

HISTORY OF
THE THIRD INFANTRY DIVISION
In World War II



Edited by
DONALD G. TAGGART

worldwartwoveterans.org

WASHINGTON
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IN WORLD WAR II

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HEADQUARTERS THIRD INFANTRY DIVISION

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

APO No. 3

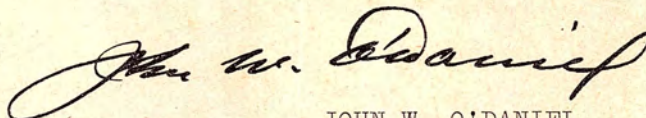
On this Memorial Day of 1945, the 3d Division remembers you for the contribution you have made to America and all it stands for in the loss of your loved one.

These things are hard to understand, but in a war such as this one where the gain to be had was so great and the destruction of the evil force so necessary, great sacrifice was inevitable.

We who are living know that the success of the Division, and our own very existence is due mainly to those who unselfishly gave their lives in battle. This realization will be with us always.

Now that the German Army is destroyed, you can well feel proud that through your great contribution, our nation may live as was intended: in freedom and goodness.

As Division Commander of the 3d Division, I speak from the bottom of my heart for all of us when I say be of good cheer and be ever proud that his sacrifice makes it possible for our country to be great and free forever.



JOHN W. O'DANIEL
Major General, U. S. Army
Commanding



*TO OUR FALLEN COMRADES
WHEREVER THEY MAY LIE
AND TO THE MEMORY OF
THEIR VALIANT DEEDS*

This history was compiled by the 3d Infantry Division
Office of the A. C. of S., G-2
Historical Section

and

Office of the A. C. of S., G-3
Information & Education

Lt. Col. Grover Wilson, GSC A. C. of S., G-2
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Major Frederick C. Spreyer }
Lieutenant Donald G. Taggart } Editors
Lt. Col. Walter T. Kerwin Custodian of History
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Staff Sgt. Orville Sheldon }
T/3 John D. Cole }
T/5 Howard B. Nickelson }
Pfc. Robert S. Seesock } Photographers
T/5 William J. Toomey }
T/4 William Heller }

Preliminary sketches by T/4 Henry McAlear and Cpl. Richard Gaige

Finished paintings by Corporal Gaige of the Recruiting Publicity Bureau,
Governors Island, N. Y.

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General of the Army George C. Marshall

Foreword by the Chief of Staff

I have a very special interest in the history of the 3d Division. My first assignment in the Army was with the 30th Infantry, later I commanded the 15th Infantry in China, and my last command in the field was the 5th Infantry Brigade, then a part of the Division.

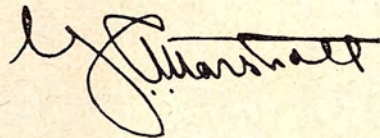
As a staff officer in the AEF with the First United States Army, I had many opportunities personally to observe the 3d Division during the bitter fighting in the Meuse-Argonne.

But all this is ancient history to the men who represent the Division today. The names which will stir their memories in the years to come are Port Lyautey and Casablanca in French Morocco, Licata in Sicily, Paestum's beaches on the Italian mainland, Acerno, the Volturno, Mount Rotondo and bloody Cassino. They will speak of those days at Anzio, where they held the beachhead from the January landings until the breakthrough to Rome.

Last August the Division was selected for the amphibious assault on the south coast of France which led to its rapid pursuit of the retreating Germans up the valley of the Rhône. As I write, the Division is engaged in a grand assault on the German homeland.

There is no comradeship so close as that which is born of long campaigns, of hardship and bravery, of danger and sacrifice. From such experiences as the Division has recently gone through, there grows a realization that the men who compose our democratic army are strong and fine. From such experiences arises a fuller meaning of the principles for which we fight.

The 3d Division has undergone a magnificent development and growth since those dark morning hours in November 1942 when its men dropped into the assault boats to storm the Moroccan coast for their baptism of fire. In expressing my gratitude to all ranks, I wish them God's protection and, when their part in this war is done, the years of full enjoyment of their honors and of peaceful happiness. There will always be our deep sorrow that so many comrades of the battlefield will be denied the privileges for which their final sacrifice was made.



Washington, D. C.
November 23, 1944



General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower

Foreword by the Supreme Commander

The Third U. S. Infantry Division entered World War II with a reputation for gallantry and reliability already established by its brilliant performance in the first World War. Never once in World War II, either in the Mediterranean or in the Western European theater, has the Division failed to add a still greater luster to its record. My own service in the Division covered just slightly more than the year 1940. Three years later, in Tunisia, it was a rare privilege, during an inspection of the Division, to meet on a foreign battleground many of the officers and men who had been my comrades on the West Coast of the United States.

The Third Division now adds to its battle streamers the names of many fierce engagements in French Morocco, in Sicily, in Italy and in Western Europe. None of these names will ever recall a single instance when the Division gave up a foot of ground or failed to attain the objectives assigned it by its commander.

The most pleasant thing that old soldiers can talk about among themselves is the memory of successful battles; the future reunions of the Third Division will be most enjoyable affairs.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

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Major General Jonathan W. Anderson

Nothing in my military career has given me the pleasure, satisfaction and pride than has my service with the 3d Infantry Division—both in World War I and in World War II.

JW Anderson

Fort Bragg, North Carolina
8 May 1946

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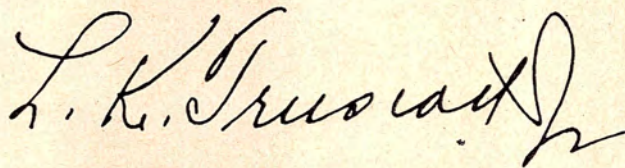


Lieutenant General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr.

To Those Who Served With the Third Division

Yours has been a gallant group and proud your record! Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, France, Germany have known your conquering steps. No condition of war has been unknown to you—barren beaches, desert sands, rugged mountains, vine-clad slopes, dense forests, marshy plains, torrid heat, torrential rains, winter snows, mud, ice—you knew them all. Attack and pursuit were your familiar forms of combat. Defense you learned. Only withdrawal and retreat you never needed. Truly your achievements merit well the grateful appreciation of your countrymen.

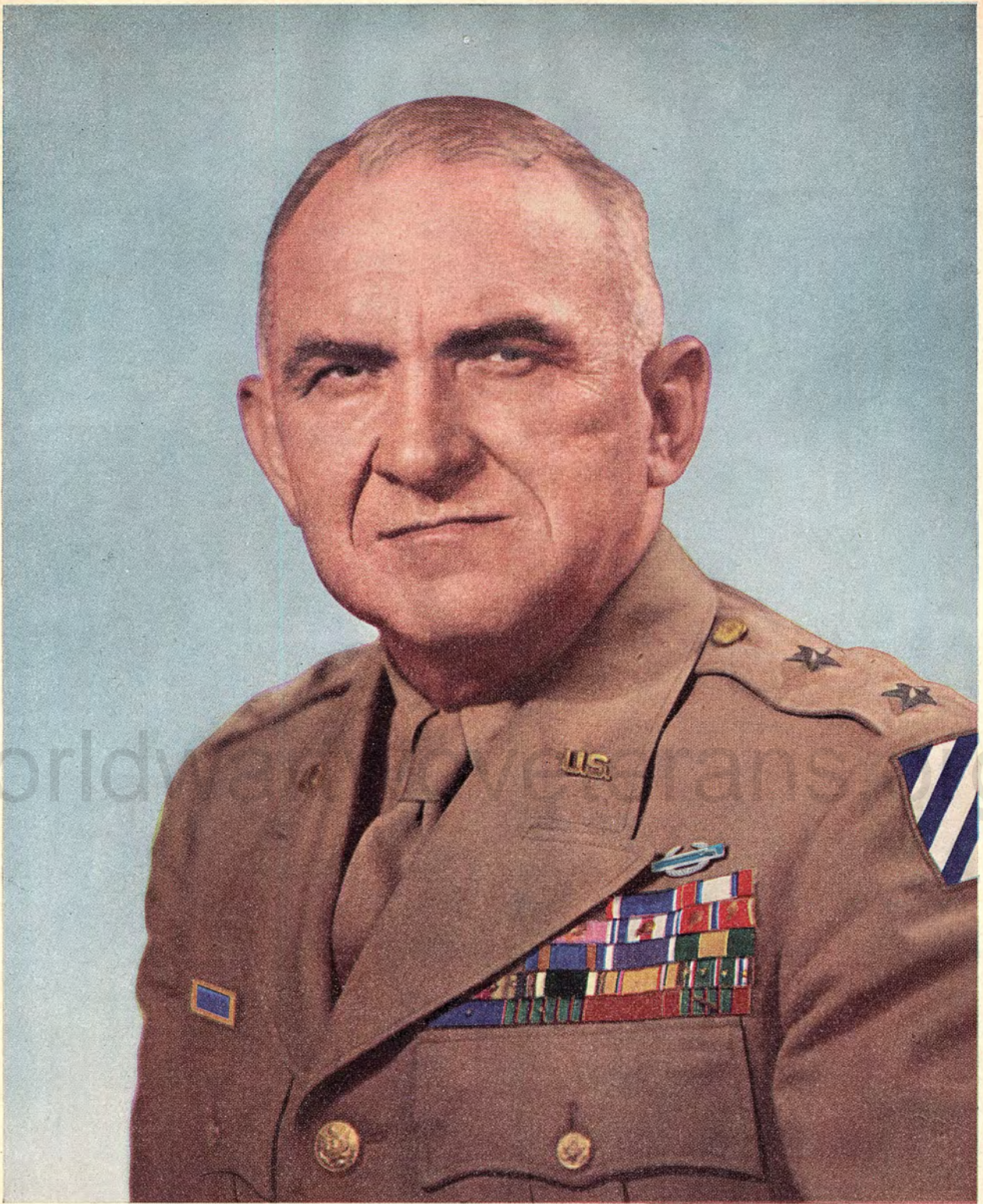
This record of your exploits is a monument to our comrades who paid the supreme sacrifice, a bond of comradeship between us who served with them, and an inspiration to all who follow in your footsteps.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "L. K. Truscatt". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

Washington, D. C.

18 April 1946

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Major General John W. O'Daniel

Message from the Commanding General

This history is about the 3d Infantry Division in World War II.

It tells of the events that made possible the final victory for which we fought so long.

It describes the feats of heroism and valor that were the spark plugs which helped make our combat successful.

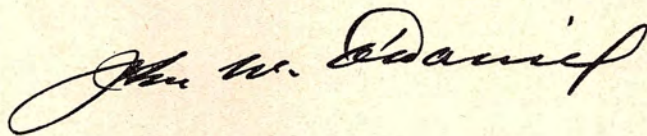
It is dedicated to the men of the 3d Infantry Division who gave their lives that the principles on which our country is founded might live forever. It was their sacrifice that made the victory over Italy and Germany possible.

No officer ever commanded a finer group of men, more loyal group of men or finer fighters than it has been my privilege to command in the 3d Division.

As you read the lines in this book, memories of days gone by will return. You will again live through Fedala, Sicily, Acerno and Anzio. You will again land in Southern France and dash northward up the Rhône Valley. You will drive through the Vosges Mountains and eliminate the Colmar Pocket. You will smash the Siegfried Line and bridge the Rhine. You will storm Nürnberg and capture Munich. Finally, you will speed on to Austria, capture Salzburg and be in on the kill at Berchtesgaden. You will again live with those fighting men who belong to the Brotherhood of Arms, to which only men of combat can belong.

My congratulations to you all for the way you brought this phase of the war to a close, and may we all see to it that such a war never occurs again.

Well done, 3d Division!



Salzburg, Austria

8 May 1945

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Preface

This is the story of the United States 3d Infantry Division in World War II. It is dedicated to "our fallen comrades . . . and to the memory of their valiant deeds." It is addressed to and written for you, the 3d Division soldiers, of whose many experiences in war it tells.

The main purpose in view and the chief intent of those concerned in the presentation of this book was to set down in words for the pleasure and enjoyment of all 3d Infantry Division veterans the story of the 3d Infantry Division in war; to recapture therein from fading memory a perception of the bond of comradeship that was then ours; to recall the varied emotions we knew in battle and to perpetuate the esprit and traditions of the Division to whose accomplishments we all contributed.

The major part of this history was written by Donald G. Taggart, 1st Lieutenant, Infantry, AUS. Many other people within and without the Division contributed in part to the realization of the project. The information it contains was compiled from several sources: viz., the Daily Periodic and Special Reports from the Offices of the A Cs of S, G-2 and G-3, the Monthly Reports of Operations and After Action Reports of all 3d Infantry Division units, reports of the U. S. Fifth and Seventh Armies and the French First Army, reports of the U. S. II, VI, XV and XXI Corps and the French II Corps, War Department publications and records, newspaper articles and personal interview with officers and soldiers who commanded units and fought in the battles described. The separate rosters were compiled by Unit Personnel Sections.

It can be presumed that there may be inaccuracies in some of the sources mentioned. Many of the original reports were made and written during the confusion of battle; they were hastily scribbled journals of telephone conversations, situation reports, verbal orders. Some reports were false. It has been attempted to review all the available material, compare reports, interview participants in the action concerned and thereby strive to arrive as near to the truth as possible. If the editor has fallen short of the truth, the fault lies not in the honesty and genuineness of his effort, but in the untruth of the information that comes out of battle.

The story tells of the Division's campaigns in French Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Southern Italy, at Anzio, in Southern France; it traces the course of the Division over the Vosges Mountains, through the Colmar Pocket and across Germany to Berchtesgaden in Bavaria and Salzburg in Austria; it describes the amphibious assaults against Casablanca in French Morocco, Licata in Sicily, Anzio in Italy and Cavalaire and St. Tropez in Southern France; it relates the saga of the seemingly endless days of combat and the ever-increasing toll of casualties; it describes the heroic deeds of the Division's thirty-seven recipients of the Medal of Honor. It relates the story of the Division's operation in the Colmar Pocket, for which the entire Division was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation and the sixteen different actions for which component units of the 3d Infantry Division were awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation. It tells of the Division's campaign in France, in gratitude for and recognition of which the Provisional Government of the French Republic (by Decision No. 975, signed at Paris,

27 July 1945, by General Charles de Gaulle, President of the Provisional Government of the French Republic and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of France) authorized the members of the 3d Infantry Division to wear the fourragere in the colours of the Croix de Guerre 1939-1945.

This history, made by you, is written for you. May it afford you many pleasant hours and hold for you the memories of a soldier's life.

FREDERICK C. SPREYER
Major, FA

Washington, D. C.

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To correspondents, too numerous to mention by name, whose graphic writings have been "lifted" wholesale and piecemeal to liven the pages of this book.

To families of the Medal of Honor winners, for graciously permitting the 3d Infantry Division to borrow photographs of their sons and husbands—in many cases the only photograph in the family's possession—for inclusion in this history.

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I
PREPARATION FOR WAR

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“Coming Events Cast Their Shadows Before”

We Prepare for the Showdown

December 7, 1941

THE day started like any ordinary Sunday. Most married officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted men of the 3d Infantry Division, then stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, were at home with their families. A large percentage of the remainder of the command was away from the post on pass. There had been no hint of impending hostilities through any official channels, and only by press accounts of events in the Far East, and the apparent lack of success of the Kurusu mission in Washington, was there any suspicion that war against Japan might break out in the immediate future.

Just before noon, all scheduled radio programs went off the air and fantastic accounts of the Jap attack on Pearl Harbor began to come through. Jap bombs had hit many of our warships lying in the harbor; Jap planes had bombed and strafed Hickam and Wheeler fields, damaging United States aircraft, hangars and barracks. Men of the 3d, who for months had been preparing for a theoretical war against a theoretical enemy, were as surprised and stunned as the rest of the western world.

Almost immediately Headquarters IX Army Corps, of which the 3d Infantry Division was a part, sent out instructions for all members of the command to report to their organizations.

From homes, churches, theaters and clubs, the move to the post began. Officers and men entering Fort Lewis by bus and private car found a traffic jam at the gates where military police were inspecting the occupants of all vehicles as they entered. Machine guns were set up at post entrances and at various points about the post for antiaircraft protection. So unexpected was the Pearl Harbor attack that the possibility of an invasion, or at least of raids against the Pacific coast, was uppermost in everyone's mind.

Blackout measures at the post were initiated almost immediately, and from the first day of the war until the Division left Fort Lewis, blackout was normal. For a time the blackout fixtures—tarpaper and shelter halves—could be removed only with difficulty, so office personnel worked by artificial light even during the daytime. Later, removable blackout panels were installed.

Every morning at dawn, observation planes from Gray Field, adjoining the barracks area, roared over the post on routine patrol of Pacific waters.

To guard against glider or air-landing attacks, tactical vehicles of the Division were dispersed on the par-

ade ground at night as obstacles to such an enemy attempt. The fact that nearby Gray and McChord fields were not similarly blocked, or that the Division would have experienced great difficulty in sorting out its trucks in the event of an emergency move illustrates the lack of tactical perception which prevailed at that stage of the war.

On Monday, the day after the Pearl Harbor attack, combat elements of the Division went into concealed bivouac on the Fort Lewis reservation, partly as a “shakedown” in the event of immediate hostilities and partly to get away from the vulnerable barracks area. As the first week passed and the capabilities and intentions of the enemy became clearer, organizations returned to their permanent quarters in barracks.

* * *

The 3d Infantry Division's role in World War I ended in August, 1919, when the Division completed its occupational duties at Andernach, on the Rhine, and embarked for Brest, France, where it embarked for the United States. For the following three years the Division was scattered at various posts throughout the country. In September, 1922, Division Headquarters moved to Fort Lewis, Washington, and other elements of the command were stationed in the west.

In 1939 and 1940, when the War Department triangularized all infantry divisions, several major changes in the Division's organization occurred.

Infantry and artillery brigade headquarters were disbanded. The 4th and 38th Infantry Regiments, both of which fought with great distinction during the first war, were lost to the Division, and the 15th Infantry, hoary with the tradition of twenty-six years' occupational duty in China, was added. The 18th and 76th Field Artillery Regiments departed; the 10th was broken up into three separate light battalions: the 10th, 39th and 41st; and one battalion of the 9th Field Artillery, redesignated the 9th Field Artillery Battalion, became the Division's medium artillery unit. The 2d Battalion of the 6th Engineer Regiment, renamed the 10th Engineer Battalion, remained with the division. Division Headquarters was reorganized. Medical, signal and quartermaster units were reactivated in the new triangular organization. The old 3d Tank Company was taken away, and a new unit, the 3d Reconnaissance Troop, was organized around a cavalry cadre.

These changes, occurring under the mounting pressure of the international crisis, also saw the Division



3d Infantry Division doughboys simulate a bayonet attack during training.

concentrated at Fort Lewis. At the outbreak of the war, the following units composed the division:

- Headquarters and Headquarters and MP Company.
- 7th Infantry Regiment.
- 15th Infantry Regiment.
- 30th Infantry Regiment.
- Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3d Infantry Division Artillery.
- 9th Field Artillery Battalion.
- 10th Field Artillery Battalion.
- 39th Field Artillery Battalion.
- 41st Field Artillery Battalion.
- 10th Engineer Battalion.
- 3d Medical Battalion.
- 3d Quartermaster Battalion.
- 3d Reconnaissance Troop.
- 3d Signal Company.

In addition, the 603d Tank Destroyer Battalion, attached, had been formed from divisional infantry and artillery units and was regarded as part of the division.

Only two changes in the organic composition of the division occurred prior to movement overseas. The 3d Quartermaster Battalion was reduced to company size, and the 703d Ordnance Company was added (due to transfer of motor vehicle responsibility from the quartermaster to the ordnance branch); also, the MP platoon was made separate from Headquarters Company, but remained attached to it.

One month before the outbreak of war, the War Department assigned to the 3d Infantry Division the primary mission of training in landing operations. For tactical purposes, the Division was assigned to Amphibious Corps Pacific Fleet, a Navy-Marine headquarters located in San Diego, California.

This new training mission did not alter the Division's basic composition as a triangular infantry division, nor its responsibility for remaining capable of triangular land operations. Amphibious training did, however, consume most of the Division's training time during the remainder of its stay in the United States.

A training-camp area was obtained at Henderson's Inlet, eight miles north of Olympia, Washington on Puget Sound. Here a pier, worksheds, orderly room and messhall were constructed, and a boat detachment of some 200 officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted men, drawn from divisional units, was established. Captain Glenn Wood, on special duty from the 15th Infantry, commanded the detachment during its period at Henderson's Inlet, and later on, in California.

Forty Higgins landing craft (LCP's) and a few old-type motor sailers, sufficient to embark an entire battalion landing team at one time, were available for training. During November, 1941, the first battalion exercises were held, in which the battalion landing teams traveled to Henderson's Inlet from Fort Lewis (about fourteen miles), loaded into landing boats, proceeded to a rendezvous point, and returned to the pier for unloading.

About December 1 the exercises were made tactical, with the battalion landing teams traveling from Henderson's Inlet by water to McNeil Island, landing on a steep gravelly beach on the north side of the island, and continuing a few hundred yards inland to a coordinating line. All nine battalion landing teams of the Division completed this problem.

Training of battalions in actual loading upon and disembarkation from transports began the last week in January, when the 1st Battalion Landing Team, 7th Infantry, combat-loaded the *USS Zeilin* at Tacoma and sailed to San Diego, where the battalion remained two

weeks engaged in landing exercises and practice disembarkations. From San Diego the battalion moved north to Fort Ord, near Monterey, California, to which the Division had received a warning order to move.

Following this training of the 1st Battalion Landing Team, 7th Infantry, other battalions of the Division went to San Diego in numerical order, with the 7th completing training first, followed by battalions of the 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments. Regimental headquarters units and other elements of the RLGs (Regimental Landing Groups) made the journey with one of their battalions and went through the same type of training. This training continued all through the spring and summer, with at least one of the Division's infantry battalions, with its attached amphibious elements, at San Diego at all times.

There was only one interruption of this continuous training program. In mid-February, the 41st Infantry Division, which had been made responsible for security of industrial plants and communications in the North-western Sector, as well as for coastal defense of the sector extending from the Canadian border to the Oregon-California line, was ordered to prepare for overseas movement. On February 15 the 3d Infantry Division took over these defensive missions, using the 15th Infantry in the area from Seattle northward, and the 30th Infantry on the Olympic Peninsula and southward. This duty continued little more than a week, when the division was relieved by the 44th Infantry Division, a former New York-New Jersey National Guard unit.

From the beginning of training in landing operations, in which many personnel of the Division had taken part during the spring of 1940, development of Tables of Organization and Tables of Basic Allowances was continuous. It became apparent that even before a unit could practice loading dummy boats on dry land, some sort of decision had to be made as to the personnel and equipment which would compose the unit. While frequent changes were made in boat assignments and detailed items of equipment and methods of loading, the basic composition of the battalion landing team remained fairly constant, including: battalion headquarters, three rifle companies, heavy weapons company, attached artillery battery, attached engineer platoon, attached medical platoon, attached antitank platoon, and battalion shore party.

The RLG normally contained three battalion landing teams, regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Company, other regimental units, headquarters of the attached artillery battalion, engineer and medical company headquarters, and a regimental shore party.

While no attempt will be made to relate in detail the hundreds of decisions made on organization and equipment, and the reasons for them, the following basic

principles became increasingly clear with the advance in training:

1. Combat-loading of transports and landing craft must be 100 per cent; that is, tactical units must be complete on transports and in boat teams, and weapons, vehicles and ammunition must be loaded in the correct priority on the same transports as the using units.

2. Landing-boat crews must be trained in landing and retracting their boats in surf.

3. Individual equipment must be light, and the minimum amount required for the first phases of the operation carried by the individual.

4. Actual practice-loading of transports, preferably those to be used in the operation itself, and the training of personnel in debarkation with equipment and supplies, is vital.

5. Supply must conform to the peculiarity of the operation, bearing in mind the transportation which will be available after the landing is made.

Any veteran of the landings in Sicily, at Anzio and in Southern France will smile as he reads of these things which harassed the best minds of the Division, and which appear to be almost axiomatic in the light of historical retrospect. Yet it must be remembered that the division was then preparing for a hypothetical ship-to-shore operation, in which the whole array of specialized landing craft, developed later, capable of carrying all the Division's transportation and supporting armor, was almost wholly absent. Indeed, the feeling of many junior officers and noncoms, following their first exposure to amphibious training, was that once a soldier had learned to clamber down a cargo net while carry-



Heavy machine-gun crew in training.

ing full kit, he was a trained artist in amphibious warfare.

Some of the larger aspects of amphibious operations, such as the question of command responsibility between the Army and Navy commanders, the determination of the appropriate hour for attack, means of prior reconnaissance of the landing area, and the coordination of naval gunfire and air support, were somewhat beyond the scope of the Division's training at Fort Lewis and Fort Ord, although these questions engaged the constant attention of the Division staff and were frequently discussed by them with Amphibious Corps headquarters at San Diego.

A source of considerable pride to the Division was the boat detachment, previously mentioned, which began its training in the relatively calm waters of Puget Sound but which later made numerous landings in heavy ocean surf and never lost a boat. The consequent insistence by the Division on the proven ability of trained operators to beach a landing craft and retract it even under unfavorable conditions was subject to incredulity on the part of those who had never seen it done successfully. The boat detachment never failed to fulfill its mission in superior fashion in consequence of thorough training.

In order to include larger headquarters in exercises using amphibious organization and equipment, an imaginary "island" known as Taongi Island was laid out on the Fort Lewis reservation and regimental problems by the 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments were conducted along the "beach line" formed by Muck Creek. The 3d Reconnaissance Troop acted as the defenders. Boat teams were carried in trucks, disembarking on the south side of the creek and crossing on foot with their equipment, except personnel carried in vehicles which would normally be borne ashore in landing craft.

The commander of the Division from the outbreak of the war until March 21, 1942, was Maj. Gen. John P. Lucas, who left on that date to take command of the III Army Corps. Brig. Gen. Jonathan W. Anderson, commanding division artillery, assumed command of the Division and was promoted to major general shortly afterward.

While still at Fort Lewis, the Division staged two simultaneous parades on Army Day, April 6, 1942, in Tacoma and Seattle, with the 30th Infantry combat team marching in Tacoma and the 15th Infantry combat team in Seattle. Demonstrations of weapons and equipment were given in both towns, and luncheons were given honoring the staff officers of the combat teams involved.

On February 16, 1942, the Division was electrified by a warning order to be prepared to move by February

23. The move was first stated by higher headquarters to be a temporary change of station to a staging area at Fort Ord preparatory to going overseas, as the 41st Infantry Division had done. Division personnel immediately started making arrangements to vacate their quarters and move their household goods. Organizations sold much of their company- and battery-fund property, and a general shakedown of office equipment and supplies took place.

Within a few days it was announced that the move would not take place February 23, and that the change of station would be a permanent one for training purposes, rather than a temporary one prior to overseas movement. Even so, the flurry caused by the sudden preparations for departure was a short sensation in the Fort Lewis area, largely because the Division had been so long established there, and the news of the impending move was an ill-guarded secret.

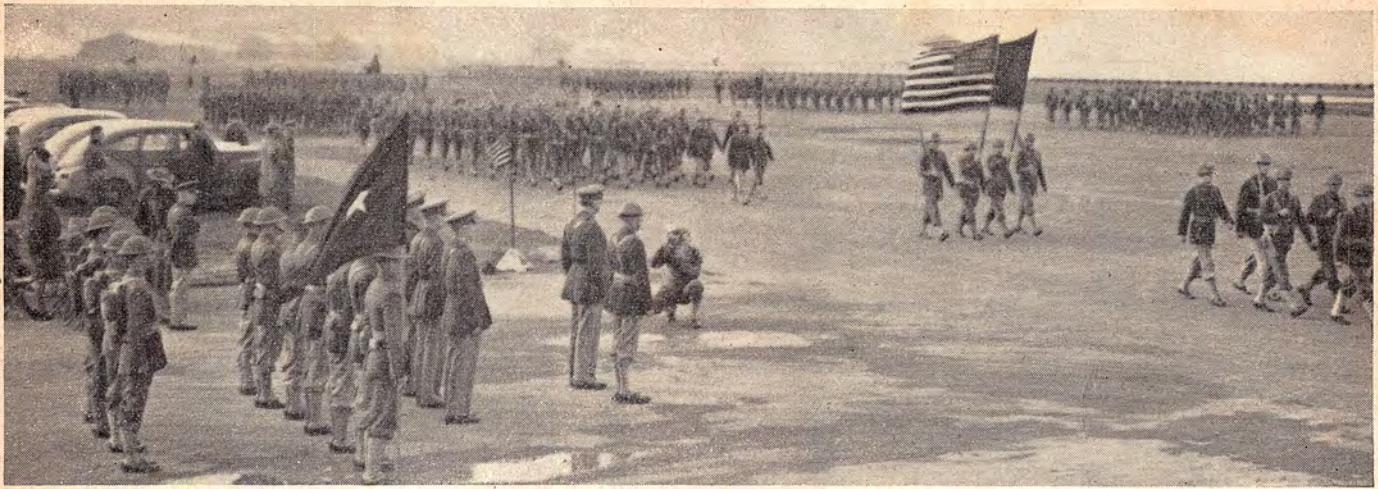
During March and April the Division stayed at Fort Lewis, awaiting orders to move, while more and more of its units were going to San Diego for training and moving on to Fort Ord to await the remainder of the Division. The entire 7th Infantry and 10th Field Artillery Battalion were concentrated there by the time the Division finally moved, between April 28 and May 5.

The move was made by train and motor vehicle and was over familiar terrain, as the Division had twice been to California in the preceding two years. The 30th Infantry, indeed, had made the move between San Francisco and Fort Lewis several times independently of the Division, as its permanent station had been the Presidio of San Francisco for many years.

The Division had been at Fort Ord only three weeks when the coast-wide alert which preceded the Battle of Midway was sounded. Word from Fourth Army indicated that a large Japanese task force had left Jap bases and was headed eastward, but its mission was not known at that time. Consequently, on the night of May 29-30 the Division moved into dispersed bivouac on the Fort Ord reservation, returning to barracks at noon Memorial Day. Five days later the Battle of Midway began, and the enemy attack on Dutch Harbor, Alaska, took place.

On the Fourth of July the Division participated in two parades, the 7th Infantry combat team marching in San Francisco and elements from other units marching in Monterey.

During July a series of battalion GHQ tests was held, each test being an identical problem for battalion landing teams involving embarkation from the pier at Monterey, and an advance inland to an objective on Grant Ewing Ridge on the Fort Ord reservation. A demonstration of overhead artillery fire with 75mm pack howitzers was part of each problem. These tests, under the



The 3d Infantry Division passes in review in front of Major General Thompson at Fort Lewis, Washington.

direction of Brig. Gen. William W. Eagles, assistant division commander, were given to each of the nine BLT's in the division.

A special phase of amphibious training was undertaken by 3d Reconnaissance Troop, which trained as commandos or raiders. The men, their fatigue suits dyed black and with black felt covering their helmets, wore rubber-soled shoes and carried knives and tommy guns during their many rubber-boat landings. They practiced reaching objectives at night by the most direct overland routes.

Until the first part of August, the Division's amphibious training remained merely a phase of its training as a triangular infantry division. This placed a burden on all personnel because all planning, training and supply had to include not only the normal triangular requirements but also similar requirements for amphibious training, and in many cases the two differed greatly. At one time, for instance, the field artillery battalions were equipped with four sets of tubes—the regular 105mm howitzers, 75mm guns, 75mm pack howitzers and 37mm subcaliber guns. Only the 75mm pack howitzers were amphibious equipment, but they placed an additional maintenance burden on the organizations.

However, in early August, the Division began to feel the tremendous suction of the battle fronts in dead earnest. Until this time it had been assumed that any operation in which the Division might participate would be in the Pacific theater, inasmuch as the Division was assigned to the Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet. A great deal of material in the way of maps and literature on the Pacific theater and Japanese army had been collected with this in mind. The Division was now told to prepare for a mission in the Atlantic; and to train intensively in amphibious warfare, since the first task in combat would probably be a landing operation.

The work of drawing up the tables by which the Division was to be organized and equipped was speeded

up. These tables had existed in tentative form since early spring as a basis for training, but it now became necessary to freeze them, embodying the lessons learned in practice.

The largest exercise conducted on the west coast was a practice operation in which the 7th Regimental Landing Group embarked in three transports at San Francisco August 15, swung out into the Pacific and returned to Monterey Bay for a landing during the morning of August 17. They were preceded ashore by the 3d Reconnaissance Troop landing from a destroyer in rubber boats about midnight. The opposition was represented by 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, reinforced.

The main landing was made at 1100 and was supported by naval aircraft flown from San Diego. The planes laid a smoke screen and executed simulated strafing missions. Two destroyers accompanied the task force during the maneuver, since the threat of enemy submarines was always present.

Two battalions were landed from transports and the third, initially in reserve, landed behind the first two from the "*USS Pier*" (the pier in Monterey Bay from which training was ordinarily conducted). The regiment succeeded in establishing its beachhead, and in theoretical cooperation with other elements of the Division, in driving the enemy off the southern end of the "island," which was assumed to be surrounded by water on the inland side.

Other amphibious maneuvers involving the same "island," but with no actual landings except those from the pier, using the boat detachment, were held during the latter part of August. The staff and separate companies received valuable training in division operation, since the Division had not been in the field as a tactical unit since the preceding summer at Fort Lewis.

During August, Major General Anderson and many members of his staff went to Washington, D.C. and to Camp Pickett, Va., where they were given some details

of the impending operation, and where they organized Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet. Toward the end of August the Division was ordered to prepare for a move to Camp Pickett, and the move was begun Sunday, September 6. The final order for the move was received two hours before Saturday midnight. The last train left Fort Ord Monday, September 14 and reached Camp Pickett Sunday, September 20. This was a temporary change of station prior to overseas movement.

Camp Pickett was virtually a new post, having been occupied only a few months by the 79th Infantry Division prior to the arrival of the 3d Division. Sidewalks had not been laid and the frequent rains left paths, motor parks and drill areas a sea of mud. Housing facilities in nearby communities were scarce and poor. Nevertheless many families accompanied the Division to Camp Pickett.

The new location was actually a staging area for the Division, which remained there only a month. The only event of importance during this period was a prac-

tice loading and landing operation called "Exercise Quick." In this exercise, which began at Norfolk September 29, most of the elements of Sub-Task Force Brushwood (3d Infantry Division reinforced for landing operations) were loaded aboard thirteen transports, proceeded north up Chesapeake Bay, and made a landing in the vicinity of Solomon's Island, using a tactical plan modeled on that projected for the actual operation in North Africa.

The work of preparing the division for a "wet run" in such a short period was of staggering proportions. As an example, consider that the following units, most of which were unknown to the Division, much less included in previous plans and tables, were attached to the sub-task force for the operation:

9½ platoons, 443d AAA AW Bn
 436th AAA AW Bn CA Bn
 36th Engr Regt (less 2d Bn and shore parties; plus
 Det 71st Sig Co)



3d Infantry Division soldiers en route by troop train from Fort Ord, California to Camp Pickett, Virginia.



Camp Pickett, Virginia, the Division's staging area prior to movement overseas.

2d Bn 20th Engrs (less certain elements) (Plus Regt
Hq and Serv Co)
204th MP Co
1st Bn LT, 67th Armd Regt, 2d Armd Div

Counterintelligence Group
Prs Inter Group
Censorship Unit
Cvl Govt Pers
Task Force "A" Hq Elements
Task Force "A" Sig Det

Until this time, the division had planned on the assumption that it would have to organize and equip its own shore parties. Now it was learned that this vital task would be performed by an engineer unit which, until the time of Exercise "Quick," was totally strange to the division.

In addition, the following units were attached for overseas movement only:

Det Air Task Force, XII GASC
Det 66th Engr Co (Topo)
Det 1st Armd Sig Bn
Det 239th Sig Co (Opr)
Det 122d Sig Co (RI)
Det 163d Sig Co (Photo)
Det 1st Broadcasting Sta (Opr)

Companies A and C of the 756th Tank Battalion, which had been attached to the Division at Fort Ord, accompanied the Division on the operation, but the 603d Tank Destroyer Battalion did not. The remainder of the tank battalion remained with Group Three (administrative and other elements of the Division which did not accompany the assault convoy).

A few of the other problems which had to be worked out included the following:

Establishment at Norfolk of an advance detachment for the purpose of supervising loading and the preparation of necessary tables.

Reception of a few hundred replacements, both officers and enlisted men, to bring the division up

to authorized strength for the operation. Few, if any of the replacements had had prior amphibious training.

Receipt, processing and loading of a large amount of new or special equipment which came flooding in virtually at the last moment. One weapon, the antitank rocket launcher (also called the "bazooka" or "Buck Rogers" gun) was never fired by any divisional troops prior to embarkation, and it was held such a closely-guarded secret that instructions for its use were not made available until after the troops had boarded the transports.

Waterproofing of all vehicles.

Completion of all necessary administrative processes prior to overseas movement. Combat-loading of vessels and the leaving behind of Group Three personnel greatly complicated the normal procedures. Handling of service records, preparation of safe-arrival cards and identification tags, handling of sick and absent personnel, provision for physical examination and immunization were additional problems.

Distribution of tactical plans, intelligence data and maps for all units. The fact that none of this information could be disseminated or studied prior to sailing meant that every item had to be broken down and tallied against the loading plan for every unit, segment and detachment.

Arrangements for all types of supply, and supervision of loading of supplies and equipment to conform to tactical plans. The ammunition problem alone was a major one, and was rendered more difficult by two facts: First, the force which loaded at Norfolk before the 3d Divi-

sion, had been compelled to load some of the ammunition intended for the Brushwood force, and second, plans for loading several units were changed, with the result that ammunition shipped to certain berths had to be diverted into a common pool and redistributed. The pool system was found to be the only one that would work without too great loss of time.

In consideration of the brief period available for preparation and the newness and complexity of the problems involved, the division's effort to load its own personnel, equipment and supplies, as well as those of many miscellaneous attachments within a specified period was attended by well-deserved success.

The clatter and hum of winches ceased. The great gray transports, mysterious in the subdued glare of essential loading lights, stopped taking on inert cargo as the human shipments arrived by train on the piers: the doughboys of the 3d Infantry Division. Tired, patient, they waited endless hours, sleeping on the concrete with their heads on their packs until it came their turn to have their names checked on the sailing lists, to mount the gangplank, to seek a bunk in the hot, moist troop compartments. The dockworkers watched for a while, then drifted into the night. They were tired too, from a week's steady manhandling of vehicles, ammunition, water cans, medical chests, deadweight of all descriptions. The hawsers slackened, tightened, slackened, tightened. . . . The last troops were aboard. . . .

Sub-Task Force Brushwood, under command of Major General Anderson, set sail from Norfolk, Va., as part of Naval Task Force 34 on October 24, 1942. Destination: French Morocco.

II
CASABLANCA

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We Storm the Beaches of North Africa and Capture a White-Walled City

TROOP LIST—Operation "Torch" Third Infantry Division (Reinf)

Organization for Combat

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Hq & Hq Co, 3d Inf Div</i> | Armd Bn LT 67th Armd Regt 2d Armd Div |
| 2. <i>7th Inf Regt</i> | Det ATF 12th GASC |
| 3. <i>15th Inf Regt</i> | 562d Sig Bn ATF |
| 4. <i>30th Inf Regt</i> | 16th Obsn Sq |
| 5. <i>3d Inf Div Artillery</i> | 21st Engr Bn(Avn) |
| 9th FA Bn(-LT) | 68th Obsn Gp ATF |
| 10th FA Bn(-LT) | 122d Obsn Sq ATF |
| 39th FA Bn(-LT) | 12th Serv Cmd ATF |
| 41st FA Bn(-LT) | 41st Serv Gp ATF |
| 6. <i>3d Rcn Troop</i> | Det 1st Armd Sig Bn |
| 7. <i>3d QM Bn</i> | Det 239th Sig (Opr) |
| 8. <i>3d Signal Co</i> | Det 122d Sig Co (RI) |
| 9. <i>3d Med Bn</i> | Det 163d Sig Co (Photo) |
| 10. <i>10th Engr Bn</i> | Det C, 829th Sig (Opr) |
| 11. <i>Attached Units</i> | Sp Rad Co (1st Bdc) |
| 756th Tk Bn | Ctr Rad Co (1st Bdc) |
| 443d AAA AW Bn | Prs Interr Group |
| 436th AAA AW Bn | Cvl Govt Pers |
| 36th Engr Regt | Det 66th Engrs |
| 2d Bn, 20th Engrs | Pub Rel Officers |
| Co A, 204th MP Bn | Counterintelligence Group |

IN the pitch-black hours preceding the dawn of a memorable African morning a mighty armada of ships lay offshore the resort town of Fedala, French Morocco.

It was November 8, 1942.

Three months earlier United States Marines, in the United States' first offensive effort of World War II, had assaulted the beaches at Guadalcanal and struck at the enemy in the Pacific. Now was the time for the United States to commit her strength in another theater, against the enemy whom almost all had privately acknowledged to be the common foe prior to the beginning of the war against Japan on December 7, 1941—Nazi Germany.

To engage the enemy initially where planned gave rise to a paradox. It was necessary first to fight a people who always had been—and again would be—our ally. It was necessary to establish ourselves solidly in North Africa in order to carry our share of the fight to Rommel's *Afrika Korps*, even then fleeing before the hammer blows of a rejuvenated, victorious British Eighth Army in Egypt. So arose the necessity of attacking and seizing the French garrisons at Fedala, Casa-

blanca, Safi, and Port Lyautey on the Atlantic coast, and Oran and Algiers and the surrounding area on the Mediterranean coast.

The 3d Infantry Division was one of five divisions which began the United States' offensive against Hitler's far-flung empire.

United States pilots and seamen had been battling German aircraft, submarines and warships for many months; United States tank crews had supported the British in the African desert; but the United States doughboy did not begin his steady, unremitting fight until that chill morning on the beaches of French North Africa.

This landing, which fittingly enough was designated "Operation Torch," was made while the vast array of special amphibious craft and equipment, later to carry our troops ashore in dozens of smashing blows, was still on drawing boards or factory production lines. There were no LSTs, LCIs or "ducks" at Fedala; only big gray transports and their small transport-borne landing craft. This meant that the Division's heavy supporting weapons and trucks had to be painfully ferried ashore, one or two at a time, in LCMs (Landing Craft Me-

chanized) designed to carry one light tank each. It meant also that transportation had to be scaled down drastically to conform to the "Amphibious Tables of Organization" previously developed by the Division.

Even the artillery complement was affected; light battalions were equipped with 75mm pack howitzers, which were broken down and carried in LCPs (Landing Craft, Personnel, known familiarly as "Higgins boats"), while the medium battalion used halftrack 105's ferried ashore in LCMs.

In effect, each battalion landing team was a small task force—a separate entity in itself, the theory being that each battalion commander had at his disposal all the elements of a force that would be self-sustaining for several days. This was later basically altered to follow a theory of more interdependence with regiment and Division.

Supply was predicated on bringing rations, ammunition and gasoline ashore by small-boat shuttle, although it was hoped the port of Fedala would be freed at least by the second day, enabling transports to come in one at a time and unload at the pier.

Operation Torch had the strategic aim of cutting North Africa out from under the Axis' European edifice, opening the Mediterranean to Allied shipping, and providing a base for later offensive operations against the continent of Europe. Casablanca, Oran, Algiers, Bizerte and Tunis were all big ports, and there were enough potential air-base sites in eastern Algeria and Tunisia to accommodate all the planes the Allies could put onto them.

The tactical mission of the 3d Infantry Division was to capture the great city of Casablanca, largest port on the west coast of Africa, the only one on the Atlantic Coast of French Morocco capable of being used as a base of operations for large bodies of troops. It was farthest of the five ports from Axis bomber bases.

Reinforcing the Division were the 67th Armored Battalion Combat Team from the 2d Armored Division; two companies of the 756th Tank Battalion (light); elements of the 443d AAA AW Battalion, 436th AAA AW Battalion, 36th Engineer Regiment (C); and one battalion of the 20th Engineer Regiment and several smaller attachments.

To accomplish this mission, the Division was directed to land on beaches in the vicinity of Fedala, a small port sixteen miles northeast of Casablanca; seize Fedala as a temporary base of operations; and attack toward Casablanca. Landings by other units were to be made at Safi, 120 miles southwest of Casablanca, which had a small harbor suitable for landing armor, and at Port Lyautey, eighty miles northeast of Casablanca, which had an airfield on which could be landed planes from

the United Kingdom to support the attack on Casablanca itself.

Fedala, in normal times, has a population of about 2500 Europeans and 13,000 natives. Cape Fedala at the west end of town projects northward from the coast about 1000 yards, providing some protection for the harbor and serving as a base for one of the two jetties which enclose the harbor.

About three miles northeast of Fedala, and immediately north of the deep-cut ravine of Wadi Nefifikh, is Batterie du Pont Blondin, at that time a defended locality and seacoast gun emplacement. Pont Blondin itself is a highway bridge across the Wadi Nefifikh.

Immediately west of Fedala another stream empties into the sea. A few hundred yards inland the course of this stream flows between steeply sloping banks which form the Wadi Mellah. The terrain between Fedala and Casablanca is gently rolling, largely cultivated, and ideal for motor and mechanized operation, since there is a good network of roads and trails.

Information furnished by the War Department and other sources indicated that the attitude of the French armed forces was highly uncertain; many high French officers were known to be friendly to the Allied cause; yet others were known to be solidly under Vichy control or even pro-Axis, so that the places where the enemy would defend and the extent of his resistance could not be accurately estimated beforehand. It was believed, however, that the navy was under a strong Vichy influence but would strongly resist any attack, whether Axis or Allied.

Intelligence reports showed about a battalion and a half of infantry in Fedala, two or three antiaircraft batteries and a coastal gun battery on Cape Fedala, a field artillery battery and two troops of Moroccan Spahis (cavalry). In Casablanca there were believed to be three or four infantry battalions, four troops of Spahis (one mechanized), and four battalions of field artillery.

In devising the tactical plan for the landings, the Division Planning Staff recognized the necessity of destroying, at the earliest possible moment, the powerful enemy batteries on Cape Fedala and north of Pont Blondin. Until this was done, no craft could safely approach shore nor could the port of Fedala be used to supply troops in their push on Casablanca. The 7th Infantry was assigned the mission of capturing the town and cape of Fedala, and neutralizing the guns on the Cape. The 30th Infantry received the mission of attacking and reducing Batterie du Pont Blondin and protecting the rear and left flank of the Division. The 15th Infantry was to land as the Division's reserve regiment, prepared to pass inland on the left of the 7th Infantry and, in company with the latter, take up the drive on Casablanca.

