

too different. Germany wished to protect Eastern Prussia, Austria, Galicia, and the route to Vienna and Budapest. The lines of retreat of the two armies separated at right angles. Furthermore the absence of mutual confidence was a moral barrier to close cooperation.

CONCLUSION

Whatever the faults or merits of the strategical concepts of Schlieffen as applied by Moltke it appears that neither was prepared to meet the problems of a war of coalition waged on two fronts. It was lack of appreciation of these problems that caused the German High Command to lose the Marne campaign and eventually the war.

THE MILITARY CONSEQUENCE OF THE RETURN OF THE SAAR TO GERMANY

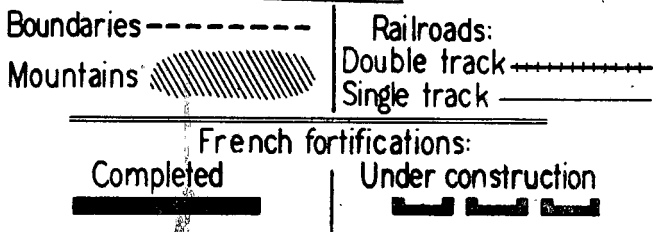
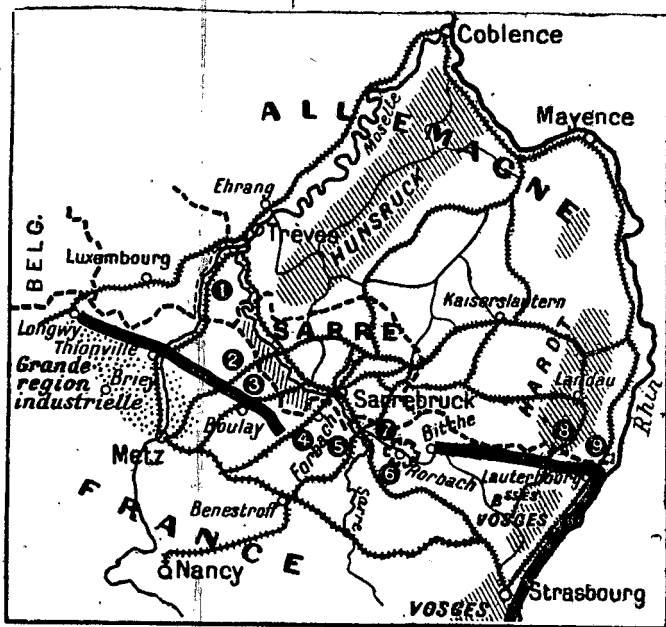
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The Saar plebiscite of 13 January and the correlative decision of the League of Nations on 17 January, have important military consequences for France. Some of the more important ones, in view of the geographical position of the Saar on the northeastern frontier of France, are considered in the following article:

The Saar is located on the northeastern boundary of France and is somewhat of a basin between the German mountain ranges of Hunsruck and Hardt. It is situated on the most direct and most convenient road from Mayence (Mainz) to Nancy and the great French industrial region on the one hand, and to Metz—Briey—Longwy—Thionville, on the other. It is for this reason that six of the nine railway lines which penetrate from Germany into France between Luxembourg and the Rhine pass through the Saar. The territory of the Saar constitutes a large regulating station with its 250 miles of railway lines within an area of that of a French department (about 800 square miles).

Saarebruck is an important railway junction similar to those of Tréves-Ehrang and of Kaiserslautern which are capable of dispatching 120 military trains per 24 hours. The

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lateral railway line: Trèves—Sarrebruck—Kaiserslautern or Landau, close to the French frontier, is therefore of considerable value to Germany. A second lateral line: Trèves—Kaiserslautern, passing north of the Saar territory, is less suitable for the transport of troops because it is partly a single track line in the mountainous region of Hunsruck.

Moreover, the hills on the left bank of the Saar River are, for the most part, situated in German territory. These

hills constitute the northern ridge of the Lorraine plateau. Well organized observation positions will henceforth enable the Germans to closely observe the French fortifications and even the approaches of Metz, at a distance of 20 miles, and they will also be able to prepare artillery emplacements, which will be concealed to French observation. Finally, the valley of the Saar, which, with the exception of the heights of Forbach, cannot be observed from French artillery observation forts, will make it possible for German tanks to cross the river easily, an operation which is always very delicate. The Franco-German frontier on the Saar front is clearly unfavorable to France. "It is a frontier of invasion," declared the French delegation at the Peace Conference in 1919. As a matter of fact, the events of 1870 and of 1914 have proved the veracity of this statement. In other words, the Saar has once more become a zone of concentration and a military camp on the French frontier for the benefit of Germany.

These facts have been recalled in order that conclusions may easily be deduced therefrom, especially if it be added that the French fortifications system along that frontier has been organized as follows: The immediate protection of French territory is not continuous. There are two fortified regions organized with very strong permanent fortifications: one of these regions extends from Longwy to Boulay and protects the entire iron basin at Briey, as well as the large industrial region of Metz—Thionville; the other extends from Bitche to Lauterbourg and defends northern Alsace. Between these two towns there is a gap which is called a "defensive sector" where there are natural obstacles, such as the heights of Forbach. In this "defensive sector," the efforts have been limited to planning in detail the defensive works to be constructed in the event of a conflict, in order to complete the line of permanent works.

It is therefore easy to realize the danger of a sudden German attack launched from the Saar front. To remedy the situation, credits were recently voted by the French Parliament for the construction of permanent works on the plateau of Rohrbach in the above-mentioned gap. Nevertheless, the fact remains that vital objectives are within reach of a German attack, if the latter captured by surprise within a few hours the fortified zone between Boulay and

Thionville, or if it penetrated within the gap. These vital objectives are Metz and the industrial region northwest; Benestroff is the junction of the railway lines between Metz and Strasbourg. Lorraine would then be invaded and the northern part of Alsace enveloped, as well as the fortifications on the left bank of the Rhine and the Vosges.

These eventualities are mentioned as possible in view of the departure of the Government Commission of the League of Nations from Saarebruck and give weight to the steps taken by France at Geneva for the purpose of including the Saar in the demilitarized Rhineland Zone.

The same applies to the destruction in Saar territory of a railway line from the west to east, connecting north of Saarebruck, the two large north-south railway lines, as well as to the reduction in the length of certain military detrainning platforms, in order to limit their use to commercial traffic. Similar destructions were carried on in the Rhineland in 1929 after the conclusion of a direct Franco-German agreement.

Furthermore, France will no doubt have to take certain precautions within her territory near the Saar where Germany has just recuperated the value of three army corps of mobilizable men. The question raised is that of the reinforcing of the French covering forces, that is to say, of the suitable garrisoning of the fortified works extending from Thionville to Lauterbourg. This constitutes a problem of effectives, which, linked with that already raised by the deficit of the lean years, is liable to influence the question of the extension of the length of military service in France.

The return of the Saar to Germany is a master pawn on the chess board of the Franco-German Frontier.