

To anticipate this another general forward movement was undertaken on the whole allied front.

On October 9 a second American army was formed and took over a sector of the front in the Wœvre. Twenty-one American divisions were then in the field, numbering with other army troops nearly a million men. The American First Army continued its advance slowly down the left bank of the Meuse, overcoming stubborn resistance. On November 2 it had advanced as far as Buzancy and cleared the Germans out of the Argonne. The Third Army Corps forced the passage of the Meuse at two points on November 4 and 5, and gained a footing on the right bank. On November 6, the first corps reached the river opposite Sedan, which it entered in conjunction with French troops next day. On November 8 other troops of the same army advanced to Montmedy and occupied Stenay on November 10.

After the capture of Vouziers, the French army moved against that portion of the Argonne lying north of Grandpré, which they cleared of the Germans after several days severe fighting. Another column of the same army occupied Hirson on November 9, and advanced to the Belgian frontier. Between the Aisne and Meuse, Gouraud's army advanced without opposition until it arrived on the Meuse between Sedan and Mezières, where it crossed the river and retook the latter town. Mangin's army reached the north bank of the Serre on October 25, and crossed the Aisne at various points between Rethel and Attigny on November 5. The First French Army commanded by General Debeney advanced along the Oise. They were strongly opposed at Guise which was resolutely held by the Germans until October 23.

Early on the morning of November 1, the Seventeenth Corps of the British Third Army, and the Twenty-second and Canadian Corps belonging to the First Army attacked on a front of six miles south of Valenciennes. In the course of two days bitter fighting the Germans were expelled from their positions, and the Fourth Canadian Division captured Valenciennes and advanced beyond that town. On November 3, the Germans withdrew and the line was further advanced. As information was then secured that a further retirement was under contemplation, the principal attack was accelerated. This was launched by the Fourth, Third and First British armies on November 4, upon a front of thirty miles, extending from the Sambre north of Cisy to Valenciennes. The character of the country made this an extremely difficult operation. The river had to be crossed at the start and in the centre the great forest of Mormal, obstructed by the debris of German forestry operations, presented a formidable obstacle. Further northward several streams running parallel to the line of advance must be passed and the fortified town of Le Quesnoy had to be taken. Preceded by a most effective artillery barrage the German positions were soon penetrated along the whole front, and by nightfall an advance of five miles was accomplished. The Sambre was crossed by rafts and the town of Landrecies was taken. Before dawn on November 5 fighting was resumed and the eastern edge of the forest was reached. Le Quesnoy was surrounded by the New Zealand