To avert unnecessary fighting in case the French were of a mind to welcome us ashore, President Roosevelt and the Allied High Command broadcast to the people of North Africa at 0100, November 8, before any of our troops had touched foot on shore, telling them to expect us and to stack their arms and point their searchlights in the air if they desired to cooperate with us.

A special mission had also been assigned to Col. W. H. Wilbur, who was to drive to Casablanca in a jeep, protected by a white flag, and offer friendly armistice terms to the French authorities there. United States flag arm bands were worn by all personnel and United States flag transfers were applied to all vehicles so there would be no doubt as to the identity of the assailant-liberators.

On November 7, the day before the landing, the powerful Western Task Force convoy, composed of nearly eighty transports, warships and airplane carriers, turned northeast from a deceptive course laid toward Dakar and began deploying before dark as the groups destined for Safi, Fedala and Port Lyautey made for their respective transport areas.

Some difficulty was encountered by vessels in the 3d Infantry Division convoy (known as Sub-Task Force Brushwood) during the evening of November 7 when two 45-degree turns were made while approaching the transport area, and some vessels misinterpreted the signals for the turn. At 0200 the Division Commander, Maj. Gen. Jonathan W. Anderson, and his staff, aboard the *Leonard Wood*, were informed by the Navy that four ships had moved into the assigned areas, and were assumed to be those bearing the four assault battalions. This later turned out not to be the case, as one of the ships was carrying a reserve unit.

It was now just two hours before H-hour.

The boat-employment plan had envisaged borrowing small boats from transports which did not carry assault battalions and as these ships were then only slowly finding their way into the transport area and sending their landing craft to be loaded in small dribbles, the question of whether the assault waves could be formed in time to hit the beaches at 0400 became critical.

At 0415 word was received from the destroyers marking the line of departure that some of the assault battalions had only one wave present for dispatch to shore. It thus became imperative to set H-hour back in order to give the four battalions concerned time to get at least four waves ashore without interruption.

The new H-hour was set at 0445, and the change announced to all vessels.

The landing plan was fairly simple, and may be generalized as follows:

On the extreme left, or northeast flank of the Division, Company L, 30th Infantry, was to land on Beach Blue 3, beyond Batterie du Pont Blondin, and assist in

its capture by attacking from the rear. The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was to land on Beach Blue 2, immediately southwest of the battery, and assault it from the Fedala side.

Next in order was 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, scheduled to land on Beach Blue 1, proceed inland and seize the remainder of the beachhead line in the 30th Infantry sector.

The 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, had a mission similar to that of its neighbor on the left, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, which was that of advancing inland and seizing the bulk of the regimental beachhead. The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, was prepared to land on Beach Red 2, immediately northeast of Fedala, then turn to the right, capture the town, and reduce the coastal battery on the Cape.

The Reconnaissance Troop and Company L, 7th Infantry, were both to land at Yellow Beach southwest of Fedala. The Reconnaissance Troop was to assist 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, by attacking defenses on the Cape, while Company L was to advance inland and seize a crossing over the Wadi Mellah.

The grinding of ships' engines dies away and the quiet seems strange after so many days at sea, just as the absence of gunfire after days of continuous combat becomes a silence strong enough to be heard in the ears of the battle-weary soldier. The anchor chain rattles loudly.

There is suddenly the sound of many footsteps and voices topside; gear being kicked around; sailors stumbling over Army equipment and cursing all landlubbers (some of whom have spent as much time afloat as ashore for several preceding months); power winches starting up preparatory to lowering landing craft into the water; clanging, apparently meaningless bells; orders shouted in that strange Navy idiom: "Sea detail report to aft steering"; and the sleepy soldiers in green herringbone twill with a United States flag armband around the left sleeve—some with faces painted black—in close company in the stuffy holds, each trying to get his equipment and put it on in the dim blue lamplight; belt, haversack with full field pack, rifle, tommy gun, or some with that strange new weapon already dubbed "bazooka," which was so secret prior to embarkation that no one had the chance to fire it.

Chest bumps rear of the man next higher up on the steel steps, with somebody pressing closely behind and making the blue light a little bluer when a canteen slaps against his face; gripping the handrail on either side for support and aid in pulling the weight of man and equipment upward. There are low-toned imprecations against the restrictions of space with so many soldiers and much equipment packed into that space; constant urging from N.C.O.'s and officers to keep moving



Down the net of the dipping transport and into the landing craft below.

onto the already jammed deck which is milling with silent soldiers and harassed sailors.

Over the rail eventually, slowly, feeling for the rope net first with the feet, then the hands; descent to the waiting boat which is pitching on the high swells and provides a momentary test of balance as each soldier poises on the gunwale before helping hands assist him in getting down to the deck. Soon it's all loaded and somebody yells "Shove off!" The coxswain accelerates the motor a little to clear the steel sides of the ship, then

feeds it a little more gas, and the endless cruising begins.

Presently a thousand men will say to themselves the pertinent cliché "This is it," and shake a little with cold as each downward lurch of the craft propels a cold spray skyward to descend a moment later on the huddled, shivering figures. A chronic whine in the engine rises to a shrill scream over the roar of the engine, and the run to the beach begins.

Correspondent Harold V. (Hal) Boyle, landing with the 30th Infantry, pictured the following scene:*

Our section of the convoy reached its journey's end in a light rain. Darkest Africa was only a dim glow as we pulled away from the transport and circled toward our rendezvous point.

Phosphorescent flecks gleamed briefly in the water and were gone like drowning fireflies when the boats assembled. We turned suddenly toward shore at full speed with motors roaring.

We were in the third assault wave. The first two waves, which preceded us by a matter of moments, landed safely on a four-mile stretch of beach between Cape Fedala and the Pont du Blondin area known as the Riviera of French Morocco.

They had reached shore in the darkness, completely surprising French batteries at each end of the beach. As we neared the coastline, however, a bright searchlight stabbed the skies at Pont du Blondin and then swept seaward, catching our assault wave.

In a bright glare that dazzled the coxswains, we ducked to the bottom of the boat. Machine-gun bullets ripped across the water at us. A naval support boat on our left flank opened fire at the searchlights with .50-caliber machine guns.

We could clearly see, in quick glimpses, the red path of the tracer bullets striking above, below, and to the right of the shining target.

Then came a grinding crash as our landing boat smashed full speed into a coral reef which has helped to win this shore the name of Iron Coast.

The craft climbed futilely, then fell back in the water.

From its ripped front ramp the water climbed to our shoetops, then surged to our knees.

"Every man overboard," said the boat commander.

We plunged from the sides of the settling craft up to our armpits in the surf and struggled to the reef. Waves washed over our heads, doubling the weight of our 60-pound packs with water, but sweeping us nearer safety.

I grabbed an outcropping of coral.

A soldier, there before me, lay on it completely exhausted. He was unable to move and was blocking me. Twice the surf pulled me loose and twice it returned me.

My strength was ebbing fast when another soldier pulled up the man before me and lent me a wet hand to safety.

When I could stand again I saw about scores of dripping soldiers, their legs weary and wide-braced.

Staff Sergeant John Anspacher, my public relations escort, and I discarded our lifebelts and turned toward the

*Harold V. (Hal) Boyle, in an Associated Press release.



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Phosphorescent flecks gleamed briefly in the water and were gone like drowning fireflies when the boats assembled. We turned suddenly toward shore at full speed with motors roaring.

We were in the third assault wave. The first two waves, which preceded us by a matter of moments, landed safely on a four-mile stretch of beach between Cape Fedala and the Pont du Blondin area known as the Riviera of French Morocco.

They had reached shore in the darkness, completely surprising French batteries at each end of the beach. As we neared the coastline, however, a bright searchlight stabbed the skies at Pont du Blondin and then swept seaward, catching our assault wave.

In a bright glare that dazzled the coxswains, we ducked to the bottom of the boat. Machine-gun bullets ripped across the water at us. A naval support boat on our left flank opened fire at the searchlights with .50-caliber machine guns.

We could clearly see, in quick glimpses, the red path of the tracer bullets striking above, below, and to the right of the shining target.

Then came a grinding crash as our landing boat smashed full speed into a coral reef which has helped to win this shore the name of Iron Coast.

The craft climbed futilely, then fell back in the water.

From its ripped front ramp the water climbed to our shoe-tops, then surged to our knees.

"Every man overboard," said the boat commander.

We plunged from the sides of the settling craft up to our armpits in the surf and struggled to the reef. Waves washed over our heads, doubling the weight of our 60-pound packs with water, but sweeping us nearer safety.

I grabbed an outcropping of coral.

A soldier, there before me, lay on it completely exhausted. He was unable to move and was blocking me. Twice the surf pulled me loose and twice it returned me.

My strength was ebbing fast when another soldier pulled up the man before me and lent me a wet hand to safety.

When I could stand again I saw about scores of dripping soldiers, their legs weary and wide-braced.

Staff Sergeant John Anspacher, my public relations escort, and I discarded our lifebelts and turned toward the

*Harold V. (Hal) Boyle, in an Associated Press release.

To avert unnecessary fighting in case the French were of a mind to welcome us ashore, President Roosevelt and the Allied High Command broadcast to the people of North Africa at 0100, November 8, before any of our troops had touched foot on shore, telling them to expect us and to stack their arms and point their searchlights in the air if they desired to cooperate with us.

A special mission had also been assigned to Col. W. H. Wilbur, who was to drive to Casablanca in a jeep, protected by a white flag, and offer friendly armistice terms to the French authorities there. United States flag arm bands were worn by all personnel and United States flag transfers were applied to all vehicles so there would be no doubt as to the identity of the assailant-liberators.

On November 7, the day before the landing, the powerful Western Task Force convoy, composed of nearly eighty transports, warships and airplane carriers, turned northeast from a deceptive course laid toward Dakar and began deploying before dark as the groups destined for Safi, Fedala and Port Lyautey made for their respective transport areas.

Some difficulty was encountered by vessels in the 3d Infantry Division convoy (known as Sub-Task Force Brushwood) during the evening of November 7 when two 45-degree turns were made while approaching the transport area, and some vessels misinterpreted the signals for the turn. At 0200 the Division Commander, Maj. Gen. Jonathan W. Anderson, and his staff, aboard the *Leonard Wood*, were informed by the Navy that four ships had moved into the assigned areas, and were assumed to be those bearing the four assault battalions. This later turned out not to be the case, as one of the ships was carrying a reserve unit.

It was now just two hours before H-hour.

The boat-employment plan had envisaged borrowing small boats from transports which did not carry assault battalions and as these ships were then only slowly finding their way into the transport area and sending their landing craft to be loaded in small dribbles, the question of whether the assault waves could be formed in time to hit the beaches at 0400 became critical.

At 0415 word was received from the destroyers marking the line of departure that some of the assault battalions had only one wave present for dispatch to shore. It thus became imperative to set H-hour back in order to give the four battalions concerned time to get at least four waves ashore without interruption.

The new H-hour was set at 0445, and the change announced to all vessels.

The landing plan was fairly simple, and may be generalized as follows:

On the extreme left, or northeast flank of the Division, Company L, 30th Infantry, was to land on Beach Blue 3, beyond Batterie du Pont Blondin, and assist in

its capture by attacking from the rear. The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was to land on Beach Blue 2, immediately southwest of the battery, and assault it from the Fedala side.

Next in order was 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, scheduled to land on Beach Blue 1, proceed inland and seize the remainder of the beachhead line in the 30th Infantry sector.

The 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, had a mission similar to that of its neighbor on the left, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, which was that of advancing inland and seizing the bulk of the regimental beachhead. The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, was prepared to land on Beach Red 2, immediately northeast of Fedala, then turn to the right, capture the town, and reduce the coastal battery on the Cape.

The Reconnaissance Troop and Company L, 7th Infantry, were both to land at Yellow Beach southwest of Fedala. The Reconnaissance Troop was to assist 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, by attacking defenses on the Cape, while Company L was to advance inland and seize a crossing over the Wadi Mellah.

The grinding of ships' engines dies away and the quiet seems strange after so many days at sea, just as the absence of gunfire after days of continuous combat becomes a silence strong enough to be heard in the ears of the battle-weary soldier. The anchor chain rattles loudly.

There is suddenly the sound of many footsteps and voices topside; gear being kicked around; sailors stumbling over Army equipment and cursing all landlubbers (some of whom have spent as much time afloat as ashore for several preceding months); power winches starting up preparatory to lowering landing craft into the water; clanging, apparently meaningless bells; orders shouted in that strange Navy idiom: "Sea detail report to aft steering"; and the sleepy soldiers in green herringbone twill with a United States flag armband around the left sleeve—some with faces painted black—in close company in the stuffy holds, each trying to get his equipment and put it on in the dim blue lamplight; belt, haversack with full field pack, rifle, tommy gun, or some with that strange new weapon already dubbed "bazooka," which was so secret prior to embarkation that no one had the chance to fire it.

Chest bumps rear of the man next higher up on the steel steps, with somebody pressing closely behind and making the blue light a little bluer when a canteen slaps against his face; gripping the handrail on either side for support and aid in pulling the weight of man and equipment upward. There are low-toned imprecations against the restrictions of space with so many soldiers and much equipment packed into that space; constant urging from N.C.O.'s and officers to keep moving

shore. We had to clamber across a 100-yard patch of spike-sharp coral reef and wade to the shore.

The way those soaked men, a few moments before so weary they could not stand, forgot their fatigue on seeing their objectives is a never-to-be-forgotten example of soldierly fortitude.

Forlorn on a hostile coast, with much of their heavy equipment fathoms under the salt water, they quickly organized and turned to their assigned tasks when we had crossed the beach and flung ourselves beneath a covering grove of pepper trees.

I found I had a two-inch laceration on my right thumb and a lacework of cuts on both hands to remember our soggy trek through the coral.

Our grove quickly became dangerous. We were caught between our own fire and the batteries of Pont du Blondin above us. After one shell showered dirt only a few yards behind us we split away from the beach and turned toward Cape Fedala. . . .

The actual places of landing bore only a faint resemblance to those laid down on paper, due to the blackness of the night, the lack of landmarks, failure of transports to rendezvous at the proper locations, and insufficient training and briefing of small-boat crews. To make matters tougher for the infantry, there was a fairly heavy surf running and many small boats broached and were overturned upon beaching. At some points the boats struck offshore bars, and many went aground on a coral reef which lay between Beaches Red 2 and 3, northeast of Fedala.

In spite of these difficulties infantry units were able to reorganize and proceed to their objectives, with the exception of the two flanking companies, whose experiences will be discussed later. Thorough instruction of all personnel in their missions and duties and determination to get ashore and reach their objectives enabled commanders to collect scattered elements of their units and to accomplish their missions.

The 1st Battalion Landing Team, 7th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Roy E. Moore, started landing at approximately 0500 on the beach and reefs about one mile east of Fedala. Many of the boats struck the reefs separating Beaches Red 2 and 3 with the result that personnel were battered and cut getting ashore on the rocks through the surf, equipment was soaked or lost, and organization of the advance was rendered extremely difficult.

The first two waves apparently landed without opposition, but from that time on the beach was covered intermittently by an enemy searchlight and by artillery and machine-gun fire from Fedala and Pont du Blondin. The bulk of the initial waves went ashore at Beach 3 instead of 2 because of the unfamiliarity of the coxswains with pre-designated landing places together with the other difficulties mentioned.

At about 0530 Colonel Moore's wave (the third) landed on the rocks east of Beach Red 2. After spending a half hour getting from the rocks to the beach he found elements of his two assault companies, A and C. Both companies were ordered to proceed toward their objectives as planned. Advance guards were ordered out to precede the advance of the two companies, and a patrol sent to cover the left flank. The advance on Fedala began.

The battalion had not proceeded far when Company A observed enemy Senegalese troops "skylined" against a ridge. The two assault platoons immediately took cover. When the Senegalese, about a company in strength, became aware of the presence of Americans they became disorganized and were captured without resistance. Company A proceeded rapidly toward Fedala. It entered the town, passing on the way small groups of Senegalese who gave no trouble.

The 1st platoon, Company A, surrounded and entered the Miramar Hotel. It was intent on capturing the members of the German Armistice Commission in Fedala, known to have been staying at the hotel. The Commission had escaped in the confusion, so the platoon gathered what papers were left. A C.I.C. detachment completed the search of three floors of the hotel, finding documents of military value, equipment, and money.

While elements of Company A and the C.I.C. detachment were in the Miramar, friendly naval shells began to fall on the building and at least two direct hits on the hotel served to speed them in rejoining their company, which had proceeded through town and made its way to an area just above a Casino, where the men took cover from the shelling.

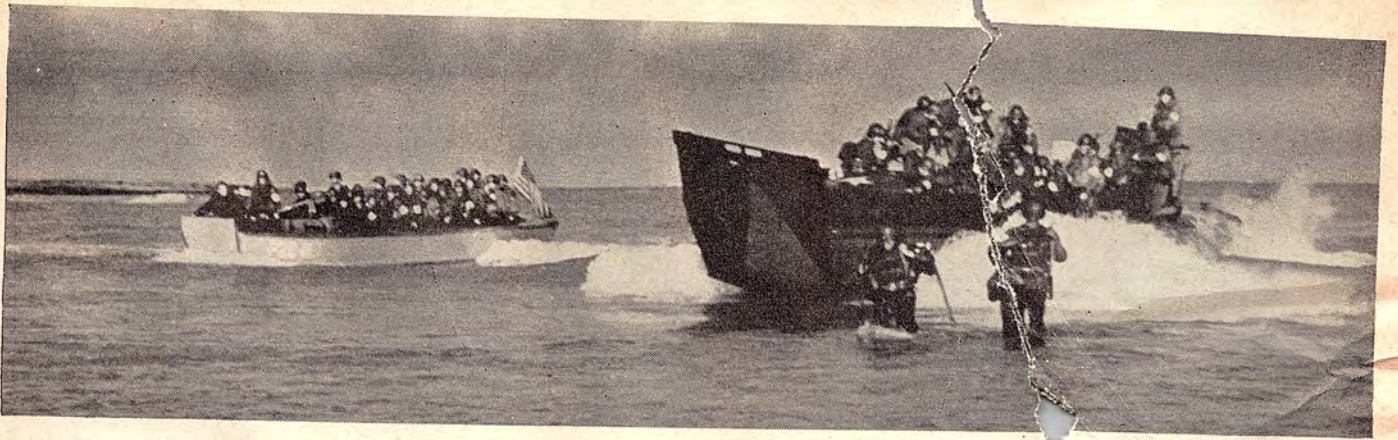
The 3d platoon, Company C, meanwhile, had intercepted the fleeing Commission by stopping their cars.

The members, ten German officers and men, were disarmed and searched.

Colonel Moore arrived at Boulevard Moulay Youssef, the first street in town, shortly after the first elements of the battalion had passed through the town, and encountered a small group of Senegalese who promptly surrendered. He proceeded to his battalion CP near the Miramar Hotel, and at about 0700 his CP group began to arrive. He sent his executive officer, Capt. Everett W. Duval, back to the rear in an attempt to get the Navy to cease firing. Captain Duval found the Assistant Division Commander, Brig. Gen. William W. Eagles, and gave him the information.

General Eagles immediately got in touch with the *Leonard Wood* and sent the following message: "Stop shelling Fedala."

Shortly thereafter Colonel Moore was guided to Gen-



Landing craft carrying waves of reserve troops off the Moroccan coast.

eral Eagles, and there gave him the situation, repeating the request for a cessation of naval fire.

The Division Commander on the *Wood*, fearing an enemy transmission for purposes of deception, asked for a verification on the previous message. General Eagles sent him the following: "For God's sake stop shelling Fedala—you're killing our own men and friendly French groups—the shells are falling all over town—if you stop they will surrender."

The shelling was finally halted although Col. A. H. Rogers, commanding the 30th Infantry, desired to have it continued in order to interdict two light artillery pieces on Cape Fedala which were firing northeast upon Beaches Red 3, Blue 1 and 2.

At about 0900 four tanks of the 2d platoon, Company A, 765th Tank Battalion, went by the Miramar Hotel in the direction of Cape Fedala. Riding on the foremost tank was Colonel Wilbur, who had completed his mission to Casablanca. He had taken command of the tanks with the idea of attacking the Cape and silencing the gun which was giving the landing waves much trouble and causing casualties. He had just come from the beach.

The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry was prepared to attack twenty minutes after the tanks had arrived at a forward position, where the battalion commander had gone to reconnoiter for his attack on the Cape.

At 1030 Capt. C. C. Crall reported to Colonel Moore and said that Company B was in its reserve position.

The fire-control station of the battery on Cape Fedala was on a small hill. Between the hill and Company A was open ground, and the station was well protected with bands of barbed wire. Company A opened fire on it with all weapons.

When some of the wire had been cut one of the light tanks started to go through it, but hit an embankment and turned over. The enemy immediately opened fire, which was returned by the assaulting troops. The station was reached and overcome. There were twenty-two prisoners and approximately five dead.

After going through town, Company C's 1st platoon had moved rapidly, and had advanced to within 150 yards of the battery without opposition, when the naval barrage came down. After about twenty minutes of shelling, Capt. Herman E. Wagner, the company commander, was able to get forward and contact the platoon, telling its leader to withdraw about 300 yards to the rear, where the balance of the company was. When the naval barrage failed to lift, it was decided to move the company to the south, in the vicinity of a racetrack, to avoid further casualties. The company immediately came under direct fire from an enemy anti-aircraft battalion stationed there. The company shifted about to attack this new menace to its security.

The company maneuvered into position and opened fire, and individuals began working their way forward. A lieutenant and a sergeant moved in close with a rocket launcher and fired a few rounds. A white flag was raised, but when the two stood up to take the surrender they were cut down by a fusillade of fire. The company resumed fire on the enemy and shortly thereafter there was an actual surrender. The sergeant and lieutenant died a short time afterward.

At the battery, the tanks had arrived at the fire-control station. The French officer who had been in command insisted on lowering the French flag, so at 1201 Capt. Albert Brown hoisted a United States flag while the United States and French soldiers stood at present arms or hand salute.

Colonel Moore arrived at the station and ordered Captain Brown to prepare for an attack on the tip of the Cape, on which remained some enemy fortifications, and which had to be taken in accordance with the original battalion plan.

Company A was organizing for this attack, to jump off at 1330, preceded by a five-minute mortar concentration of battalion heavy weapons, and to be accompanied by the tanks . . . when a French civilian arrived from the tip of the Cape. He said the French there wished to surrender, providing the rights of prisoners of

war be granted them, and that if United States officer came with him, the French commader would discuss the surrender. Captain Brown went alone, where he found an officer and fifty or sixty men who had already piled their arms and ammunic on the ground and were lined up. Captain Brown sent back for ten men to guard the prisoners. Col. Harry McK. Roper, War Department observer attache to the 3d Division, arrived at this time and ordered a search be made of the surrounding buildings. Tenty more prisoners were taken as a result of this search.

Company B, less the 2d platoon, which had been sent on battalion order to reinforce the pack on the Cape, dug in on its objectives which it had reached much earlier. One squad entered in a fire fight with French marines on a patrol boat mounting a machine gun. The enemy was driven off the boat and retreated. The remainder of the platoon assaulted and captured a warehouse containing arms and ammunition.

Battery A of the 10th Field Artillery Battalion came ashore at 0900, its four gun sections landing on four separate beaches. The 1st section opened fire on sand-bagged emplacements on Cape Fedala shortly thereafter, and was joined at 0930 by the 3d section. The 2d and 4th sections landed in the 30th Infantry area and joined Battery B, 41st Field, until they could be moved into their own battery position. The battery commander and his party had landed at dawn on the reefs between Beaches Red 2 and 3 under artillery and machine-gun fire.

The 75mm guns at the base of the oil tank on the Cape were taken under fire and silenced by one section of Battery A under the direction of Maj. Walter T. "Dutch" Kerwin, S-2 of 3d Infantry Division Artillery, who had come ashore to supervise operation of the shore fire-control parties working with the warships.

In connection with the action of the 1st Battalion, the report of Col. W. H. Wilbur is interesting. Colonel Wilbur came ashore in one of the boats of the 1st Battalion, in an amphibious jeep which had been

equipped with a radio, a United States flag, and a white flag. He carried letters signed by Maj. Gen George S. Patton and approved by the President, directed to the Commanding General of the Casablanca Division.

According to his report he reached land about 0530. Before reaching the beach a searchlight was turned on the boat and a .50-caliber machine gun opened fire. When the beach was reached, the motor of his jeep would not start so he commandeered the next jeep to land, transferred the flags and set off for the line of dunes with his own chauffeur driving the jeep. He contacted the French without being fired upon and drove into Casablanca followed by a French captain in a civilian car.

At Division Headquarters he found the French General Desré and Admiral Ronarc'h, whom he told he had a letter from the President of the United States. Neither would take the letter, both saying that an Admiral Michelier was in command, so he placed it on General Desré's desk and left.

He was then guided by the French captain to the French admiralty, in the attempt to confer with Admiral Michelier. As the party approached the admiralty friendly naval shells, and bombs from United States planes, began falling. Another French captain (naval or army unspecified) stopped him, apparently angry at the shelling and bombing. He refused to admit the colonel to Admiral Michelier's office, continuing to refuse after twice entering the office to consult with the Admiral. When Colonel Wilbur remonstrated he was told to get out.

Colonel Wilbur drove back to Fedala, encountering French sailors whose attitude was very threatening. They passed numerous groups of French soldiers.

He stopped at the command post of 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, and was told that the battalion had come ashore as planned.

He then moved to 3d Division Headquarters which was then established, and sent the following message by voice radio to General Patton: "Letter to the Commanding General Casablanca Division has been deliv-



3d Division soldiers, one of whom carries a United States flag, run across the beaches toward the Fedala shore.



ered to him. I went to the Admiralty in Casablanca, but Admiral Michelier refused to receive me. The French Army does not want to fight. I will report to you on the *Augusta*."

Moving along the beaches in an attempt to find a boat to return him to the *Augusta*, he came to the beach where small boats were being fired on by the gun from the battery on the Cape. He decided to organize an attack to capture the battery.

He commandeered 1st Lt. John M. Rutledge's platoon of light tanks, which was attached to the 7th

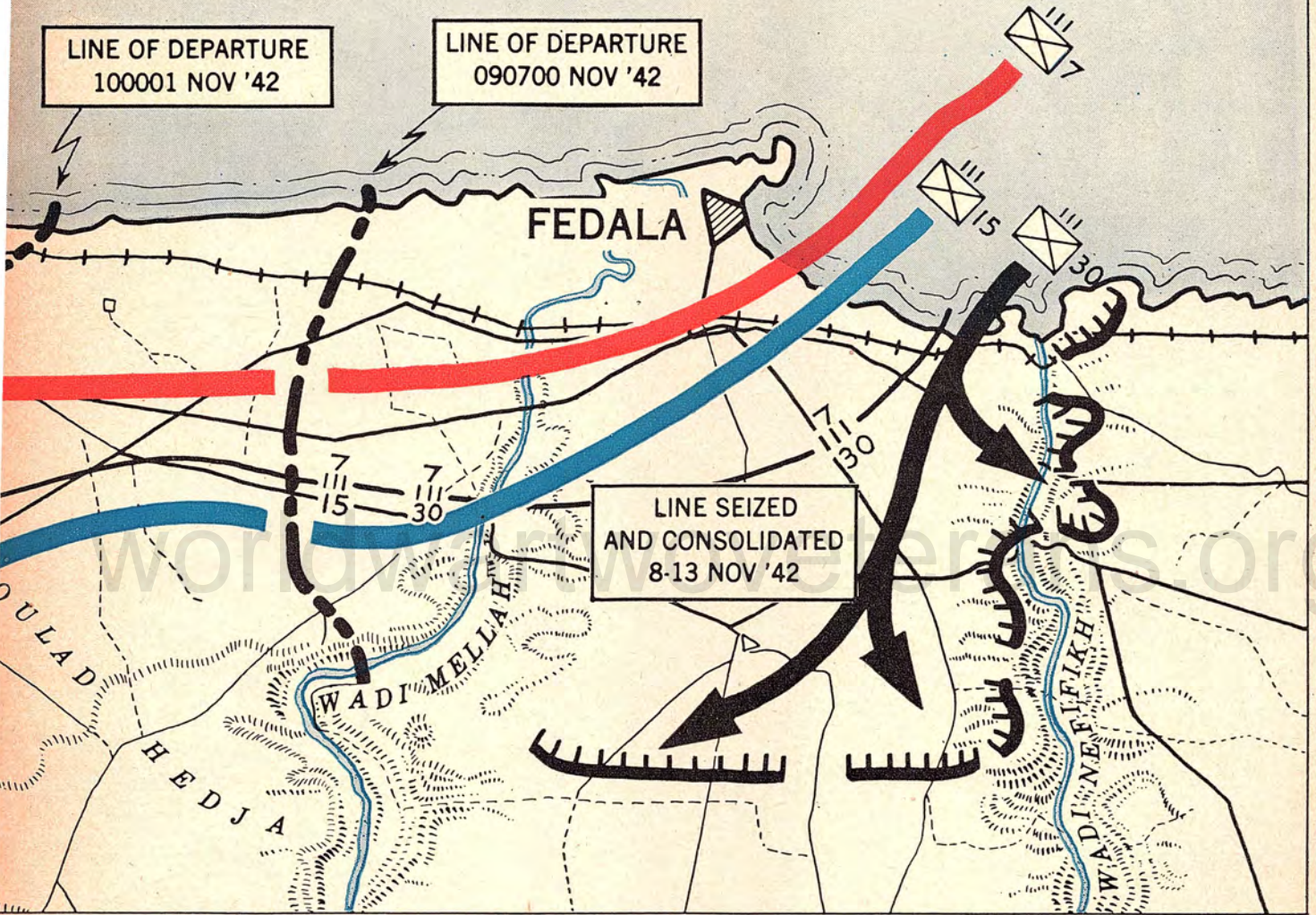
Infantry. Riding on the leading tank, he encountered Col. Robert C. Macon, regimental commander of the 7th, whom he informed he intended to guide the tanks into Fedala. He shortly thereafter contacted Colonel Moore, and when Company A took the battery he was still riding the tank.

For his participation in the battle of Fedala and the delivery of the President's letter, Colonel Wilbur later received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The request for cessation of naval fire, once confirmed, was ordered by the Navy. The additional shell-

O C E A N

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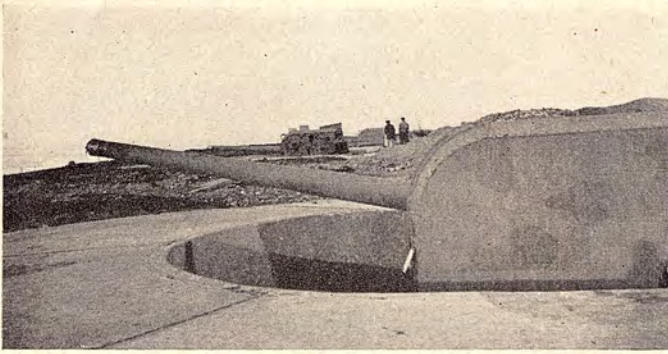
ing in the vicinity of Cape Fedala was done by one destroyer which apparently had not received the cease-fire order.

The 2d Battalion Landing Team, 7th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Rafael L. Salzmann, was less fortunate even than the 1st Battalion in the location at which it was landed.

Companies E and F, the two assault companies, were landed on a beach east of the Mansouriah railroad station, about twelve kilometers east of their assigned objective, against no opposition but on rough,

rocky reefs which damaged many boats and caused much equipment to be lost. After organizing, the companies moved west along the railroad toward Fedala. They crossed the Wadi Mellah and continued on toward their objectives under occasional strafings by single enemy aircraft which were, however, kept off by rifle fire. At 1430 they were met by the battalion commander north of Fedala and led to their initial objectives which were the road and railroad crossings over the Wadi Mellah.

Company G was scheduled to land at Beach Red 3



A close-up of one of the 128mm coast defense guns at Pont du Blondin.

in battalion reserve. Instead, part of the third wave landed on a beach northeast of Fort Blondin, and the remainder landed farther to the east and out of sight of the right group. Part of the fourth wave landed at Beach Red 3 and the remainder at Beach Red 2 with one squad near Fort Blondin.

Those who landed nearest Fort Blondin—four squads of Company G and a section of heavy machine guns and a section of mortars of Company H, proceeded to attack the fort. Their landing had been made under naval gunfire and some fire from the fort. When the naval gunfire ceased, the fire from the fort was very weak. Under the covering fire of the heavy weapons, the small unit led by Colonel Salzmänn personally attacked the fort. They captured some prisoners and turned them over to the 30th Infantry, which had attacked and entered the fort first from the other side.

After Colonel Salzmänn had conferred briefly with Maj. Edner J. Nelson, executive of 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, who was in the fort with other personnel of the 30th, the elements of the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry withdrew to move to their own objectives on the Wadi Mellah.

The 3d platoon of Company G less one squad, landed at Beach Red 2. The platoon leader knew that part of the battalion's objective was the railroad crossing over the Wadi Mellah, so he led his platoon there, in advance of any elements of our forces. He was joined by a section of Company H's machine guns. Upon arriving at the crossing it was necessary to drive out detachments of the enemy.

The entire battalion was on its objectives by 1700.

Battery B, 10th Field Artillery Battalion, was landed at 1600 and went into position west of the Wadi Mellah in the area of the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry.

The first wave of 1st Battalion Landing Team, 30th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Fred W. Sladen, Jr., hit the beach at 0510 and was not detected by the enemy. The second wave three minutes later received machine-gun fire, probably "overs" from Fort Blondin aimed

at 2d Battalion units landing to the east. The third wave, which hit the beach at 0535, was illuminated before landing by the searchlight on the point and was machine-gunned from the same place. The light was shot out at 0530 by assault boats and scout boats.

In spite of a lack of small boats, all rifle companies were ashore by 0600. Most of the boats landed on Beach Blue, but part of Company C and part of Headquarters Company were landed east of the battery at Pont du Blondin. Colonel Sladen and some of the shore party landed east of the beach on the rocky point. The boat was wrecked and everyone had to swim ashore. Part of Company D landed on the reef west of the beach. In spite of the mixup, boat groups quickly rejoined their companies and all units pushed rapidly toward their objectives.

At 0700 a squad from Company B; the 2d platoon, Company C; and one section of the 2d platoon and a section of the mortar platoon, Company D, halted an electric train moving toward Rabat, about two kilometers west of the Wadi Nefifikh. Seventy-five French military, naval, and air corps personnel were made prisoners. At 0800 identification and information from these prisoners were obtained by the regimental interrogation team.

By 0830 Companies A and B had reached the Division objective on the high ground southeast of the beach and began organizing it for defense. During the day Companies C and D and other elements of the battalion established bivouac areas, established a roadblock on Route No. 1 at St. Jean de Fedala, set up antiaircraft and antitank security, and organized the command post near Route No. 1, southeast of Fedala. Nearly all units were subjected to artillery fire, strafing and bombing on their way to objectives.

During the morning a Company C roadblock halted a car and captured three French colonels who were attempting to escape.

The first of the four gun sections of Battery A, 41st Field Artillery Battalion, landed shortly before 0700 and was put into position 500 yards off the beach. Its first four rounds were fired at the Batterie du Pont Blondin. Another round was fired at the electric train heading into the 1st Battalion sector, hitting behind it and uprooting a rail.

After bringing up ammunition and establishing an observation post, the battery began adjusting on the Cape Fedala battery, but ceased firing when the Navy opened up on the same target.

The experience of the 2d Battalion Landing Team, 30th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard, was similar to the 1st Battalion's in getting its personnel away from the transport, because none of the boats scheduled to report to the transport *Dickman*

had arrived by 0430. The reassignment of some personnel and shifting of equipment which was necessary as a result of the shortage of boats took considerable time.

The first 30th Infantry unit to set foot on Moroccan shores was the assault wave of Company B, commanded by Capt. Charles C. Nalle, which landed on the west side of Beach Blue 2. As this company and succeeding waves were coming ashore—at about 0500—a searchlight from Fort Blondin came on, shining in the air. The troops had been informed that a searchlight pointed at a 90-degree angle and held stationary would indicate that the French units at that point were friendly and ready to surrender without fighting, but this soon proved to be false. (It is believed the French placed the light in the air because they thought the landing boats' roar was that of airplane motors.)

Just before the second wave landed on the east bank of the Wadi Nefikh at 0530 the Fort Blondin searchlight came on again and this time was directed at Beaches Blue 1 and 2, and at advancing landing boats. Naval support boats and several landing boats directed machine-gun fire at the light which was destroyed in short order.

A few minutes later, as Company C's assault wave was debarking and as units of the 3d platoon and weapons platoon, Company B, were wading the Wadi toward its bank, machine-gun fire from Fort Blondin began crisscrossing the beach.

Among the units which were finally organized for the attack were the bulk of Company F, under Capt. Walter A. Cromer, most of the 3d platoon and mortar section of Company E, led by 2d Lt. Jesse G. Ugalde, together with a squad from Company F, all three coordinated and led by Capt. Mackenzie E. Porter, commander of Company F; a boat group of Company G under 1st Lt. C. L. Elmore, and the 1st mortar section of Company H, the mortar platoon of which was commanded by 1st Lt. Charles W. Morse, Jr.

As the bulk of Captain Cromer's company organized and began advancing for the assault on the fort from the east, heavy naval gunfire opened on the fort, with "overs," "shorts," and "wides" hitting all around the various advancing troops of the 2d Battalion LT-30. Heaviest casualties from this fire were suffered by Company F troops—six killed, three wounded. (First 3d Division soldier to die in action in World War II was Pvt. Earl F. Takala of Company F, who was killed in this barrage. In his honor the Division's bivouac camp at Rabat, and later another bivouac at Port Lyautey, were named Camp Takala.)

Throughout this prolonged naval fire and the .50-caliber machine-gun fire which opened the assault on Fort Blondin, Capt. Elmer Egleston, 2d Battalion surgeon, and 1st Lt. James P. Flynn, battalion chaplain,

were doing more than their duty of finding and caring for the wounded. Both officers encouraged the men to go forward, take proper cover, break up huddled groups, and find their parent units. In general they displayed qualities of courageous leadership that stand above the ordinary.

When the naval fire let up slightly—toward 0700—Captain Cromer organized his men for an assault from the northeast. At about the same time Captain Porter, having his own heavy weapons company emplaced, obtained permission from Maj. Edner J. Nelson, 2d Battalion executive officer, to organize a scattered group of disorganized and officerless men from Companies E and F into a three-pronged assault on the fort from the west and southwest. Meanwhile Captain Porter's 81mm mortar section, led by Sgt. Franklin H. McNeeley, from a position south of the Fedala-Mansouriah highway bridge was lobbing shells into the fort. Before receiving the "cease fire" order—when advancing foot troops were observed within 200 yards of the fort—the section had lobbed seventeen shells into the battery. Observing and sensing of bursts was extremely difficult due to the simultaneous fall of naval gunfire. That the shells had their effect, however, was beyond doubt, and it was believed that one or more was responsible for destroying the fort fire-control mechanism.

In addition to this shelling, Battery A, 41st Field Artillery Battalion, from its position in the 1st Battalion LT-30 sector, fired four 75mm howitzer shells into the fort during the same period.

Maj. Robert D. Henriques of the British Army, an observer attached to Western Task Force, materially aided the organization of the assault from the southwest, for which important action he was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

As Captain Porter's group was preparing to hit from the southwest, Captain Cromer's leading elements reached the open ground about fifty yards west of the buildings at Chergui, and were fired on by a machine gun placed near the Fort Blondin entrances. One man was wounded. The company's mortar section was then placed in position near the Chergui restaurant.

At 0700 Captain Cromer sent up a green star parachute flare and at about the same time, from the other side, Captain Porter ordered two yellow smoke grenades set off, both men attempting to signal the Navy to cease firing on the fort, in order that the final assault might begin. The naval spotter planes either failed to see the signals, didn't recognize them, or chose to ignore them as being contrary to their own orders. At any rate the fire did not cease. Nevertheless Captains Porter and Cromer ordered the advance to continue.

At 0715, as the detachment led by Porter was approaching from the southwest, the Navy ceased firing.

Small-arms fire punctuated the continuing advance. At the same time Company F's 60mm mortars opened fire on the building from which the machine-gun fire was issuing. After four rounds had plunked on the target a white flag on a rifle was thrust from the window.

As the white flag appeared, Captain Porter entered the fort, followed immediately by Lieutenant Ugalde and his men from Companies E and F. The French commander and his men came into the court, their hands high in the air, and surrendered to Porter. The time was 0730.

Men from Companies E and F were immediately ordered to remove enemy personnel from the four gun positions and gather all prisoners in one spot in the center of the emplacement, which was done. The commanding officer and his seventy-one remaining enlisted men, including four wounded, were made prisoners.

Major Nelson arrived at 0740, followed closely by Cromer and the bulk of his company, together with Lieutenant Gibson's 3d Platoon, Company E. The 2d platoon, Company E, which was also heading for the fort at the time of the final assault, stopped its advance when the white flag was raised and took up a defensive position east of the highway at once. At the same time a Company G boat group, consisting of a machine-gun squad and 3d platoon rifle squad, both led by Lieutenant Elmore, which had participated in the firing on the fort, entered the emplacement.

About fifteen minutes after Major Nelson's arrival, eight enlisted men from 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, entered, followed by Lt. Col. Rafael Salzmänn. Colonel Salzmänn, who spoke fluent French, conversed freely with the defeated fort commander and conveyed many of the commander's requests for burying the French dead, caring for the wounded, and disposing of effects to Major Nelson, who was then in charge of the battery.

At about 0755, just after Colonel Salzmänn stepped into the fort, Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard, 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, commander, came on the scene and found the fort being organized for defense by Captain Cromer. Captain Eggleston, Battalion Surgeon, was caring for the French wounded. Colonel Bernard thereupon directed Cromer to take charge of the position, the 3d platoon, Company E, to rejoin its parent unit, and the 2d platoon to take up a defensive position along the west bank of the Wadi Nefifikh south of the Fedala-Mansouriah highway.

A portion of Company E had gone up the Wadi Nefifikh looking for a garrison which was thought to be located at the rear of Fort Blondin on the east side of the Fedala-Mansouriah highway. After searching the area thoroughly, and being showered with "overs" from the Navy shelling of Fort Blondin, the patrol found the garrison to be no longer there. Two detachments were

sent out to take over the Moroccan railroad and Route Principale highway bridges in case Company G had not already done so.

The landing of Company L, 7th Infantry and the 3d Reconnaissance Troop, which were to have come in together on Beach Yellow 2 at H-hour, was one of several instances in which units were entirely unable to perform their missions because of the time and place of landing. Because their transport was hours late in reaching the transport area, these units were not put into landing craft until approximately 0500, fifteen minutes after they should have been on the beach. Dawn was breaking before they finally approached their landing place. As they came in toward the beach, however, they got caught in heavy naval gunfire—believed to have originated with French cruisers at Casablanca—firing at our warships, and the small-boat crews circled and headed back.

The 3d Reconnaissance Troop was on the water approximately seven hours before being returned to their transport, where they remained until the evening of November 10, taking no part in the action. The fact that they would have been landed by daylight when all chance of surprise had been lost would have greatly reduced their value in the fight for Cape Fedala.

The same lack of surprise applied to Company L, 30th Infantry, which finally landed at Beach Blue 2 south of Pont Blondin at about 1030, in roughly the same spot where the 2d Battalion had landed earlier. The company rejoined its battalion, which was in regimental reserve near the Villa Velozza, immediately after landing.

The 3d Battalion Landing Team, 7th Infantry, commanded by Maj. E. H. Cloud, began landing on regimental order at about 0930 and went into assembly area southeast of Fedala near the Regimental command post.

Company I landed at about 0815 on Beach Red 3 under fire of a battery of French 75's. In about an hour they had assembled and reorganized.

Company K also landed at Beach Red 3.

Company M landed at the wrong beach in the face of heavy artillery fire and was just beyond the line of dunes when an enemy plane dived and strafed it. The company reached the prearranged coordinating line at about 1000 or 1015.

At about 1100 the battalion, less Company L, was assembled and within the next two hours the missing company had rejoined. The battalion, with Company L as advance guard, moved down Route Secondaire to the Wadi Mellah. Company L secured the high ground in front of the highway bridge over the Wadi, and Company I secured the bridge.

Orders were then received from the regimental com-

mander to proceed south toward Casablanca and go into assembly area prior to continuing the attack at daylight. The battalion reached the assembly area at about 0130, and security was established by all companies.

3d Battalion Landing Team, 30th Infantry, commanded by Maj. Charles E. Johnson, landed troops as follows:

0830: Battalion commander and headquarters	Red 2
0930: Company M	Red 3 & Blue 1
1030: Company K	Red 3
1030: Company I	Red 2 & 3

The battalion commander with his headquarters personnel marched to the predesignated assembly area in the vicinity of the landing beach and across the Wadi Nefikih from Batterie du Pont Blondin. By 1130 the other three companies had arrived. (Company L, commanded by Capt. Paul E. Doherty, had received permission to land on Beach Blue 2 instead of Blue 3 about 1030.) The battalion was intact, dug in, and ready for a move in any direction.

While in the boats and on the beaches the battalion was subjected to intermittent artillery fire from Cape Fedala, strafing, and aerial bombardment, which resulted in a few casualties. It later received another bombing and several strafings.

When the situation in Fedala became sufficiently clarified around noon November 8, it was decided to land the 15th Infantry Regimental Landing Group, commanded by Col. Thomas H. Monroe, on Beaches Red 1 and 2 as rapidly as possible. The 1st Battalion Landing Team, which received orders to land on Beach Red 2, was actually put ashore on several different beaches because of the unfamiliarity of the naval coxswains with the shore line. Immediately upon landing the battalion was directed to move to, and hold, the bridge by which Route No. 1 crossed the Wadi Mellah.

The battalion, maintaining contact with the 7th Infantry on its right, moved into an assembly area east of the bridge, and sent outposts across the bridge with the mission of holding the crossing. This was done just prior to darkness November 8.

At 1600 Colonel Monroe was directed to land the remaining element of the regiment as rapidly as possible. That evening the remainder of the landing group was landed in darkness all along the beaches from Fedala northward.

