Second Battle of the Marne, the goal was extremely simple; along with their Allied counterparts, the American troops were simply meant to hold the line at the Marne and prevent the German forces from getting through (Neiberg 113). The greatest appeal and role of the American troops was as sheer numbers; the other Allied forces were fatigued and low on morale before the American forces showed up, their arrival providing immensely great benefits to troop attitude and morale (Neiberg 165). The arrival of a large American force (as many as 10, 000 troops a day) to assist in the Allied war effort allowed the remaining British and French forces to breathe a sigh of relief, as it permitted these

weakened soldiers to be supported by fresh recruits eager to prove themselves in the midst of battle. As a result, with the help of tens of thousands of American troops, the Allied forces were able to successfully stall the advance of German troops against the Marne on the 17th of July (Neiberg 118).

Following the Second Battle of the Marne, the German troops were forced to retreat, the Allies (with their new American allies) beginning the counter-offensive that would eventually win the war. This began with a heated battle between the Marne and Aisne, using approximately more than a quarter million American troops - this allowed the Allies to push back the German forces up to four miles a day, slowly withdrawing until they were back where they started by August 6th (Neiberg 41). This proved to be a tremendous victory for American troops and the Allied forces as a whole.

The Second Battle of the Marne successfully demonstrated the American's strength through sheer numbers and fighting skills. Furthermore, their better overall morale, as they were fresh to the war and had not been worn down by months of fighting, helped to make them a fierce presence in the Allied counteroffensive, getting behind enemy German lines by October of 1918 and leading the Germans to surrender the following month. While this was not without casualty - more than 100, 000 troops died under the command of General John J. Pershing - the Americans offered the manpower and morale needed to help the Allies win World War I (Neiberg 20).

The Life of a Soldier in World War I

World War I's experience was fundamentally different from previous states of warfare, chiefly due to the technology that had been innovated and saw first use in these conflicts. The 19th century's technological and industrial age saw the creation of machine guns and artillery, allowing for single soldiers and battalions to unleash torrents of gunfire and weaponry on unsuspecting groups of soldiers. Soldiers were outfitted with devastating weapons of destruction, such as machine guns, bayonets, pistols and flamethrowers, as well as group devices like trench mortars that could land in enemy lines and take out several men at once (Neiberg 33). The use of poisons was also innovated in World War I as well, with mustard gas becoming another preferred alternative for driving soldiers out of trenches (Neiberg 65).

Artillery such as the Renault FT tank became large, armored presences on the battlefield as well, introduced during the counter-offensive following the Second Battle of the Marne (Neiberg 64).

The life of the typical American soldier in World War One was not unlike that of any other Allied (or Axis) soldier, having to deal with some of the most heartless and difficult warfare in history. Trench warfare was particularly popular during the First World War - this, combined with the newer technologies found in the war, created situations in which thousands, if not tens of thousands, would easily die. Life on the battle lines was harsh and unforgiving, with soldiers living in the outdoors for up to several weeks, exposed to the elements, including incredibly hot temperatures in summer and cold temperatures in the winter. The aforementioned devastating power of artillery irrevocably changed the landscape of the fields of war, tearing up

forests and plains and turning them into fields of mud (Neiberg 10).

At the same time, the life of a WWI soldier was often spent waiting, often with fighting not happening for weeks on end. In some situations, Allied and German troops would create informal truces for holidays, if only to break up the monotony of the front (Brown, 1984). Instead of the grand life of heroism and excitement many soldiers likely expected when entering the war, the incredible boredom and long stretches of inactivity took a lot of the glamour out of military conflict (Neiberg 12). What's more the conditions in the trenches were incredibly harsh and terrifying, with soldiers suffering from lice, food shortages and incredible hits to morale. Battlefields were often drenched in the smell of dead bodies and infested with rats, which was incredibly demoralizing (particularly when stuck in the trenches) (Neiberg 139). All of these factors contributed to a hellish experience for World War I soldiers, both in the Second Battle of the Marne and beyond.

Conclusion

Looking at the role of American troops at the Second Battle of the Marne and how they fit into the overall structure of the First World War, the battle itself proved to be an important turning point both for the Allies and for America's military morale. The arrival of the fresh-faced, numerous American troops allowed for a swift and decisive victory that led to the counteroffensive that won World War I, even in the face of devastating new military technology and wartime conditions that made the life of a soldier into a figurative hell. That being said, the perseverance and the timely arrival of the American soldiers to the Marne allowed for the Allies to win the First World War, and

establish America's military as a formidable force that could hold its own in international conflicts.

References

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