In contrast to the token resistance or quick capitulation on the part of most of the land forces resisting our invasion, the French naval forces, as expected, put up a wicked, last-ditch fight.

John A. Moroso, III, Associated Press, described it

from a grandstand seat aboard the light cruiser *Augusta*, General Patton's command ship, in a dispatch dated November 8:*

The audacious and well-trained Vichy French naval force today staged a furious, reckless and soul-searing battle against American ships attempting to land troops at Fedala, French Morocco.

The American force, the greatest of its kind in history, had crossed the Atlantic without casualty. With more than 100 ships and thousands of men determined to open the long-awaited second front we waded through Axis submarines.

Here is the battle as I logged it until the order to cease fire reached the crew:

11:25 p. m.—We arrived at the designated area for operations in Stygian darkness and a slight rain squall. We are surprised that all navigation lights are on.

11:45 p. m.—At Casablanca and Fedala the lights go out suddenly and village blacks out. We are six miles offshore and we make several whistle signals. They know something is wrong.

12:05 a. m.—Our first motorboat leaves the transport and we start loading troops into landing barges.

4:45 a. m.—Destroyers go almost to the beach to help barges land. The swell is heavy and some boats are damaged. Overhead the big and little dipper and Orion stand out brilliantly as the Rev. Father O'Leary of Boston offers prayer. Lt. Comdr. George K. Williams of Salt Lake City gives last-minute instructions.

4:55 a. m.—Our troops machine-gun a searchlight that appears on the beach. Red tracer bullets scream through the night air. Minutes later a destroyer machine-guns and then shells the French tanker *Lorraine* which disobeyed a command to stop. The *Lorraine* fires back and then gives up to a boarding party. Hell starts popping off in the dark.

5:47—The captain asks for the range on the powerful Chergui battery.

6:00—Heavy firing is heard dead ahead.

6:12—Chergui opens with a terrific cannonading and our ships reply instantly. The sky fills with flame and smoke.

6:20—A destroyer says Chergui has his range and he will need help. We give him plenty after closing to 11,500 yards.

6:35—We give Chergui rapid fire that obliterated our target in smoke and dust.

6:45—We give Chergui a round of drum-firing. An oil storage tank and two buildings break into fire, our plane spotter tells us. Three of four guns have been knocked out. Suddenly I note that our landing boats, loaded with soldiers, are making their way ashore in the midst of this inferno.

6:53—Our plane reports the fourth gun smashed. Three minutes later two of their guns reopen fire. The Army reports no resistance was offered to landing.

7:01—Chergui is silent again and we close to 10,000 yards

*John A. Moroso, III, Associated Press, Nov. 8.

making fifteen knots. Later, one gun puts a shell 400 yards from us and water cascades skyward.

7:08—Seventeen American planes approach us.

7:10—Scores of landing boats are now in the water, heading shoreward. We fire fifty rounds in five minutes.

7:18—Eleven friendly planes zoom over us. We need them because shells are coming closer and submarines have been detected.

7:21—A tremendous salvo shatters the glass on our bridge.

7:25—Chergui has been silent five minutes, Lt. Eugene Bertram, senior aviator from Spokane, Wash., reports.

7:30—Our planes are bombing and strafing Chergui. Thirteen Grummans, United States Navy fighter planes, join them.

7:32—The French battleship *Jean Bart* begins a long-range duel with one of the battle wagons. Huge flashes spring up and the *Jean Bart* takes a few pot shots at us from a distance of twelve miles. More glass shatters on the bridge.

7:36—My head is reeling from the blast.

7:39—They have fixed the gun at Chergui and are shooting at us again. We pound them brutally and in two minutes score a direct hit.

7:41—These Frenchmen are tough. Two of Chergui's guns are going and we silence them with a round of rapid fire.

7:58—One of our destroyers fires at one of our planes and we warn him.

7:59—Our starboard 5-inch batteries blast away at French planes strafing soldiers on the beach and men in small boats.

8:00—Planes begin attacking transports and all hell breaks loose. Right in the middle of this those obstinate Frenchmen at Chergui get another gun going.

8:05—We put up two more planes for spotting.

8:10—They report Chergui is silenced.

8:14—The planes tell us the location of the French anti-aircraft guns ashore. We blaze away at them.

8:19—The French ships escape from Casablanca under a smoke screen. We are ordered to destroy two cruisers coming our way and steam away at twenty-five knots.

8:28—Our destroyer screen reports the cruisers are firing on them. Most of us are scared as hell, but we all try to hide it.

8:35—We fire two batteries at the cruisers. We hear that some French ships have headed for the open sea.

8:50—We make contact with the French cruisers. Shells begin to fall all around us and we and our flagship give them plenty. The cruiser lookouts report one French cruiser is hit and possibly the other.

8:59—After a furious action the Frenchman reverses his course toward Casablanca. We speed up to thirty knots to chase them. Right in the middle of this the Army sends us this message: "Admiral refused to see me. I delivered message to him at Casablanca. French army does not wish to fight. Citizens welcome us and hold us in high esteem." We learned later that only the French navy wants to continue the battle and they fight like mad dogs. A shell plunks into the water twenty feet from me.

9:05—We fire away with renewed energy and our lookout reports we have twenty-three hits on one cruiser. She is smoking, but continues to fire at us. She is doing a fine job. We hear later that both the cruisers we have engaged are beached, but this is not confirmed.

9:30—A submarine is spotted off our starboard bow, but the captain tells us to ignore him. We are zigzagging at thirty-two knots, too fast for him to hit us—we hope. A few minutes later another submarine is sighted to port.

9:35—We are ordered to return to Fedala to protect our transports. This makes us mad as hell.

9:49—We are told French destroyers are coming out of Casablanca. Our orders told us to destroy them. Our battleship smacked a French cruiser, setting her ablaze.

10:01—We are doing a wonderful job, radio message says.

10:09—Shells appear from nowhere. Their bursts are a peculiar magenta color. I think we are gone this time. Shells whistle over my head. They are shortening range now. They have us. That last one hit about twenty feet away to port. We turn. Their range is short by 400 yards. We open with rapid fire and straddle a destroyer behind a smoke screen. These cagey Frenchmen are hiding in the sun and all we have to fire at is flashes. They are giving us fits.

10:20—Their subs are in on us, firing torpedoes. We hit a destroyer as a torpedo goes by our port side.

10:25—Two French submarines have periscopes up. Five torpedoes head at us. Watching their wakes, we reel into a zigzag and luckily go in between them.

10:29—They straddled us again and we can't see them. We go into furious rapid fire. Our ship is reeling from our own gunfire. I suddenly notice a number of birds swimming in the water. They are totally unaware of the battle. How I envy them.

10:47—Lookout reports periscope to port. Boy, how we could use some planes. They must be somewhere else. Somebody reports a torpedo wake, but we are too busy with the destroyers to watch it.

10:57—A battleship is coming to help us. We are going to box in those destroyers and let them have it from all sides. Our guns thunder steadily and my head is a mass of pain.

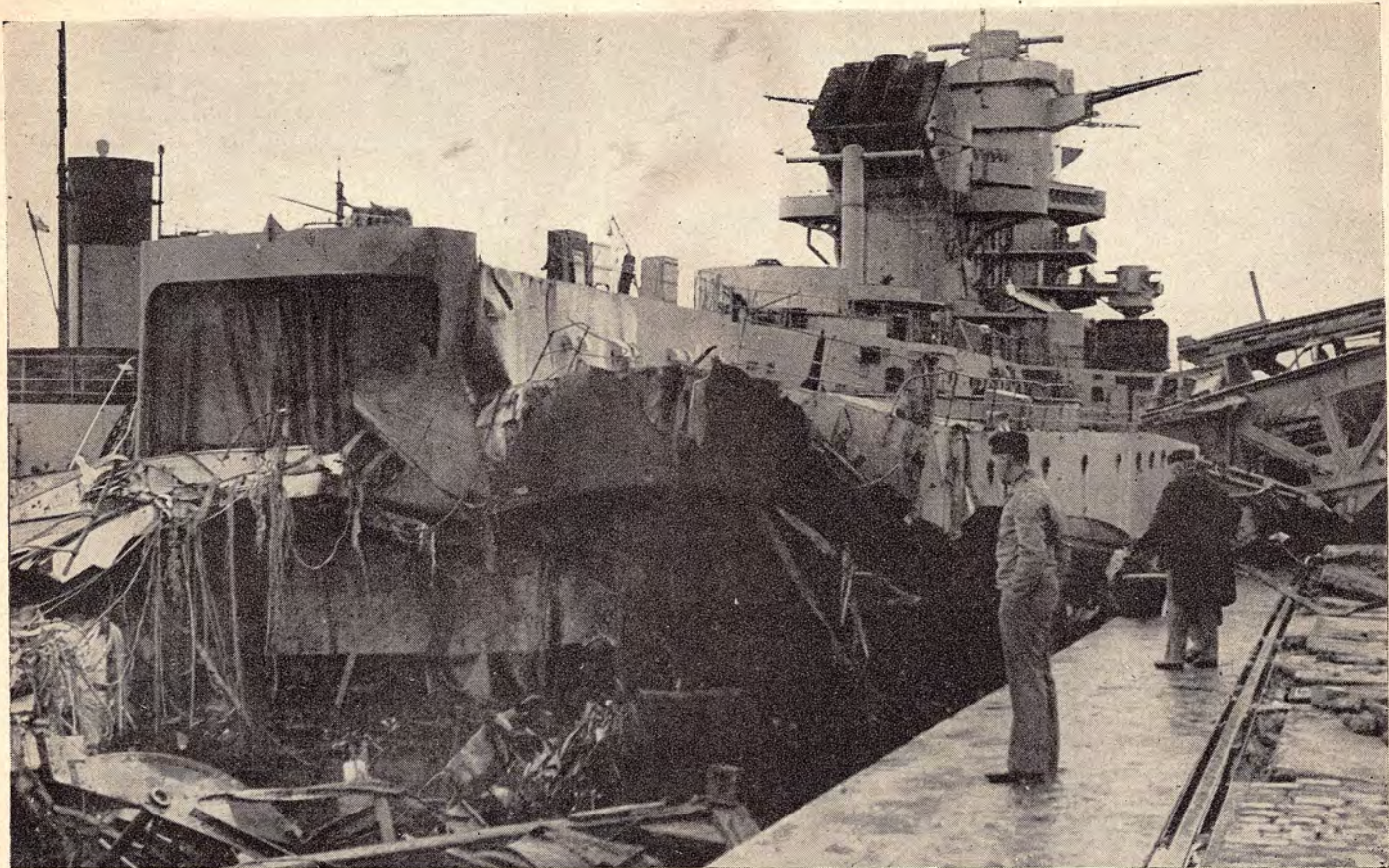
11:30—The French ships appear to be running away. Thank God we are returning to Fedala to guard transports.

11:40—From ashore the Army sends word our officers are conferring with the French on whether naval gunfire must cease during an armistice. I run down to the captain's cabin—where I am living. I find blood all about. However, our four wounded are not in critical shape.

12:17 p.m.—We scatter from general quarters. We had been firing since six o'clock this morning, and have had no food. Our fliers return and tell us how we pounded the Chergui battery to pieces.

12:55 p.m.—The French navy is ignoring the armistice at Fedala. Two cruisers and two destroyers just left Casablanca and are heading for us. In addition a French bomber attacked the beach during the armistice.

1:08—We contact the French squadron and blaze away. It turns back toward Casablanca—and lets us have it. Our



The French battleship *Jean Bart* in Casablanca harbor after having been dive-bombed by United States Navy planes.

flagship falls back and we find ourselves fighting all four ships. The bursts are coming nearer and nearer.

1:30—Our flagship gets in the battle. Our planes depth-charge a submarine off our port bow. The French are using submarines with their surface ships, but they have had no luck. Some Navy dive-bombers appear and we shout with joy. One of the French destroyers is reported dead in the water. Our dive-bombers roar in on the French ships and one of the destroyers is hit.

2:03—Planes report that the French cruiser is being towed toward Casablanca and fifteen minutes later the planes tell us a French destroyer has been beached inside the harbor. We believe we hit at least three ships.

2:26—The Army tells us Fedala has been taken and that minesweepers have been ordered to clear out the French minefields. The officers and I limp below for coffee and sandwiches.

3:20—French bombers attack our soldiers on the beach.

4:27—We don't even get up when planes drop depth charges off the starboard bow. We want to rest and eat. We expect a night riddled with submarine attacks and French planes at dawn.

The situation at midnight was generally as follows:

The Division and its attachments had succeeded in landing all the important units of the three regimental landing groups, and were in the process of bringing in the Armored Battalion Combat Team; had seized all

its initial objectives but had stopped short of its D-day objectives because of lack of transportation for moving troops and supplies; and had brought ashore sufficient supply and control personnel to make possible continued coordinated operations the following day.

The biggest disappointment, amounting almost to a catastrophe, which threatened the entire operation was the realization that because of the terrific undertow and heavy surf all plans for unloading equipment and supplies over beaches were absolutely impossible of accomplishment. Hundreds of landing craft were beached, only to find that retraction was impossible. LCM's and Higgins boats were turned end-over-end by the raging surf. The morning of November 9 disclosed a scene on the beaches of waste and destruction that was symbolic of total war. The obvious solution to unloading was the maximum use of the port of Fedala. This was exploited to the utmost.

It was believed not much resistance could be expected from ground forces during the advance on Casablanca, but there was good reason to believe that all naval elements in Casablanca, including ships based there, marines, coast defense guns, and anti-aircraft batteries would provide stiff and determined resistance.

Orders were issued to all regiments as follows: 7th Infantry was to advance toward Casablanca on the right,

15th Infantry on the left; Division reserve was 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry. The remainder of the 30th Infantry stayed on its objectives of November 8 and performed local missions.

The 7th Infantry jumped off at 0730, the 15th at 0700. Both continued without opposition until halted by Division order, the 15th at 1100, the 7th around 1400. This order was issued because of the extremely critical supply situation caused by lack of transportation, and it was not desired to over-extend the supply lines. The advance was to continue at 2400 that day. The 7th was to reach a coordinating line on the outskirts of Casablanca at 0700 November 10. The 15th was to move onto high ground extending from Bled Oulad Cheikh eastward through Hill 92 and high ground in the vicinity of Oulad el Melouk.

A description of the march that night, written by the commanding officer of Company H, 7th Infantry, Capt. Gilbert C. St. Clair, is presented here to illustrate the condition of most of the men at this time:

... In column of companies, at 0001 of the 10th of November Company H was again on the move; tired men shifted their loads and groaned very quietly; the silence in which the battalion moved was worthy of real veterans; and the knowledge that we were approaching the objective, with the probability of real action and, incidentally, expending a good part of all that heavy ammunition we had been carrying since early morning of the 8th, encouraged every one.

Tired legs stretched out, bent backs straightened, deep breaths could be heard; and across the Bled (open country) toward Casablanca marched the battalion. After a while we were on the smooth pavement of a highway.

In the darkness of that night, with a thin rain coming down persistently, and a chill wind that penetrated to the very bones, no man but could appreciate the smooth walking of a surfaced road, after all that stumbling, shuffling, sinking, on plowed fields, and climbing walls and fences.

All the length of the column, long as it was, and wide, no sound could be heard other than a low rustling of shoe leather meeting asphalt, but off the front and to right and left, hundreds of dogs howled a continuous alert, keeping up with the column, never quite dying down, gaining in volume occasionally.

Periodically, almost monotonously, the batteries of Ain El Diab roared, accompanied by a great flash. The rush of wind and the scream of shells passed over our heads. After a while the men forgot to duck. That instinctive shrinking of heads into shoulders had not been due to fear but to unfamiliarity with the sound.

Now, from time to time, a new noise could be heard; a man would stumble, fall forward on his face, get up, and try to pick up his load again, but though the spirit was strong, endurance had reached its limit. This was particularly true in this company. Heavy machine guns and the corresponding load of ammunition, heavy mortars and their heavy shells, were never meant to be man-carried day after

day, night after night, by soldiers who had their own individual weapons.

They kept up, and they fell, not once, but many times on that march to Ain Sebah, and always they got up again and walked some more, and were grateful for the rests that had to come more and more frequently now.

As the order to advance was being issued around 2300, patrols of the 15th Infantry encountered enemy patrols south of the battalion positions and encountered an enemy defense line organized north of the Tit Mellil crossroad. The commanding officer informed Division Headquarters that a night march across country on unfamiliar ground against hostile automatic weapons and organized defense would be extremely hazardous. He was ordered to hold up until dawn.

The 7th Infantry, despite intensified shelling from land and naval artillery, commenced moving at 0030 and moved steadily until shortly after daylight, when hostile artillery and small arms halted the advance of all but Company L, which continued in the face of fire received from small enemy forces.

During the morning platoons of Companies I and K, 7th Infantry, attacked and captured a battery of anti-aircraft guns located about 1200 yards southeast of Point Oukacha.

The 2d Battalion, on the left, had moved more rapidly during the approach march, but a half hour prior to daylight began receiving machine-gun, rifle and artillery fire from front and flanks. A short time later the battalion commander ordered the elements in contact to move to the left (south) flank. The companies became somewhat disorganized, largely as a result of losing the commanding officer of Company E, who was wounded, and the commanding officer of Company F, who was killed. The battalion commander led the bulk of the battalion to the south, clearing out hostile riflemen and a number of machine guns en route, to high ground near Route Secondaire No. 106. Leading elements of the battalion, principally two platoons of Company E and one of Company G, remained in contact with the enemy all day. During the progress of the morning one hostile artillery piece was captured, its crew destroyed, and the crews of two other field pieces driven from their guns.

The platoon of Company G undertook to envelop the hostile left flank but was unable to advance over the open terrain. It later withdrew to a line formed to provide protection for the 10th Field Artillery Battalion guns in the rear.

As soon as the situation of the 2d Battalion was clarified, the 1st Battalion was directed to attack, with tank and artillery support, in the previous zone of action of the 2d Battalion and to capture the military barracks



The United States flag waves over a sand dune on the coast of French Morocco where 3d Division soldiers secure the beach

area on the outskirts of Casablanca. It crossed the line of departure at 1200 and at darkness held a line immediately in front of the barracks area, which was held during the night.

The 15th Infantry, meanwhile, had jumped off at dawn, and immediately encountered enemy positions. Enemy rifle and machine-gun fire was heavy; it was estimated that the hostile positions were held by a squadron of cavalry, organized in depth, with machine-gun crossfire covering their front.

Under covering artillery, machine-gun, and 81mm mortar fire, enemy positions were finally enveloped and the hostile forces withdrew to the south and west of Tit Mellil. The enemy, as they withdrew, mounted horses which had been held in the rear. A tentative enemy attempt to establish a line was discouraged by accurate long range machine-gun and 37mm antitank fire, employing high-explosive shell. Thereafter enemy cavalry withdrew toward Casablanca and contact was lost. The 15th Infantry suffered only slight casualties in the engagement.

By 1300 the 15th Infantry had pushed south of Tit Mellil and reorganized. At 1400 a platoon of light tanks was attached to the 1st Battalion. By 1700 the battalions were on their objectives.

Just prior to this time the 2d Battalion received a 30-minute artillery concentration fired from a park in the center of Casablanca. The battalion withdrew about 500 yards out of the impact area and spent the night there.

The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, which was in Division reserve, stayed near the Division command post

at Villa Coigny until morning of November 10 when it moved to an assembly area about halfway from the Route No. 1 intersection on Route No. 7 to Tit Mellil.

This battalion was not committed on the 9th or 10th although strafed on the 9th and subjected to artillery fire believed to have been observed by civilians on nearby hills. On the 11th Company L and a machine-gun platoon was sent to high ground southwest of Tit Mellil with the mission of protecting the Division against French troops reportedly moving north from Marrakech. News of an armistice was received as soon as this company arrived in position. The remainder of the 30th Infantry underwent a small local patrol action during which there were a night attack from a Goum patrol in which four men of Company B were stabbed and two taken prisoners, a platoon-sized counterattack and a major armor scare.

The latter scare with which the regiment made extensive preparations to deal, never materialized because naval dive bombers, called into action by Lt. (j.g.) J. B. Furstenberg, naval air liaison officer with the regiment, strafed the column, destroying several tanks and completely disrupted the enemy and rendered him unable to attack.

At Division Headquarters preparations for the assault on Casablanca began about 1400 November 10. Arrangements had been made for naval gunfire and dive bombing support during the attack, and the details were discussed with the commanders concerned. The attack was to employ all the striking power then available to the Division—the armored battalion, all the Divisional artillery except that supporting the 30th

Infantry, Cannon and Antitank Companies of the 7th and 30th in addition to the organic infantry firepower. H-hour was set for 0730.

During the night prisoners were taken by the regiments, all of whom stated that orders had been issued them to cease firing pending an armistice.

At 0230 a telephone call was received from the 30th Infantry. Two French officers and four enlisted men in a French car, flying a white flag and sounding a bugle, had entered Company G's area and stated that they had authority from the Commanding General in French Morocco to seek an armistice.

They were directed to Task Force Headquarters at the Miramar Hotel in Fedala. Task Force Headquarters was notified, and General Campbell, in Fedala, was called and directed to represent the Division at the parley. Similar reports later came from 7th and 15th Infantry Regiments.

One French officer, picked up by the Division Ordnance Officer and brought to the command post, carried a copy of orders issued by General Desré, commanding the Casablanca Division, directing the cessation of hostilities. This officer arrived under guard at 0620.

Units were notified of the possibility of an armistice. When General Patton arrived at the CP at 0655 with definite word of the truce, immediate orders were issued calling off the attack. Some elements of the Armored Battalion had moved to the line of departure and delivered a brief attack against an artillery position, but broke off when they received word of the situation.

Artillery attached to the 7th and 15th began registration, the former resulting in the death of several French soldiers, but aside from these instances, it is believed there was no other fighting or firing.

Naval dive bombers were circling above their carrier with ready lights on when word of the armistice was put through to them. They came in and circled the northeastern outskirts of Casablanca and were over their targets at H-hour, but apparently received word in time to avoid delivering the attack.

After General Patton had arrived at the advance Division CP at Villa Coigny and gave the order to cease hostilities, General Eagles, Maj. Albert A. Connor and Col. Harry McK. Roper left for Casablanca to arrange for the capitulation of the French. On the way they stopped at the 15th Infantry CP, picked up Capt. Burton S. Barr and 1st Lt. Walter Millar and took them to Casablanca with them. Captain Barr carried a United States flag into Casablanca. On the outskirts of town they met some French officers whom General Desré had sent to lead them into the French headquarters. The Frenchmen said they wanted to clear out some mines along the road before the party proceeded. The 15th Infantry sent some troops to assist

with the clearing of the mines, and the group went ahead with a white flag on the French car. All the way into Casablanca the crowds lining the streets cheered and clapped.

At French headquarters General Eagles arranged with Admiral Ronarc'h to call Admiral Michelier and tell him to be present at 1030 to go to Fedala, where they were to be at 1130. Prior to 1030 General Anderson arrived and had a conference with General Desré and Admiral Ronarc'h. They discussed mutual release of prisoners, which was arranged; return of certain French troops from Casablanca to Mediouna; obtaining of American dead from the French morgue where they were being held, and the use of part of the European cemetery for burial of American dead.

General Eagles by this time had departed with Admiral Michelier for Fedala, where the meeting was delayed until the arrival of General Nogues from Rabat in the afternoon. Certain terms of armistice had been previously prepared by General Patton's staff, but when information was received from Lt. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's headquarters concerning terms of the armistice arranged by Eastern Task Force they were found to differ so widely that the armistice could not be concluded in Fedala at that time.

However, hostilities were definitely ended with the exception of action by submarines in sinking our transports, and it is probable that the subs were German. Local movements of French troops were not restricted, and no incidents were reported between them and the occupying United States forces. Elements of Sub-Task Force Brushwood went into defensive positions in Casablanca and Fedala, and began the job of unloading remaining transports in Casablanca harbor. The operation was ended.

"Thanks for the birthday present, Andy!" General Patton had said to General Anderson when he stopped into the Division CP that morning. The second armistice, twenty-fourth anniversary of the first Armistice, and the General's birthday were all rolled into one on that November 11, 1942.

That afternoon and evening the Division CP was moved forward to the Villa Mas in Casablanca.

It is desirable to mention here the activities of some of the component units of the Division as well as those attached, in tribute to the yeoman service performed by them during the three-day operation. Some already have been mentioned. Elements of the 39th Field Artillery Battalion were in close support of the 15th Infantry. The battalion commander came ashore with the regimental commander at 1530 November 8, and a short while later led Battery A, which landed at 1600, to a new position three miles inland. This battery later displaced all its guns at once with a jeep and a civilian

truck and on the morning of November 10 placed fire on the enemy at Tit Mellil positions and aided in destroying resistance at that point. Shortly after, with a liaison officer conducting the adjustment, the battery neutralized enemy cavalry firing from a building in a field. Several rounds of counterbattery fire fell on the battery in this action.

The other two batteries did not get into action in time to aid the advance. The battalion, however, was in position with eleven guns the morning of November 11 with survey and registration complete, ready to support the attack of the 15th Infantry when hostilities were called off.

Battery B, 9th Field Artillery Battalion, did salvage work along the beach until it landed two self-propelled 105mm howitzers the morning of November 11. These were immediately dispatched to the front and were in firing position at 0800, too late to participate in the action, as the armistice had already gone into effect. A third gun was later landed but the fourth was lost in the surf.

The 1st Battalion Combat Team, 67th Armored Regiment, 2d Armored Division, commanded by Maj. R. E. Nelson, and consisting of an armored battalion reinforced by armored infantry, artillery, engineer and reconnaissance elements, landed one platoon of tanks from Company A the night of November 8. This platoon immediately proceeded to the high ground east of the railroad station at Fedala.

As the other elements of the unit were unloaded, they were assembled in the same general area. Due to the swell and the shortage of tank lighters, unloading of the transports *Arcturus* and *Biddle* was slow, but most of the vehicles were unloaded by 1900 November 9. The process was hastened by moving the *Arcturus* into the port of Fedala at 1300 November 9, and unloading directly onto the pier.

The mortar and assault platoons of Headquarters Company, and Battery A, 78th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, were actually the only United States troops who began the attack as scheduled on the morning of November 11, but as mentioned before, their fire on a gun position was broken off immediately upon receipt of word of the armistice.

On November 9 the Division Engineer and the Signal Officer checked the railroad telegraph in Fedala, located prospective water points and obtained wrenches from the town engineer, and reconnoitered for crossings of the Wadi Mellah. A detail under the 10th Engineer Battalion supply sergeant checked the city and beaches for engineer supplies. At about 1900 the battalion command post was set up in the port area of Fedala.

On November 10 details were sent along the beaches to salvage all possible equipment. Repair of the shunt-

ing-engine and railway in the port area was commenced under the Assistant Division Engineer. Power on the Fedala-Casablanca line was found to be interrupted. That evening the Division Engineer went to the Division command post to discuss plans for the demolition of water aqueducts and power lines leading into Casablanca, and the company commander and one platoon of Company C were ordered to stand by at the battalion command post to perform this mission, which was never found necessary. A water point was established at Tit Mellil.

The chief work of the 3d Medical Battalion, other than that of the collecting companies which were assigned to regimental landing groups, was in establishing and operating Division clearing stations. The work was made enormously difficult by the shortage of equipment and transportation. Coupled with this hampering factor was the burden of casualties caused by the sinking of four transports off Fedala November 11 and 12 probably by German submarines.

For this operation, the battalion was divided into amphibious collecting companies with the assault landing groups, and one such company under Division control; two clearing platoons; and headquarters and headquarters detachment, which remained with Group 3 at Camp Pickett. Equipment and supplies were reduced to those absolutely necessary for the amphibious operation. The Division Surgeon's office was likewise split into an "A" and "B" group, corresponding with the method used in landing the Division Headquarters.

The abbreviated collecting companies with the assault landing groups landed and functioned as prescribed, as did the two clearing stations, one at the Casino and the other at a winery about six miles southeast of Fedala, closer to the front. The collecting company, under Division control, was landed and attached to Regimental Landing Group 15 after it was committed to action.

The 3d Signal Company had a difficult time. Prior to 0900 November 9, when the first wire net was laid, all communications had been by runner, radio or direct liaison. The company came ashore on the afternoon of the 9th, and that night and the following night vehicles and equipment were landed. It had been impossible to land them before this. Until the evening of the 9th the company had only one jeep, three SCR-284 radios hand-carried, and hand-carried wire and telephone equipment. One radio team was attached to each of the assault landing groups and one radio operated as net control at Division Headquarters.

Maximum use was made of existing wire facilities such as open-wire lines and switchboards. One of two major problems was the destruction of lines by shelling

and the other was the foreign construction of wire, switchboards and telephone circuits.

Elements of the 3d Quartermaster Battalion were embarked on three vessels: the *Leonard Wood*, *Rutledge*, and *Procyon*. The Division Quartermaster and eleven enlisted men landed at 0600 November 8 and at 1400 the officers aboard the *Rutledge* were sent ashore to meet the Quartermaster's party in the vicinity of the Casino. Reconnaissance was undertaken for Class I, II, III, and IV dumps. The office of the Quartermaster was established at La Compagnie du Port de Fedala adjacent to the west dock.

The 436th AAA AW Battalion was landed at Fedala November 10, although some officers and men had preceded it on November 8 and 9. The thirty-two 40mm guns on truck-drawn mounts were emplaced for the temporary protection of Fedala. The one officer and forty-eight men who remained aboard ship for unloading were among those torpedoed November 12 and suffered many casualties.

On November 11 Batteries C and D moved to Casablanca to provide anti-aircraft defense of the airport while Batteries A and B consolidated their positions in Fedala.

The 36th Engineer Regiment (Combat), which underwent extensive training in the organization and operation of shore party installations before leaving the United States, provided these services for Sub-Task Force Brushwood. One battalion was attached to the assault landing groups, with the companies sub-attached to the battalion landing teams for initial phases of the landing.

The 2d Battalion, 20th Engineer Regiment, commenced landing in Fedala the afternoon of November 8, and by the next day had completed taking over police and local security missions in the town. Throughout the operation they continued to perform these functions. They relieved the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, which was enabled to go into regimental reserve.

The 204th Military Police Company suffered one of the most unfortunate disasters of the entire operation. Four landing craft filled with officers and men were disembarked at 0200 November 9, and before daylight had entered Casablanca harbor, instead of Fedala. The

boats were in column about a hundred yards apart. Second Lt. Edward W. Wellman, who was in one of the boats tells about it:

We were supposed to land on the beaches of Fedala, but through error, the assault boats headed toward Casablanca, fifteen miles away, where the French fleet was quartered. It was not until we were in Casablanca harbor that we realized that the fire toward which we were headed was from oil tanks on Cape Fedal, but a French ship hit by our naval fire.

Two of our boats drew back.

The other two had drawn near the vessel, which, in the darkness, they thought was a United States destroyer.

I was in one. When the men in the other hailed the vessel, a foreign voice answered. They shouted back, "We are Americans."

A burst of machine-gun fire came from the destroyer, then only fifteen yards away, and the first burst fatally wounded the Captain (Capt. William H. Sutton, the Commanding officer).

Realizing that resistance was useless against a destroyer, the men stood up and threw up their hands—some even tearing off their undershirts and waving them.

The destroyer, perhaps thinking they were up to a trick, immediately opened fire with 3-inch shells.

Some men in the boat were killed by the shells and machine-gun bullets. Then Sgt. Claude Cunningham, of Memphis, Tenn., sent the survivors over the side into the water.

The French kept on pumping shells into the boat until it sank. Under international law, they could do this, since it was an assault vessel.

I was in the second boat, only twenty yards behind the first, and we shouted to the third and fourth boats to get away. Then we too turned and tried to escape by zig-zagging.

The destroyer was pouring 3-inch shells our way.

A splinter took away the front of one of my shoes splitting two toes.

Another shell blew a leg off the coxswain.

The air was full of metal. A second lieutenant jumped up to take the wheel. A moment later he got a machine-gun slug through a thigh.

As I started to climb up for the wheel, a shell crossed my lap and blew up the motor. Burning gasoline spread over the boat so I gave the order for the men to go over the side. A destroyer picked us up.

The men in the first boat swam for the shore. Hundreds of French civilians waded out to drag them to safety. They chased away the Moroccan police and took off their own coats to wrap our dripping soldiers.

A French officer grabbed me and asked how many boats there were in the attack group. I told him I could tell nothing but my name, rank and number. The officer ran excitedly to the bridge. They apparently thought the whole invasion was being centered at Casablanca, instead of Fedala, and steamed back to port.

There were no doctors on the destroyer but our six wounded didn't let out a whimper . . . We were taken to a French military hospital jammed with their own wounded.

Lieutenant Wellman added that the commanders of the two boats which escaped, Lts. Arthur Erwin and Thomas W. Kelly, Jr., of the 20th Engineers, refueled and landed at Fedala Beach as originally planned.

The lieutenant and twenty-four men, the only survivors of the two boats which did not escape (four



Smashed landing craft litter the coastline.

other men were captured), reported to the Division CP at 1000 November 9 and were attached to the Provost Marshal's office for duty.

On the evening of November 11 between 1930 and 2030 the transport *Hewes* was torpedoed, presumably by a German submarine. About fifty casualties were received at the Casino clearing station at Fedala, most of the men suffering from exposure, cuts, and bruises. Up until Thursday evening the clearing stations continued to receive army casualties and wounded native and French civilians, including some severe injuries which involved amputation. Among them were cases of natives who had picked up fragmentation hand grenades and pulled the pins.

At about 1730 November 12 the *Scott*, *Bliss* and *Rutledge* were torpedoed. Some 1500 wet survivors,

some of them terribly burned, came ashore by 2200. The quartermaster battalion at once issued at least 1200 woolen blankets to the clearing station, and issued food and coffee all during the night. The battalion surgeon assisted in attending the wounded, of which there were about 355.

That the 3d Infantry Division succeeded in accomplishing its mission in French Morocco is a tribute to the perspicacity of its commanders, and to the courage and tenacity of its soldiers. Consider these facts:

Some of the transports became lost, initially.

H-hour had to be changed virtually at the last minute, and all commanders did not receive this information.

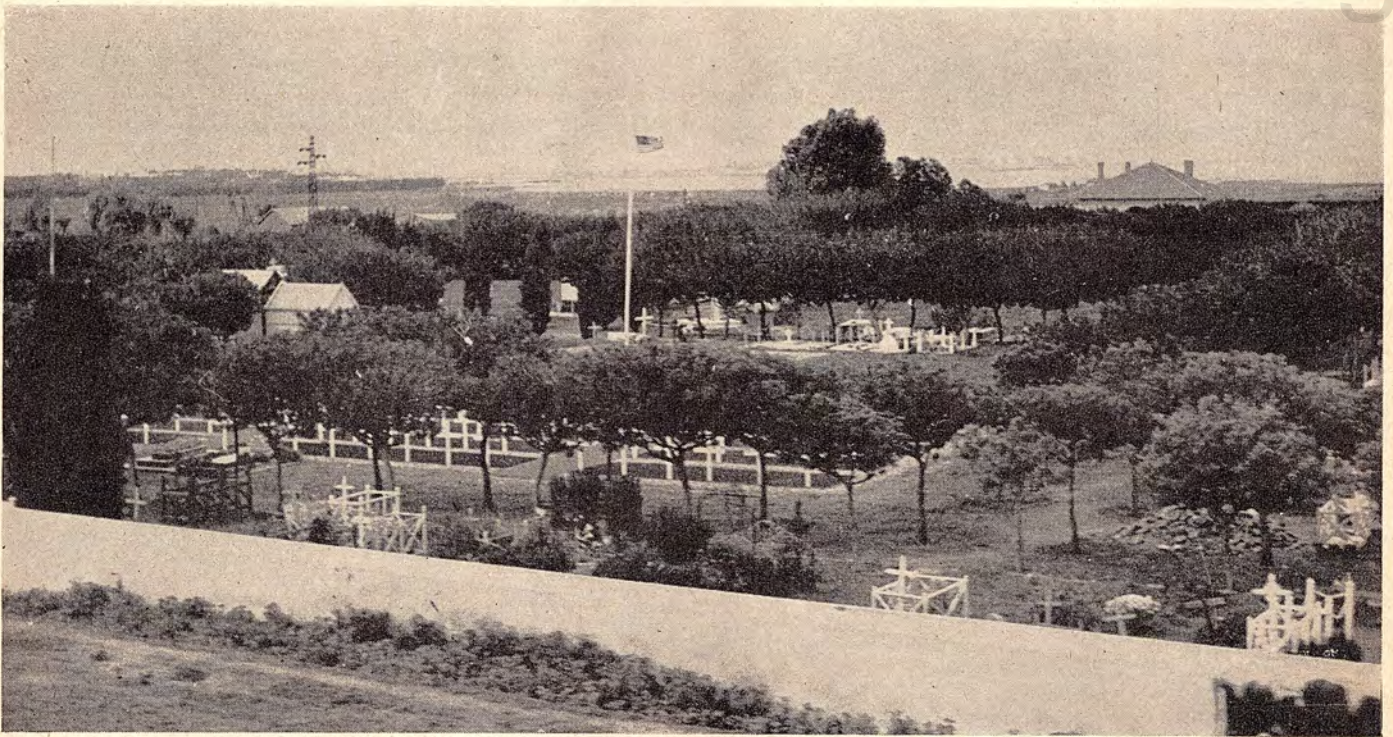
Coxswains were not familiar with the coastline and did not become familiar with it even after several trips to the beaches. This resulted in repeated landings of units on the wrong beaches.

The bulk of the landing boats hit the rocks, rather than the beaches. Many of those boats that did not broach-to or capsize were left on the beaches to be hammered to pieces by the tide.

The original plan of landing supplies by small boats was virtually impossible because 219 out of 320 small boats were lost during the first day of operation.

Transportation was almost nil, seriously hampering bringing up those supplies that did get ashore, again traceable to the shortage of small boats.

There was no transportation for wire, curtailing



The United States Military Cemetery at Fedala, French Morocco, where 3d Division dead lie.

communications almost to the zero point, making imperative the maximum use of runner and radio.

Despite these handicaps, Casablanca *was* taken, and the United States had her port on the Atlantic Coast of French Morocco through which to move the men and material which played such a large part in the subsequent defeat of the Axis in Africa.

Outside reaction to the African landing was varied. Hitler publicly promised "terrible vengeance." Allied peoples were very enthusiastic, in many cases wildly optimistic. The invasion was hailed by many newspapers in the United States as the "Second Front," an event for which the occupied countries of Europe, the Russians, and the citizens of Britain and the United States had so long and eagerly waited. It was not.

Only a few leaders, civil and military, actually knew how many bitter months yet remained before the actual Second Front was finally to open in Normandy on June 6, 1944.

There yet remained much "blood, sweat, tears and toil," not only for the 3d Infantry Division but for all the United States Army in the Mediterranean Theater.

The bitter days of Kasserine and Faïd Pass and Hill 609 lay ahead for those in the gallant 34th Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions.

The "Fighting First" and the 9th Divisions were yet to participate in the bloody fights at El Guettar and Mateur.

Bloody Ridge in Sicily for the 45th Division.

Salerno for the 36th Division.

The desperate, disheartening, almost hopeless battling for the mountain heights of the Gustav Line in Italy—Mignano and Cassino.

The Anzio Beachhead.

Yet, the battle had been joined. It was against the

French, true, who immediately after the Armistice became our staunch, and in time strong, ally. Still, the 3d Infantry Division, and all those who made the landings on the morning of November 8, had been blooded for the bitter battles that were yet to come, and from which they were finally to emerge triumphant.

That is why the landing at Fedala was so important in spite of its short duration. The revelation of the great number of mistakes made by an organization in its first action, and the overcoming of all difficulties to attain the final objective was prophetic of the future career of the Division in all its battles in World War II. The first action is usually the most important from the standpoint of the quantity of lessons learned, and that is why so much space has been devoted here to telling about Casablanca and Fedala.

Confident in its newly acquired maturity born of battle, the 3d Infantry Division looked ahead.

TABLE OF CASUALTIES*

North Africa

(Oct. 23, 1942 through July 9, 1943)

<i>KIA</i>	<i>WIA</i>	<i>MIA</i>	<i>Total Battle Casualties</i>	<i>Non-Battle Casualties</i>
66	234	11	311	3299
Reinforcements & Hospital return-to-unit personnel				
<i>Off</i>	<i>Reinf</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>Off</i>	<i>EM</i>
173		5004	127	4302
Hospital return-to-unit personnel				
			<i>Hosp</i>	<i>RTUs</i>
			127	4302

KNOWN ENEMY CASUALTIES

<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Captured</i>
Not recorded	Not recorded	9

*These figures were provided by the A C of S, G-1, 3d Infantry Division.

III
NORTH AFRICAN INTERLUDE

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We Learn the "Truscott Trot" and Prepare to Invade Sicily

THE battle for Casablanca, like a brief, feverish nightmare, was over. Hardly had the men of the Division become accustomed to the sights and sounds of battle when they found themselves again faced with a long period of marking time. During the eight months before they were again committed to combat, however, their eyes were turned to the east where the slow, terrible drama of Tunisia was being enacted; and finally toward Sicily, where the Division itself was to participate in one of the great amphibious assaults in World War II.

Meanwhile there were the sights, sounds—and smells—of a fascinating new country to keep the men occupied. They learned about medinas—the old native towns which squatted anachronistically amid the modern cities of western Morocco; about French food and customs, French men and women; about mangy burros, wooden plows, Arab beggars; about gasogenes, chicory coffee, and the thousand subterfuges by which a people accustomed to colonial luxury attempted to shore up their living standards.

When Casablanca fell on November 11 at 0655, units of the 7th and 15th Infantry Regiments, poised on the outskirts of the city, entered, without firing a shot, and occupied the port area, the power plant, and other strategic objectives. Gazes airport on the southeastern edge of town was taken under protection by the 436th AAA AW Battalion. The two regiments took over guard duties in the city and port, while the 30th Infantry and 36th Engineer Regiments remained in Fedala to guard and operate the port under the supervision of a rear Division CP, commanded by Brig. Gen. William A. Campbell.

The main Division CP was established in the fashionable Anfa district in the southwestern outskirts of Casablanca. The CP itself was in the luxurious Villa Mas, home of Pierre Mas, wealthy publisher of *Le Petit Marocain* and other Moroccan newspapers. The nearby Italian and Japanese consulate buildings were also used for offices while the swank Anfa hotel and Villa Mirador on top of the hill were used as residential quarters for the staff.

During its stay in Casablanca the Division completed unloading the vessels of its convoy in Casablanca harbor, established liaison with French Army authorities, provided some security for the Casablanca area and straightened out problems of personnel and equipment occasioned by the landing, insofar as facilities permitted.

Transports which had brought the Brushwood force to Africa were still lying off the port of Fedala. As previously noted, one was torpedoed and sunk the evening of November 11, and three more the following evening. On November 13 the ships were moved into Casablanca harbor, and unloading began immediately, with at least one infantry battalion being constantly on duty to perform this work. The reason for the urgency was that another convoy was expected on D-plus-five (November 13). It actually arrived two or three days late, and lay off the port one day before being brought in.

From the close of the Casablanca operation until April 28, 1943, the 30th Infantry was destined to be scattered throughout French Morocco and western Algeria, serving as border, school, and line-of-communication guard troops.

The 1st Battalion, under command of Lt. Col. Fred W. Sladen, marched from its positions near Fedala on November 12 to Rabat, colorful, historical Moroccan port, where for almost a month its companies guarded the Rabat airport, the city of Rabat and all roads leading to the vicinity.

On November 12 the first issue of the *Daily News Summary* was published by the G-2 office, and this summary continued to appear daily until the Division began loading for the Sicilian operation. It is believed to be the first news sheet published by United States troops in the North African theater.

During the next week and a half there was very little training activity, units being occupied in guard and labor duties, care of equipment, completing reports on the operation, and taking in the sights of the strange new country.

Relationships with French military personnel rapidly changed from cool correctness at the moment of surrender to warm cooperation. Pro-Germans and Vichy-ites, of whom there were a small number, found it expedient to hide their sentiments as the great majority of French officers began studying American organization and methods, with the unconcealed intention of some day joining the battle against the "Boche." Capt. Donald H. Lieb was sent to Casablanca Division headquarters as American Liaison Officer, while Capt. Anthony du Pradel joined the 3d Division as French Liaison Officer.

A striking illustration of the new spirit was the visit of Major General Anderson to the headquarters of General de Division Henri Martin in Marrakech, in

accordance with the desire of Major General Patton, Western Task Force commander. On the afternoon of November 17 General Anderson, accompanied by Col. Harry McK. Roper, Lt. Col. Edgar C. Doleman, Maj. Albert O. Connor, and Capt. William H. Ellsworth, flew to Marrakech by Army transport.

There the American party was entertained by General Martin and by his Excellency Hadji Thami El Glaoui, Pasha of Marrakech. Both the Pasha and General Martin welcomed General Anderson's party warmly, and vowed that North African forces would soon be in the fight on the Allied side. History knows how soon their promises were made good; before the year's end French troops had drawn German blood along the Grande Dorsale in central Tunisia.

Further to seal the rift caused by the brief hostilities, joint ceremonies for American and French soldiers killed during the operation were held in Casablanca November 23. Chaplains from the Division participated in both the Catholic and Protestant services. Meanwhile many of the Division's wounded had been evacuated to the United States aboard vessels of the D-day convoy, while nontransportables and those with superficial wounds remained behind in the French military hospital, which had been taken over by United States authorities.

Much of the administrative work during this period was done with the aid of equipment left behind by the German Armistice Commission, which had hastily evacuated the Villa Mas, Anfa Hotel and Villa Mirador. Mimeograph machines, paper, ink, stencils, notebooks, and office supplies of all descriptions virtually kept the Division offices going when American supplies were not to be had. Oddly, planning for the operation apparently had not contemplated that any administrative work would have to be done for a long time after the landing, and such things as American envelopes were very scarce for months following November 8.

On November 25 the Division CP was moved from Casablanca to the Casino in Fedala, a large, drafty wooden structure whose western windows overlooked the beaches on which the original landings had been made. The nearby Miramar hotel, from which the German Armistice Commission had fled on the first morning, was taken over for staff quarters.

Units of the Division made the trip from Casablanca to the Fedala area in a one-day march, as organic transportation was still on a slim amphibious basis. The move was made to get troops into training areas and away from Casablanca, which was already beginning to fill up with service troops.

(On November 27 the French fleet was scuttled at Toulon. In Tunisia Allied advance units were locked in combat with Germans around Tebourba, almost

within sight of Tunis. The Germans were rapidly reinforcing, and hopes for the quick seizure of Tunis and Bizerte were approaching the vanishing point. But in Libya, the gallant British Eighth Army was rolling in high gear following its successful drive from El Alamein. October 23.)

The Division was not by any means on a non-tactical basis, even in Fedala. The favored German capability at the moment was to make a lightning move into Spanish Morocco, occupied by Franco troops, and attack out of the almost trackless Rif hills against the thinly-held Allied supply line running from Casablanca through Port Lyautey, Meknes, Fez, Taza and Oudjda to Oran and eastward. Terrain studies of western Spanish Morocco were initiated; order-of-battle of Spanish troops was plotted and brought up to date. The Division itself moved to Rabat on December 5, sending patrols up toward the Spanish Moroccan border, and checking strength and dispositions of French troops on border duty.

On December 4, 30th Infantry, less 3d Battalion, was transferred to control of Western Task Force, commanded by Maj. Gen. George S. Patton, and alerted for movement by air, rail and motor to Oudjda, French Morocco. Company C, commanded by Capt. George Abbott, was placed in air transports and flown to Oudjda to guard the airport there against possible German parachute invasion or land invasion through Spain and Spanish Morocco.

On December 5-6 the remainder of 1st Battalion was moved to Oudjda by truck and train to reinforce Company C and to strengthen the defenses of northern French Morocco and protect the vital line-of-communication supply line from Casablanca to Tunisia.

The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, and special units, less the platoon of Cannon Company with 1st Battalion, remained in the Fedala area until December 6, when they were moved by truck and train to Guercif, French Morocco, an old French Foreign Legion post used during the Rif Campaign of the French in the mid-twenties.

The battalion and regimental special units remained in the Guercif area, guarding the airport and maintaining motor, rail, and air patrols, the last consisting of one Division Artillery and one I Armored Corps cub plane in the Taza-Guercif-Taourirt-Spanish Moroccan border areas, and necessitating a daily flight of over 200 miles. The 2d Battalion patrols met 1st Battalion patrols at various contact points between Guercif and Oudjda.

Col. Arthur H. Rogers' staff had prepared an elaborate "staff study" of enemy capabilities, one of which was a paratroop attack from Spanish Morocco, against which an alert system was established, in addition

to preparations made for dealing with land attack. A joint French-American system of guarding and patrolling, also under Colonel Rogers' command, was established in late February and March, continuing until April 19, when full responsibility was assumed by the French.

The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, under Maj. Charles E. Johnson, remained on guard and labor-battalion duty in the Fedala area from November 12 until the first week of January, serving one week in late December as Casablanca port battalion troops—a desperate measure adopted to speed ammunition and supply shipments from that crowded port to the hard-pressed Tunisian front.

In Rabat, Division headquarters was established in the Chamber of Commerce building, while the smart Balima hotel was taken over for staff quarters. Enlisted men were put up at the Grand Hotel. The troops, most of whom had marched from Fedala, were initially bivouacked in the outskirts of Rabat, but were soon moved to the cork-oak Forêt de Mamora about eight miles east of Sale, twin city of Rabat.

Because there were no administrative or base section troops in Rabat, the Division headquarters was split in order to establish a headquarters for Third Military Area, which included a part of western Morocco with Rabat as its capital. Col. Walter E. Lauer, Division chief of staff, was placed in command of the area headquarters, which administered nondivisional units and handled civil affairs.

On December 14, the Division opened a school for twenty-eight French officers and fifty noncommissioned officers, to train them in use of American weapons, motor vehicles and armor. The school was well-planned, competently run, and resulted in a thorough grounding of the French students in the subjects taught, as well as improved relationships between the two armies. The French quickly earned respect because of their knowledge of weapons and their excellence as artillerymen. A second school, identical in subject matter but with new students, opened on January 11. This day there was a demonstration for the French press, in which all divisional weapons were fired.

December 20 saw another outburst of Franco-American solidarity, when the 3d Infantry Division, together with elements of the 2d Armored Division, and French troops, paraded through downtown Rabat. Large cheering crowds watched the parade, which was lavishly written up in the press.

On December 23 the Group Three convoy, which had remained at Camp Pickett, arrived at Casablanca. This convoy brought the Division's transportation virtually up to normal strength, and partially answered the query of a disillusioned Frenchman upon seeing

the Division's earliest North African road march, "But where are all your big American trucks?" The four-ton prime movers of the medium artillery battalion and the big wreckers of the Ordnance Company looked good after several weeks of moving in half-tons and a tiny fleet of "two-and-a-halves." Arrival of personnel sections, the APO, and other administrative units also took a great burden off the harassed tactical sections of unit headquarters.

(On the evening of December 30 an estimated six to ten enemy bombers came in over Casablanca and dropped several bombs, doing slight damage in the port and killing some Arabs in the New Medina. Two planes were reported shot down. Those who were in Casablanca at the time said the ack-ack was like a Fourth of July demonstration. Except for the Fedala torpedoings, this was the only direct enemy action against western Morocco during the Division's entire stay.)

On January 29 ceremonies were held in the lovely cathedral in Rabat for 1st Lt. Clement Falter, Catholic chaplain who was killed on the beach at Fedala. He was believed to be the first American chaplain killed in action during the war.

The 3d Infantry Division was present at the making of world history on Thursday, January 21. On this day President Franklin D. Roosevelt reviewed troops of the 3d Infantry and 2d Armored Divisions on the main highway leading north from Sale. He was accompanied by many dignitaries, civil and military, including his secretary, Stephen T. Early; Harry Hopkins, personal agent and adviser; Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark, commanding Fifth Army; Maj. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr., commanding I Armored Corps; Maj. Gen. Jonathan W. Anderson, commanding 3d Infantry Division; Maj. Gen. Ernest Harmon, commanding 2d Armored Division; and Maj. Gen. Manton Eddy, commanding 9th Infantry Division.

The President, wearing a gray business suit and gray felt hat, with a black band around his left arm, in mourning for his mother, rode in the front seat of an army jeep down the long line of troops, which extended about one mile along the tree-lined highway, and which represented all separate units of the Division. General Clark and General Anderson were in the rear of the jeep during its progress past 3d Infantry Division troops.

Soldiers were in full field uniform with bayonets fixed, and heavy weapons and some organic transportation from each unit was lined up behind the troops east of the highway.

After passing the length of the column, the President met and congratulated heroes of the November landing operation from both the 2d Armored and 3d In-

fantry Divisions, and ate lunch at a mess prepared by Service Battery, 39th FA Battalion. Bands of the 7th Infantry and 3d Infantry Division Artillery took part in the ceremonies.

The visit was such a closely-guarded secret that no one, with the exception of those concerned with the planning, knew he was to see the President until shortly before his arrival.

As he passed the President returned the salutes of the units and spoke words of greeting to those along the way.

P-40 pursuit planes were over the line of march much of the time.

The President came by automobile with his party from Casablanca, arriving at the head of the 3d Infantry Division troops about 1140 and completing his visit at about 1205. A strong, chilly wind sprang up about the time the President arrived, so that those who took part were well-chilled by the time the Commander-in-Chief had departed around 1200.

A number of Army and Navy officers, in addition to those named, as well as secret servicemen, military police, press correspondents, and cameramen accompanied the President on his tour. The party left for Port Lyautey after lunch, presumably to put the President aboard a plane for Casablanca.

It was later learned that the President had attended the historic conference at the Anfa Hotel, together with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Basic plans were laid there for the 1943 offensive against the European continent, and this second of many well-publicized meetings between these two public figures made front page headlines in every newspaper in the world as the "Unconditional Surrender" Conference, so dubbed



French artillery-men learn to service the United States 105mm howitzer.

when Roosevelt and Churchill borrowed a famous phrase from General Ulysses S. Grant, and upon the President's insistence, announced that the Axis powers would feel the full force of Allied power until they should surrender unconditionally.

Guard of the conference area was assigned to 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, under command of Lt. Col. Charles E. Johnson. From January 8 to 23 the battalion provided security for the area, inspecting houses in the vicinity and keeping a close check on personnel entering and leaving the Anfa.

Personages who attended the Conference read like a military Who's Who. The complete roster of the United States delegation included:

President Roosevelt;
 General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff;
 Admiral Ernest J. King, COMINCH, USN;
 Lt. Gen. Henry H. Arnold, Commanding General USAAF;
 Lt. Gen. Brehon B. Somervell, Commanding General, SOS;
 Mr. Harry Hopkins;
 Lt. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commanding General, NATOUSA and Allied Force Headquarters;
 Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark, Commanding General, Fifth Army;
 Maj. Gen. Carl Spaatz, Commanding General, MAAF;
 Lt. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, Commanding General US Forces, Middle East;
 Mr. William Averill Harriman, Lend-Lease representative in London;
 Lt. Col. Elliott Roosevelt, USAAF.

The British delegation, headed by Prime Minister Winston Churchill included:

Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, Chief of Naval Staff;
 General Sir Alan Francis Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff;
 Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal;
 Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Chief of Staff, Combined Operations;
 Field Marshal Sir John Dill;
 Lt. Gen. Sir Harold Alexander, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East;
 Maj. Gen. Sir Bernard Montgomery, Commanding General, Eighth Army;
 Sir Arthur Tedder, Air Chief Marshal, Middle East.
 Also present were:
 General Charles de Gaulle;
 General Honoré Giraud.

On January 23 the Division G-2 and G-3 offices moved into the field, in preparation for the commencement of training.

On February 18 Assistant Secretary of War John J.



Archbishop Spellman of New York at the grave of Lt. Clement Falter, Catholic chaplain killed on the beach at Fedala.

McCloy visited the Division CP in the field southeast of Port Lyautey. The 3d Reconnaissance Troop formed the guard of honor and the 3d Infantry Division Band provided music for the occasion. General and Special Staff officers of the Division, as well as General Anderson and unit commanders, formed a receiving line for the guests.

Meanwhile General Anderson had received orders re-assigning him to the United States. On February 20, following a ceremony at the Division CP, Col. Robert C. Macon was presented with the stars of a brigadier general. General Anderson said farewell to his staff. He left for the United States on February 22, and General Campbell assumed temporary command of the 3d Division.

(On February 16, the German 10th Panzer Division, which had made an undetected move north from the Mareth line sector, attacked inexperienced United States units deployed on and between three or four isolated hills west of Faid Pass. In two or three days the attack rolled past Sidi Bou Zid, Sbeitla, through Kasserine Pass—and the Germans were bearing down on the advanced Allied base at Tebessa, also the location of II US Corps headquarters. Whole infantry and artillery battalions were swallowed up in this enemy drive; scores of tanks were lost. The commander of a United

States airfield, hearing a distant ammunition dump go up, interpreted this as a withdrawal signal, and ordered his planes destroyed and abandoned the field. The attack was finally halted by the combined action of tank destroyers and artillery units which had been rushed into the area southeast of Tebessa. But at least two United States divisions had suffered telling losses, and a great blow had been delivered to Allied morale.)

To make good the heavy casualties in men and material suffered in Tunisia—and the name “Kasserine” will long be remembered as the token of a black day—the 3d Infantry Division and 2d Armored Division were tapped for replacements. About 3,400 men, most of them volunteers, and all but 400 of them infantrymen, left the Division for Tunisia during the last week in February. The 3d sent its best men and officers, and thereby earned an enduring reputation for excellence among the units which it reinforced. Later, during preparations for the Sicilian landing, many of these men had a chance to come back to the 3d, and several hundred did so. Battle-wise and competent, they provided valuable stiffening at a propitious moment.

Maj. Gen. Lucian King Truscott, who had seen the fighting around Kasserine Pass as General Eisenhower's deputy, arrived March 7 to take command of the 3d Division, and brought with him Col. Don E. Carleton

as Chief of Staff. One of General Truscott's first acts was to gather his officers together and tell them, in unvarnished language, what had happened in Tunisia. His cardinal point: the "Boche" were not supermen. They could be beaten by applying known principles of warfare with aggressiveness and daring.

On March 15 the 15th Infantry commenced its move to Fifth Army's Invasion Training Center at Arzew, there to begin amphibious training in preparation for the invasion of Sicily.

The training in Africa could not be confined merely to the normal Army Ground Force training, for the Sicilian operation was to be a combined operation, calling for the closest cooperation between ground, sea and air forces. "Intensive amphibious training" was the name applied to the program. It had to be intensive because time was growing short.

On April 28 the 30th Infantry rejoined the 3d Division for the first time since conclusion of the Casablanca operation and reassembled as a regiment at Arzew.

The complete Division had now closed in at Arzew. Here General Truscott introduced something new in training methods. Soon dubbed the "Truscott Trot," the innovation proved to be a marching speed of five miles an hour for one hour, four miles an hour for the next two hours, and three and one-half miles an hour for the remainder of a 30-mile march.

Companies D and I, 30th Infantry, commanded by Capt. Eugene A. Salet and Edward G. Paar, respectively, served as School and Demonstration Troops at Arzew, training other elements of the Division in amphibious tactics and simulating the enemy in maneuvers.

Other training at Arzew, which stressed coordination of all arms from airborne infantry to naval units, was emphasized from the beginning but physical conditioning was the immediate need. In addition to the speed marches there was log-rolling, obstacle-course running, bayonet training and training in hand-to-hand combat. Men who couldn't meet the standards were immediately eliminated.



The late President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the playing of the United States national anthem at a Guard Mount held by 3d Division troops in his honor during the Casablanca Conference. In the background are the late Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. and the Commanding Officer of Troops.



Camp Takala in the Forêt de Mamora near Rabat, named in honor of Pvt. Earl F. Takala.

Infantry and artillery also began to learn to work together more closely than ever before. Doughboys learned to follow artillery barrages closely, sometimes to within 100 yards, and thereby gained confidence in the accuracy of artillery during these firing problems.

Battle conditions were also simulated by using mortars and machine guns. There were naturally some casualties as a result of this training with live ammunition but it is undeniable that the training resulted in saving many lives later in combat.

Lessons that other United States soldiers were learning the hard way in Tunisia at this time were also taught the men. They became familiar with all types of mines and booby traps that the Germans and Italians were using in Tunisia and gained confidence in their ability to avoid or overcome these weapons.

There was also training with the Navy. This included practice landings and training in controlling fire of naval vessels by shore groups. Every type of landing craft, from LSTs and LCMs to rubber boats, was tested. This meant "dry-run," after "dry-run," until men of the 3d were ready to swear they had spent more time afloat than many of the men in the Navy.

Training in the firing of naval guns utilizing shore observation posts was a continuation, with improvements, of the methods that were first tried in the landings in Morocco. Picked groups of Division officers and enlisted men were assigned to work with Navy personnel, forming Shore Fire Control Parties. Under control of the 3d Infantry Division Artillery, their function was similar to that of the usual observation teams of field artillery.

Concurrent with the training, the Division had con-

ceived and put into operation something new for staff work on division level, called a Planning Board. This method of preparation for a combined operation was designed to insure the utmost in cooperation between all branches of the services involved. It was named Joss Force Planning Board, after the code reference name for 3d Infantry Division Reinforced. It was headed by Lt. Col. Albert O. Connor, Deputy Chief of Staff; staffed by Lt. Col. Ben Harrell, A C of S, G-3; Maj. Grover Wilson, A C of S, G-2; Lt. Col. Robert D. Henriques of the British Army (a member of the Combined Operations Staff of Allied Force Headquarters); Lt. Col. Charles E. Johnson, A C of S, G-4; Maj. George H. Revelle, Assistant A C of S, G-4; Capt. Robert C. Shaw, G-4 liaison officer and Lt. Col. Bruce C. Price, Adjutant General. There were also representatives from 36th Engineer Regiment (C), 2d Armored Division, 3d Ranger Battalion and the Navy.

As time went on and the planning grew more detailed a number of other men, representing all component elements which go to make up a combined operations task force, were added to the Planning Board. It can truthfully be said that one of the main factors in what was to prove the phenomenally successful Sicilian campaign was the careful, coordinated planning of infinitely numerous details.

A vital part of the work was the gathering of intelligence of the enemy. Part of the success of the coming operation hinged on our knowing where the enemy was and in what strength; his available reserves, and the nature of his defenses. From the time the Division was given the mission of landing in Sicily until the last possible moment before D-day and H-hour, the G-2 Section worked night and day gathering and fitting together every scrap of information about the Axis



The 10th Engineers construct a road through the Division's bivouac area in the forest.



Colonel Thomas H. Monroe, commanding the 15th Infantry.

defenders. The bulky sheaf of papers that was called the Intelligence File finally included everything known about Sicily pertinent to the operation both from the military and civilian points of view.

Information on terrain, communications and customs of the people and towns was gathered. Information concerning enemy fixed defenses was compiled. The Navy supplied most of the information on beach defenses. This mass of information was then employed to build relief models for the benefit of commanders and leaders of units down to squads and platoons.

Early in the planning phase it was recognized that for a force the size of Joss (three times the normal strength of the Division with approximately fifty attached units) a special organization, other than the Division service troops, would be necessary for supply, evacuation and embarkation. This fact was emphasized by the directive that the force would be prepared to sustain itself on Sicily for from twenty-one to thirty days. It was obvious also that the formation of this special organization could not wait until the actual landing but that it must be formed if possible prior to the concentration of the force in the staging area.

Accordingly, the concept of supply control through three agencies was developed. These agencies were Force Depot, Near Shore Control, and Beach Group. Force Depot consisted of all the quartermaster, ordinance, chemical, medical, and signal supply troops

attached to the Division other than the Beach Group. It was controlled by the Division Quartermaster, Col. B. M. James, who was assisted by an executive officer from G-4 and a specially selected officer for each of the Division Services.

The mission of Force Depot was to furnish to the Joss forces all those services and evacuation normally supplied to a division in the field by an Army headquarters. The depot was set up to operate on the Near Shore (Tunisia) exactly as it would be on the Far Shore of Sicily. It was capable of establishing truckheads and railheads anywhere on the island of Sicily and was charged with maintaining these installations at all times within fifteen miles of the Division rear boundary. This was to result in the unique but highly satisfactory arrangement of having the command of a higher echelon of supply and evacuation directly vested in the unit being supplied.

Near Shore Control was a provisional headquarters set up to plan, control, and supervise the embarkation of all organizations and to load all supply ships. It included the Division Embarkation Officer, the Division Transport Quartermaster (TQM) and was also the headquarters for all subordinate TQMs. This organization worked in close harmony with the corresponding organization of the Navy and with the 1st Embarkation Group of Eastern Base Section which was charged by higher headquarters with the responsibility of the supply and embarkation of Joss Force.

The Beach Group consisted of the 36th Combat Engineer Regiment, a battalion of the 540th Engineer Regiment (Port) and attached medical and supply troops.



Colonel Robert C. Macon, commanding the 7th Infantry.



Soldiers of the 3d Recon Troop during a training exercise in North Africa.

The purpose of this group was to organize three of the four landing beaches so as to facilitate the landing of the force, to unload supplies and establish dumps, and, upon capture of a port, to repair and operate the port.

As the downfall of the German and Italian forces in Tunisia approached, the Allied command decided to exploit the successes of II U. S. Corps by committing a fresh U. S. division.

At noon on April 30 the Commanding General, 3d Infantry Division, received a warning order from the Commanding General, I Armored Corps, to be prepared to move the Division immediately to the Tunisian zone of action, reporting upon arrival to the Commanding General, II U. S. Corps. Purpose of the move, and the mission of the Division, was to provide II U. S. Corps with fresh reinforcements in order to effect the rapid destruction of the Axis army then being pushed back against the Mediterranean coast. The Division was to be relieved from assignment to I Armored Corps upon commencement of its move.

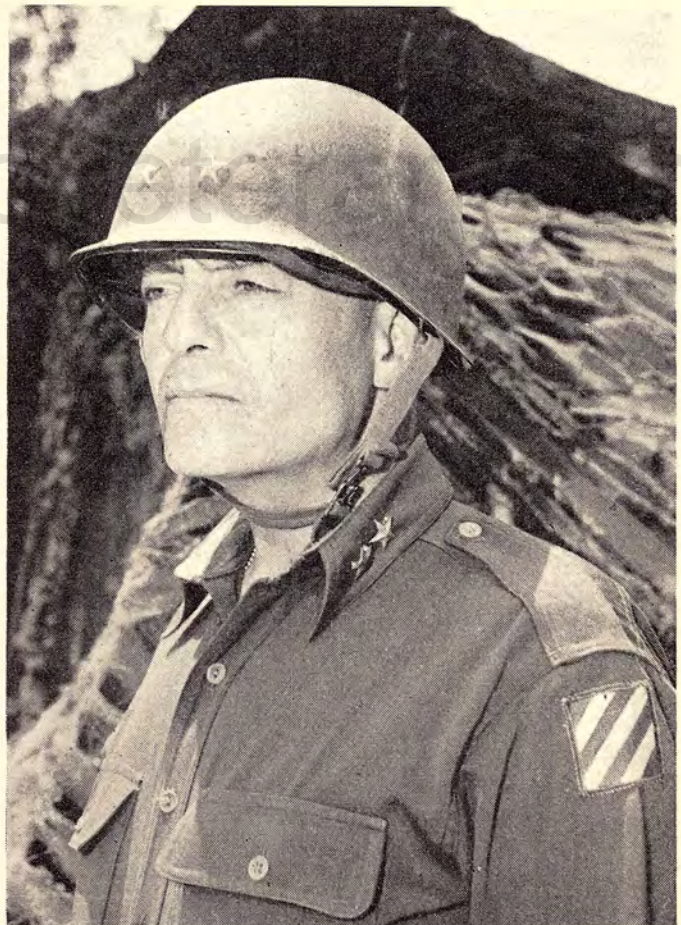
Training was halted immediately. At 2200 April 30, the order was received to begin the movement. The Division's movement order had already been prepared and was issued immediately. The 15th Infantry moved out as scheduled at 0300 May 1, five hours following receipt of the movement order from higher headquarters.

The Division's order intended that all elements of the Division be on the road by 0900 May 2 and be concentrated in the Constantine area by the evening of May 4 or morning of May 5. However, difficulty was immediately experienced in placing this density of vehicles on the road, due to the requirements of other movements, and the Division was limited to 800 vehicles per day past a given point.

This practically doubled the time required for getting

the Division on the road. RCT 7 passed its initial point at 1200 May 1, RCT 30 at 0800 May 2, and Division Headquarters at 0400 May 3, followed by Division Artillery (minus three light battalions), 10th Engineer Battalion and Division rear echelon.

Other units followed the same route and, with



Major General Lucian K. Truscott, commanding 3d Infantry Division.

minor exceptions, occupied the same bivouac areas on successive nights. By Friday afternoon, May 7, the Division was entirely concentrated in the Ghardimaou-Wadi Melis area just inside the Tunisian border.

On May 7, General Truscott visited II U. S. Corps CP and received oral instructions to move one combat team behind the 1st Infantry Division, prepared to pass through the 18th Infantry and attack the enemy on its front. At that time elements of the *Barenthin* regiment, which was part of the hastily-formed German *Man-teuffel* Division, was dug in on the high ground eight miles southeast of Mateur and was causing the 1st Infantry Division considerable trouble.

In the early morning of May 8, RCT 15 left the Wadi Melis bivouac and moved to a new bivouac about fourteen miles south of Mateur, prepared to execute its combat mission. Meanwhile General Truscott had gone to the 1st Infantry Division CP to keep abreast of the situation. While he was there, at about 2300 May 8, he received instructions to move the remainder of the Division into the Ferryville area, and also received a new attack mission—namely, to attack eastward from the base of the Metline-Porto Ferina peninsula and mop up any remaining resistance. Combat attachments for this operation included the 13th FA Brigade, 5th Armored Artillery Group, RCT 39, 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion, and 106th AAA AW Battalion. The 15th Infantry was instructed to move to a position west of the junction of the Ferryville-Bizerte-Tunis highways, and the Division rear CP at Wadi Melis was instructed to order 7th Infantry to move immediately to the Mateur area.

At this time the only known enemy forces in the peninsula east of the Tunis-Bizerte road were elements of the *Barenthin* regiment which may have been withdrawn from the high ground west of the road, and a few tanks which had been driven back into this area by the 1st Armored Division. There were other pockets of unimportant enemy units, notably a company of the *Hermann Goering* Division on Djebel Ichkeul whose commander refused to surrender until one of his superiors personally ordered him to do so.

At 0730, May 9, the advance Division CP was opened in an olive grove one mile south of Ferryville on Route C-54. Reconnaissance had been sent to the Tunis-Bizerte highway to look for a truck turn-around, and at about 0800 the head of the RCT 15 truck column passed the Division CP headed for the front.

At this time General Truscott was with General Harmon, Commanding General, 1st Armored Division, on reconnaissance along the Tunis-Bizerte highway. The attack of the 1st Armored had made such progress that the attack of the 3d Infantry Division was unnecessary. At 0830 General Truscott reported the facts to

Commanding General, II U. S. Corps, and upon instructions from II U. S. Corps, released the Division's combat attachments. An attempt was made to halt RCT 7 before it left Wadi Melis, but as it could not be reached until it had got within a short distance of its bivouac south of Mateur it was permitted to close in the new area.

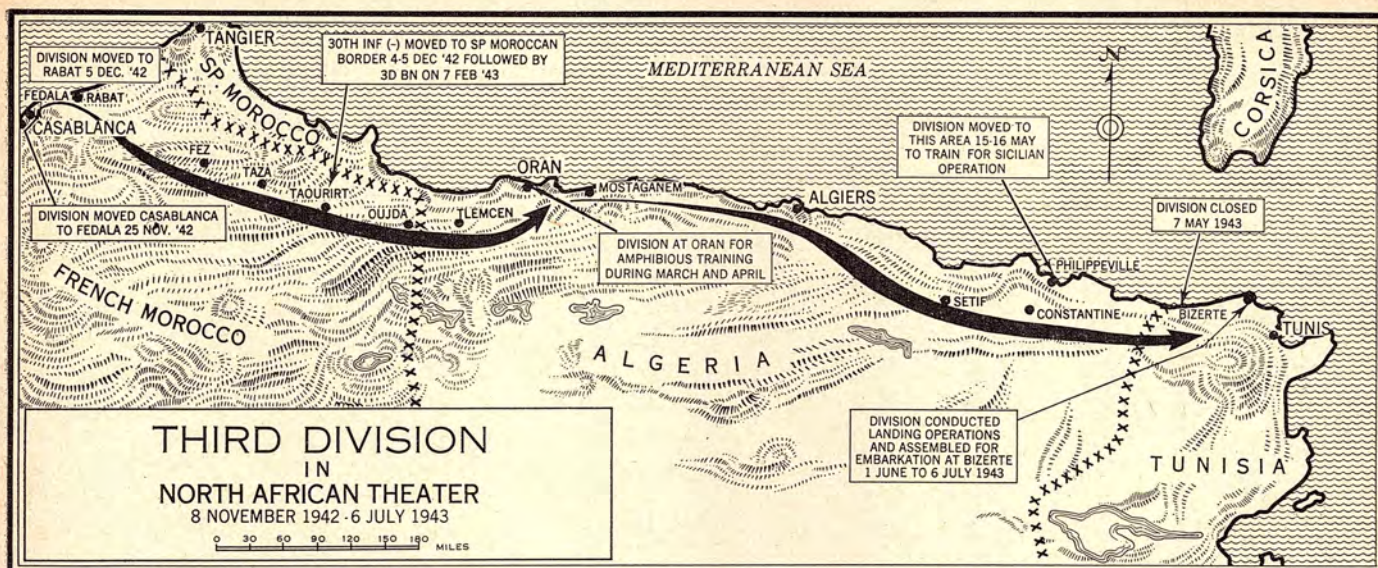
On May 10 the entire Division, with the exception of the rear echelon, RCT 30, and certain service detachments, was concentrated in the Ferryville area. Still under the control of II U. S. Corps, the Division was given a mission of operating the PW cage west of Mateur, where approximately 38,000 prisoners were collected in three or four days, and of collecting captured matériel into designated salvage dumps and guarding it. One company of the 15th Infantry was placed in charge of the PW cage initially, but on the evening of May 9 the entire 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, was detailed to take over the cage, and the battalion continued to run the cage until the Division departed for the Jemmapes-Philippeville area May 15. So ended the 3d Infantry Division's brief participation in the Tunisian campaign. Training was immediately resumed.

Training in the reduction of beach fortifications, and the Division's proposed plan of maneuver, were the two most important items on the docket. Jemmapes was not ideal for this work, since the area was covered with heavy underbrush, but at the moment it was the best area available.

As a general objective all the units prepared for a landing on defended beaches and an advance inland of about five miles. Here at Jemmapes four units were picked for the specific task of assaulting the beaches. They were: 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry; 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry; 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry and the attached 3d Ranger Battalion. Other infantry battalions trained to accomplish their missions of passing through the assault battalions and seizing inland objectives. One other battalion also underwent specialized training in street fighting. Most of the training of the assault battalions and of the street fighting unit was carried on at night.

On June 1 the Division began concentrating in an area near Lake Bizerte in northern Tunisia. Here it was joined daily by other units comprising Task Force Joss. Training at Lake Bizerte stressed co-ordination with the Navy in all phases of the operation, from the fire control of naval guns prior to and during the actual landing to the smooth disembarkation of troops on the beaches. This training of the combined forces proved effective as later shown by the manner in which all units worked during the actual operation.

Specialized training at Lake Bizerte included the removal of beach obstacles and mines, the attack against



genuine, German-built pillboxes, mortar firing from landing craft, and the firing of grapnels to remove beach wire. Speed marches remained the rule to and from training areas.

After three weeks of this tough work the big dress rehearsal, Operation "Copybook," was held. It included nearly every unit in Joss Force and followed the actual plans for the landing as closely as possible. So realistic were the preparations for "Copybook" that the majority of men half believed the actual operation to be underway, and refused to be convinced otherwise until the morning for the landing found the landing craft still off African beaches.

This huge "dry-run" brought to light some faults which were corrected in time for the actual operation. There was increased confidence among men of the Division in the ability of the Navy to land all troops on the proper beaches. This spirit of harmony with the Navy was encouraged to the extent that a Division order stated that commanders of Naval craft would be invited by the 3d Division officer of each unit, representing the Naval officer's "opposite number," to a meal ashore at each army unit officers' mess.

Following the rehearsal the men were given a rest. Intensive training came to an end. Drill hours were shortened, and there was more time allowed for recreation. The speed marches and physical conditioning continued, however, in order to prevent a drop in the already high physical standards attained.

Never, anywhere, was a combat division more fit for combat . . . more in readiness to close with the enemy, than the 3d Infantry Division at this time.

The evening sun had dropped behind the tired, dusty green olive trees, but the heat driven into the ground by its piercing rays during the day was still radiating upward, bringing perspiration to the tanned faces of the

men sitting in a large group toward the northeast edge of the Division bivouac area.

The group sat in a large semicircle. It was composed of every officer of the 3d Division. To the front a line of chairs conformed to the shape of the formation, and upon these chairs sat the ranking officers—the regimental commanders and the two brigadier generals. The majority of the officers sat on the upturned edges of their steel helmets.

It was not a particularly noisy gathering. The prevailing heat forbade exuberance. Rather it was a silent, somewhat speculative group. On O.D.-clad backs, white salt stains of dried perspiration indicated the exertion of the foregoing weeks.

A loudspeaker microphone had been placed in front of the group. A large red-faced man with a bushy moustache—Col. Don E. Carleton, Division Chief of Staff—stepped up to it. Before he began to speak a sudden rush of withering hot air struck the assembled officers.

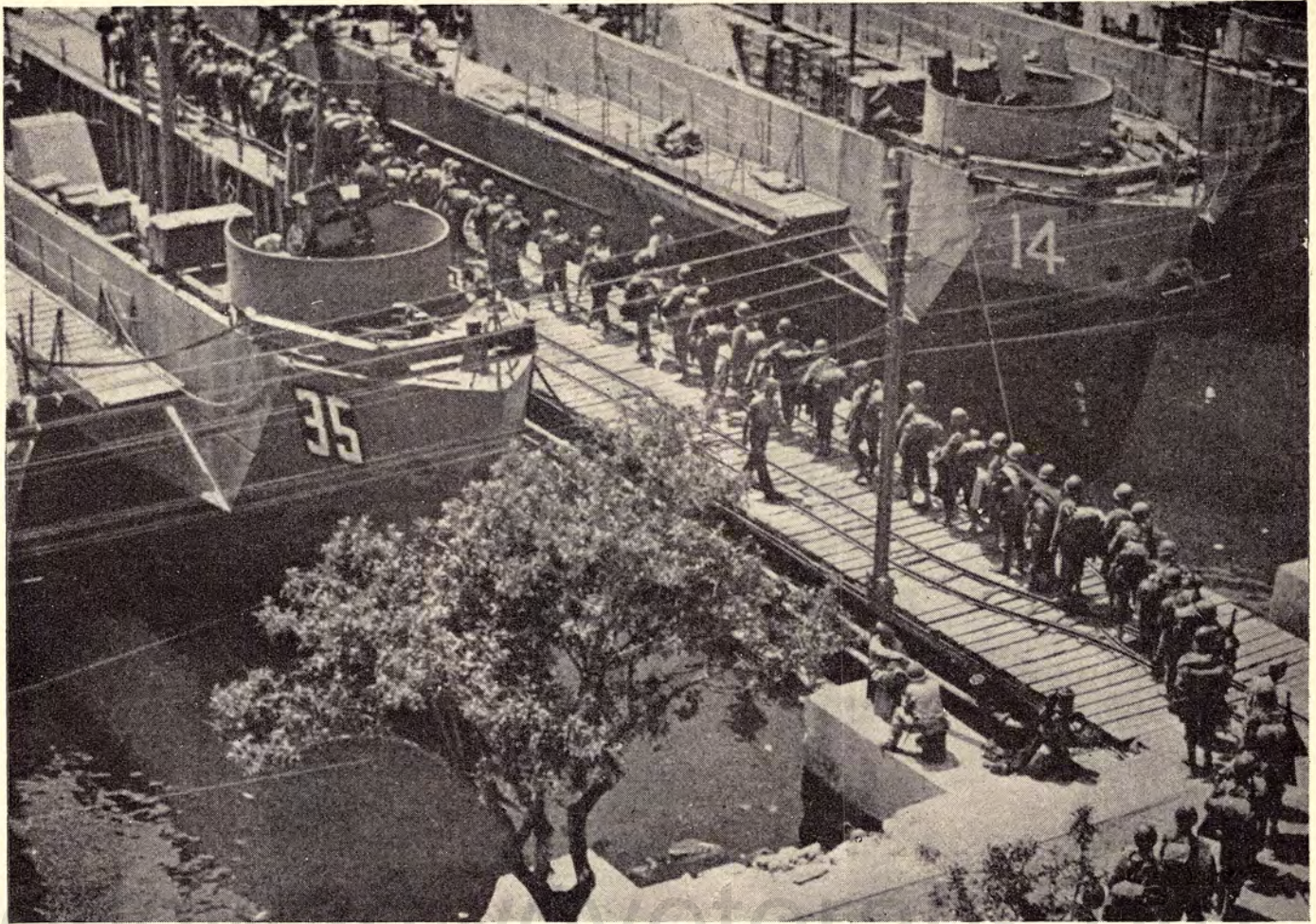
"Gentlemen," said the Colonel, "the first Sirocco. A hot wind that sweeps north across the sands of the Sahara, with the heat of a furnace, to die over the Mediterranean. A good omen."

There was a slight murmur of laughter, which was quickly stilled. There was a silence. The Colonel fidgeted slightly, waited. Then he looked to his right, straightened, and called out, "Attention!" The officers scrambled to their feet.

"Gentlemen, the Commanding General."

General Truscott, heavy-set, steel-gray haired, took his place at the microphone. A beam of light from the dying sun shot through an opening in the olive trees and rested on his face, causing him to wrinkle his features in a characteristic grimace. He looked the entire assemblage over, slowly.

"Gentlemen," he began, speaking very deliberately,



Soldiers of the 3d Infantry Division march aboard the landing craft at Bizerte, Tunisia, which are to transport them to Sicily.

“we are on the eve of a great adventure. We are about to set forth upon the greatest amphibious expedition the world has ever known. We are going forth to engage the enemy and to defeat him. . . .

“I say to you, as I look upon you, that we are ready. Let us review briefly the training of the last few months. . . .

“You have engaged in five-mile-an-hour marching—which my staff officers tell me is commonly referred to as the ‘Truscott Trot’—until you are now able to march great distances over long periods of time, and arrive at your destination ready for combat. . . .

“You have learned what it is to follow closely your supporting artillery, and your men have learned not to be afraid of it. . . .

“You have learned how to land on your assigned beaches, quickly disembark, and move inward rapidly to seize your objectives. . . .

“I repeat, we are ready. . . .

“On the eve of this great adventure, we find ourselves

anticipating success or—failure? No, instead we anticipate success, or success beyond our utmost expectations. We do not know the word ‘failure.’ We know only that we will be successful, or that we will be successful beyond our utmost expectations. . . .”

It was nearly dark when the General ended his speech.

The following day was July 4. The 3d Infantry Division staged a review. Certain men were decorated for actions they had performed in the Fedala landing. This time General Truscott spoke for the benefit of the whole Division. The speech was shorter, less comprehensive. It was designed to put the men in the final aggressive spirit so necessary for combat.

It concluded: “You are going to meet the ‘Boche’! Carve your name in his face!”

The Division commenced loading on its invasion convoys the following morning. The United States Army was about to teach the Axis an overwhelmingly crushing lesson in blitz warfare.

IV
SICILY

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"In Which We Carve Our Name"

TROOP LIST—Operation "Joss" Third Infantry Division (Reinf)

Organization for Combat

1. *Hq & Hq Co, 3d Inf Div*
 - Det CIC Pers
 - Two IPW Teams
 - Det Civ Affairs Pers
 - Det Pub Relations Pers
 - Censorship Det
 - Boadcasting Det
 - Naval Party (Liaison Only)
2. *7th Inf Regt*
3. *15th Inf Regt*
4. *30th Inf Regt*
5. *3d Inf Div Artillery*
 - 9th FA Bn
 - 10th FA Bn
 - 39th FA Bn
 - 41st FA Bn
 - 5th Armd FA Gp
 - 77th FA Regt
 - 2d Bn, 36th FA Rgt
 - Btry B, 1st FA Obsn Bn (S&F) (-Flash Det)
 - Survey Plat, Co B, 66th Engr Bn (Topo)
 - Naval Shore Fire Control Parties
6. *10th Engr Bn*
 - Det, 2658th Engr Co (Map Dep)
 - 3d Plat, Co B, 601st Engr Bn (Cam)
 - 20th Engr Regt
 - 815th Engr Bn (Avn)
7. *3d Ranger Bn*
8. *4th Tabor Goums*
9. *3d Cml Bn Mtz (Mortar)*
10. *3d Rcn Troop*
11. *3d Med Bn*
 - Det, 3d Aux Surg Gp
 - Vet Det, 8580th GG
 - 20th Malarial Control Unit
12. *3d QM Co*
 - 1st Plat, 48th QM Co
13. *3d Signal Co*
 - 2d Gen Assnmt Co, 196th Sig Photo Co
 - Two Rad Rep Secs & one Tp Rep Sec, 177th Sig Rep Co
 - Det, 128th R & I Sig Co
 - Co A, 51st Sig Bn (-)
14. *Hq & Hq Btry, 105th AAA AW Gp, with attchd units*
15. *CC "A", 2d Armd Div (Hq & Hq Det), with attchd units*
16. *703d Ord Co*
 - 1st Plat, 235th Ord Co (Bomb Disp)
17. *Administration Center, 3d Inf Div, Rear Echelon*
 - 32d Fin Disbursing Sec
 - APU No 547
18. *Far Shore Control*
 - Force Depot, Beach Group and their attachd units
19. *Near Shore Control and attchd units*
20. *Air Officer, XII ASC*
 - Administration & Liaison Det
 - Air Support Parties
 - Fighter Control
 - Advance Landing Ground Party
 - Hq Control and Plotting Sec
 - Two radar dets, Prov AW Bn

SOMEWHERE in the gloomy interior of a captured enemy emplacement a bell rang. Correspondent Michael Chinigo of International News Service picked up the receiver of an Italian field telephone, and spoke a word of question, in Italian. A worried "brasshat," volubly querulous, had received a disturbing report that United States troops were then landing in force all along the Southern coast of Sicily, and this, signor, was most disquieting. Please, I beg of you, say it isn't so.

When the flood of words had subsided somewhat, Chinigo seized his opportunity to break in. In firm tones he assured his questioner that all was quiet, the situation well under control. The "brasshat," his fears allayed,

hung up. Chinigo, amused, did likewise. Then he went out to watch the LSTs unload.

Unfortunately for the Italian general's later peace of mind he had been only too well informed the first time. At 0200 that morning, July 10, 1944, the seaborne invasion of Sicily had commenced. The investment of the outer fringe of *Festung Europa* was underway. It was to carry the Allies almost nonstop into the inner bastions of Germany's defenses, eliminating almost parenthetically along the way the junior Axis partner, Italy. It was to pile on an additional crushing loss of prestige to a nation which had two months before lost an entire army in the tip of Tunisia. It was to give the Allies an invaluable base for further operations in the Mediterranean

Theater, including the final, brilliantly executed invasion of southern France.

The wresting of Sicily from the Axis meant much more than the mere seizure of enemy territory. A popular military cliché has it that "he who controls Sicily controls the Mediterranean." Since the days of the ancient Romans and Cathaginians the island has been the traditional stepping stone from Europe to Africa, and its people have known many conquerors. One inherited characteristic of the Sicilians, springing from the constant infusion of the warrior blood of new races, is the fiery Latin temperament, unsurpassed for sheer intensity anywhere on the Continent; the temperament which has given the country so much colorful notoriety and internal dissension.

In this war Great Britain held Gibraltar, Suez, and Malta, but Axis-controlled Sicily in the center of the Mediterranean was a constant threat to Allied shipping. From Italian naval bases at Palermo, Syracuse and Catania, packs of German and Italian submarines, plus a few surface vessels, constantly harassed Allied ships carrying supplies for operations against the enemy in Egypt, Libya, Tripolitania, and Tunisia. Ships bearing cargoes destined for the Near, Middle, and Far East continually ran the gantlet of enemy air squadrons whose fields were on Sicily. Sicilian-based Axis bombers made little Malta a hell on earth—"the most bombed spot in the world"—at least up until the time the RAF and AAF intensified their pilgrimages to Berlin.

A lesser reason for the invasion of Sicily was economic. Despite its square miles of mountain "badlands," the island is fertile and its people primarily agricultural. Deprived of its possession the Axis aggressors would lose not only a large quantity of tribute in the form of agricultural products, levied annually against the populace, but also a certain amount of mineral resources and industrial products, a triple blow not necessarily crippling, but not helpful to the industries of Italy and Germany, battered as they were even then by the Allies' aerial blows.

It is only three miles across the Straits of Messina (where, according to Homer's *Odyssey*, the twin monsters Scylla and Charybdis jealously mount guard against unwary voyagers) to the Italian province of Calabria. The capture of Sicily would aid the Allies in gaining a literal "toehold" on the boot of Italy. Possession of Sicilian airfields would mean increased bombing of targets in southern Europe, extended fighter range. When the nearest fighter bases were in Africa, long-range bombers of the MAAF were obliged to fly unescorted over long, dangerous round-trip missions and their casualty figures reflected the need for fighter escort. Possession of the airfields was also vital to the

eventual support and fighter protection of our landings on the Italian mainland.

Thus it was that the pre-dawn of July 10, 1943, found the 3d Infantry Division, powerfully reinforced, forcing its second assault beachhead in World War II, in the region of Licata, near the center of the south Sicilian coast.

We were traveling in excellent company. Several miles to the East in the vicinity of Gela the 1st U.S. Infantry Division established its foothold on the island. To the right of this force was a combat team of the 9th U.S. Infantry Division and the entire 45th U.S. Infantry Division. The latter division, shortly to prove itself a first-class assault formation, was previously untried in combat. Its mission was to drive inland and contact the left elements of the Eighth British Army which landed between Pozzallo, around Cape Passero, and northeast to Syracuse.

On the night of D-minus-one paratroopers of the 82d U.S. Airborne Division landed behind enemy lines. Their primary mission was to seize an enemy airfield, then to destroy enemy communications and harass the enemy's attempts to move up reinforcements. In its initial "jump in anger" many of the paratroopers were dropped in locations widely scattered from each other, bearing little resemblance to previously scheduled DZs (drop zones) because of faulty navigation on the part of the C-47 crews. Worse than this, however, was the tragic occurrence when the twenty-three fully-loaded transports were shot down off the Gela area. Due to failure in coordination, a large flight of C-47s flew over friendly naval vessels which had just undergone a severe enemy air attack. The recognition code for the night of July 11-12 was "red-red," two colors indistinguishable from the streams of upward-bound anti-aircraft tracer. The AA gunners, quite naturally assuming that another enemy bombing was in progress, turned the full force of their combined firepower on the low-flying, lumbering '47s. Many of the paratroopers and plane crews never had a chance to escape the vicious welter of hot metal.

Principal military objectives of the 3d Infantry Division after clearing the beaches, were the port of Licata and the nearby airfield. Licata, a town of approximately 30,000 in normal times, lies near the center of the south Sicilian coast at the mouth of the Salso River. To the west, paralleling the coast, is a long steep ridge, topped by Monte Sole. On the eastern end of the ridge is Castel Sant' Angelo, a relic of former days and a prominent landmark. (Future visitors in Rome, veterans of Sicily, were destined to wonder at the familiar ring to the name of the Eternal City's famous relic and tourist attraction, the Castel Sant' Angelo.) Except for this ridge the ground around Licata is flat or low and rolling for

a radius of about six miles, with a few minor hills immediately to the northeast of town.

Surrounding the Licata plain is a ring of hills ranging in height from 1200 to 1600 feet. There are many rocky ridges and steep-walled ravines in these hills which favor the defense, but as later events showed, the enemy was never able to make full use of this peculiarity of terrain. The port itself is a small one, completely enclosed by three breakwaters. The airfield was an uncompleted strip about two miles north-west of the town. This field had never been used by the enemy, but was a potential base for speedy development and exploitation.

The invasion convoy sailed in three echelons. The first echelon left Bizerte on July 6, and made a short stopover at Sousse, Tunisia. The fighting doughboys here got the chance to stretch their amphibious legs and to undergo a few limbering-up speed marches, after which they reembarked. The medium speed convoy of LSTs and a slow convoy of LSTs composed the other two echelons, and set sail July 7. The three convoys took separate routes for purposes of deception, as well as for achieving a successful compromise between the varying speeds of the type of ship in each echelon. The final rendezvous was made on July 9, off Gozo Island, near Malta.

For a short time then, it seemed as though the gods of Fortune were leagued against the Allies. Perhaps the ancient deities of the Mediterranean were determined that the upstart mortals should at least taste of the type of weather which those all-powerful beings could invoke even over that notably calm, watery arena of age-old naval battles. For the sky clouded over, the wind commenced to blow, and the sea began acting as though it were *en rapport* with its mammoth sister to the west. The elements seemed bent on proving themselves "mightier than them all." The success of the entire operation hung by a thread. It seemed for a space as though the months of laboriously-conceived work and planning might be entirely wasted, and more terrible, yet it appeared the entire invasion convoy might enter battle under absolutely adverse and highly hazardous conditions to the jeopardy of thousands of lives. The brand-new landing craft were as yet untested. There was one thought paramount in the minds of every person aboard each of them: "Will they be able to withstand the fury of the storm?" Luckily they were.

An apocryphal story has been told in at least one place of Seventh Army Commander Patton's decisive conference with his meteorological officer.

"How long will this storm last?" asked the General.

"It will calm down by D-Day," replied the weatherman.

"It had better," replied the General.

Despite the unspoken promise contained in General

Patton's words (or perhaps because of it) the weather miraculously reverted to its habitual calm just in the nick of time.

In the 3d Division fleet a master stroke by Rear Admiral R. L. "Push-'em-in-closer" Conolly recovered the time lost by the LCTs in the storm. They were ordered to take a new and much shorter course, which they did, and the flotilla did not stop until it reached the Sicilian beaches—on time within seconds.

There were many seasick boys looking forward to seeing land by this time, even hostile land. Perhaps the reason for the untamed fury with which the 3d Division hit the Sicilian beaches can be traced partly to the fact the majority of soldiers were so damned sick that the prospect of hastening what seemed a lingering death was almost welcome. The thought that we were soon to be fighting against the very persons whose former aggressions had indirectly caused all this misery was almost certainly a strong contributing factor to the forbidding mood of the invaders. There was little mercy, and likewise a negligible quantity of thought, wasted over the coming doom of many Italian and German defenders.

The final estimate of enemy strength in Sicily that could be mustered against the Division at H-hour or thereafter included:

- 207th Coastal Division, in the Licata area;
- 26th (Arietta) Division, in the vicinity of Sciacca, 65 miles west of Licata;
- 4th (Livorno) Division, at Caltagirone;
- 54th (Napoli) Division, believed near Catania;
- 26th (Aosta) Division, in the Marsala-Trapani area;
- Army and Corps troops, mainly manning heavy guns around Caltanissetta, Campobello, Agrigento, and Porto Empedocle;
- About 34,000 German troops known to be in the vicinity of Palermo, and on the major airfields.

Enemy air strength in Sicily and Italy was estimated at 945 modern-type combat planes, of which in late June only 552 were believed serviceable. In addition there were several hundred obsolete German and Italian planes of various designs.

From the foregoing estimates of enemy strength on land and in the air, it appeared that the defenders of Sicily could put up a stubborn fight. The type of fortifications and annotation of defenses seemed to justify the expectation on our part of a tenacious, all-out battle to get ashore and hold.

By 0135, July 10, the Division Headquarters Ship, USS *Biscayne*, had dropped anchor off the coast. It was safely and correctly assumed aboard the *Biscayne* that



The town of Licata, Sicily, near where the Joss Force assaulted the beaches.

all other craft had reached their areas and were preparing to disembark the troops, since the units had been instructed to break radio silence and report only in case of emergency.

Just before 0200 heavy gun and antiaircraft fire was heard coming from the direction of Gela, where the 1st Division had met resistance. Despite a column of German tanks which at a later hour actually drove between two regiments of the 1st, the division succeeded in repulsing the attack, to secure firmly its beachhead.

As the 3d Infantry Division was preparing to debark its troops, searchlights from Licata and the surrounding heights to the west suddenly blinked on, and their dazzling beams swept over the sea off Yellow and Blue Beaches. From the bridge of the *Biscayne* the craft in the transport areas stood out in dark, ominous relief.

Without warning four searchlights converged on the *Biscayne*. The ranking naval officer made a quick decision to open fire, but withheld execution of the order to confer with General Truscott. Outcome of this brief parley was the abeyance of fire until the enemy should open up in proof that the ship had been observed. Amazingly, the lights soon went off. It seems apparent that although the *Biscayne* had been caught in the cone of four powerful searchlights for ten minutes at a distance of only 7,000 yards it had not been seen. At least the shore batteries did not fire, and the landing operation went forward as planned.

At H minus 30 minutes units of the U. S. Navy shattered the fearful silence of the black morning, when the two cruisers, USS *Brooklyn* and *Birmingham*, protected by a part of the invasion fleet's destroyer force, steaming up and down the coastline, began a pre-arranged bombardment of enemy positions in a diversionary demonstration outside the assault area in the

vicinity of Agrigento. After the assault waves of the division had landed, the cruisers mentioned stood off the assault area firing on call at pre-arranged targets, while the U. S. destroyers *Buck*, *Ludlow*, *Roe*, *Swenson*, *Edison*, *Woolsey*, *Wilkes* and *Nicholson*, together with nineteen smaller British craft, curved shoreward, firing as they went, to destroy targets as requested by the infantry and cover its landing.

By 0340 reports began sifting in to the headquarters ship that flotillas were all in proper position and that small boats were off and away. This was followed by reports that small craft had landed and were returning. At 0440 a message was sent to General Patton to the effect that the first waves had landed on Blue, Yellow and Red Beaches.

No word had been received from Green Beach. At 0500 the Division Artillery Air OP aboard an LST was contacted by radio and told to have a Cub plane stand by. Through a misunderstanding two Cubs took off from the improvised flight deck and were on the way inland by daylight. Shortly afterward one Cub observer reported that our troops could be seen climbing the hills back of Green Beach. For two hours these planes, piloted by 1st Lts. Oliver P. Soard and Julian W. Cummings, continued to spot enemy artillery positions and report progress of our troops.

Prior to the landing, seven areas were thoroughly analyzed for defenses. These included the four beaches, Blue, Yellow, Green, and Red, on which the landings actually were made. The entire width of the Division zone, including the all-important terrain to the flanks, had been subdivided for purposes of study and planning into seven parts, although not so designated by either number or color. Enemy static defenses consisted of beach obstacles, barbed wire, pillboxes, trenches, fortified blockhouses, and antitank ditches. Defending these were machine-gun positions, rifle pits, emplaced antiaircraft guns, and registered artillery batteries.

The initial assault was carried out by only four battalions: one from each regiment and the 3d Ranger Battalion, attached. The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, landed on the right over Beach Blue; 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, landed on Beach Yellow. The 3d Ranger Battalion went ashore at Beach Green, and 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, landed on the left at Beach Red.

During this time, commencing shortly after 0100, enemy planes were over the flotillas, periodically discharging red flares. Brilliant yellow chandelier flares followed, but no other hostile action was taken at that time.

Greatest difficulty in landing was experienced by Lt. Col. Roy E. Moore's 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, where machine-gun and artillery fire were received for some

time. The attackers began landing at 0400 and received no fire until they had crossed the beach and reached the foot of the bluff rising from it. Then the enemy opened fire. The men ran through gullies to the top of the bluff and within an hour had overcome resistance in the immediate beach area. Over this beach the Navy was able to claim one of a number of valuable assists. In one instance, naval gunners on an LCI slugged it out with a couple of enemy machine-gun nests above the beach and destroyed both of them. Then enemy 47mm guns on the left flank scored hits on two LCIs. Naval guns promptly got the range and silenced the enemy position. By 1000 7th Infantry had taken all its objectives.

The 3d Infantry Division Artillery also took part in the fight on Red Beach. By 0630, 10th Field Artillery Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Kermit L. Davis, with the 62nd Armored FA Battalion and Battery A, 9th FA Battalion, had landed and gone into position from 500 to 1500 yards inland. Once set up, these guns fired on every target the observers could spot for them, including enemy mortars, infantry, an enemy gun battery, machine-gun nests, and an OP.

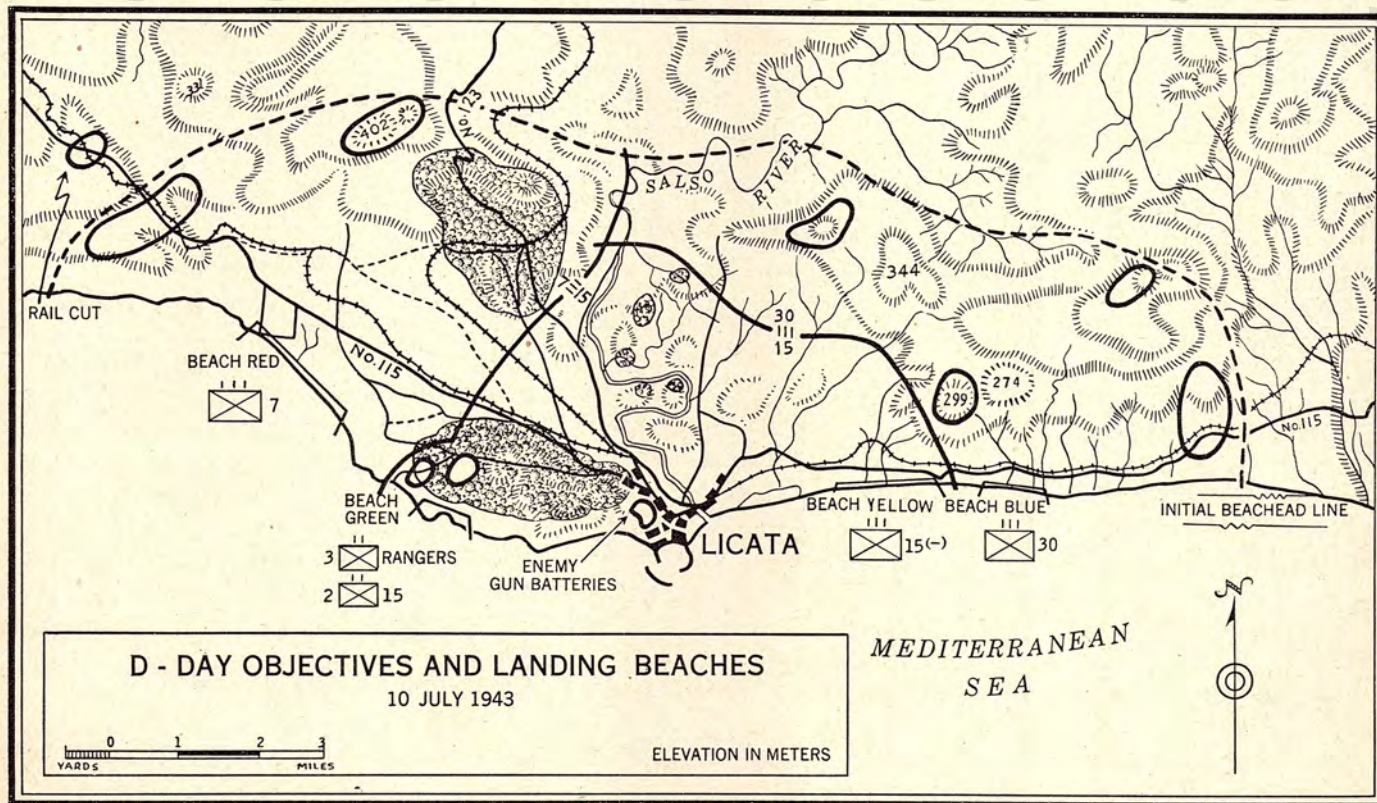
The 3d Ranger Battalion began disembarking on Green Beach at 0300, achieving tactical surprise. The men were able to cross the beach and pass through a wide band of defensive wire before the enemy was aware of the situation. When he opened fire the gun flashes gave away locations of the enemy weapons

and the Rangers were easily able to subdue them.

Lt. Col. William N. Billings' 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, following the Rangers, landed without opposition, reorganized immediately and begun pushing eastward along the Monte Sole hill pass toward Licata. At 0735 a United States flag, carried specifically for that purpose, was raised over Castel Sant' Angelo. Then, after the naval shelling of Licata, the 2d Battalion and other regimental units together with the Rangers approaching from the east entered and captured the town by 1130. The first major objective was taken.

The 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Ashton H. Manhart, made its regiment's initial assault over Beach Yellow, commencing at 0345. The landing was not opposed until the boats actually beached, at which time the enemy opened fire with machine guns and small arms. The battalion quickly cleared the beach defenses, seized the spurs overlooking the beach, and then reorganized to move west. The battalion entered Licata at about 1130, at about the same time 2d Battalion and Rangers entered from the west and 1st Battalion from the north.

The 1st Battalion, commanded by Maj. Leslie A. Prichard, landed at 0445, pushed a mile inland to its assembly area, then advanced on its first objective, the high ground immediately northeast of Licata at 0600. The objective was reached at 0800 and at 0930 the battalion received orders to advance on Licata. One platoon, however, was detached to protect the un-





Lieutenant-General Patton, CG Seventh Army talks with wounded soldiers on the beach.

damaged bridges over the Salso River and the remainder of the battalion forded the Salso about two miles upstream from the town and moved on Licata from the north.

The assault group for Beach Blue—2d Battalion, 30th Infantry—began landing at 0330. Like the other assault waves this unit, commanded by Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard, achieved tactical surprise. The force, however, soon met rifle and machine-gun fire from pillboxes on the beach and artillery fire from a strongpoint east of the beach. Prearranged naval gunfire soon neutralized this enemy artillery. The battalion, employing its 10-man antipillbox squads, cleared the beach head in its sector and advanced against the enemy strongpoint at Poggio Lungo, which it occupied at 0845. Meanwhile, the 1st and 3d Battalions, 30th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Cols. Fred W. Sladen and Edgar C. Doleman, respectively, landed approximately on schedule and moved inland to take and hold their initial objectives.

The same held true for 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, under the command of Maj. Everett N. Duval, and 3d Battalion, 7th, commanded by Lt. Col. John A. Heintges.

All units received necessary field artillery support at the right time. With minor exceptions, all battalions of

Division Artillery landed on schedule and went into position, firing where and when needed. In addition, Cannon Company, 30th Infantry, and Company I, 66th Armored Regiment, both supporting the 30th's 2d Battalion, moved in and destroyed several enemy strongpoints.

Before evening the eight-by-fifteen-mile beachhead had been secured, and supplies and reinforcements were pouring in through the captured port of Licata. Aggressive reconnaissance already was being pushed to the front and flanks. Nearly 3000 prisoners, preponderantly Italian, were taken by the Division on D-Day.

The next twelve days were to be hectic ones for the 3d Division. Under the influence of the personalities of two hell-for-leather generals, one the ex-cavalryman Truscott, the other the ex-tanker Patton, the Division was about to "carve itself a slice of Sicilian real estate" from Licata to the capital city, Palermo, on the north coast; a distance of over 120 miles.

On July 11, D-plus-one, two regimental combat teams, the 7th and 15th, each captured a town. The 7th took Palma di Montechiaro against uncertain Italian resistance, and the 15th, Campobello. By seizing Palma, the 7th forced the enemy to withdraw in the direction of Agrigento and also opened up another north-south highway for the Division.

In the fight for Campobello the 15th Infantry met the first organized German opposition in Sicily. The regiment broke through this resistance to take the town, destroying in the process two Italian 90mm. self-propelled guns and an Italian light tank. Following seizure of Campobello the 15th contacted Combat Command A (CCA) of the 2d Armored Division at Naro and the 30th Infantry at Riesi.

Two spectacular actions took place on July 11, one credited to the 30th Infantry, the other to an officer of the 15th Infantry. The 30th was holding its original position after the landing, but was concentrated and alerted for movement, when a patrol was sent out with the mission of contacting Headquarters, II Corps at Gela. This group, consisting of one rifle platoon, a platoon of medium tanks, and two platoons of the regimental Cannon Company, set out eastward along the coastal road.

En route the patrol fought its way through three enemy positions, taking 400 prisoners. The patrol leader, Maj. Lynn D. Fargo, contacted General Patton, commanding the Seventh Army, at Gela at 1430 and began the return trip. On the way back the patrol reduced another enemy strongpoint and captured an additional 153 prisoners.

It was the same day, July 11, that 2nd Lt. Robert Craig, a member of the 15th Infantry, performed the

action for which he was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. It was at Favarotta that Lieutenant Craig's company was blocked by fire from a concealed gun. With the aid of Cpl. James Hill, Craig located the gun and crawled to within thirty-five yards of the emplacement before the enemy saw him. The lieutenant shouted for Hill to cover him, while he ran head on through the machine-gun fire until he reached the gun, whose three-man crew he killed with his carbine. This allowed the company to continue the advance. Later in the day Craig and his platoon found themselves on a slope on which there was no cover, ambushed by a large group of Germans. Craig ordered his men to withdraw to the cover of the hill crest while he himself charged forward about seventy-five yards, and opened fire. He killed five enemy and wounded three more before he fell under the concentrated fire of an estimated one hundred enemy guns.

By midnight of July 12 the entire Division and attached units had completely reorganized and was systematically enlarging the beachhead. Units boldly moved forward, capturing several towns and establishing strong contact in all sectors. The 7th Infantry had contacted CCA near Naro; 15th Infantry had captured Ravenusa and Sommatino; the 3d Battalion 30th Infantry had taken Riesi, and the regiment minus 3d Battalion occupied Naro. CCA took Delia and Canicatti. In the action around Naro the 30th Regiment destroyed and captured four 40mm AT guns and considerable small arms and equipment.

Two other accomplishments had been marked up by midnight of D-plus-two. The first LCIs that had landed were back again, this time with material and follow-up troops, and men of the 815th Aviation Engineer Battalion had begun work on the uncompleted German landing strip outside of Licata.

The following day, July 13, saw the beginning of one of the many spectacular moves of the 3d Infantry Division in Sicily. General Patton told General Truscott that he did not desire a major effort made at this time to capture Agrigento, but that he had no objection to a "reconnaissance in force." To this reconnaissance mission, then, General Truscott committed the 7th Infantry Regiment, with the reservation that it was not to become involved in a battle from which it could not be readily withdrawn.

The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 7th occupied high ground east of the Naro River and patrolled to the front while the other battalion remained in assembly northwest of Palma di Montechiaro. The advance was begun on July 16, with 2d Battalion moving around to the north of Agrigento and 1st Battalion attacking directly to the west, crossing the Naro River north of the main highway. At 1430 3d Battalion entered the

scrap, attacking west along the highway toward Porto Empedocle.

Although communications between 2d and 3d Battalions were sketchy and out completely much of the time, the gamble succeeded largely because of the speed and daring of the maneuver. The appearance of 2d Battalion on the high ground north of Agrigento took the defenders by surprise and 3d Battalion met little opposition in its rapid advance west along the highway.

The 3d Ranger Battalion, which had moved out ahead of 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, was able to circle Agrigento on the northeast and enter Porto Empedocle at 1900 against little opposition en route. The 3d Battalion, 7th, however had been in Porto Empedocle since 1430, entering the town from along Highway 115.

The 1st Battalion advanced directly into Agrigento from the east, overcoming scattered strongpoints and engaging in some street fighting. The city was captured and outposted by 0300 July 17.

While success of the maneuver was in great measure due to the audacity of its planning and the speed and endurance of the infantry, credit is also due to the attached artillery units who worked with 7th Infantry during the time. For at 1410, July 16, large enemy reinforcements were spotted by artillery observers moving by motor toward Agrigento. Guns of the 10th Field, 58th and 65th Armored FA Battalions, and 77th FA Regiment caught the convoy coming down from Aragona and when the shooting stopped it was apparent that the convoy had been broken up with an estimated loss of fifty vehicles and at a cost to the enemy of about a hundred killed and wounded.

The capture of Agrigento gave the Division about 6000 prisoners, and the most important city in that part of southern Sicily, plus the port of Empedocle. It also cost the enemy besides human casualties, many destroyed transports and guns, about fifty assorted field pieces and a hundred vehicles captured.

During the fight for Agrigento another member of the Division, 1st Lt. David C. Waybur of the 3d Reconnaissance Troop, performed the action for which he was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, marking up the second of two such caliber deeds within one week. While leading a three vehicle patrol on a volunteer mission to contact an isolated unit of Rangers, Waybur found himself and his group waylaid at night by four Italian light tanks. Men of the patrol immediately opened fire with their machine guns, despite the fact they were combating armor, and soon most of them were wounded. Waybur, himself severely hit, took up a tommy gun and, standing but a few yards from the leading tank and in its direct line of fire in bright moonlight, opened up. By firing through the



"Chips," the beloved war-dog of the 30th Infantry, later the possession of the Division MPs.

ports he killed two of the crew. The driverless tank veered erratically and toppled over into a creek bed. The patrol remained in position all night. Just before reinforcements arrived the tanks withdrew.

Between the capture of Agrigento on July 17 and 1800 July 18 when Joss Force, which was the 3d Infantry Division reinforced, was dissolved, the Division and its attachments also captured Serradifalco, San Cataldo, and Raffadali. As a result of the breaking up of Joss Force on the 18th the Division reverted to its normal combat strength, plus a tabor (about a battalion) of Moroccan Goumiers. At the same time Joss Force was dissolved the Division was incorporated into Provisional Corps.

The first order from Provisional Corps directed the advance on Palermo. For battalions of the 3d, taking a short rest following the quick slashes northwest from Licata in the harrowing heat, it was a dramatic announcement which was relayed to them from General Truscott: "I want you to be in Palermo in five days."

Palermo! The city was over one hundred miles by chokingly dusty road, under the fiery Sicilian sun, with water scarce and hard to supply rapidly moving battalions.

Nevertheless the Division prepared for a most spectacular move; the breathtaking dash across Sicily to capture the island's capital and leading city . . . a race then unprecedented by foot soldiers in either of two World Wars, and comparable only in relatively modern war to several of the rapid cleavages of Sherman or Stuart in the Civil War. At that, Stuart at least had moved on horseback. This was a rugged hundred miles even if traversed strictly by road, that was scheduled to feel the tramp of doughboy brogans every foot of the way.

Plan of the general advance was simple in itself but, because of the speed, offered tremendous difficulties in the way of supply, communications and artillery support.

With the 7th Infantry in Division reserve, the first phase of the drive to Palermo was borne by the 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments and 3d Ranger Battalion. The 15th advanced north of Aragona toward Casteltermini, meeting scattered resistance and some artillery fire. South of Casteltermini demolitions in the form of blown bridges and tunnels impeded the advance, but not for long.

The 30th moved forward from Aragona toward San Stefano Quisquina, also encountering demolitions. One of these was particularly difficult; the enemy had blown a section of a road along a cliff just south of the Platani River, necessitating hard work by Lt. Col. Leonard L. Bingham's 10th Engineer Battalion to make the route passable for jeeps. Despite the magnitude of the job, by midnight jeeps of the regiment had passed the obstacle.

Moving northwest from Raffadali toward Cattolica the Rangers met no resistance and continued on toward Calamonica where they outposted the left flank of the Division. During the day they also made and maintained contact with the 82d Airborne Division, operating on the 3d's left.

Next day, the 20th, 15th Infantry continued the advance on the right, passing through Casteltermini and Castronuovo and occupying the area just southwest of Lercara Friddi, where it covered the assembly of the 7th Infantry. Resistance again was light, taking the form mainly of armored vehicles, artillery, and mines. Many prisoners were captured and much equipment was taken.

The 30th Infantry captured San Stefano Quisquina, but had a fight doing it.

At 2215, July 19, Colonel Rogers, on orders of General Truscott, ordered his 3d Battalion to move cross-

country and seize high ground northeast of town. No roads existed, therefore during the marching over mountainous terrain the battalion was unable to receive rations or additional water for July 20 (a situation which later became familiar along the island's north coast). The battalion set a record for marching that perhaps still stands for World War II: 54 miles in 33 hours, cross-country, to reach the assembly area for the attack on San Stefano Quisquina at 0945, July 20.

Commencing at 0500, July 20, 1st Battalion moved cross-country west of Highway 118 to attack the west side of San Stefano, and 2d Battalion moved along Highway 118 in regimental reserve to an approach south of the city. The 41st Field Artillery Battalion, regimental Antitank and Cannon Companies, and attached artillery moved by bounds from the vicinity of the road north of the stream crossing of the Platani River to positions from which they were prepared to support the attack of infantry battalions on San Stefano.

At 1130, 3d Battalion, having overcome intermittent resistance, reached the east outskirts of San Stefano to encounter strong resistance, including machine-gun and artillery fire. The heights were immediately attacked, but progress was slow until a coordinated attack was launched from the west.

Meanwhile the motorized advance guard of the regiment, consisting of a platoon of the 82d Reconnaissance Battalion, 2d Armd Division, led by Lt. James Fontone, a platoon of the 3d Reconnaissance Troop under 1st Lt. William Gunter, and the 30th Regimental I & R Platoon commanded by 2d Lt. Samuel W. Riley, had by-passed blown-out bridges and skirted minefields to reach a position a hundred yards from San Stefano.

At about 1200 Colonel Rogers joined Lieutenant Riley and four men of his platoon at the I & R observation post which was located 700 yards from an Italian roadblock position before the city. Here he discovered two enemy batteries going into position to fire on our approaching infantry when they came within range. Organizing a fire unit from his reconnaissance elements, consisting of three 37mm guns, one 75mm gun, three 60mm mortars, one 81mm mortar, five .50-caliber machine guns, four .30-caliber machine guns and fifteen riflemen, Colonel Rogers ordered them to open fire at the maximum rate. The sudden hail of fire achieved complete surprise. The gunners abandoned their pieces without firing a shot, as did the gunners of thirty-two machine guns, all of them making off toward San Stefano, several hundred yards to the rear. Pressure on the 3d Battalion on the right was relieved. Rogers ordered 1st Battalion to attack east of Highway 118.

The 1st Battalion drove toward the southern entrance of the city, assisting 3d Battalion in its difficult task of clearing the eastern slopes of the mountains which bordered San Stefano.

Once again under the personal direction of the 30th regimental commander, the 41st Field Artillery Battalion, with one battery initially, and subsequently with the entire battalion, placed heavy concentrations on the highway north of the city, preventing the escape of enemy personnel and transportation. Regimental Anti-tank Company also placed direct 57mm fire on retreating vehicles, and Company D laid 81mm mortar fire to the same effect. The intense fire destroyed numerous enemy vehicles and trapped at least a hundred pieces of transportation. The better vehicles captured in this haul were used by the 30th to speed movement of the regiment northward.

Immediately following this action the hard-pressing reconnaissance and battalion elements rounded up at least 750 prisoners.

The coordinated attack on San Stefano had begun at 1330 and continued throughout the afternoon. The city was entered by 3d Battalion at about 1700, followed by 1st Battalion.

The 2d Battalion, which had reached the southern city outskirts at about 1600, was ordered to prepare to push on to Prizzi, while 1st and 3d Battalions were to hold positions on the mountains north, northeast and northwest of San Stefano. The 41st Field Artillery Battalion, in position south of the city, commenced registering on all routes leading north from it.

Next day the 7th Infantry led the advance on the Sicilian capital. Attacking west from Castronuovo at 0555 with two battalions abreast, the regiment captured Prizzi and seized the high ridge beyond it by 0930, taking 500 prisoners in this area. The battalions then reorganized and continued the advance to the north, the 3d moving on Corleone at 1400 followed by the 1st at 1500. The 2d Battalion, which had left its area near Raffadali at 0130, arrived in the assembly area beyond Castronuovo and after being held in trucks as a mobile reserve, then moved on to Prizzi. At 1840 3d Battalion entered the town of Corleone, most important city between Agrigento and Palermo, and by 2100 the entire regiment was concentrated north of Corleone. At 2200 the 2d Battalion had moved forward by truck, detrucked just north of the town and then begun an advance toward Marineo.

The 15th Infantry, with the 4th Tabor of Goumiers attached, followed in the trace of 7th Infantry, one battalion passing through the 7th and starting up the secondary road which runs through Piana del Gresi toward Palermo.

At 1017 30th Infantry sent Company F (reinforced)



Troops of the 3d Division passing through Palermo.

north and west to Roccamena with the mission of securing the high ground in that vicinity and protecting the Division's left flank. The remainder of the regiment, with two battalions of field artillery in addition to the 41st Field, 65th Armored Field, and the 1st Battalion, 77th Field, was ordered to move to Roccamena to await further orders.

The regiment moved as ordered but a change in the plan was caused by an order from Provisional Corps changing the left boundary of the Division. The regiment was ordered to concentrate in an area about two miles south of Corleone, leaving Company F, reinforced, at Roccamena. This order necessitated a retracing of the line of march of 2d Battalion, which had been in the lead, from a position eight miles north of Campoflorita to the new area south of Corleone.

July 22 was one of the great days for the 7th Infantry, commanded throughout the Sicilian campaign by Col. Harry B. Sherman. By 0300 2d Battalion had reached a point two miles southwest of Marineo, meet-

ing very light resistance. At the same time the Division field order was issued for the advance on Palermo.

The 1st Battalion entrucked and passed through 2d Battalion just north of Marineo. The 3d Battalion entrucked at Corleone at 1115 and after detrucking passed through 1st Battalion at Misilmeri at 1300. Supporting artillery, the 10th, 65th and 77th Field, moved forward also to support the attack.

At Misilmeri 1st Battalion moved northwest across the mountains in order to enter the Palermo plain from the south. Some resistance was encountered and sixty German port troops were taken prisoner. At 1445 orders were received from General Patton that no troops other than patrols were to pass the line extending from Villabate through Belmonte to Monreale until further orders. The 7th Infantry, having sent motor patrols into the city at 1400, occupied positions along this line, prepared to move forward on order. At 1900 civilians representing the people of Palermo offered the surrender of the city to Brig. Gen. William W. Eagles, assistant division commander. At 2030 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, was sent into the city to guard important installations.

The entire phase just concluded was well summed up by Will Lang in *Life Magazine*.*

... The "Truscott Trot," as his men dubbed their grueling pace, proved more prescient than sadistic once the 3d Division had landed at Licata in Sicily. There followed an operation which is already classic in military annals for speed and success. After seven days' fighting the division captured Agrigento . . . and five days after that its patrols entered Palermo, fully 100 miles to the north. The bulk of this latter distance was covered by all three regiments in three days. On the 14th day the Division rested after having slyly gained for Truscott one of his most memorable firsts—the entry into Palermo.

As the various American forces approached Palermo, Patton defined a "blue phase line" just four miles short of the city beyond which no infantry excepting patrols, were to go. Patton's tanks had been chosen to make the victorious entry into the island's capital. This they did, with banners flying and cameras grinding. But inside the city they found the 3d Division's Lt. Col. John Heintges and his entire battalion quietly patrolling the streets . . .

While 7th Infantry was busily herding thousands of Italian and German prisoners together, the other two regiments were mopping up pockets of enemy resistance. The 15th Infantry, following in the wake of the 7th, reached the Seventh Army limiting line and was on the heights overlooking Palermo at 1445. Light resistance encountered north of Piana dei Greci was neutralized by the regiment's Cannon Company and attached artillery.

*Will Lang, *Life*, Oct. 2, 1944.

At 1400 the same day 30th Infantry had moved out from its area south of Corleone, following in the route of the 7th. The regiment concentrated just south of Misilmeri where it was prepared to move on short notice to any point desired by higher headquarters. The race to Palermo was over and the Division was allowed to rest for a few days before resuming pursuit of the faltering but still strong German and Italian armies.

Second Phase

By the time 3d Division captured Palermo, 2d Armored Division had cleaned up all of western Sicily west of the 3d's boundary. II Corps had moved north, east of the 3d, so that its front extended on a line from Montemaggiore through Petralia to Nicosia. Over in the eastern part of the island the British Eighth Army was fighting on a front from south of Nicosia through Catenanuova to just south of Catania. The stage was set to push east along the north coast to Messina. The United States 45th Infantry Division was chosen to lead the advance while the 3d Division enjoyed a well-earned rest.

The 45th pushed off but met heavy resistance and by the time the division got to San Stefano di Camastra, on the north coast road, it was decided that the 3d would relieve it. The relief began July 31.

The weather by this time, if it were possible, had grown hotter. At the peak of the day, around 1100, temperatures soared to between 100 and 110 F. It was muggy, sticky. The sun dawned each morning in an absolutely flawless blue sky, and before it was well into the zenith, men began sweating and cursing its relentless, burning rays. Not a breath of air stirred but that it was hotter than the normal motionless air and felt as though it had been piped through a blast furnace.

The single ribbon of road leading along the north coast of the island between Palermo and Messina was often as not thoroughly chewed up, cratered, and mined. On either side the broad shoulders were covered with finely ground dust which rose to tree-top height under the churning treads of the constant two-way traffic of supply vehicles and ambulances.

Water, which until Palermo had been scarce, was now to become more precious as relief for alkaline throats than the finest of aged beverages. It was a common sight to approach large groups of men clustered around a small pipe cemented into the side of a rocky cliffside, from which a small trickle of cold water flowed. These men would edge their way in in the attempt to fill their canteens, then double-time for several hundred yards to arrive, soaked with perspiration and covered with a film of dust, back in place in their rapidly-marching columns. Foresighted soldiers carried

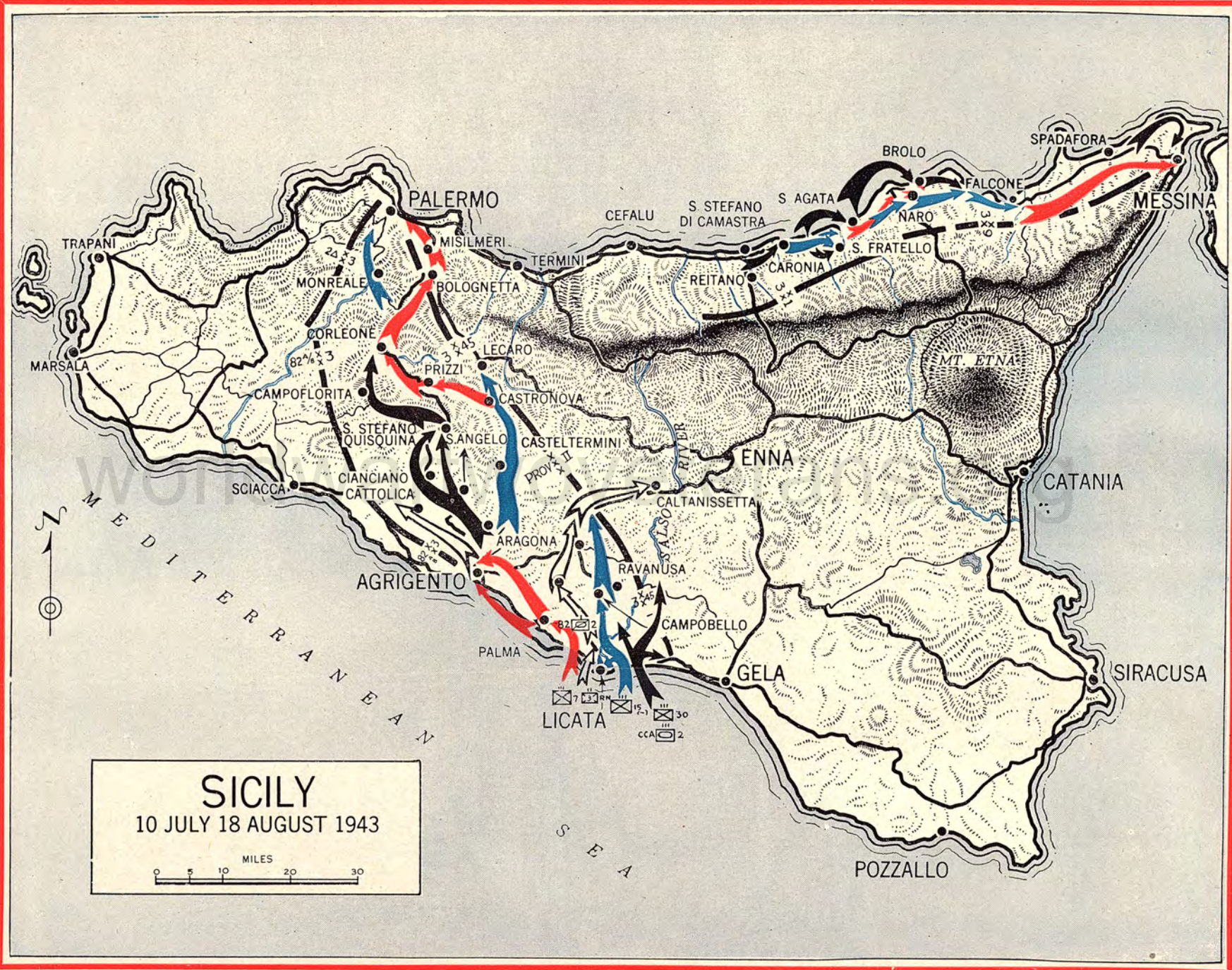


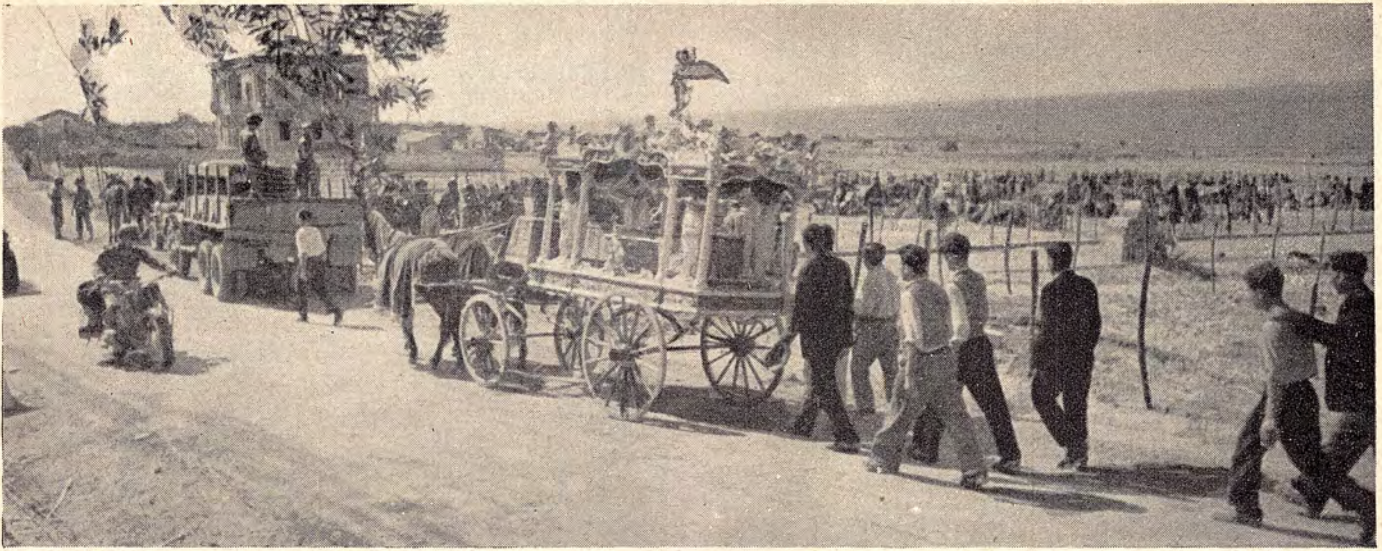
Colonel Don E. Carleton, Chief of Staff.

as many as four canteens, often one or two U. S. style, with possibly Italian or German models which had larger capacities.

It was a case of sanitation be damned. The drinking of unchlorinated spring water was at no time officially condoned. All men knew they were supposed to dissolve halazone tablets into unpurified water before drinking it, but it was hard to tell that to thousands of soldiers, constantly thirsty, when water points were so few and far between. More than once it became literally a life-and-death matter to various forces, isolated on forbidding heights, to get water. That the barest minimum necessary to sustenance was achieved is a tribute to many anonymous men, stout-hearted and strong of back, who carried five-gallon cans over heart-breakingly steep, rugged slopes; to the persistence of the men of the 3d Provisional Pack Train who led their mules as far as those agile animals could go, and then carried the precious cans the remainder of the way on their backs. It was also a commentary on human nature that men, deprived of water in inaccessible places, yet knowing the enemy ahead controlled watering spots, would fight like supercharged demons, preferring—if it became a matter of hard choice—to stop a piece of flying metal than to die agonizingly with their throats choking for moisture.

The single road was generally quite narrow. It wound between sea and mountain. At times the north side of the road edged gently into flat ground, covered





War and the civilian: An Italian funeral procession at the environs of Palermo. Probably a victim of artillery fire.

with olive trees, to slope gently to the water's edge. The opposite side might ascend gently into higher ground, then rise abruptly to lofty peaks. Along the greater part of the route however, the terrain was sharply defined, and on one side sheer hundred-foot drops to rock-lined surf confronted the unwary driver, while on the island's side great, towering rock cliffs, presenting few toeholds, jutted toward the sky. In such places the road was carved from the mountain-side itself.

On the maps each projection of terrain is referred to as a "hill," in many cases probably the cartographers' little joke. To the men who had to climb them the humor was salted with plenty of sweat.

Is it any wonder then that an enemy who, with the exception of a couple of notable battles, was fighting a delaying action could defend with such relative ease, deploy a minimum number of men, and still make the fight of the 3d Infantry Division as harrowing as any fought anywhere? It is to the everlasting credit of the doughboys that the ninety miles from San Stefano di Camastra to Messina was covered in seventeen days following completion of the relief.

The 30th Infantry led the advance initially along the north coast. The 1st Battalion detrucked in the San Stefano di Camastra area at 1115, July 31, and marched south to Reitano where it contacted the 179th Infantry of the 45th Division. The 2d Battalion completed detrucking at 1315 and moved east along Highway 113 toward San Stefano, effecting contact with the 157th Infantry of the 45th Division one and one-half miles west of the town.

At the riverbed just west of the town a blown bridge and mines were encountered and at this point the battalion left the road and moved to positions about 4,000 yards southeast of San Stefano. All that night the 10th Engineers, supervised by Colonel Rogers, worked to

ready the by-pass to enable the Division timetable to be met. A combat and reconnaissance patrol entered San Stefano and proceeded two miles east, meeting no enemy activity other than sporadic artillery fire. By 2130 the battalion had moved along steep mountain trails to a point six miles southeast of San Stefano.

The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, detrucked at 1505 and remained in an assembly area near the detrucking point, moving east at 2100. Company C, 10th Engineer Battalion, moved immediately from the detrucking area and began the repair of by-passes in the San Stefano area.

The 15th Infantry, meanwhile, had gone into bivouac in the area just east of Castel di Tusa and prepared to move on to the east. By midnight of August 1 the entire Division was concentrated in the San Stefano area, poised to begin its relentless drive to the east. Effecting this concentration was not an easy matter. The highway and bridge situations already men-



The north coast of Sicily in vicinity of San Stefano di Camastra.



Waiting for the mines to be swept from a river bed ahead.

tioned were bad in that they hindered the orderly relief of the 45th Division. Order was soon formed from seeming chaos, however, and the Division began its attack hampered only by Germans, heat, and miserable communications caused by the one, lone road.

At 0500, August 2, 30th Infantry attacked to the east over steep cliffs and extremely rugged terrain. Its mission was to seize the bridge west of Caronia, to capture the town itself, and to cut the road east of the town. The 41st FA Battalion supported the attack. The 1st Battalion reached its objective by 0900 and sent a patrol to the northeast of Highway 113 and thence back through Caronia. The 2d Battalion attacked from its position to seize the high ground just south of Caronia, arriving at its objective by 1500, although advance patrols entered the town at 1430. The 3d Battalion moved down the highway and advanced to the east along it.

The 3d Battalion seized the bridge and Company L entered the town at 1215. The enemy reaction was violent, and took the form of copious artillery and mortar fire, long-range machine-gun fire and treacherous minefields. This was the first German resistance of any nature met by the 30th Infantry since landing overseas. From 1000 to 1030, and then intermittently until 1100, the regimental command post, but 800 yards behind 3d Battalion, underwent an intensive enemy artillery concentration, which resulted in two killed and eleven wounded. General Truscott was there to "sweat it out," and among the casualties was Lt. Col. Lionel C. McGarr, executive officer, who was seriously wounded by a mine explosion while he was en route to Caronia.

Blown bridges hindered moving up organic transportation. Mortar, artillery, and machine-gun fire inflicted approximately forty casualties in the 3d Battalion as it assaulted Caronia across rugged, shrub-covered terrain.

The 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, now moved out along the coast road to the vicinity of Caronia, followed by the remainder of the regiment. Progress was extremely slow because of the numerous blown bridges, minefields, and the slow movement of the troops in front.

The 2d Battalion moved through the 30th Infantry at 1545 and continued east along Highway 113. Foot troops were able to by-pass the blown and mined bridges but the vehicles had to wait until the engineers constructed by-passes. The 2d Battalion reached its objective at 2345 and patrols were sent forward to the east. The 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, passed through the 30th Infantry at 1730 and started cross-country at 1845 to a position two miles west of San Fratello. The first of the two bloodiest battles on the north coast of Sicily was about to begin. Again, however, during this day resistance mainly took the shape of enemy minefields.

Sergeant Jack Foisie, *Stars and Stripes* correspondent, graphically described this "minefield resistance."

You march in extended order and you keep looking for snipers in the hills, and mines under your feet. Your eyes soon get tired from looking but you keep on looking first at the hills and then the road.

A jeep passes you by; it is the first vehicle through the by-pass and you think it is going to get into town before you. You curse the mobility of the army.

The jeep enters a tunnel and there is a muffled explosion. The medics start to run down to the tunnel and someone says, "Yeh, you'd better let me go first" and an engineer with a mine detector begins sweeping a path for them. You are suddenly glad you are an infantry man—but only for a minute . . .

On the bend in the road are what look like small shell craters in the asphalt surface. You wonder who did the nice shooting, and then a smart sergeant says, "watch out for those soft spots, they're antitank mines." Sure enough, an engineer comes along and probes with a bayonet and it strikes metal.

"Take it easy, Joe," says the guy who's working with him, "those things are touchy." The two get down on their knees around the mine and from a few yards off it looks like they're shooting craps. If you're a damn fool you come closer and, looking over their shoulders, you see them dig out the dirt around the mine and then work their hands under the mine to see if it's boobyed, that is, if it will explode when lifted up. Satisfied, the engineer called Joe lifts out the German Teller mine and the other guy unscrews the caps and defuses it. "Now it's completely harmless," says Joe, and he lays it down very carefully way off the road. There are a pile of these Teller mines; they look just like an oversize discus.

You've been walking over an hour now and the white lines of salt begin to appear on your sweat-soaked shirt. Your canteen is still half-full but the water is more than lukewarm. There is a spout of cool mountain water empty-

ing into a cement basin in the shade of a grove of big-leaved trees. "How about a ten-minute break?" Okay, but you'd better jump from the asphalt to the bank; those shoulders are always mined.

So you leap over the soft shoulder and land on the bank; you lean back and relax. The weight of the pack leaves your shoulders. The grass is cool and soft. You stretch out flat—and that saves your life. The guy who had been marching out in front of you—yes, the fellow carrying a Browning Automatic Rifle—had been the first to refill his canteen from that spout of cool water, and the first to find that the Germans had put a ring of S-mines around the foot of the basin.

You are tempted to take to the railroad tracks which go straight across into town but then you remember the jeep in the tunnel . . . It is decided to reconnoiter the roadblock at the entrance to the bridge. Two men are selected and you are not one of them. A halt is called while they go ahead. . . . One of the two scouts comes running back.

"Mines. All around the bridge. A patrol from another company coming down from the hills ran into them. Got quite a few. They need a doctor," the scout reports.

"Doctor up front! Pass the word back!" orders the point commander. The word is passed back: "Doctor up front!" There is more talk on a walkie-talkie; it is decided to try and get the doc through; the engineers will be up shortly but there is no time.

You reach the other bank and there above you on the ledge is an Italian civilian, all smiles and a mixture of languages. He is wearing sandals made out of rubber tires. Naturally, he announces right off that he lived twenty-three years in Brooklyn—they all have, it seems.

"Okay, Joe, tell us about that later. What we want to know, can you lead us around that minefield?"

He leads you along the bank until you come onto the wounded and the dead about fifty yards in front of you. You were taking the same path that these men had taken.

The file backs up. This time the Italian who had once lived in Brooklyn is ordered to take us up over the ridge and then swing around to the road. The old man explains that he is very old and cannot make the hill. There is nothing to do but go on without a guide. Shoot the old man, you say. No, remember that he was in the lead and would have been the first one to go. Blame it on the fumbings of an old man's mind.

You climb the terraced ridge and turn toward the road. Your eyes are glued to that soil. You follow in the exact footsteps of the man in front of you. The man in the lead—perhaps he follows in the footsteps of God. Every snap of a twig, each rattle of a pebble, makes you twitch and shiver. If you think at all it is perhaps about what you said in your last letter home.

The leader reaches the bank overlooking the road. He jumps and lands on the firm asphalt surface. He is safe. The next one jumps. He is safe. Each one jumps and is safe. You jump and you are safe.

The doctor walks in the middle of the road down to the bridge. There is a cart at the end of the bridge. It was

touching this cart that set off the first of the mines. The doctor goes to work.

Monte San Fratello is a 2200-foot peak standing on the east bank of the Furiano River, close to the Mediterranean. A saddle joins it to higher ridges to the south and in the saddle lies the village of San Fratello. A road winds up the western side of the mountain from the coastal highway to the village and continues on south. A short distance inland from the village the Furiano forks, forming two deep gorges with a lofty, steep-sloped nose standing between the branches.

The crest of Monte San Fratello is a high, rocky escarpment and the western slope is irregular, with many hummocks and draws. The Germans occupied dug-in positions east of the river. In addition they had thickly sown the bed of the Furiano with "S" and Teller mines and had demolished the bridge which carried the main highway across the river.

The problem thus facing the Division was by no means easy. The Germans were in position to make a strong bid to stop the advance of the 3d and these Germans were not ready to start running again. It was up to the Division to outmaneuver and outfight them.

The 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, following a terrific two-and-one-half hour artillery barrage beginning at 0830 August 3, advanced along Highway 113 until it reached the west bank of the Furiano River where it encountered strong opposition. It reorganized and attempted to continue the attack but was halted by heavy artillery, machine-gun, and mortar fire from the east of the river and minefields in the river bed.

During the evening of the same day the 1st Battalion moved up on the south flank of the 2d Battalion and 3d Battalion advanced cross-country to positions west of San Fratello, well south of 1st Battalion.

The advance of the 3d Battalion was slow and grueling. During the long march, exhausted soldiers plodded on across deep gorges and over mountain trails so precipitous, that the mules bearing rations and ammunition were often unable to negotiate the steep ascent, lost footing and tumbled to their death hundreds of feet below. The 3d Battalion skirted two enemy minefields to find the enemy in the mountainous terrain and carry the battle to him. Ammunition, food and water supply was precariously low. Yet the advance on Hill 673 continued.

Patrols went out and preparations were made to continue the attack in the morning.

At 0600 the 1st and 2d Battalions attacked again; again they were halted. The 2d then changed direction of advance, made a lunge toward the right, but got only to the east side of the river bed when heavy enemy fire drove it back. The 1st Battalion tried several times to

cross the river at a more southern point but was driven back each time.

At this point General Truscott ordered a coordinated attack on San Fratello and patrols spent the night of August 4-5 vigorously probing enemy defenses to obtain additional information concerning their strength and locations.

The 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments attacked at 0600 the following morning, the 30th minus its own 2d Battalion but reinforced by the 3d Battalion of the 15th. Moving from a line of departure that ran along the ridge from Di Nicoletta to Santa Maria, the 1st Battalion of the 30th was taken under terrific enemy artillery and mortar fire that lasted for an hour. The battalion withdrew with heavy losses.

The entire attack was destined to the same fate—every step toward the objective was made at high cost. The advance down on our slope, the crossing of the river bed, the advance up the enemy slope, offered nothing but obstacles and clear enemy observation.

Even mule packs had difficulty negotiating the hills and maintenance of communications proved almost impossible, although mounted messengers furnished by the Provisional Horse Cavalry Troop were indispensable aids.

The terrain was so rough that it took five hours for the 3d Battalion of the 30th to reach the 3d Battalion of the 15th, which had moved secretly into positions on the Santa Maria ridge prior to the attack. Contact with our own units which were not over 1,000 yards away was frequently broken.

Like that of the 30th the advance of the 15th, which was veiled in a heavy smokescreen laid down by our artillery and Chemical Battalion, was extremely slow.

After an all-day fight that at times was disheartening, the 15th minus the 3d Battalion, which was still attached to the 30th, had reached only half way up the ridge when it was ordered to hold its positions till dark and withdraw back across the river. The 2d Battalion of the 7th aided in this withdrawal, which was completed under cover of darkness.

The coordinated attack had hardly punctured the enemy positions during the whole day and after reorganization the units were set to continue the mission the following day, August 6. The 7th Infantry, which had been held in readiness near Caronia also was to move forward with the mission of passing through the 15th, crossing the Furiano and pushing east along Highway No. 113 toward the sea.

The 7th struck early in the morning, by-passed the San Fratello action and reached Acquadolci at 0753. By 1115, the regiment was in Sant' Agata and an hour later had made contact with the 2d Battalion of the 30th,

which had made a successful amphibious landing three miles east of Sant' Agata.

The San Fratello objective fell during a night assault.

At 1830, one platoon of Company C, 30th Infantry, attacked with the mission of clearing out machine-gun and mortar fire which had retarded previous advances. Company D covered the platoon with machine-gun and mortar fire but suffered heavily from an enemy artillery and mortar concentration. The platoon, though badly disorganized, continued on and succeeded in reaching the top of the hill just south of San Fratello.

The 3d Battalions of both the 30th and 15th encountered stiff resistance at Hill 673 but had fought their way nearly to the crest at daybreak, when it was discovered that part of the ground was exposed to enemy enfilade fire from a ridge to the south and most of the men had to be shifted to other positions.

Company I of the 30th however, commanded by 1st Lt. George K. Butler, continued the attack toward San Fratello but was stopped by artillery, machine-gun and cannon fire from tanks in San Fratello. The company held its position all day while the rest of the 3d Battalion was reorganizing.

At 1930, the 3d Battalion struck again, with Company L in the assault, supported by Company K and an 81mm mortar platoon from the 15th Infantry. The hitherto indomitable enemy defense finally cracked and at 2330 Hill 673 was captured by Company L. A fierce counterattack was repelled, adding considerably to the already high total of casualties that the enemy had suffered.

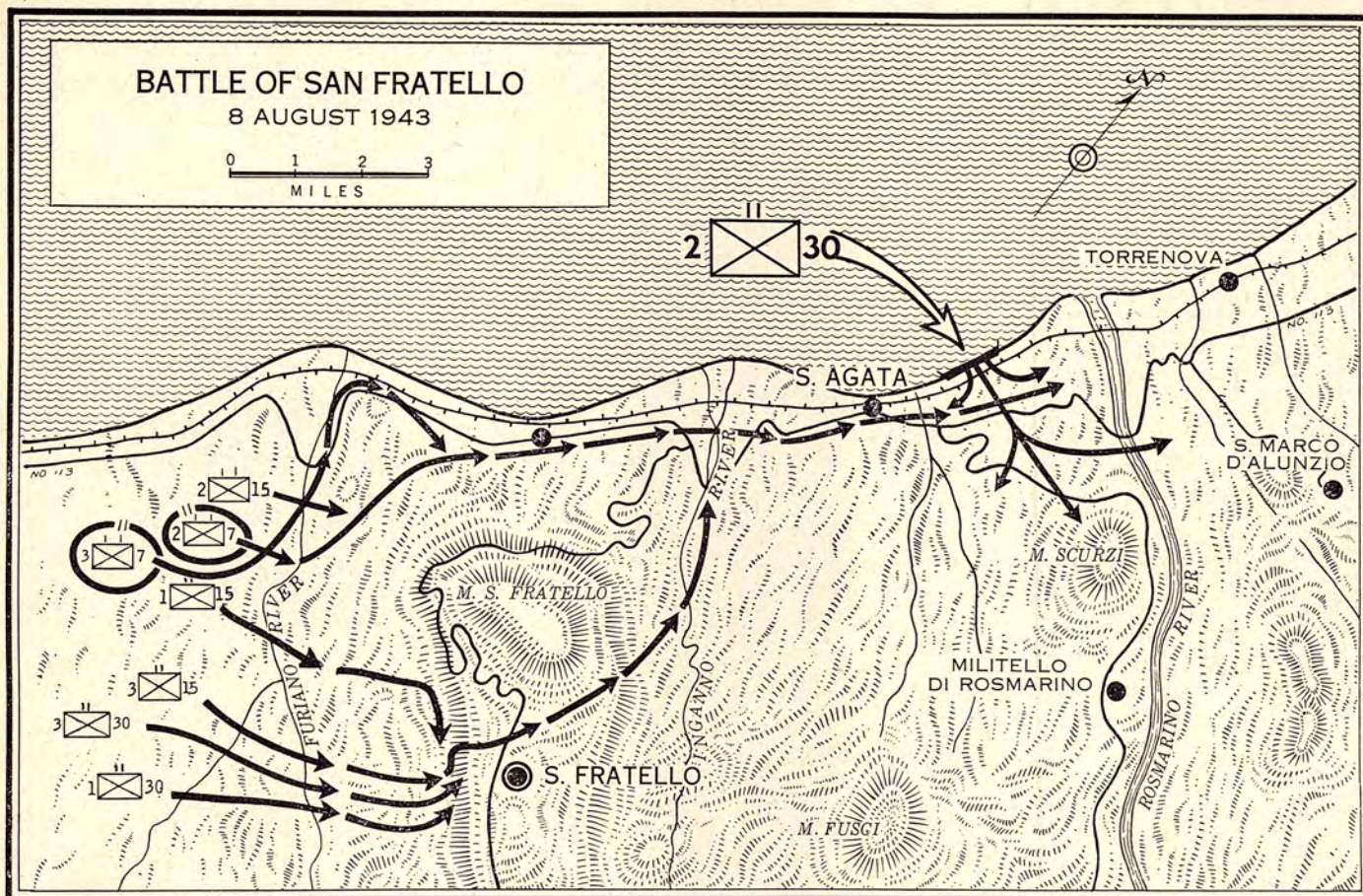
It was the weary 3d Battalion of the 15th Infantry which was hardest hit by the enemy counterattack. For more than 45 minutes it was subject to a violent TOT-artillery concentration, after which it met the several waves of counter-attacking enemy, committing all service troops in the attempt to stop the on-rushing foe.

A large number of machine guns and mortars were also destroyed and captured during the two-day engagement. Company L, leading 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, entered San Fratello proper at 0800. Moving from there to Monte Fratello, the battalion took 500 prisoners.

The 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry was committed to attack another hill mass, which they stormed under a protecting mortar concentration and seized. It then descended on San Fratello in the valley and in house-to-house fighting, fought through the town to contact elements of Co. L, 30th Infantry.

For its action from 3-8 August, the 3d Battalion 15th Infantry was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation.

The crossing of the Furiano, the struggles in the high hills and finally the seizure of the San Fratello ridge were the bitterest operations the Division had encountered since Licata.



During the night of August 7, while the rest of the regiment was making its successful attack against San Fratello by land, the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, with tanks, armored artillery and other attachments, loaded into several landing craft and early on the morning of August 8 made a successful, almost unopposed landing near Sant' Agata, a short distance east of San Fratello on the north coast.

Certain passages from a story by Foisie in the *Stars & Stripes* help to tell of the results attained by this "minor" amphibious landing:

We landed seven miles behind the enemy lines at 0300 hours Sunday morning.

Our mission was to fight our way through the beach defenses to a high tableland a mile inland, there to cut the coastal highway leading to Sant' Agata and isolate the entrenched Germans holding up the American advance along the north Sicilian coast. Alone and without hope of reinforcements we were for twenty-four hours to hold off the bulk of the Axis forces to the east, at the same time keeping the net tightly closed around the enemy caught between us and the main lines.

"It is the chance that few outfits get, so let's cut the rug and knock them all the way back to Messina," were the final words of the raider commander, Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard.

Five hours after the first assault boat had touched sand we were firmly entrenched in the hills, had smeared all

German traffic going in either direction. By noon the town of Sant' Agata had fallen. At 1241 hours, contact was established with the advanced elements of the main American forces, ahead of schedule.

The unparalleled success of the daring knifelike thrust at the enemy's rear resulted in the complete collapse of their strong defense line on the 2200 ridge east of Sant' Agata and sent them reeling back without being able to depend upon minefields and other Nazi tricks for delaying action. . . .

There was virtually no opposition to the landing but the battalion was later counterattacked strongly by the enemy, supported by machine guns and artillery. All positions were held. As a result of this landing 250 enemy were killed, one hundred were captured, four tanks were disabled and fourteen trucks and four motorcycles were destroyed.

The 7th Infantry passed through the 15th Infantry about daylight August 8 and advanced along the coastal road meeting little opposition. The enemy, yielding to heavy pressure from south of San Fratello, and disorganized by the landing of 30th Infantry's 2d Battalion in his rear, had withdrawn from all his forward positions and could not offer further effective delaying action here. Contact between 7th Infantry and 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was made at 1236 August 8 and a gain of more than twelve miles was the second important result of this audacious operation.



The 39th FA passes through the rubble of Sant' Agata on their way along the northern Sicilian coast.

From Sant' Agata the attack was pressed vigorously by 7th Infantry along the coast with 15th Infantry moving up and attacking cross-country on its right on August 10. The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, in the meantime, without any rest, was preparing for another amphibious operation. This time the mission was to land fifteen miles behind the enemy lines and cut the highway at Brolo, halfway between Cape Orlando and Cape Calava.

On August 11, 30th Infantry, minus the 2d Battalion, continued the attack along the coastal road, while the 7th Infantry swung inland. Both 7th and 15th reached and secured positions along the important Orlando-Randazzo road that day, across extremely difficult terrain, and against increasingly strong enemy resistance.

On August 11 Colonel Bernard's force struck again. This second landing, like the first, was unopposed in the beginning. The landing craft hove to about 3000 yards off the landing beach and by 0310 the landing craft from the LST and the sixteen ducks were in their rendezvous circles. The run into the beach commenced immediately and at 0243 the first wave landed without a shot being fired. Rapid, quiet work landed the entire assault force on the beach without loss by 0400.

By daylight not a trace remained on the beach or to seaward to indicate that a landing of infantry troops had occurred, but the absence of exits from the beach to the highway was a very serious drawback to wheeled and tracked vehicles. It was necessary for the tanks and mobile artillery to go through a lemon grove, traversed by numerous ditches, then up to a steep embankment to reach the highway; moreover, there were only a few ways the vehicles could get up the embankment, namely by going under the bridges at either end of the beach.

Immediately upon landing Company E began clearing the lemon grove. Within forty-five minutes after disembarking, the grove, between the embankment and the road, was reported clear of enemy. Companies F and G had reached the road at 0345 when the leading elements heard a vehicle moving along the road from west to east. This vehicle was allowed to pass as the secrecy of the operation had not yet been lost. About five minutes later the put-put of a motorcycle broke the silence. Overanxious riflemen shot and killed the driver. A few seconds later another small car came down the road and was destroyed by an antitank rocket shell. As a result of this shooting the enemy opened up with flares and tracer fire in the darkness.

As the two rifle companies, followed by battalion headquarters and the supporting weapons, crawled up the steep slope at the eastern tip of the mountain, rifle and machine-gun flashes lit the night about them. Four machine guns and several rifles were quickly identified. These were put out of action by the advancing infantry who had to grab and hold on to the bushes to ascend the slope. Enemy fire, however, was not well directed. The bulk of the landing team was still obviously undetected. Two German prisoners were taken during the climb.

By 0530 the top of Monte Creole had been reached and within an hour all units reported by radio that they were in position and reorganized. The few men who attempted to scale the tip of the mountain after that drew heavy fire from the machine guns and 20mm guns located across the river in the hills south of Brolo. With daylight, movement of any kind became extremely hazardous. About fifteen men were killed trying to climb this slope with messages or equipment.

Before daylight Battery A of the 58th Armored FA Battalion had taken up positions in the lemon grove, firing toward Brolo. Battery B took position to fire on targets of opportunity to the west. Both batteries gave extremely effective supporting fire until they were destroyed in the late afternoon.

Their location in the lemon grove, which was dominated by high ground to the west, their proximity to the enemy on the east; and hampered by lack of direct observation on close-in targets, made their task very difficult. In spite of these limitations they succeeded in preventing the enemy from emplacing any supporting artillery on the eastern end of the position, and harassed the enemy a great deal on the west end, where the situation and terrain were more favorable to enemy action.

The tanks were also hampered, even more seriously, by the number of ditches in the lemon grove, as well as by a stone wall along the edge of the road which limited their movement. They were also under observation, and, although they were able to fire as fixed guns, they were not able to maneuver effectively, and so were relatively useless in the engagement which was about to follow.

By 0700 the enemy had recovered from his surprise and began to initiate reconnaissance. The first of these probing attempts came in the form of a motorized patrol. This force came roaring down the road from Naso. The concentrated rocket and machine-gun fire which greeted them set the two leading vehicles on fire and scattered the enemy personnel.

Shortly after this a large patrol of about thirty men began working its way down the bed of the Brolo River and was kept under observation until it got to within 700 yards. It was engaged by heavy machine-gun fire from the platoon on top of Monte Creole. The force was decimated. Its members returned again only to drag away their casualties.

About an hour later a company of enemy was located marching boldly down the bed of the Naso River. This group was caught in machine-gun and 60mm mortar fire and was pinned down. All three of these attempts having proved both abortive and costly to them, the Germans made no further attempts to attack from the south. The sector was relatively quiet until after dark.

At 0900 enemy vehicles were seen moving westward along the road from Cape Orlando, about five miles east of Brolo. The Navy opened fire. No direct hits were observed, but the enemy was forced to dismount. At about the same time one light tank and one Mark IV moved along this same road, accompanied by a small detachment of infantry. Artillery fire forced the tank to seek cover, and the infantry moved into the woods north of the road.

By this time the lack of mortar ammunition, with



Lieutenant Colonel Lyle W. Bernard, commanding 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry.

which these enemy soldiers could have been taken under fire, was beginning to be felt. Only harassing fire was possible. Since sixteen mules had been brought along, the mule train attempted to bring ammunition up on the hill, but was caught by machine-gun fire when it came under observation from the hills south of Brolo. All but two mules were killed. These two mules reached the top of Monte Creole late in the afternoon. Hand carry of ammunition was attempted but was only partially successful, since the trip was so long and the losses prohibitively high.

While reconnaissance of the eastern flank was carried out by the enemy, a strong attack was obviously in preparation from the direction of Brolo. At least two companies arrived in personnel carriers; several tanks came down the road and entered the town. Small groups of men also could be seen in the woods east of the town.

At 1300 the artillery fired on Brolo, intense naval gunfire was placed west of the town, and 2d Battalion dumped heavy mortar shells into the town. An hour later a friendly air mission came over and dropped bombs over a large area covering the roads and assembly areas east of Brolo.

From all appearances this bombardment from three directions and from the air ended any attempt to assault the position from the east and a column of enemy

troops could be seen moving to the east in great confusion. Friendly planes which came over again at 1430 disabled many of these.

Three Mark IV tanks remained concealed in the town, however, and at about 1500 began working their way across the bridge over the Brolo River. Because of the high wall at this point and the limited observation for direct fire the artillery was unable to engage these tanks, which succeeded in penetrating the position and destroying two of the ammunition half-tracks and two of the artillery pieces. One of the tanks was destroyed in this battle. The others made good their escape.

During the course of this action an especially heavy concentration of enemy artillery fire fell on Monte Creole, and kept up for an hour, causing several casualties. The tanks which had penetrated the western end of the position also delivered considerable direct fire against buildings, walls, clumps of trees and other likely places for congregation or concealment of our men.

Enemy tracer set fires on the northern slopes of Monte Creole which burned out telephone lines. The repair crews which were sent down in an attempt to fix them suffered severe losses by machine-gun fire from the German tanks and were forced to withdraw.

The volume of enemy fire was rapidly increasing on the western end of the position. Naval fire support was called to lay a concentration on the woods just west of the Naso River. An air mission on this area had been requested previously, but had not yet materialized. It was then discovered that communication with the naval support had been disrupted by the burning of the telephone lines. The naval craft did not respond.

An attempt was made to move the artillery pieces to positions from which they could lay fire on the enemy assembly areas. This resulted in their being detected by the enemy tanks. Three of our pieces were destroyed. Troops on the hill placed as much rifle fire as possible in the area but without much effect as it was primarily plunging fire. Mortar and machine-gun ammunition, beyond a very small last contingency reserve which was being held out on orders of the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard, was exhausted and replenishment, although attempted, resulted in considerable casualties.

To remedy this situation Company F was ordered down into the flats to relieve elements of Company E on the east flank, who would then reinforce the west flank position. The one remaining gun of Battery A was placed to cover the road west of Brolo and the bridge across the Brolo River.

This movement began about 1500 and soon relieved the pressure on the west flank. In spite of this the

enemy had been able to get small groups into the position.

At about this time the requested air attack materialized all too surprisingly. Seven A-36s swooped in low over the southern hill and planted two heavy bombs in the battalion CP and the remainder on the artillery in the lemon grove in the flats below the road. Here the lack of dispersion resulted in all four guns of Battery B's being destroyed by 1630. All supporting weapons were now gone and the infantry in the flats stood alone.

At this point the battalion executive officer, Maj. Lynn D. Fargo, returned to the CP from the flats with word that Company E had been badly disorganized by the tank fire from the rear, the enemy attacks from the front, and by the ammunition exploding in the half-tracks of the artillery, two of which were now burning.

It appeared now that the position in the flats would soon become untenable. The elements there were ordered to withdraw to the hill and organize a defensive position which would be held for the night. The remaining mortar ammunition was expended in a concentration placed in the woods just west of the Naso River and machine-gun and rifle fire was directed at the bridge to prevent infiltration on that side, and to cover the disengagement.

About this time a message over the 511 radio from an unknown source was received by Colonel Bernard. It gave the electrifying news that 7th Infantry was on a hill just beyond Naso and that help was on the way. So, with the groans of the wounded in the aid station and the scraping sound of steady digging coming from all directions on the beleaguered hill, the battered battalion settled down to hold the position to the last.

A small patrol of the enemy started up the hill about midnight but was driven off by heavy machine-gun fire. In the early part of the night, bursts of small-arms fire and an occasional grenade-burst testified eloquently that those who had been left on the flats were fighting their way back to the battalion. From dark until early morning hours, the movement of tracked and wheeled vehicles could be heard on the road below the position and in the town of Brolo.

At 0600 survivors on the hill looked to the west and a welcome light greeted their eyes. Friendly troops were approaching. Contact with them was made at 0830. They proved to be elements of 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry. They continued marching down the highway, passing through 2d Battalion. The hungry, dirty, tired and thirsty men were relieved. An immediate check was made of the battalion and results summarized, while the battalion and attached units moved to a bivouac area in the grove just west of the Naso River, where the battalion remained in Division reserve for the next two days.

The results of the Brolo operation were realized more in morale effect on the retreating enemy than in the punishment actually inflicted, although that in itself was quite severe. No longer could he move with any freedom in his rear areas along the remaining distance to Messina.

At any time a large force was likely to land in his rear and cut off and destroy his entire command.

As one example, a mere feint with a larger group a few days later contributed to a very hasty withdrawal of all enemy forces across the Straits of Messina, since any successful breaching of the north coast would have laid the other elements spread across the island of Sicily open to attack from the flank.

(Foregoing material on 2d Battalion (reinforced) 30th Infantry, in its landing at Brolo is from the report submitted by Capt. Walter K. Millar, Jr., A.D.C., and later of the 45th Infantry Division, who participated in the entire engagement.)

In tallying up losses at Brolo both sides were seen to have paid heavily, with the Division losing more heavily in personnel and materiel than the Germans, but gaining on the strategic side of the ledger.

The Germans lost two Mark IV tanks destroyed and two disabled; one 77mm gun with 1½-ton prime-mover destroyed; four personnel carriers destroyed; two motorcycles destroyed; twelve Germans captured; and an estimated 100 killed.

United States losses were four officers and 37 men killed; three officers and 75 men wounded; three officers and 55 men missing. We lost also seven M-7's (105mm full-track) destroyed, one M-7 disabled, two half-tracks (ammunition carriers) destroyed, and 14 mules killed.

According to the Distinguished Unit Citation which was later awarded the battalion, ". . . The action of the 2d Battalion was marked by gallantry, fearlessness and profound devotion to duty in the successful accomplishment of two vital missions."

During the night of August 9-10, while the 2d Battalion of the 30th was slipping through the waters of the Tyrrhenian in its second amphibious operation, the remainder of the Division had started a parallel land march east, the 7th Infantry skirting Highway 113, the 15th moving cross-country south of the highway and the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 30th edging up the coast behind the 7th.

Our artillery, displaced in positions east of Sant' Agata, supported the advance of the regiments, although enemy artillery countered on their positions frequently and with good effect. Maj. Edward C. Robertson, commanding the 41st Field Artillery Battalion, was killed during an early-morning reconnaissance just before the infantry started advancing.

Reaching the Di Zappulla river, the 7th encountered heavy resistance and Company B sustained unusually severe losses from mines in the bed of the river, which the company crossed at daybreak. Shortly after Companies A and C had crossed the river to occupy Hill De Morco, the enemy launched a terrific counterattack and the whole 1st Battalion withdrew across the river after inflicting heavy losses on the enemy in a five-hour battle.

The 3d Battalion of the 7th attacked again that night and by 1945 was firmly established on Hill De Morco.

The 15th Infantry moved through the hills unopposed in the early hours of its march but came under heavy artillery fire after reaching Mirto and had to infiltrate across open, observed ground to cover the final steps to the Di Zappulla.

The 7th and 15th initiated attacks early on the morning of the 11th.

The 7th, veering south of Highway 113, struck at Malo, which was taken at 1030 despite heavy enemy mortar and machine-gun fire and at 1145 Pernicchia was occupied. The regiment then turned northeast toward Brolo to disrupt an enemy counterattack which was forming against the 2d Battalion of the 30th, which had made its amphibious landing at 0300 that morning. Contact with the 30th's battalion was made at noon.

Lacking artillery preparation, the 15th moved slowly behind patrols as it crossed the Di Zappulla. The 1st Battalion occupied Naso late in the afternoon and the rest of the regiment moved into the area surrounding Castel Umberto. The enemy was withdrawing rapidly in front of the 15th and steady progress was only lightly contested.

The 1st and 3d Battalions of the 30th, meanwhile, had taken Cape Orlando, which juts out into the sea midway between Sant' Agata and Brolo. Learning that the 2d Battalion was in dire straits after the sea-borne landing, the 30th immediately began a speed march toward Brolo. Arriving at Monte Creole, between the Naso and Erelo rivers, contact was made with the beleaguered battalion, which was relieved by the 1st and 3d and went into concealed bivouac.

By August 12 the Division had advanced to a line running from Brolo to Castel Umberto but the march had been costly, slow and difficult. An approximate casualty report submitted by the 7th Infantry on that date indicated the regiment had fifteen officers and 400 men killed, wounded and missing during the period August 7-12 and this figure approximated these of the other units in the Division.

The Division resumed the mountainous pursuit the following day with the 30th headed toward Cape Calava on the coast and the 15th pointing to Patti, a little town on Highway 113 just east of Cape Calava. The

route of the 15th lay through treacherous country and all heavy weapons were loaded onto pack mules at San Angelo. The trek ahead required it. Although the march was uninterrupted insofar as enemy resistance was concerned, it took eight hours to cover the distance, a little over five miles. The men and animals were so worn that they were given a four-hour rest when they reached Highway 113, just outside Patti.

Our artillery and air bombarded the advance route of the 30th as the regiment made its coastal march toward Cape Calava. The enemy, however, was withdrawing as rapidly as possible and the retreat had become so hasty that large stores of supplies and guns were scattered along the escape route. For instance, an enemy dump on Highway 113 yielded the following equipment, all new: 50 light MGs, 40 heavy MGs, 20 light mortars and 15 truckloads of hand grenades, ammunition flares, rockets and explosives. Coast defense batteries and other heavy guns were found undamaged in many places. Mark IV tanks were being employed to cover rear-guard engineers as they hastily prepared demolitions and laid mines along highway 113, just ahead of our advancing troops.

While no direct enemy fire was received when the 30th approached Cape Calava, the advance was halted abruptly where a section of highway was blown off the face of a cliff directly above the Tyrrhenian and at a point where Highway 113 cut through a tunnel on the tip of the cape.

Col. Arthur H. Rogers, the regimental commander, with Lt. John C. Perkins, Communications Officer, and some communications personnel, loaded two amphibious 2½-ton trucks with water and signal equipment and "by-passed" the obstruction via the Tyrrhenian Sea while the 10th Engineer Battalion began the task of restoring the highway, one of the most notable feats of engineering performed during World War II.

Stripped to the waist in heat that was almost unbearable, the engineers worked without rest literally to "hang a bridge from the sky," as the late Ernie Pyle described the job in his book *Brave Men*.

Jeep traffic crossed the gap eighteen hours after the engineers started the job and within twenty-four hours the larger trucks were moving over the ledge in perfect safety. General Truscott, to accelerate the operation and to lend heart to the weary engineers, spent the entire night at the site.

"I'm going to stay here and look impatient until they get the job done," said the General.

Pyle told of a busy engineer, engaged with an air hose, who tripped over the General's feet.

"Why don't you get the hell out of here if you're not working," suggested the irritated soldier to the anonymous figure sitting in the dark.

The General moved out of the way without a word.

General Truscott, in his jeep, was first to cross the completed structure.

The 30th continued to advance without incident to Patti. Considerable heavy equipment, such as tanks and guns, was ferried around Cape Calava while the hastily built bridge along the cliff road was being reinforced for heavier traffic.

On August 13 the 15th and 30th Infantry regiments were moving out of the Patti area. The 7th loaded its Cannon Company on LCTs in the vicinity of Brolo while the foot troops moved out from the Cresta di Naso and advanced along Highway 113 to an area near Falcone, where the Cannon Company rejoined after landing at Patti.

Hugging the coast, the 15th moved steadily along, passed through Cape Tendari and Oliveri and occupied the high ground east and south of Oliveri. The 3d Reconnaissance Troop located four enemy pillboxes across the Mazara River in the vicinity of Castoreale Station and the Cannon Company of the 15th destroyed them by direct fire from 75mm SPs. Pack howitzers also took part in the neutralization.

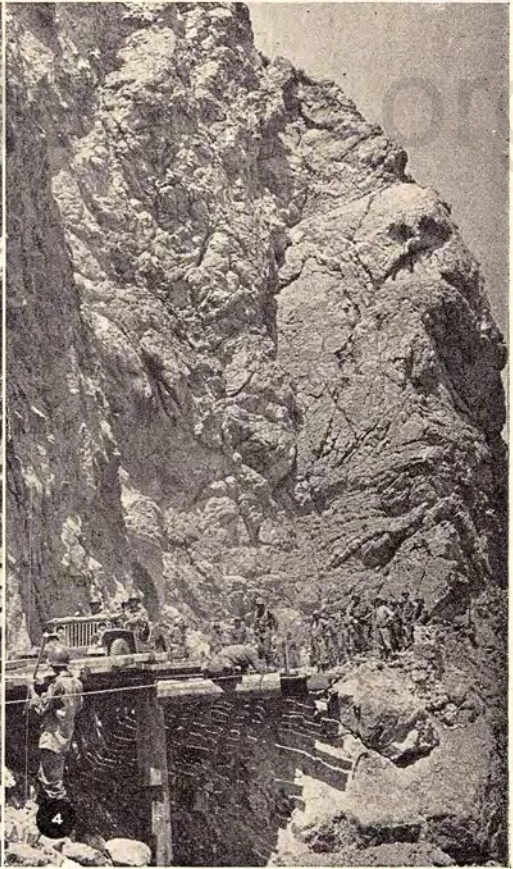
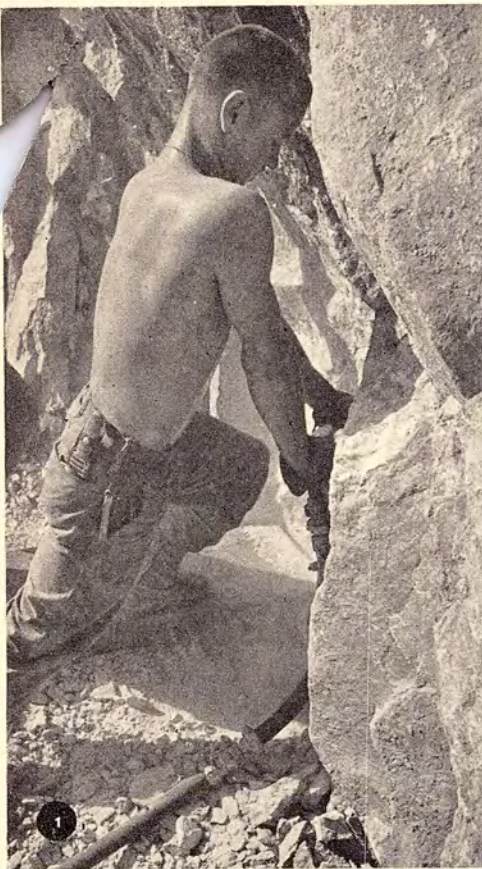
The 30th passed its second day of light action as it moved to positions north of Furnari.

On the morning of August 15 the 7th passed through the 15th and in an all-day drive took Barcellona, Mari and San Lucia and by night had enveloped the enemy at Spadafora, forcing a withdrawal from the town after considerable street fighting.

The 3d Reconnaissance Troop was especially active in front of the 7th along Highway 113 and encountered many minefields and small pockets of resistance, which were eliminated by their own pack howitzers or by on-rushing 7th Infantry men. The troop also came under occasional fire from Mark IV tanks that the enemy was using as roving artillery to cover the retreat and to blow bridges. Strong positions on Cape di Milazzo, which jutted like a finger into the sea, were abandoned without a fight. A large 88mm ammunition dump, several coast defense batteries, about 150 undamaged vehicles, several thousand gallons of gasoline and oil and huge quantities of lumber were taken on Cape di Milazzo. A lighthouse off the Cape yielded several long-wave transmitters and a complete radio direction-finder was located at the seaplane base nearby.

Four ME-109s bombed Milazzo the following day, apparently bent on destroying the spoils which already had fallen into our hands.

The last day of enemy resistance in Sicily, August 16, found the 7th moving rapidly through the hills to Rometta, then to the high ground overlooking Messina. The enemy put up stiff resistance at a road junc-



The 3d Division's 10th Engineers "hang a bridge from the sky" at Cape Calava. (1) an engineer drills into the rock with a jackhammer. (2) a heavy timber is wrestled into position. (3) the flooring is laid. (4) General Truscott is the first to cross the span.

tion joining Highways 113 and 133 and the infantry by-passed the stronghold, which was later reduced by Company A of the 753d Tank Battalion, which destroyed one 88mm gun, two 77mm guns, one pill-box and a Mark IV tank. The tank, incidentally, had set afire a freight car filled with ammunition near Rometta early in the day, holding up traffic on Highway 113 for several hours.

The 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments closed in with little resistance and occupied positions beyond Messina.

The enemy completed his evacuation of Sicily during the night of August 16-17 and enemy guns from the Italian mainland hindered our convergence on the city with sporadic fire laid on roads and in the city itself.

Formal surrender of Messina was made at 1000 August 17, by Colonel Michele Tomasello, senior military authority of the city. The 3d Battalion of the 7th was the first unit to reach the town, which had been reported clear at 0500 that morning by a patrol led by 2d Lts. Ralph Yates of Company L and Jeff McNeely of 3d Battalion Headquarters. The first British patrols entered the city shortly after the 3d Battalion's patrol. General Patton, with a motorcycle escort and accompanied by General Truscott, entered the city at 1000.

The clearance of Sicily took thirty-eight days and was a well-coordinated campaign which ended in the enemy's being literally squeezed off the island. As the 3d pounded along the north coast, the II U. S. Corps had broken through all defenses west of Mt. Etna and the British, after taking Catania, had smashed through on the eastern slope of the Etna hill mass and were rushing pell-mell up the eastern coast intent on trapping the Germans southeast of Messina.

The infantryman is proud to say, and few will disagree, that all other arms and services are fundamentally in a support role to the infantry. Sicily was primarily an infantryman's campaign. If it was the almost perfect example of a well-executed military campaign, it is because the conquest of the island demonstrated how all branches of all services can work in the smoothest coordination so that the man who carries the M-1 rifle can fight the enemy at close range, destroy him, and move forward to occupy territory—and no war can be won without occupying the ground.

Before the first soldier could step ashore at Licata the problem of keeping him supplied had to be worked out. While the campaign was expected to be rapid, it was not expected that troops could or would move as swiftly as they did. That the entire supply setup managed to operate as well as it did, despite the handicaps of a swiftly-moving operation and the lack of good

roads, was not the miracle it appeared to be, but rather the end result of sound logistical planning.

It has been related in the previous chapter in preparation for Sicily of the formation of Force Depot, Near Shore Control, and Beach Group. It is time to mention their excellent work in connection with this successful campaign conducted by the fighting troops.

Force Depot continued operation in Africa until after the departure of the assault forces. The first groups of Force Depot landed in Sicily on D-plus-3 and D-plus-4, took over central dumps and warehouses already established by the Beach Group near Licata, reconnoitered for other installations and operations on D-plus-5. This marked the end of direct supply of troops by Beach Group and resumption of normal supply of the force.

The depot established railhead supply for all troops west of Licata and continued the operation of a daily train and advance railhead at Campobello which had been initiated on D-plus-4 by the Division Quartermaster and Division Ammunition Officer.

The 10th Field Hospital and 11th Evacuation Hospital were landed and placed in operation east of Licata under control of Force Depot.

During its period of operation the Depot supplied, in addition to Joss Force, a regimental combat team of the 9th Infantry Division, major elements of the 82d Airborne Division, and the entire 2d Armored Division. Thus, for a short period the reinforced 3d Infantry Division supplied more than 60,000 troops.

At midnight, July 17, orders were received from Seventh Army detaching all attached supply, medical and ordnance troops from the Division and attaching them to the newly created Special Engineer Brigade. This occurred nine days after the landing, just as the rapid push from Agrigento to Palermo began. Some of the units which had formerly operated under control of Force Depot, including ammunition and truck units, were removed entirely from the Division area and were no longer available to perform the necessary supply and transportation functions.

The Special Engineer Brigade, suddenly and unexpectedly thrust into the picture while the combat operation was in full swing, was unable to coordinate the remaining units to fill the gap left vacant by the dissolution of Force Depot. As a result, the entire burden of supply was placed squarely on the Division, which did not have sufficient organic transportation to maintain its own supply over the long distances which prevailed.

Near Shore Control worked in close harmony with the corresponding organization of the Navy and with the First Embarkation Group of Eastern Base Section which was charged by higher headquarters with the

responsibility of the supply and embarkation of Joss Force.

The Beach Group landed before daylight with the combat troops. Shortly after daylight Beaches Yellow and Blue were organized and prepared to unload any type of craft; including LSTs, which could not be beached and had to be unloaded by a 300-foot ponton dock.

In three days Beach Group had landed at least 188 craft and had unloaded and placed in beach supply dumps about 7000 tons of supplies of all classes. On one occasion fourteen LSTs were unloaded in five hours. On D-plus-7 the advance detachment of Beach Group entered Porto Empedocle with the combat troops and within twenty-four hours had the port in operating condition. This shortened the supply line of the Division nearly forty miles. Both Licata and Porto Empedocle continued to handle the traffic of supplies and troops throughout the entire campaign.

The very success of the operation in Sicily increased the problems of supply and transportation. Combined with the breaking up of the Force Depot, Division supply units were faced with a difficult situation. To exploit the initial success of the operation and to keep fresh troops in contact with the enemy General Truscott therefore directed the organization of a special troop movement platoon of thirty-five 2½-ton trucks. These were employed continually on the drive to Palermo in shuttling infantry battalions. After carrying our troops forward, the trucks were used to haul prisoners of war to the Prizzi enclosure. The normal procedure of having empty supply trucks for this job was not feasible as there were too many prisoners. Consequently, in addition to normal supply vehicles other vehicles had to be used for this purpose.

The greatest drain on transportation was the necessity for carrying supplies from the beach dump at Agrigento to the advance Division supply dumps. This continually-lengthening supply line eventually involved a round trip of 175 miles, taking twenty hours. "The Battle of Transportation" was won only by the twenty-four-hour operation of all Division transportation and by using thirty 2½-ton trucks of the 3d Chemical Battalion. The victory was a tribute to the quality of the trucks which operated continually over the poorest roads without developing any serious maintenance trouble and to the drivers who drove day and night, in blackout and through numerous by-passes, with few vehicle accidents.

Greatest surprise to the Germans, and a feature upon which the support of later, more ambitious, amphibious operations was predicated, was the excellence of the naval gunfire support. In his report of naval gunfire, Lt. (jg) Hubert C. Manning, Navy

liaison officer, was enthusiastic over the coordination of Navy and 3d Infantry Division.

For the first time in any operation, naval gunfire was directed successfully from an artillery fire-direction center, in this case the FDC of 10th FA Battalion. Direct hits were made on the railway battery on the mole of Licata and on gun positions northeast of Licata. In all, the Navy effectively screened and protected the assault forces and delivered smashing blows at enemy shore installations during the initial phase of the assault. When the push to Palermo began the Navy continued to assist the Division. When fire was needed during the fight for Agrigento, field artillery units could not reach their targets unless they went into positions lacking both cover and concealment. The Navy fired the missions. The missions were successful.

When the 3d Infantry Division began the advance along the north coast of the island the Navy was again available. All during the drive, especially in the engagements at San Fratello, Sant' Agata, and Brolo, naval gunfire proved tremendously effective. Crowning achievement of the Navy, according to many enlisted personnel, was the direct gunfire on the north coast which destroyed a Mark IV Tank at a critical moment.

The civilian reaction was interesting. In a country supposedly tightly controlled by, and wholeheartedly in favor of, the Fascist political rule, the "enemy" was greeted with open arms (and palms). As units moved through the towns and villages the civilians lined the streets, clapping and cheering—and begging for "*mangiare, caramelli, un sigaretto.*" In the beginning the troops took pity on the obvious poverty and squalor and gave freely of their rations, candy, and cigarettes. Later the ascending prices of wine and eggs, which were the reward of generosity, began to change the attitude of the troops. Generally, however, the people were glad to see the Americans. The Fascist regime, it seemed, contained more slogans than food. "*Credere—Obedire—Combattere*" (Believe—Obey—Fight) was a little hard to digest without spaghetti and Marsala wine as the main course.

From the perspective of time, what were the visible results of the whirlwind campaign?

First, the Division played an outstanding role in clearing the island of enemy and making it usable as a base for further operations.

Second, the Division demonstrated conclusively that a well-planned operation placed in rapid and smooth execution, coordinated with naval and air forces, can overwhelm the enemy by not giving him a chance to get set. Once he is on the run he can be kept on the run if sufficient pressure is continually exerted.

Third, the Division demonstrated that small-scale amphibious operations in the enemy's rear can disrupt

his entire defensive setup and force him to withdraw, sometimes more rapidly than if he were subjected to land or air attack only.

Fourth, the Division helped materially to eliminate Italy from the war. The Italian was not a good soldier, had no stake in the war, and no interest in continuing to fight it. Only the dyed-in-the-wool Fascists, as a rule, made a serious effort to provide determined resistance. The remainder surrendered in large numbers on the slightest pretext. The vast numbers who did give up with little or no struggle proved conclusively that Germany could depend little on her junior partner when the going got tough, and revealed upon what a foundation of sand the "Sawdust Caesar," Mussolini, had erected his grand castles in the air.

The campaign over, the 3d Infantry Division moved to western Sicily, near Marsala and Trapani, for a rest. Some portentous event, unnamable, indefinable, was even then rushing toward its bloody, hairbreadth fulfillment—the Battle of Salerno.

There were small hints dropped here and there from the airmen. "There was a funny thing happened over on one of the eastern fields yesterday. A big black Italian plane came in, and none of the ack-ack opened up on it. They say Eisenhower himself was there to meet it. . . ." From the paratroopers: "This is strictly on the Q.T., of course, but we got a big deal on, and its coming up pretty damn quick. . . ." From the higherups: "Tonight we expect a lot of planes over. Unless they commit a hostile act, instruct your men not to fire on them. . . ."

The Gethsemane of Mussolini and his Mediterranean Empire was rapidly approaching. The chickens of unwarranted invasion, rapacious seizure, and cruel domination had come home to roost. The crumbling of empire was about to shift the entire role of Italy in World War II from that of an opportunist aggressor

to that of a bewildered, internally-torn bystander. The mountainous, narrow peninsula, infrequently studded with low, rolling plains—famed in song and legend as a land of sparkling wines, sunshine, flashing signorinas, gay and colorful opera, was about to turn into the bitterest, most heartbreaking, most cursed battlefield of the longest-fought campaign in Europe in the Second World War.

The 3d Infantry Division was even then destined to play a prominent part in the coming ill-starred struggle. Now, men of the Division rested, took light training, and absorbed at a more leisurly pace the sights and sounds of Sicily, which before they had had time only to observe in passing. But Italy loomed as visibly from Trapani and Marsala almost as plainly as it had to those soldiers of the 3d who shortly before gazed at it across the turbulent waters of the Straits of Messina.

TABLE OF CASUALTIES*

Sicily				
(July 10, 1943 through Sept. 19, 1943)				
<i>KIA</i>	<i>WIA</i>	<i>MIA</i>	<i>Total Battle Casualties</i>	<i>Non-Battle Casualties</i>
381	1398	146	1925	2983
Reinforcements and Hospital return-to-unit personnel				
<i>Off</i>	<i>Reinf</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>Off Hosp</i>	<i>EM RTUs</i>
50		676	13	665

KNOWN ENEMY CASUALTIES

<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Captured</i>
Not recorded	Not recorded	50,104

*These figures were provided by the A C of S, G-1, 3d Infantry Division.

V
SOUTHERN ITALY

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We Battle in the Craggy Apennines

NOT eagerly, not with the curiosity of tyros, but rather with the almost detached and very comprehensive first glance of an engraver at a difficult photograph on which he will shortly begin work, men of the 3d Division, lined at the rails looked forward. Ahead lay the beaches of Salerno.

Where the layman would discern only flat sandy beaches, backed by a low, almost imperceptible dirt ridge beyond which the terrain lay almost as flat as a billiard table; tall trees lining the main roads; some olive groves, some farmhouses; in the distance foothills and back of them the blue of mountains . . . the doughboy visualized, almost as though he had been here a few days before, enemy fire whipping in red slashes or invisibly across the hot fields . . . the terrain offering little or no natural cover; sparse foliage, lightly wooded hills and rugged mountains.

Naval officers made mental reconnaissances of the shifting line where sand disappeared beneath water, and of the color of the sea near shore; studied their hydrographic charts and scanned the blue skies for enemy planes which might come out of the sun in screaming, death-dealing power dives. The sailors' main concern was with how far inshore the craft and ships could get and still be able to retract after unloading. The doughboys thought in terms of, "How close can these things go here? Maybe we won't have to get our feet wet, for once."

A few correspondents thought in terms of the recently opened front, this time on the mainland of Italy: "At the point to which Seventh Army has carried the battle against the Nazis the newly-committed Fifth Army now enters the fray, and a new phase in the Mediterranean War at this point begins to unfold before our eyes."

To the doughboys the thought occurred and sometimes found articulation that something was now starting of which no one, not even the most optimistic nor belligerent could see the finish. "Where will it end? When will it end? Will I be there when it does end?"

The last week of August and the first week of September, 1943, was an extremely tense period. A large juggling of government, conducted on a high diplomatic level, with strong military overtones, was taking place, and lives and the outcome of battles hung in the balance.

The Badoglio government, which on July 25 had taken over the reins of Italian government from Mussolini, was dickering with the Allied governments through General Eisenhower for peace. Neither side, however, held the trump card, militarily speaking. This belonged to the Germans, and how much it meant

was yet to be disclosed. The major questions of the moment were, how firmly were the Germans entrenched in Italy, technically still an Axis ally; and from the positions they held, how quickly could they move once their partners' defection became known? A lot depended on the answers to these two questions.

It has since been uncovered that Badoglio was possessed of an optimism which almost resulted in a catastrophe for the Allies. It was the belief of the aged Marshal (the man who won the war in Ethiopia for Mussolini) that there was enough Italian strength in and around Rome to seize and hold the capital city following the announcement of Italian surrender, until Allied troops could land amphibiously somewhere in the vicinity of Lido di Roma, or elsewhere near, and push on to the Eternal City. Badoglio underestimated both *Wehrmacht* intelligence and German sagacity.

The enemy knew that Italy had been ruled by a strong man and strong party. Once that man had been overthrown the fall of the party could not be long delayed, and with the collapse of Fascism in Italy any power the military had once possessed must certainly collapse under the Allied weight. The Germans, therefore, were prepared for just such a contingency, and were fully willing and able to take up the fight alone at the first hint that the Italian army was through.

A parachute drop on, first, Naples, then the main airfield at Rome, were called off at the last moment on the advice of a United States delegation headed by a brigadier general which was secretly in Rome in early September, when it was discovered that the *Wehrmacht* was almost completely in control of Rome and environs, and already had taken measures toward disarming the two or three Italian divisions stationed in and around the city. Military disaster for the Allies was thus avoided only by the narrowest of margins.

The Badoglio government signed final, unconditional surrender terms on September 3, the day which the Allied High Command had selected for the initial landings by the British 8th Army on the toe of the boot; at Calabria opposite Messina.

The main United States invasion effort, however, came on September 9, at Salerno. The story of Salerno has been told time and again, in other places. It is sufficient to say that Salerno was deemed the only practical place for the Fifth Army to land and that the Germans knew it; that some of the landing troops (which included a strong force of British troops) were deceived by the news of the Italian surrender; and that the enemy was fully prepared for the invasion convoy when it reached the beaches. Outstanding also, are the facts that Allied courage and tenacity went ahead to

win the battle anyway, and that by September 18, when the first elements of the 3d Infantry Division went ashore, the battle of Salerno was finished. It remained for the 3d Division to help exploit the initial victory.

To backtrack: On September 5, Major General Truscott; his Chief of Staff, Col. Don E. Carleton; G-2, Lt. Col. Walter C. Mercer; Col. Richard L. Creed; Maj. Frederick Boye, Assistant G-3; Lt. Col. Charles E. Johnson, G-4; Division Signal Officer, Maj. Jesse F. Thomas; and Division Artillery S-3, Lt. Col. Walter T. Kerwin, Jr.; flew to Algiers for a conference with Fifth Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark. The party was given details of the pending landing operation at Salerno and informed that 3d Infantry Division would probably be under Fifth Army control for the operation. The party returned to the CP at Trapani on September 7.

When news of the Italian surrender reached the Headquarters, 7th Infantry and 1st and 2d Battalions of the 30th Infantry were immediately dispatched to guard several airports in the vicinity of Trapani. Part of the Division already had been stationed at these fields, but since word had been received that major units of the Italian air force might fly in to surrender that night, the additional units were employed and the guard doubled. Nothing materialized, however.

The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Edgar C. Doleman, established, maintained, and guarded a staging area in the vicinity of Castellamare del Golfo, midway between Trapani and Palermo, where elements of the British 10 Corps were staged prior to the assault landing at Salerno September 9.

The Salerno landing on the 9th found the U. S. 36th Infantry Division on the right, and British 10 Corps on the left. The situation there quickly became critical, and at 2115, September 13, a message was received by General Truscott from General Patton for the 3d's CG to take a small staff to Salerno for a conference with General Clark. Hard on the heels of this message, at 2356, came word from the 15th Army Group: 3d Division was to be "lifted" and moved to Salerno as soon as possible to meet the urgent situation there.

On September 14 General Truscott and Colonel Carleton took a plane to Palermo, and a PT boat from there to Salerno, where they conferred with General Clark. The 30th Infantry, meanwhile, left Trapani about 1330 the same day, and arrived at a newly-constructed staging area just outside Palermo around 2000. The Division CP was established in a former Italian schoolhouse.

Wholesale movement of the Division was continued and completed on September 15. As time permitted, equipment was obtained and issued. Two thousand replacements were received from 1st and 9th Infantry

Divisions and assigned to units. General Truscott and the Chief of Staff returned at 2300 with some reassuring news. The situation at Salerno had improved considerably; 36th Division had reorganized and was now holding. Shipping was to be available the following day. Key personnel worked feverishly the rest of the night to complete loading arrangements.

The 30th Infantry, Division Headquarters, Division Artillery, and parts of service units loaded on LSTs at Palermo on September 16. The ships commenced pulling out at midnight and shortly thereafter rendezvoused. General Truscott, with a small staff, left again for Salerno by PT boat.

The following day, as loading of the remainder of the Division continued, the first convoy sailed at 0700. At 1500 a BBC broadcast gave the news that patrols of the 8th Army, advancing from the south, had made contact with 5th Army patrols. The Battle of Salerno had ended victoriously.

The LSTs which contained the first elements of the 3d Division began beaching at about 0900 September 18 south of the Sele River. It was planned for the 3d to go in on the left of the 45th Division, which had broken the beachhead stalemate a day or two earlier in a drive to the east. At that time, the area north between the beach and Battipaglia was held by the British 10 Corps while U. S. Rangers and British Commandos held the high ground west of Salerno. The 45th Division was on the right flank.

Battipaglia, an important rail and highway center some fifteen miles north of the beach, had fallen to the British that afternoon.

After officer patrols of the 30th Infantry had reconnoitered assembly areas and approach routes in the vicinity of Battipaglia, the 30th Infantry and Division Artillery units moved into positions near the beaches for the night.

By the morning of September 19 it was learned that the enemy had withdrawn north toward Acerno and the bivouac areas that night were established just south and southwest of Battipaglia, with patrols out toward Olevano.

About midnight, the I & R Platoon of the 30th, with Capt. Richard M. Savaresy, serving as Division advance guard, passed through the ruins of Battipaglia and moved north on the road toward Acerno—the first elements of the 3d Infantry Division to enter the treacherous range of the Apennine Mountains.

Three hours later, at a road fork that led to Montecorvino Rovella on the left and to Acerno on the right, the platoon engaged and defeated a small enemy infantry detachment.

The next opposition led to the Division's first real engagement in Italy.



3d Division's 10th Engineers reconstruct a demolished bridge near Salitto, Italy.

On a reverse curve northeast of Salitto and some two miles southwest of Acerno, the platoon approached a blown bridge which spanned a 60-foot gorge where the Isca della Serra plunges from a narrow canyon into the Tusciano far below in the valley.

German machine gunners and riflemen, later identified as members of the 1st Battalion, 9th *Panzer Grenadier* Regiment, commanded the curve of the road from almost impregnable positions on a hilltop across the valley to the east.

It was clear that the enemy intended to defend Acerno.

Captain Savaresy established an observation post, obtained all available information and returned to headquarters with his men to report on his mission. The fight for Acerno was in the mold.

At 0730, September 20, the Division received its mission, boundaries and objectives. The left boundary ran north and northwest from Battipaglia to a point just west of Montecorvino Rovella and Avellino. The right comprised the high ground east of the Acerno-Montello road.

The order to advance came at 1100.

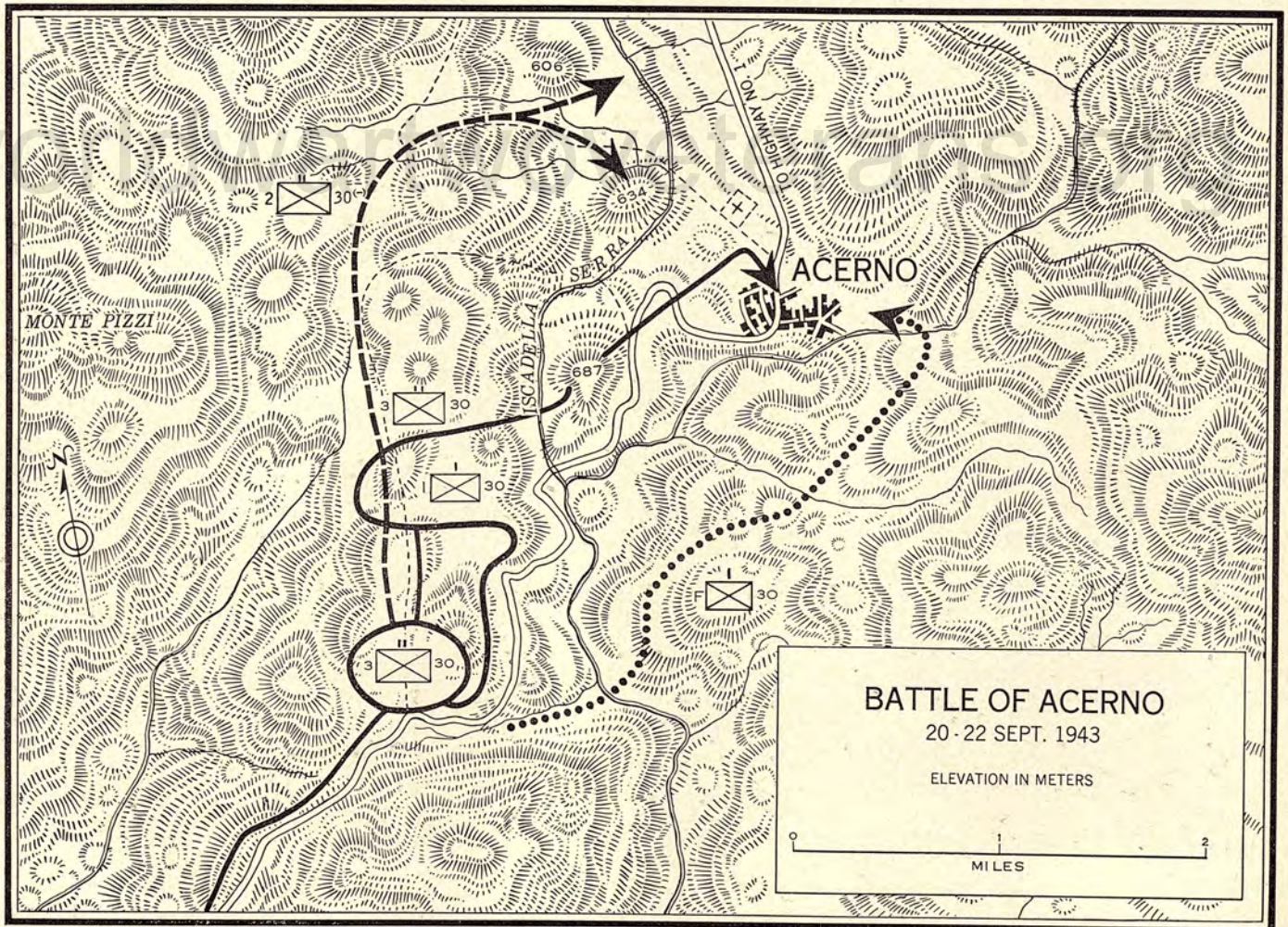
The 30th Infantry, commanded by Col. Arthur H. Rogers, with Company A, 601st TD Battalion; Company B, 751st Tank Battalion; Company B, 84th Chemical Battalion; and Company C, 10th Engineer Battalion, attached, moved north in the Division zone of advance.

The 30th's 3d Battalion, under Lt. Col. Edgar C. Doleman, was the first to leave Battipaglia, followed by the 2d Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard, which was to reconnoiter the west flank of the advance route. The 1st Battalion took the right flank under command of Maj. Oliver W. Kinney.

Only minor skirmishes marked the advance of the regiment, which halted for the night with 3d Battalion occupying the most northern position, a saddle just west of Tusciano. The march continued at daybreak September 21, just before enemy artillery shells began falling in 3d Battalion's bivouac area.

General Truscott had ordered the 30th to advance on Acerno at once.

Company I, under 1st Lt. Robert M. Boddy, started



up the Acerno road but harassing fire from enemy artillery positions just north of the village, coupled with German command of the curve south of the demolished bridge, made this route impracticable and the company soon joined Company L, whose men were clambering over the wild mountains west of the road. Company L was commanded by 1st Lt. Maurice L. Britt. By 1800 Company I had taken the lead and reached the southern nose of Hill 687, north of the bridge.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the 2d Battalion was moving up past 3d Battalion, with the mission of by-passing Acerno and cutting the German escape route north of town. Company F, with Capt. Burleigh T. Packwood commanding, veered off to the east side of the road, scaled down the precipitous slopes into the Tusciano Valley and climbed another hill to be in position to drive out any delaying force and attack Acerno from the south.

All through the night these stalwarts of the 3d Division stole toward their objectives and by daybreak of September 22 the entire 3d Battalion rested on Hill 687, Company F was on high ground east of the Tusciano, one platoon of Company C commanded Hill 606 near the main road north of Acerno and the remainder of 2d Battalion held Hill 634, northwest of the city. Division Artillery occupied positions along the ridge north of Olevano and 1st Battalion was in assembly at a point two miles south of Montecorvino.

Meantime, while the 30th was pushing into enemy territory, the rest of the 3d Division was landing on the beaches at Salerno.

The 7th Infantry, commanded by Col. Harry B. Sherman, had debarked at 2100 on September 19 and had occupied the area south of Battipaglia. With the 7th were the remainder of Division Headquarters, 3d Signal Company, Companies A and B of the 10th Engineer Battalion, Companies A and B, 3d Medical Battalion; 3d Reconnaissance Troop, 703d Ordnance Company, and the remainder of Division Artillery, including the 441st AAA AW Battalion, attached.

On the following day the 7th Infantry moved to high ground north of Montecorvino and the 15th Infantry, under Col. William L. Ritter, landed and moved into the Battipaglia area. The entire 3d Division was now in Italy.

The attack on Acerno by the 30th Infantry began at 0800, September 22. The 3d Battalion proceeded due east toward the village while the 2d, on the 3d's left flank, headed toward the road running north out of the town.

The 3d met stiff opposition in an olive grove infested with enemy light and heavy machine guns just at the town's edge and, after bitter fighting with hand grenades and bayonets, took the grove and continued



Colonel Rogers, CO 30th Infantry, explains the Acerno situation to General Clark, CG, 5th Army.

northeast into a clearing outside the woods. They were stopped by fire from a 75mm battery in position behind a church. Heavy mortar fire was also falling in the area, further retarding their progress and keeping open the enemy escape route to the north. The Germans were pulling back and covering their withdrawal with savage counterattacks, which were habitually beaten off.

All morning, Division Artillery kept enemy mortar positions and traffic north of the town under constant fire while the 2d Battalion was moving up to positions within machine-gun and mortar range of the escape road. Company F occupied high ground south of Acerno.

At noon the regiment ordered a coordinated attack—a knockout blow which would start at 1300.

The 3d Battalion, with two companies abreast, one in reserve, was to attack east through the town. The 2d Battalion, minus one company, would advance east along an intermittent stream and cut the north-south road out of Acerno. Company F, reinforced by one platoon from the 1st Battalion, was to strike due north from its present position.

Came H-Hour. The 10th, 39th and 41st Field Artillery Battalions, under Lt. Cols. Kermit L. Davis, John D. Byrne and James R. Wendt, respectively, opened up with a concentration which battered the town and sent Germans streaming out the northern

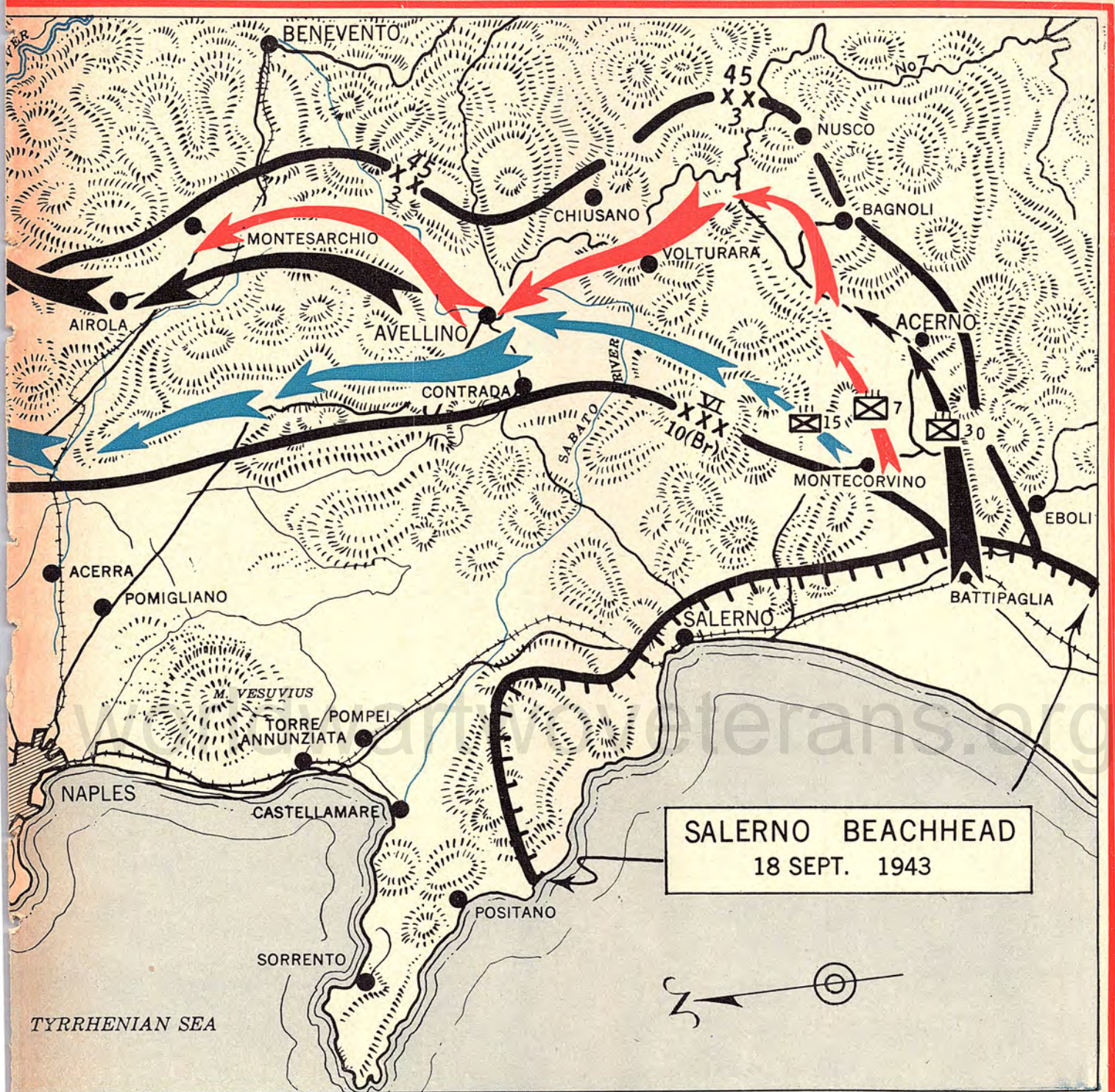


exit in armored vehicles. The Artillery, with Battery C. 36th Field Artillery and 441st AAA AW Battalion attached, fired a total of 1,016 rounds into Acerno from 1252 to 1325 that afternoon.

The 3d Battalion was pinned down for some time by enemy mortar and artillery fire from strong positions in the hills north of the city while the 2d continued to advance slowly over the rugged terrain north-

west of the city, intent on cutting off the enemy retreat.

At 1525, the 3d Battalion struck dagger-like at the northwest corner of the village and Company F, with the attached platoon, simultaneously stabbed from the south. Opposition faded under this attack and at 1700 the 3d Battalion entered battered Acerno, which yielded thirty-four prisoners.



The main German body had escaped under heavy protective fire but the opening round of the Division's "Boot Campaign" was won.

The Volturno River was the next Division objective—and the road that led to it was a series of obstacles designed to tax the ingenuity, vitality and endurance of every man, mule and vehicle in the entire organization.

Nature and the ages had provided impregnable defensive positions for enemy motorized infantry and self-propelled guns. Lone roads that cut through passes, skirted ledges and wrapped the lofty peaks with rough-surfaced ribbon, afforded secure avenues for German escape.

But the Volturno loomed and Acerno was only an-



The infantry moves its supplies through Acerno, which was captured after a two-day battle.

other milestone as the Division renewed the enemy chase September 23.

Augmenting the defenses set up by Nature, the Germans strengthened the delaying action which they effected after Acerno with innumerable demolitions that commanded all the resourcefulness of the 10th Engineer Battalion and supporting elements of the 36th Engineer Battalion. The Division Engineers were commanded by Lt. Col. Charles F. Tank.

No less than five bridges in a 2,200-yard stretch of road leading north from Acerno had been demolished by the enemy. Company C of the 10th, under Capt. Stanley E. Larson, rebuilt the demolished bridge on the main road just south of Acerno in two days. It was a two-story, two-bent trestle span eighty feet long, capable of carrying eighteen tons.

The engineers also swept the roads for mines, operated supply dumps, maintained water points, repaired road craters and even constructed a landing strip for Divisional artillery planes at Acerno.

At one point during their retreat, the Germans not only destroyed the bridge that spanned a canyon, but also blew away a cliffside, completely eliminating the road for about a hundred feet. In two days, Company A, 10th Engineers, with Capt. Edwin H. Swift commanding, reopened the road with a 40-foot steel trestle bridge and joined it to a stretch of roadway that had to be cut out of the sheer cliffside.

Fall rains, which frequently turned into mountain cloudbursts, added more difficulty to the transportation problems and made the route of the foot-weary doughboys more boggy and miserable.

The roads were so bad that units on many occasions could be supplied only by mule trains which had been brought from Sicily, and on one occasion even mules were unequal to the task and supplies were carried by

human pack trains provided from personnel of reserve companies.

Despite these obstacles, the Division advanced twenty-eight miles, from Battipaglia to Highway No. 7, in eight days. The detoured route made the actual distance even greater.

Leaving Acerno, the movement was generally north



Pvt. Paul Oglesby stands in reverence before the altar of a ruined Catholic church on September 23, 1943.

and northwest, with the 45th Division on the right flank and the British 10 Corps on the left. The 30th Infantry was to lead the Division, followed in order by the 7th and 15th Infantry Regiments.

Little resistance was encountered until the 1st Battalion of the 30th reached Le Croci de Acerno, a village situated in a saddle along the main axis of advance. The 30th, with Division Artillery support and assisted by the 1st Battalion of the 7th, under command of Lt. Col. Frank M. Izenour, attacked at 1530. Within three hours, the enemy had been cleaned out and the push resumed.

The 7th passed through the 30th and assumed the lead on the following morning. The 3d Battalion, under Lt. Col. John A. Heintges, overcame resistance in the difficult terrain near Mt. Sovero that afternoon and by dark the battalion had secured the high ground and had sent night patrols into Bagnoli. A detachment of sixty American parachutists was contacted shortly after dark. Members of the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, they had been fighting behind enemy lines for nearly two weeks. They stated that the Germans were methodically withdrawing to the north bank of the Volturno.

The Division met additional light resistance in the vicinity of Salza and Nusco, but the principal enemy contact was maintained by the 15th Infantry in the advance up the Sabato Valley, which they had entered after crossing the mountains north of Curticello.

The 7th Infantry took Volturrara with little trouble as it continued westward through the hills from the Acerno road.

On September 27, the 30th on the right flank of the 7th, occupied Montemarano on Highway No. 7, thus completing an arc around Avellino, an important road junction and the next objective.



Wiremen of the 3d Signal Company lay wire in the Italian mud.



A jeep grinds its way forward over a mud-bottom road.

Elements of the 34th Division, which had begun landing on the beaches at Paestum September 21, had moved up parallel with the 30th, with the mission of cutting the main road that ran north from Avellino to Benevento. The 45th Division, meanwhile, guarded the 3d's right flank.

The swoop on Avellino began at 2200 September 29, when the arc comprising the 7th, 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments suddenly contracted, squeezing the Germans out of another mountain position, which was occupied the next morning with only light casualties.

The partial envelopment of Avellino and the night marches that preceded it and Acerno, were models for future night operations by the Division. The tendency to string out and lose control, with an overestimation of speed obtainable in cross-country marches after dark, was conquered. Enemy resistance was by-passed in the Avellino encirclement under cover of darkness and the German positions so completely infiltrated that at day-break small fights were in progress over a considerable area.

Truly the 3d was learning lessons as the advance into "Fortress Europe" progressed. New battle tricks were being introduced every day. Short-cuts of all kinds appeared in every echelon and Division Headquarters launched one of the first right after the landings at Salerno, when a War Room was organized to meet the need for a simplified, more streamlined command post.

In the War Room was gathered all information concerning the Division, adjacent units and the enemy as well as the G-2 and G-3 operations maps, G-4 situation map concerning ammunition and ration supply, Engineer road situation map and G-1 information relative to losses and replacements. Here was centered, for the use of the Commanding General, all necessary information on which to base prospective plans and orders for the Division. It was an innovation which was later widely copied by other divisions.

And while the Division was literally "learning to walk" in new surroundings, the enemy was rapidly losing ground. The great but badly damaged port of Naples had fallen to the British October 1 without opposition. Although Naples, some thirty miles northwest of Salerno, was the prime objective of the Allied invasion scheme, its occupation did not alter the original plans to push the Germans back across the mouth of the Volturno, which is within about twenty miles of the Neapolitan metropolis.

After Avellino, the 3d branched off into two directions toward the Volturno. The 30th Infantry, moving north, subdued light enemy resistance as it took San Angelo, continued the march through San Martino and reached the high ground north of Airola. The 3d Battalion of the 7th had moved up along the right flank of the 30th and aided in the capture of another village, Montesarchio.

The 15th Infantry, advancing northwest from Avellino, met weak opposition on a ridge east of Cancello and pressed on through Baiano and Maddaloni to mountainous positions north of Caserta.

This thrust-by-thrust advance ended October 6—the 3d Division had reached the banks of the Volturno.

In falling back from Avellino to the river, the Germans had employed their usual delaying tactics but their retreat had been considerably hastened by the excellent work of the 3d Reconnaissance Troop under Capt. Alvin T. Netterblad, Jr., and the ability of the 10th Engineer Battalion to keep roads open through quick construction of by-passes and bridges.

So close was the chase that many structures prepared for demolition by the enemy lacked explosive charges. However, elaborately prepared roadblocks and the continued appearance of boobytraps, coupled with almost daily downpours of rain, made the final steps to the Volturno both difficult and dreary.

Established in high ground overlooking the river, the Division immediately initiated continuous and extensive reconnaissance and patrolling and the few remaining Germans were eliminated after light engagements. By the morning of October 8 the entire Division sector south of the river was clear.

The Volturno crossing came next.

The Volturno is not a formidable looking stream. Rising high in the Apennines, it follows a devious ninety-five mile course through steep mountains and pleasant valleys to its terminus at Castel Volturno, where it empties into the Tyrrhenian Sea. It runs generally south and southwest from its headwaters to a point just below Amerosi where it joins the Calore and meanders the rest of the way in a southwesterly direction through the Campanian Plain.

The river ran due east-west along the 3d Division

front, was about 150 feet wide and varied in depth from three and a half to six feet. The banks ranged from two to fourteen feet in height while the terrain back of the banks was flat and unusually soft due to recent heavy rains.

Two bridges which formerly spanned the river had been blown by the Germans. Thus the crossing would have to be made by equipment and plans conceived, manufactured and executed by 3d Division officers and men, and they dedicated themselves to this objective.

Intelligence patrols cautiously selected crossing points, then waded and swam the river at night, probed enemy defenses, felt out the terrain, located strong-points and marked logical spots for fordings that were to come later. These hazardous missions were accomplished in the face of an alert, dug-in enemy and not without casualties.

It was soon determined that a sufficient number of assault boats would not be available. So units improvised boats from life rafts obtained from the Navy, used rubber pontoons from treadway bridges and made rafts with gasoline tins and water cans as floats. A supply of Italian life jackets found in a warehouse was appropriated.

The 3d Division was to bear the brunt of the main effort of VI Corps in the crossing of the Volturno, the second phase of the Allied campaign in Italy. This was indeed an important assignment. And it was common knowledge among the men that the defenders were the *Mauke* Battle Group of the *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division, one of Germany's proudest.

It was a great moment for General Truscott and the 3d Division when the mission was announced—to attack across the Volturno River between Trifisco and a point south of Caiazzo, secure a bridgehead and assist in the advance of the British 10 Corps.

A certain tenseness prevailed as preparations for the crossing were carried on around the clock.

All units were in concealed bivouac—the 7th just east of Caserta, the 30th in the vicinity of Casagiove and the 15th hidden behind a slope looking over the river.

Each unit conducted vigorous patrolling missions every night. The daily report of October 11 revealed the intense efforts that were being exerted to obtain all the details concerning enemy strength, positions and the nature of terrain that confronted the Division. Nothing was overlooked.

The 7th Infantry report of that date said: "Patrol crossed N261823; good crossing waist deep, seventy-five yards wide. Patrol crossed at N259829, waist deep, heavily defended on north side. Patrol crossed at N255817, four feet deep, bottom firm, no mines."

The 15th Infantry report stated: "Patrol crossed on debris of bridge at N267820, received MG fire from

house on north bank, also hand grenades thrown at them. Another patrol crossed 500 yards east of that point and received MG fire. Patrol at N213810 received MG fire. Other patrols went to river vicinity 287-290 grids."

The 30th Infantry reported: "Guard patrol went down sunken road at N209991, received harassing long-range MG fire. Patrol went to N196805 opposite sand bar in river. Reconnaissance patrol reconnoitered upstream to power line, heard MG and mortar fire east of position, saw three lights across river."

By the next day, all Division Artillery except the 10th Field Artillery Battalion had been brought up to the vicinity of Balzi-Grottolo and was in concealed positions behind a hill just south of the river.

The Engineers had completed construction of a tank road that led to the river's edge and had assembled and loaded all bridging material, including a prefabricated cableway built with material salvaged from a railroad yard and torpedo-assembly plant.

An improvised jeep bridge was constructed by using six regular floats supporting treads made of two strips of narrow gauge railroad track overlaid with Irving matting.

Nearly five miles of guide rope was ready for use by foot troops who were to ford the river.

Most vehicles of the 751st Tank Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Louis A. Hammack, had been waterproofed, as had those of the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion, under Maj. Walter R. Tardy. A number of wire-laying jeeps had also been made "seaworthy."

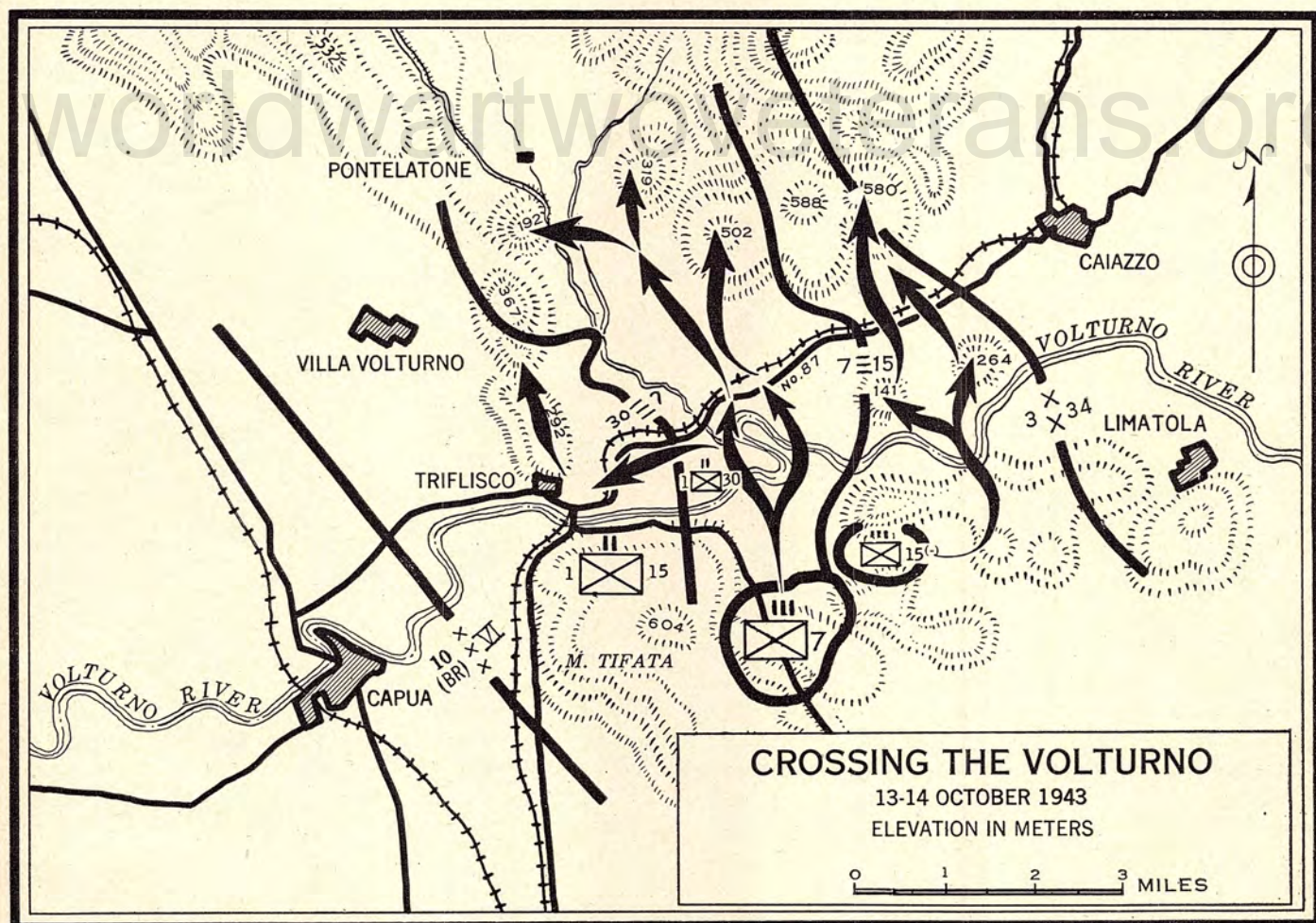
The 84th Chemical Battalion, supervised by the Division Chemical Officer, Capt. Albert L. Safine, was prepared to employ smoke pots and mortars in order to hinder enemy observation of the crossing, while artillery units were to lay down additional smokescreens.

General Truscott had decided that the crossings, all enemy-held high ground, and our tentative bridge sites were to be completely enveloped in smoke at H-Hour.

And H-Hour was at hand—0200 October 13, 1943.

Aware that the Germans anticipated a plunge at Triflisco Gap, the Division Commander staged a fake attack on the left flank, which faced the gap.

At midnight, two hours before jump-off time, the fireworks began. The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, commanded by Maj. Thomas R. Davis, and the heavy weapons companies of the 30th Infantry, opened up with all their available fire, directed at enemy positions





Brigadier General William A. Campbell, CG 3d Div. Arty. across the gap. The weapons companies, which fired throughout the night, were commanded by: Capt. Claude R. Streb, Company D; 1st Lt. William G. Stucky, Company H; and 1st Lt. James L. Osgard, Company M.

The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, stood ready for a dash across the river in event the Germans weakened under this fire and showed signs of withdrawing. However, failure of the British to effect a crossing at Capua on the preceding night, which would have weakened the enemy position if successful, made this crossing impracticable.

One hour after this diversion fire began, Division Artillery, commanded by Brig. Gen. William A. Campbell, let loose with a terrific bombardment of all enemy positions across the river.

Bedlam reigned until five minutes before H-Hour, when smoke shells were mixed with high explosives and began bursting all over the area, laying a thick pall over the Volturno and enemy positions beyond it. It was a fitting prelude to events that quickly followed.

The night was clear and cool and the smoke-filled darkness, splashed with myriad flashes from artillery bursts, provided a protective cloak that covered the three battalions of the 7th Infantry Regiment as they moved down the valley between Mount Tifata and Mount Castellone. The main assault of the 3d Division was under way.

The feint on the left flank was being coordinated with the 7th Infantry's drive at the center and the 15th Infantry's simultaneous effort on the right.

The 7th headed for the river at a hairpin loop southwest of Piana di Caiazzo and the 15th was assigned a point directly south of the city.

At 0200 the 1st Battalion of the 7th, commanded by Lt. Col. Frank M. Izenour, crossed just west of the loop; 2d Battalion, under Lt. Col. Everett Duvall, crossed east of the turn and the 3d Battalion, with Lt. Col. John A. Heingtes commanding, followed in the traces of the 2d.

The Volturno was literally filled with assault boats, rafts and soldiers, some of whom crossed with life preservers and others who forded the stream clinging to guide ropes.

The Germans opposed the crossing with everything they had. Enemy machine-gun, artillery and mortar fire continually blazed away, but in less than two hours the 2d Battalion was across and by 0640 the entire 7th Infantry was anchored on the north bank of the river.

The regiment's attached tanks and tank destroyers were unable to make an early crossing because of heavy enemy fire that kept our bulldozers out of action, thus preventing the cutting of approaches in the high river bank. Despite the absence of armor, the 7th expanded



Brigadier General William W. Eagles, Assistant Division Commander.

its bridgehead and pushed north toward Mount Majulo.

By 0800 forward elements of the 1st Battalion had reached the foot of the mountain and within a short time held the flat ground to the left of it, south of Highway 87. This highway, the best in the 3d Division zone, runs from Naples through Caserta, crosses the Volturno at Triflisco and again at Amerosi and goes northeast to Pontelandolfo.

The 2d Battalion quickly moved across country toward the objective at Mount Majulo. Many enemy machine-gun nests could not be located in the dark and were by-passed. The 3d Battalion, advancing behind the 2d, engaged these positions at daybreak and, after a series of aggressive fire fights, had cleared the river bank and the irrigation ditches leading to Highway 87. After the 3d had crossed Highway 87, the enemy still remaining in these strongpoints, aware that they were cut off, surrendered.

The 2d Battalion was reorganizing on Mount Majulo, when the 3d Battalion arrived on the western slope. At this time K Company reported six enemy tanks approaching its position. Antitank guns were not yet across the river and the majority of the bazooka teams were out of ammunition. The situation appeared critical. Lt. Jenkin R. Jones, forward observer, 10th Field Artillery, set up his radio and called for artillery fire from the 10th and 39th Field Artillery Battalions, which stopped the enemy armored attack only after the lead tank had approached to within 50 yards of the 3d Battalion's left flank. For his gallantry and quick thought in the face of the enemy Lieutenant Jones was credited with having stopped a serious enemy threat and was awarded the Silver Star. He was killed later on the Anzio Beachhead.

By this time our attached armor had crossed the river at a ford which the 10th Engineers had improved under fire with hand tools, giving the 7th added strength to beat off an expected armored counterattack from the northwest. This threat never materialized.

The tremendous success of this vitally important operation by the 7th Infantry was attested to when Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark, Commanding General of the Fifth Army, called Colonel Sherman the following morning and personally congratulated him on the achievement of his regiment.

The 15th Infantry, under temporary command of Brig. Gen. William W. Eagles, Assistant Division Commander, met stubborn resistance as it fought desperately to take the high ground beyond the river at its front.

The 2d Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. John J. Toffey, had crossed the river at the west end of Mount Castellone and quickly seized Hill 141, its first objective.

The 3d Battalion, under Lt. Col. Charles F. Frederick, forded the river at a little island at the foot of Mount Castellone after climbing down the steep slopes that almost dipped into the stream. Hill 246 was the objective and it was taken from a determined enemy.

The two battalions, astride the promontories in the valley, came under intense enemy fire from dug-in positions on the north. Colonels Toffey and Frederick reorganized their units and the Germans were shoved back to the slopes beyond Piana di Caiazzo before dark.

With the 7th and 15th Infantry Regiments securely on their objectives, the main action focused around the high ridge above Triflisco, where the Germans were firmly entrenched. This ground had to be taken at any cost—and it was taken, by the 30th Infantry, under command of Col. Arthur H. Rogers. The regiment, however, suffered several setbacks before accomplishing the mission.

A number of patrols sent to the river before daybreak were driven back by heavy machine-gun fire but one from Company F succeeded in crossing at about 0440 and returned after capturing five prisoners.

Resistance was so strong and enemy fire so heavy that 2d Battalion, which was making the initial effort to cross the river, was ordered to delay in making the crossing. That night 1st Battalion cut back and crossed a jeep bridge which had been built across the river near the hairpin loop in the 7th Infantry zone and, under cover of darkness, stormed the hill from the east and drove the Germans out.

The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, followed by 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, crossed early next morning. This meant that all the infantry battalions were now on the north side of the Volturno.

The attack had been executed exactly as planned by General Truscott and his staff and in approximately twenty-four hours of hard fighting the 3d Division had won control of the Volturno Valley from Triflisco Gap to Piana di Caiazzo.

Amidst the heroism during that time the actions of Capt. Arlo L. Olson, commanding Company F, 15th Infantry, especially stand out. Company F crossed near Scaffa di Caiazzo at approximately 0200 October 13. When nearly across the river a machine gun opened fire, killing the scout who had gone forward of Captain Olson to locate a path up the bank. The enemy opened fire on the captain, but he continued on until he reached the base of the bank and threw two hand grenades directly into the gun position, killing the crew.

"The enemy had placed a machine gun to cover the trail and laid a continuous band of grazing fire which temporarily prevented us from advancing toward our objective," T/Sgt. Robert F. Witham said later. "Captain Olson . . . divided the company into two parts and

personally led one group in an envelopment from the left. At this point five Germans came toward us, and commenced throwing hand grenades at him. In the brief scrap which ensued the enemy were either all killed or wounded, and Captain Olson got a machine pistol from one of the casualties.

"This obstacle out of the way, Captain Olson advanced on the enemy position, crossing the intervening 150 yards in a slow, deliberate walk, in spite of aimed machine-gun fire which was striking the ground within two feet of him. When he got to a point about twenty-five yards from the enemy, he took aim with the German machine pistol and killed the machine-gun crew. He then turned his attention to the riflemen occupying foxholes nearby and killed six of them. Although Captain Olson had half a rifle company at his immediate disposal, he effected the destruction of this enemy strongpoint single-handed. . . ."

The advance up the valley now awaited bringing up supplies and artillery.

The 10th Engineers had built the jeep span and an 8-ton bridge over the river during the first day of the assault and had suffered many casualties as they worked under constant enemy fire and observation at sites that afforded no natural cover.

Their work on the heavy bridge was slowed considerably by enemy machine-gun, rifle and direct artillery fire. Much of the equipment was damaged by shell fragments and many rubber floats had to be repaired during the construction. The bridge and a detail of maintenance men were bombed and strafed the following day but damaged parts were quickly replaced and the bridge was kept open for two weeks. Seven of the attacking planes were shot down by the attached 441st AAA AW Battalion.

At daybreak October 14, the 39th FA Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. John D. Byrne, displaced across the river and a section of Battery A, under Capt. Fred P. Stevens, immediately captured two German 150mm guns and six men and set up their own gun in the enemy's former position.

This capture was but one of many outstanding feats performed by Division Artillery at the Volturno as is attested to by the fact that 12,000 rounds of ammo were fired by the light batteries during the 24-hour period starting with H-Hour.

Upon completion of a 30-ton bridge by Company B, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion, the problem of moving heavy transport across the river was solved and consolidation of the Division bridgehead, which was now virtually secure, rested on the success attained in pushing the Germans further north.

This push was to continue relentlessly.

At noon October 14, the 15th Infantry was on the

heights northeast of Piana di Caiazzo, the 7th was in the hills east of Pontelatone and the 30th was on the left flank driving along the ridges from Triflisco toward Formicola.

The 7th was planning an attack on Pontelatone when orders were received changing the direction of the Division advance. The altered route sent the 7th northeast through Liberi and Majorano to Dragoni, with the latter the main objective.

The sun was sinking when the 3d Battalion, with attached tanks and tank destroyers, began to advance over the hills toward Mount Fallano with the view of capturing Liberi before dark. These plans were upset when an all-night fight was encountered at Cisterna (*not* Cisterna di Littoria) a little village which the enemy stubbornly yielded early next morning.

While the 3d was engaged at Cisterna, the 2d Battalion pushed through the darkness along the slopes of Mount Friento where German tanks, committed as roving artillery, caused some delay. By daybreak, the 2d had reached the high ground above Prea and was headed toward Liberi.

In detail, the account of the action is as follows:

The 2d Battalion had moved around the 7th's left flank and captured Mount Friento. Company F's bazooka teams destroyed an enemy antitank gun and two armored halftracks, which were firing on the 3d Battalion. The maneuver of the 2d Battalion had surprised the enemy on Mount Friento and made him give ground. Further advance was stopped by heavy enemy fires from machine guns, mortars and a 20mm Flakwagon located in Villa and on the northern slopes of Hill 561.

Meanwhile the 3d Battalion had resumed its attack astride the road to capture the crossroads at Villa and to assist the 1st Battalion in its advance toward Liberi. Hill 561 was captured but the enemy counterattacked immediately. Five enemy attacks inflicted severe losses on the 3d Battalion and particularly Company K, in which company one platoon had a strength of four men. Yet the 3d Battalion yielded no ground. Late in the afternoon the enemy broke off the fight and withdrew his battered infantry under the protection of a tremendous mortar concentration.

The 1st Battalion moved up through Strangolagalli, by-passed Cisterna on the right and encountered some stiff opposition at Hill 581, a ridge running northwest from Sasso through Villa.

The scrub-covered ridges around Sasso afforded good ground for resistance and the 1st Battalion fought all night before the enemy was finally subdued.

The 2d Battalion, meantime, moved steadily forward on the 7th's left flank but was stopped shortly after midnight by strong resistance at a point southwest of Villa,

which lay between Hill 561 and Hill 524. The battalion suffered many casualties in driving the enemy out of this area.

On the morning of October 16, the 7th was engaged in sharp fighting around Liberi. The Division intelligence section (G-2), under Maj. Grover Wilson, had learned that the 29th and 115th *Panzer Grenadier* Regiments were established on the far slopes of Hill 524 and were determined to wreck the plans to take Liberi or, at least, any hope of taking it without maximum cost. The 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, had come from the Pontelatone area to join the 7th in the mission.

Liberi was the target for thrusts from all sides. All day long these thrusts were met with fierce counterattacks. Continuously the Germans charged back. First at Hill 524, then Hill 561. It was a bloody engagement and it continued far into the night. When dawn came the 7th attacked with renewed vigor and entered the town but found that the bulk of the Germans had retreated under cover of darkness.

Dragoni was the next objective and to reach it required covering the roughest terrain encountered since the march from the Volturmo began. Even the Provisional Reconnaissance and Pack Train and the Provisional Pack Battery attached to the infantry units had difficulty in negotiating the slopes and steep hills that were encountered. The natural obstacles, with demolitions and mines that the enemy employed in his withdrawal, made it difficult to maintain contact at times.

By the night of October 17, the 2d Battalion had pushed its way to Mount Lungo, just west of Dragoni, and the 3d Battalion was on Hill 371, just south of the city. At this point, General Truscott ordered the 7th to stop its advance in order to rest the men and pack animals.

The 15th Infantry, joined by its 3d Battalion, moving on the left of the 7th, also negotiated a long stretch of tiresome hill-climbing to reach the ridges east of Pietramelara. The 1st Battalion made its way to Hill 446, above Roccaromana, that night and the following morning swooped down the hillside to capture the town, after having overrun enemy resistance-pockets on the slopes and in the valley where the town was situated. The occupation of Roccaromana was, however, only partial and temporary.

The 2d Battalion moved over Hill 446 and drove on to the Roccaromana-Statigliano-Latina road.

The 3d Battalion moved north across the Roccaromana-Statigliano-Latina road to seize the Mount della Costa and prevent the enemy from using the Latina-Baja-e-Latina-Pietramelara road farther north. The 3d Battalion succeeded in occupying the mountain mass, chiefly through the efforts of Company L. Company L,



A 3d Division aid-man merely glances at the dead German as he advances.

alone on the northern edge of Mount della Costa, overlooking the strategic enemy supply route to Baja-e-Latina, held its position for eight days, despite severe enemy shellings and counterattacks by numerically superior forces. The attrition of the battle on the slopes of Mount della Costa reduced Company L's strength to a handful of men. For three days and two nights the Company was without food and water. Yet the Company doggedly held the position and directed artillery fire upon the German line of supply to Baja-e-Latina. The enemy was, because of his inability to drive Company L from Mount della Costa, forced to withdraw from the Baja-e-Latina area. For this action, Company L, 15th Infantry was later awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation.

The 30th Infantry, meanwhile, had a hard tussle with the Germans in the vicinity of Formicola.

Monte Grande, a high ridge southeast of Formicola, lay in a gap that separated the 3d Division from the British 10 Corps and it was under alternate attacks by the 30th Infantry and British 56th Division when the 30th disengaged and moved to a position in Division reserve northeast of Villa.

The 7th, after a rest, struck at Dragoni on the morning of October 19 but the 34th Division, on the right flank, stabbed sharply at dawn in a surprise attack from the south and entered the city a few minutes be-



A 3d Division wounded soldier is hastened rearward on the hood of a jeep.

fore the first troops of the 7th Infantry Regiment arrived.

The 7th then turned north from Dragoni toward Mount degli Angeli and Mount Monaco, two high formations that rise northwest of Baja e Latina.

The 15th, headed toward high ground beyond Pietramelara, was delayed several days at Roccaromana, which the enemy finally relinquished October 22, the same day that the 7th reached Mount degli Angeli. Baja e Latina had been occupied by the 7th in its march from Dragoni after Co. L, 15th Infantry's position on Mount della Costa had forced the enemy to withdraw from the town.

After three days of tough fighting, the 7th drove the enemy from the slopes of Mount Monaco, the last natural point of resistance that was available to the Germans in this area. On the morning of October 25, the 30th moved up to an assembly area near Baja e Latina, thus completing occupation of high ground that gave the 3d Division command of everything overlooking its bridgehead at the Volturno.

Hill by hill the *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division fell back—with the 3d always at its heels. Mignano Gap beckoned from the north.

Taking up the pursuit October 26, the Division veered to the northwest with the mission of sweeping its sector and securing the left flank of 10 Corps. The British were still on our left, with the 34th Division on the right flank. Monte San Nicola was attacked by elements of 7th and 30th Infantry Regiments.

Under command of Lt. Col. Lionel C. McGarr (who had assumed his new post on hospitalization of Colonel Rogers October 21), 30th Infantry jumped off in an

attack on Mt. Nicola and Pietravairano at 0900 October 26, following a four-hour artillery concentration.

All three battalions of the 30th were committed, with 3d Battalion on the left, 2d Battalion on the right, and 1st Battalion echeloned to the right rear. The 7th Infantry supported the initial attack by fire.

As the three battalions crossed the flats of the valley leading up to Mount Nicola from the east, all troops came under heavy enemy mortar fire. Approaching the great hill mass 30th Infantry found the Germans had made intensive preparations and had dug in along the crest and not along the forward slopes. Throughout the entire day of October 26 the battalions battled enemy infantry, encountering "S" mines, demolition tripwire boobytraps, thick brush that had to be cut to make paths, and enemy *Nebelwerfer* fire. By nightfall 3d Battalion had captured the first of the three highest knolls along the crest of the ridge.

That night the front lines were but five yards apart in places, heavy brush and rain making visibility nil. All the next day grenade and tommy-gun battles raged as 3d Battalion, encountering the brunt of the enemy opposition, along with one company of 2d Battalion, forged forward to capture the two other high points which the Germans had made into almost impregnable machine-gun positions. By 2100 the evening of October 27 Company L and the 3d Battalion command group entered the city of Pietravairano to find it filled with Teller-mine boobytraps and "S" mines. The battalion had killed at least twenty-six Germans, wounded scores more, and captured thirty. In addition it had suffered numerous casualties, including six killed, in the two-day fight. Throughout the entire action, the battalion went practically without food and water as the 1200-meter climb over rugged, mountainous, brush-covered, slippery, and boobytrapped terrain made movement, supply, and evacuation almost man-killing. The 1st Battalion, after being relieved on the northern edge of the ridge by elements of the 7th Infantry, moved behind the 2d Battalion and then, after touching the eastern outskirts of Pietravairano, went north to occupy and hold the town of Vairano. The 15th swept up the valley and drove the Germans from San Felice and Mount Gaievola, meeting little opposition en route. Part of the 7th took the Monticello feature, thus establishing an unbroken front in the Division sector, which had been cleared in avalanche fashion.

October 27 saw the culmination of Capt. Arlo L. Olson's deeds. For thirteen days he had constantly been in the lead of Company F, 15th Infantry, leading combat patrols or acting as number-one scout.

"... at about 1200 hours the company was attacking enemy positions north of San Felice," said Radioman Pfc. Lawrence E. Adkins later. "... a reconnoitering



3d Division Infantrymen moving into position for the attack on Pietravairano on October 26, 1943.

party . . . returned with information that the enemy had a strongpoint about fifty yards from the base of the hill.

"Captain Olson, upon receiving the above information, called for one of his platoons to follow him and moved down the slope in an attack on the enemy. When he reached the base of the hill he crawled to within twenty-five yards of the enemy strongpoint whereupon he charged the enemy machine-gun which was in the center of the enemy position. Despite continuous fire which barely missed him as he ran, Captain Olson reached the enemy machine-gun and dispatched the crew with his pistol. When his men saw the Captain make his head-on charge against the machine-gun they followed him and completely overran the enemy. When the shooting stopped I counted twelve dead Germans and seven prisoners.

"Captain Olson sent for the balance of the company and led the company in an advance on the next objective, a mountain about 2000 yards across the flat. . . ."

Olson moved across toward the hill and two-thirds of the way up the hill, when strong enemy fire was received. At this point he organized his company into an assault line and moved forward in the lead, disdainful cover. The assault was successful and the hill was taken.

"With the hill completely in our hands," said Sgt. Anthony Trisolini, "Captain Olson posted one platoon

as security and began to reorganize the company behind the cover of the crest. At this time we were subjected to a severe concentration of enemy mortar fire which killed one of our officers, our radioman and fatally wounded the Captain.

"Although mortally wounded, Captain Olson kept going and moved about the crest of the hill completely disregarding his wounds in order that the company might be placed in position to withstand successfully any possible future counterattack. After satisfying himself that the objective was properly defended he supervised evacuation of his casualties, refusing medical aid for himself until all of his men had been cared for. Captain Olson died before he could be evacuated."

Said his battalion commander, Lt. Col. John J. Toffey: "Captain Olson's intrepidity, exemplary conduct, and demonstrated professional skill served as a model for his officers and men and enabled the company to accept casualties without weakening the desire to close with the enemy and destroy him. This spirit, instilled by Captain Olson, has never left the company."

Captain Olson was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroism from 13-27 October.

October 28 marked the first day in weeks that our men were not confronted with hills. Pack animals got a second breath for the first time since the Volturno and as October ended patrols were as far north as



General Eisenhower, Supreme Commander Allied Forces in the Mediterranean Theater, Lieutenant General Clark, CG Fifth Army and Major General Lucas leave the 3d Division War Room during a tour of the front in Italy.

Presenzano, where the 3d was to assist the 45th Division in effecting another crossing of the Volturno. The 34th Division, which had been on our right flank, had turned northeast and was moving along Bava Creek on the right of the 45th.

During this period 2nd Lt. Harold E. Greer, S-2 of the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, volunteered for a hazardous mission. He led a six-man patrol seven miles past his battalion front lines to a preselected Italian farmhouse within the German lines near Presenzano, Italy, the night of October 28-29. After establishing his OP listening post in the upper story of the farm building, Lieutenant Greer reconnoitered the outskirts of Presenzano, coming under the fire of friendly artillery that scored a direct hit on a German ammunition dump seventy-five yards away, scattering debris that narrowly missed him.

Observing the enemy preparing to withdraw, build-

ing final defensive positions and roadblocks and destroying bridges, Lieutenant Greer reported this information to his battalion by SCR 284 radio. He narrowly escaped death for a second time when American planes dive-bombed his farmhouse OP the morning of October 29. Bombs burst as close as fifty yards from the building. While this took place, Greer located an enemy field kitchen unit bivouacked along a draw 500 yards from the house and directed artillery fire on the area, inflicting heavy damage. The night of October 29 a 10-man German patrol entered the ground floor of his OP and remained there for forty-five minutes, but failed to discover him. When he saw the patrol lay mines along the roadbed forty yards from his OP, Greer recorded the fact and later informed advance friendly engineers who removed them before friendly tanks reached the city.

He also sighted an enemy convoy evacuating troops

and equipment toward the German rear on October 30, and quickly radioed the information to his battalion CO who in turn notified Division Headquarters.

Early on the morning of November 1, Lieutenant Greer met 15th Infantry troops as they entered Presenzano. His timely information had materially aided in speeding the advance.

Nearly two months had elapsed since the 3d had started its drive up the Italian boot from Battipaglia. Enemy activity had been characterized throughout the advance by deliberate withdrawal, covered by mining and demolition. He had consistently infiltrated our forward positions with night combat patrols; he came back to reoccupy positions which our patrols previously penetrated; he ambushed our supply trains and booby-trapped trails and bivouac areas; he employed armor frequently but sparingly, using tanks in twos and threes to work with small groups of infantry; he sited self-propelled guns in defiladed positions and towns where they were difficult to find. And he took full advantage of the rugged terrain, the greatest asset of defensive warfare.

All the enemy's tricks had been solved by the men of the Marne Division. All his innovations had been countered with improvisations of our own. The difficult access to certain mountain heights was conquered by the use of the Provisional Pack Train and Provisional Mounted Reconnaissance Troop. Divisional Cub planes were used for hitherto unknown purposes, as in the instance where a pack train became lost in the mountains and a plane searched it out and led it to its destination, where it arrived with ammunition just in time to save a battalion. Coordination with air support was so precise that prisoners of war taken in the Pietravairano area claimed the air bombardment was more accurate and terrifying than any they had ever experienced before.

And the mountain range that now faced us (the German Winter Line of 1943-44, or Gustav Line) presented even higher peaks, more precipitous cliffs, and less passable roads than those which the 3d had just crossed. The range skirted the Volturno Valley from Isernia, through Venafro to Mignano, which was located in a gap that temporarily broke the string. At places the peaks reached a height of one mile. Increasing rains and colder weather joined hands to make the operations more difficult as November 1 arrived and the drive on Mignano was begun.

With Highway No. 6 as the axis of advance, the Division moved forward with the 7th Infantry on the left, the 15th Infantry, now under command of Lt. Col. Ashton H. Manhart, in the center and the 30th, commanded by Lt. Col. Lionel C. McGarr, on the right.

The crossing of the Volturno by the 45th Division during the night of November 3-4 was aided by the 3d

during the next three days, when a strong demonstration was conducted toward Terra Corpo in the 7th's sector and a swift seizure of the high ground back of Presenzano was effected.

The 15th met heavy resistance in the Presenzano area but after a bitter struggle drove the enemy out of the valley between Presenzano and Mignano and followed up with the capture of Mount Cesima.

The 7th, in its action near Terra Corpo, succeeded in cutting the road between Roccamonfina and Mignano and took Mount Friello. Mount Friello was a key terrain feature, affording us observation up the Mignano valley. The Camino-Difensa-Maggiore range was still in possession of the enemy. It was here that the 7th encountered an astounding example of German obstacle construction. Mount Friello was hardly large enough to conceal the 3d Battalion. Yet the enemy had laid over 3000 S mines along every trail, ditch or break in the thick underbrush. The hill was to have been taken in a night attack. Interrogation of Italian civilians revealed the presence of the mines and saved the 3d Battalion from a possible disaster. The doughfeet of the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, named Mount Friello, "Mine Hill," and rightfully so.

On November 5, the Division was poised to make its attack on Mignano, which is situated in a wide gap, protected from the east and west by lofty peaks. Mount Lungo and Mount Rotundo, formidable barriers in themselves, rise like two camel humps from the level of the gap north of Mignano. Reconnaissance patrols reported that both of these terrain features were covered with gun positions, minefields and tank traps, thus making an attack through the southern opening to the gap impracticable.

General Truscott's strategy was to attack the Mignano gap from the mountains on its flanks.

This operation proved to be the most heart-breaking, nerve-racking venture that the 3d Division had undertaken since its baptism of fire at Casablanca. It was here that the offensive prowess of every member of the Division crystallized into a shining brilliance. Mignano's tremendous value to the enemy as a communication center and a defensive hub to the plains beyond had to be destroyed, and with it the defending enemy, who held the peaks that look down upon the gap.

The 30th Infantry, which had been in reserve and blocking to the northeast, moved northwest from Presenzano during the night of November 5-6, passed through elements of the 45th Division en route and opened an attack through Rocca Pippirozzi at 0530 November 6.

The 15th Infantry at that time was moving down the northwestern slope of Mount Cesima and through Mignano toward Mount Rotundo and Mount Lungo.

The 7th Infantry was fighting its way down the northern slope of Mount Camino toward Mount la Difensa.

All three regiments were fighting under the worst of conditions. They were attacking a battle-wise and vicious enemy, who held the commanding terrain features. He was dug in in solid rock and had the entire approach area covered with artillery, mortar, machine-gun, automatic-weapon and rifle fire. Mines were sown thickly through the entire area. It was cold and damp. The mist hung low over the mountainside and visibility was so bad at times that it was impossible to see a man 20 feet to the front. Thus the attack began.

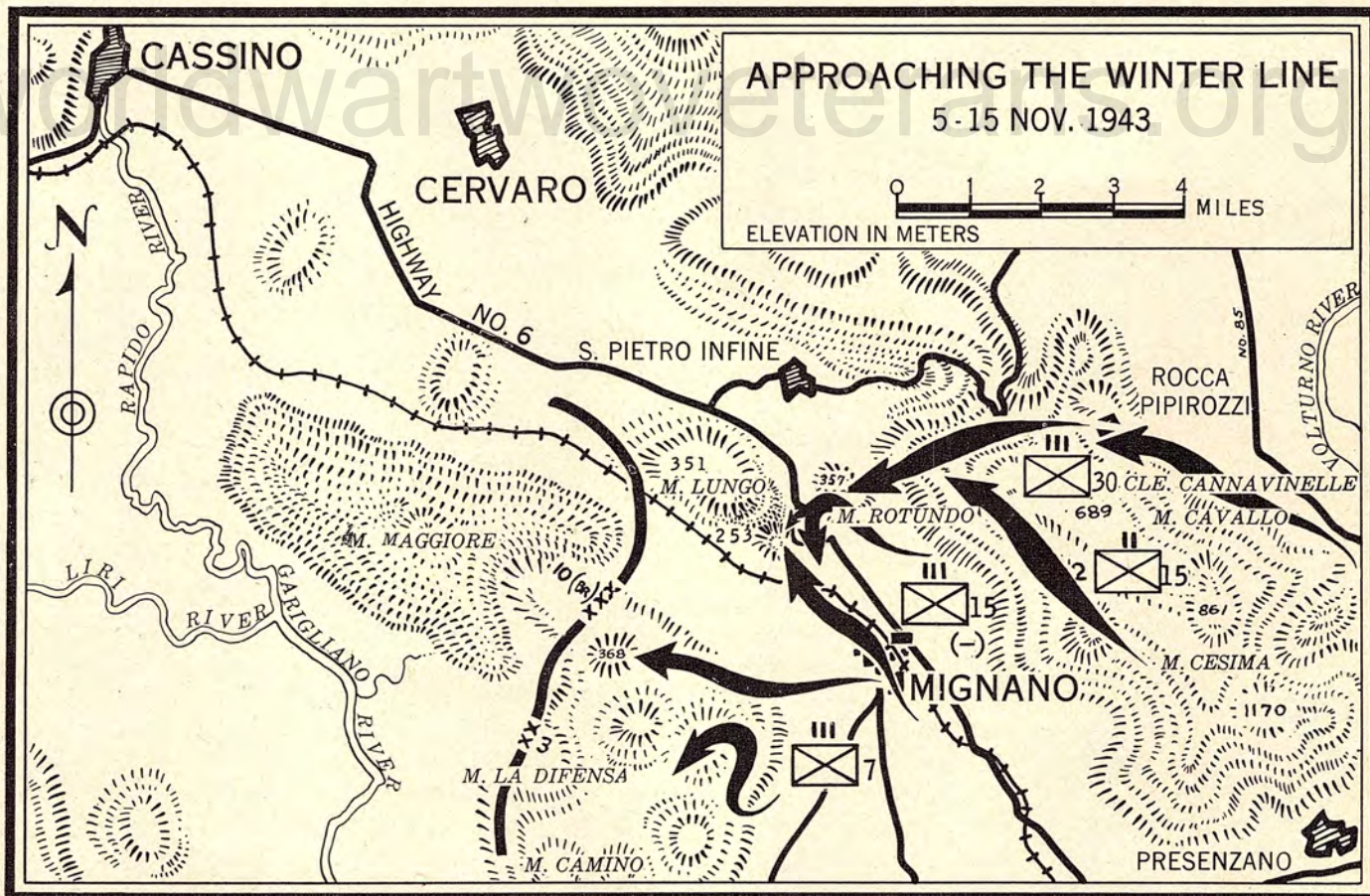
The 30th Infantry attacked westward from Rocca Pippirozzi at 0530, November 6, with the mission of seizing Mount Rotundo. It advanced in a column of battalions, 1st leading, followed by the 2d and 3d. The advance was difficult. Men, physically exhausted by five weeks of continuous campaigning in the Apennines, crawled up steep and slippery "hills" on their hands and knees. Sure-footed mules and burros carrying food and ammunition fell from narrow trails which led up the precipitous and treacherous Apennines, to their death below. The 1st Battalion contacted the enemy at 0920 and engaged him in a small-arms fire fight. The fight continued as the 1st Battalion advanced. By late after-

noon it had taken its objective, the nose of Mount Cannavinelle, where it was subjected to murderous concentrations of artillery and mortar fire at 1315.

At 1530, the 2d Battalion passed through the 1st Battalion which secured its line of departure, and attacked Mount Rotundo. The enemy on Mount Rotundo was quick to take up the challenge. Extremely intense small-arms, machine-gun, mortar and artillery fire poured forth from well dug-in positions, magnificently camouflaged and protected by anti-personnel minefields and barbed wire, on Mount Rotundo. The 2d Battalion was unable to take its objective because of this terrible opposition.

The 15th Infantry, during the 30th's advance, moved down the forward slopes of Mount Cesima. The 2d Battalion pushed north to attack Mount Rotundo from the south and the 3d Battalion passed through enemy-deserted Mignano and pressed north up the gap toward Mount Lungo. Here, too, enemy resistance was immediate and intense. Enemy on Mount Lungo, Mount Rotundo and Hill 253, which is directly south of Mount Lungo, brought fire to bear on the attackers with such intensity and accuracy that it was beyond the human ability of the men to advance.

Across the gap, on the Division left flank, the 7th



Infantry was wrapped in a terrific struggle to wrest the towering Mount la Difensa from the enemy. The 2d Battalion had attacked on 5 November, through Caspoli and Casale toward the high ridge between the jagged peaks of Mount Camino and the perpendicular cliffs of Mount la Difensa. The 3d Battalion assisted on the right flank by cleaning out the enemy in the 7th's zone of action on the Mignano Valley floor and clearing the southeastern slopes of Mount la Difensa. The 1st Battalion passed around the right flank of the 3d Battalion and attacked the northeastern slope of la Difensa. This maneuver pinched out the 3d Battalion and placed the 1st and 2d Battalions abreast, and in control of the northeastern and southeastern slopes of Mount la Difensa. During the next ten days these battalions tried in vain to scale the heights and secure the top of the mountain. Their every effort was balked by a cliff sixty feet high, following north and south some 1500 yards along the top of the mountain. In the sector of the 2d Battalion, only one path could be found up the cliff and this was commanded by two enemy machine guns, firing from positions blasted out of rock, only the firing apertures visible. Action along the entire line held by the 7th Infantry was stalemated. Yet the fire fight was continuous and savage. From his positions the enemy laid down deadly fires against our every attempt to move forward. In the sector of the 1st Battalion the enemy paid a heavy price to retain his position. His counterattacks were often costly, too, but he managed to shift his reserves and replace his losses.

Supplying the combat troops in the 7th, 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments' zones was a major problem in this terrain, cut by deep gorges and precipitous ridges. Even the valuable pack mules and burros were useless, and food, ammunition and water had to be carried by carrying parties, equipped with improvised packboards. A man could manage only a small amount, for he needed both hands for climbing. The trip up required a full day and the evacuation of the dead and wounded was accomplished in an average of six-seven hours. The soldiers suffered severely from exposure to rain and cold and from a lack of proper food and clothing. Yet the priceless ammunition was always adequate. No definition of the word "Teamwork" could explain the full significance of the word there in the Apennines. The spirit that was tacitly present, between the hard-pressed infantrymen at the crest of the mountain and the carrying parties that labored night and day to sustain them, defies to be set down in words.

On 12 November, Company K, commanded by Lt. Frank Petruzel, reinforced by the 2d (MG) Platoon of Company M, moved out to relieve the depleted 2d Battalion. On 16 November Company K, after a fifteen-minute artillery, Cannon Company and chemical mor-

tar concentration placed on enemy positions, jumped off to give it one more try. The dense fog and occasional clouds, which, it was hoped, would reduce visibility to our advantage, suddenly cleared, and the enemy stopped the attack ten yards from the line of departure and fifty feet from the top of the mountain. It was the last attempt, for on 17 November, troops of the 36th Infantry Division began the relief of the 3d Infantry Division.

Meanwhile the 30th Infantry was engaged in front of Mount Rotundo. When the advance of the 2d Battalion was stopped on 6 November, it was decided that the 2d and 3d Battalions would make a coordinated attack at 1330 November 7. Due to the great difficulties of reorganizing under continual enemy fire and the trouble caused by the infiltration of a wily and crafty enemy, determined to withstand all efforts to seize this vital outpost of the Cassino Line, the attack was postponed. In the interim the 2d Battalion was forced to repulse a counterattack and thwart enemy attempts to cut its line of communication. The 1st Battalion, too, repulsed a bitter enemy counterattack during the night of 7-8 November.

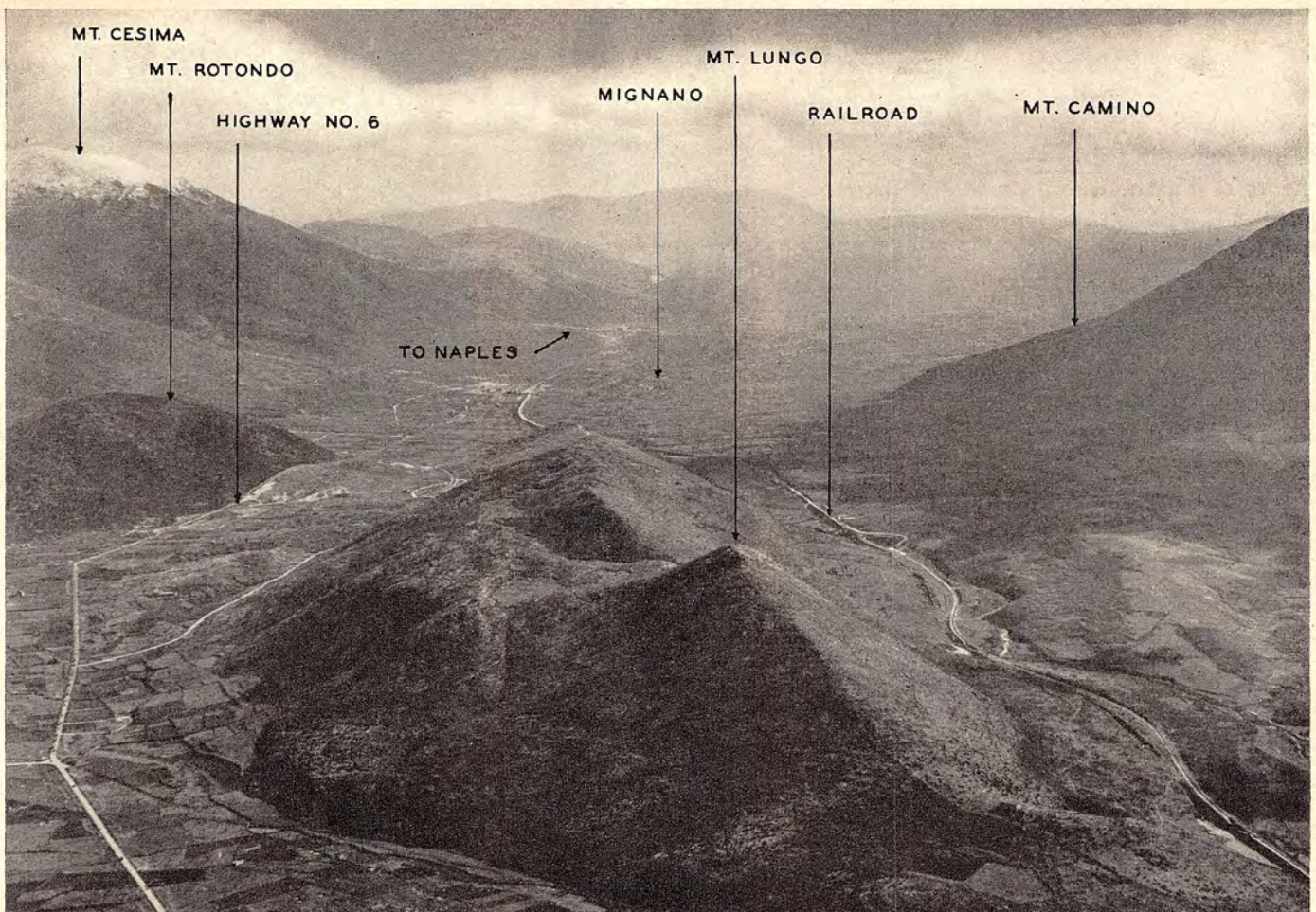
The 15th Infantry, meantime, had pressed its attack strongly but without success. Every attempt to seize the southern slope of Mount Rotundo and Mount Lungo met with bitter, determined resistance. At 0845 November 8 a coordinated attack, by the 15th and 30th Infantry Regiments, was launched after a fifteen-minute preparation, fired by eight battalions of artillery. The 1st Battalion of the 15th Infantry advanced around the southwest side of Mount Rotundo to seize Hill 193, which occupies the center of a horseshoe curve in Highway 6. The 3d Battalion of the 15th Infantry fought its way to and captured Hill 253, which is the southern nose of Mount Lungo. The 2d Battalion fought up the southern slope of Mount Rotundo.

The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, attacked Mount Rotundo from the east. At 1100 November 8, Companies I and L, less one platoon, had taken the objective. The attack had struck the enemy in the flank and rear and had taken him by surprise, while he was engaged with the 15th Infantry.

Enemy counteraction was immediate. A series of local counterattacks began within an hour of the capture of the hill and continued in mounting intensity for forty-eight hours.

Both the 15th and the 30th dug in on their objectives and were counterattacked by the enemy day and night for a period of five or six days. Attacks were launched by both units to improve their positions, which brought counterattacks by the enemy each time.

On the morning of November 10, 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was occupying captured Mount Rotundo with two depleted companies on the hill mass and Company



This view of the Mignano corridor, from the German side, shows the importance of Mount Lungo as a block at the exit from the corridor.

L in the pass to the east. The company's right flank extended to the lower nose of Mount Cannavinelle. The main line of resistance ran across the mouth of the gap up the northwest slope of Mount Rotundo through heavy brush and trees, Company L's left flank toward the right flank of Company K. "Company L's combat strength of fifty-five men," stated Battalion CO Lt. Col. Edgar C. Doleman, "made it impossible to maintain contact across the 600 yards of densely wooded slope except by patrols and listening posts. One section of heavy machine guns was attached to Company L and was in position on the left (west) flank protected by four riflemen."

The deeds of two men during the latter part of the drive are particularly deserving of note. One of these men was 1st Lt. Maurice L. Britt, the other Pfc. Floyd K. Lindstrom.

"At 0830 the morning mentioned, the Germans counterattacked over the north nose of Mount Rotundo southeast toward the gap between Company L and Company K, turned down the slope, hit Company L's left flank and captured the machine-gun section and four riflemen by a ruse. The counterattackers, later estimated from PW reports as a company of approximately

one hundred men, had as their mission the retaking of Mount Rotundo. When Company L's left-flank men opened fire, the enemy hit them in force and pushed them southeast toward the gap between the mountains. . . ."

Said Cpl. John Syc: ". . . The Germans attacked our left flank and captured some Americans whom they placed in front of them as a shield. We couldn't see the Americans, but we could hear them shouting down to us not to shoot. When they were about fifty yards away, Lieutenant Britt yelled, 'Take off! They can't hurt you! We're going to fire anyway!' All of us then opened fire and the Germans fired back with rifles, machine pistols and machine guns, too. The American prisoners scattered, some later escaping. . . . During the fire fight, which was intense, a mortar section ammo man near me was wounded and his weapon knocked out. Lieutenant Britt, while firing his carbine, suddenly yelled, 'Ow' and put his hand on his side saying he thought he was hit, but ordering me to fire my machine gun faster. . . ."

"He ran from side to side of our machine gun of which I was assistant gunner," said Pfc. Fred E. Marshall, "firing at every sound and sight of Germans. . . ."

Later, I saw Lieutenant Britt, slightly bleeding on the face, having run out of carbine ammo, grab the M-1 rifle from a badly wounded man lying near me, and continue to fire with it. He also grabbed some hand grenades and with the rifle and grenades went ahead into a wooded area ahead of our position looking for Germans. A few minutes later I saw him throwing grenades, disregarding machine-pistol bursts hitting all around him. I marveled that he wasn't hit. Concussion grenades, too, were bursting all about him. . . ."

Said Sgt. James G. Klaes: ". . . All in all . . . I saw him throw approximately ten to twelve grenades, German automatic fire and grenades coming back all the time. At times we thought we would be overrun. Always I saw Lieutenant Britt out in front firing his carbine, throwing hand grenades, first from one position, then from another. . . ."

". . . I saw his canteen was pierced with bullet holes and his shirt covered with water; his field glasses case, too, was pierced with bullet holes," said T/5 Eric B. Gibson (Cf. Push to Rome). ". . . I was throwing hand grenades at Germans and Lieutenant Britt asked me for some as he had thrown all he had. During the morning he must have thrown at least thirty-two hand grenades. . . ."

At about 0930 Britt and Gibson went toward the left to find what had become of the two mortars which had been to the left of the attacking Germans. There was another encounter with a machine gun and the lieutenant threw a couple of grenades, saving Gibson's life, according to Gibson's testimony. They returned, then once more Britt went into the woods and had another encounter with an enemy machine gun.

". . . Lieutenant Britt greeted me in my aid station," said 3d Battalion Surgeon Capt. Roy E. Hanford. "I was busy with a couple of casualties at the time . . . about a half hour later I asked Lieutenant Britt if there was anything I could do for him. His reply was 'No, Doc, go ahead and finish with your other casualties. *I got a little scratch here that I want you to look at when you get time.*'"

"Lieutenant Britt's scratch turned out to be an elliptical avulsion of skin down to the muscle about one inch long and one-half inch wide on his left side. There were a number of other visible small superficial wounds on his face and hands. . . . I asked Lieutenant Britt if he would like to go into the hospital. He replied, 'No,' calmly and determinedly, 'I got to get back up on the hill to help those boys.' . . . There were several remarks from some casualties from his company after he left. 'I'd give anything to be like that guy.' 'That guy is a one man army. . . .'"

Lieutenant Britt was subsequently awarded the Medal of Honor for his action.

For the November 7-12 period 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, later received the Distinguished Unit Citation. "With fire sweeping its ranks from the rear and from an exposed flank, the battalion launched its attack up the forward slope of the mountain (Rotundo) and doggedly advanced to the crest in the face of stubborn enemy resistance," read the citation, in part. "Although depleted heavily in effective strength and having neither food nor water for a period of two days, the intrepid infantrymen of the 3d Battalion met the onslaught of the enemy (over a six-day period) and repelled each assault with heavy losses to the attackers. . . ."

Later honored with the Medal of Honor for actions during the same period was Pfc. Floyd K. Lindstrom.

On November 12 the 2d platoon of Company H, 7th Infantry, was attached to Company E. The platoon had been depleted to a total of fourteen men and two serviceable guns. Pfc. Lindstrom was the gunner of one gun.

At about 0900 approximately forty enemy launched a counterattack against the left flank of the company. Lindstrom's machine-gun section received the greater weight of the attack.

". . . The enemy, from his position on the commanding heights," said Pvt. Marvin D. Crone, assistant gunner, "had excellent observation and when he opened fire on us he was deadly accurate. The bulk of the enemy were 200 yards above us when he attacked. E Company withdrew about 150 yards, because there was not enough cover for them at this point, leaving our machine-gun section out in front.

"Even though he saw the rifle company withdraw, Pfc. Lindstrom nevertheless instantly and without orders immediately set up a defensive position and opened fire with his machine gun. The enemy fire became intense as they started dropping a great number of mortar shells in our 'section' area and commenced to rake our positions with machine-gun, machine-pistol, and rifle fire.

". . . Lindstrom insisted on moving forward alone another ten yards for a better field of fire. He picked up the machine gun bodily and moved uphill over the rocky ground with his 112-pound load. In doing this he became the direct target of machine-gun and small-arms fire from some of the enemy who weren't more than fifteen to twenty yards away . . . at least thirty-five hand grenades of the concussion variety were thrown at Pfc. Lindstrom in an attempt to silence his gun.

"Lindstrom was aiming for one German machine gun and crew in particular when he singlehandedly carried his heavy machine gun forward because he saw that it was the chief supporting weapon in the German counterattack. Despite the heavy fire from their mortars

and machine pistols, he moved to within about fifteen yards of this machine gun even though it was firing at him and missing him only by inches.

"I could hear the Jerries yelling at him in pidgin English, 'American soldier—you give up—we treat you fine—you no surrender, plenty trouble—we got you surrounded.' This was repeated time and again and each time Lindstrom answered 'Go to Hell!' and gave them another burst of fire from his machine gun. . . .

"When Lindstrom saw that the attack was likely to succeed if the enemy machine guns were not put out of action, he yelled at me to cover him with my rifle, that he was going to 'get that machine gun,' and armed only with the .45-caliber pistol which he always had at his hip, he frontally assaulted the machine gun in a mad uphill dash. The Germans saw him coming and let go a continuous stream of fire which kicked up the dirt inches behind his heels as he ran at them. Somehow he miraculously escaped being hit by the continuous chain of automatic fire from the machine gun, got right on top of the gunners and shot them to death with his pistol. He then returned, dragging the German machine gun behind him, after which he braved more enemy fire to go back to their position and return with two full boxes of ammo which he directed us to emplace and put to use in countering the enemy attack. We received no support from our other machine gun during the counterattack because it was unable to fire on the enemy from its position. . . ."

Said Sgt. Nicholas Alfier: "Lindstrom gave the gun to me telling me to use it on the German infantry, and he immediately went back to his gun and opened fire.

"Lindstrom's spectacular action and withering machine-gun fire completely demoralized the Germans and their counterattack seemed to disintegrate. . . ."

"The rifle company and the other machine gun of our section attempted to come to our aid while the attack was going on," said Pvt. Sam G. Rohan, "But Pfc.

Lindstrom so effectively handled the situation that it was all over before they could get into action. . . ."

The exhausted warriors of the 3d Infantry Division by November 15, deserved the needed rest that was to come when higher headquarters called a halt to the advance that night.

In two days all elements of the Division had been relieved and were en route to San Felice, tired, bearded, and dirty, but flushed with victory and justly proud that they had penetrated the German Winter Line and forced the first approaches to Cassino.

The 3d Infantry Division was holding the trumps when relief by the 36th Division was effected November 17, 1943.

TABLE OF CASUALTIES*

Southern Italy

(Sept. 14, 1943 through Jan. 21, 1944)

			Total Battle Casualties	Non-Battle Casualties
KIA	WIA	MIA	3265	12,959
683	2412	170		

Reinforcements and Hospital return-to-unit personnel

	Reinf		Hosp	RTUs
Off		EM	Off	EM
438		8616	241	7295

KNOWN ENEMY CASUALTIES**

Killed	Wounded	Captured
265	86	547

*These figures were provided by the A C of S, G-1, 3d Infantry Division.

**Throughout this history, statements of enemy casualties as compiled from records of A C of S, G-1, 3d Infantry Division, are those enemy dead actually buried in 3d Division cemeteries and those enemy wounded actually processed through 3d Division medical installations. It is estimated that these figures reflect not more than five per cent of the casualties inflicted on the enemy by the 3d Division and its attached units. Statements of enemy captured are those prisoners of war actually processed through 3d Division cages under supervision of the Provost Marshal.

VI
ANZIO

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I: The First Battle of Cisterna di Littoria

January 22 to February 1

TROOP LIST—Operation "Shingle" Third Infantry Division (Reinf)

Organization for Combat

1. *Hq & Hq Co, 3d Inf Div.*
2. *7th Inf Regt (Reinf)*
 - 10th FA Bn
 - Plat Co A, 751st Tk Bn
 - Plat Co A, 601st TD Bn
 - Co A, 3d Med Bn (Coll)
 - Det 10th Engr Bn
 - Det 3d Sig Co.
3. *15th Inf Regt (Reinf)*
 - 39th FA Bn
 - Plat Co A, 751st Tk Bn
 - Plat Co B, 601st TD Bn
 - Co B, 3d Med Bn (Coll)
 - Det 10th Engr Bn
 - Det 3d Sig Co.
4. *30th Inf Regt (Reinf)*
 - 41st FA Bn
 - Plat Co A, 751st Tk Bn
- Plat Co C, 601st TD Bn
- Co C, 3d Med Bn (Coll)
- Det 10th Engr Bn
- Det 3d Sig Co.
5. *Division Artillery*
 - (—10th, 39th & 41st FA Bns)
 - 69th Armd FA Bn (105 SP)
 - Btry B, 36th FA Bn (155 G)
 - Det, Btry B, 15th Obsn Bn (Sound)
6. *3d Rcn Troop*
 - Prov Mtd Troop
 - Prov Pack Btry
 - Dets, 10th Engr Bn.
7. *441st AAA AW Bn*
8. *84th Chemical Bn*
9. *504th Parachute Inf Regt.*
10. *3d QM Co*

CASABLANCA was the baptism and the proof that the 3d Infantry Division could and would measure up to the most rigid standards of modern combat. Sicily was the gratifying fruition of an idea which held that a good United States division could move fast, and strike hard bewildering blows to confound the enemy and help to bring about his quick capitulation. Lower Italy, until the crossing of the Volturno River, was almost a continuation of the Sicilian campaign. Forging the Volturno to carry the bitter fight into the mountain fastness of an essentially mountainous country, over peaks whose sides were sown with thousands of deadly antipersonnel mines, in the teeth of lethal crossfires from an enemy imbedded in rock—minor fortresses carved into the very mountain sides—twenty-four hours a day in rain and snow, proved something again that needed proof only for the layman: When every other weapon bogs down the infantryman can still move and fight, although it costs him terribly.

The ultimate test, and the battle from which the 3d Infantry Division was to emerge as one of the great divisions of World War II, however, had yet to be fought. The name of a rather obscure hamlet; a former watering spot where Nero once had come to soak his tyrannical bones and where a latter-day, would-be Nero had come to pitch hay, bare-chested, for the bene-

fit of the newsreels, was destined to be brought prominently into the consciousness of the world. This small port on the Tyrrhenian coast, about twenty miles below the Lido di Roma, where the Tiber River empties its waters, was to have its name written in letters of fire: Anzio.

The bitter series of battles for the mountain passes around Cassino, and for the town itself, had been going on for about two months; since the 3d Division spearheaded the crossing of the Volturno River the fighting had become fiercer and progress slower for United States troops than at any time since the first landings were made in the Mediterranean Theater. When the Division was withdrawn from the lines after the bitter fights for Mount Lungo and Mount Rotundo, and almost immediately commenced training in amphibious warfare, everyone concerned suspected that an "end run" was about to take place in an attempt to break the stalemate.

On December 28, the Commanding General, Fifth Army, Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark, informed the Commanding General, 3d Infantry Division, Maj. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott, that the Division would take part in an amphibious operation to be known by the code name of "Shingle," scheduled for about January 20, 1944. This operation had already been under consideration for several weeks and had been postponed or dis-

carded on previous occasions because the troops and shipping believed necessary to success had not been available.

The broad purpose of the landing, which was initially to be made by this Division and the 1st British Division, was to debark on beaches north and south of the towns of Nettuno and Anzio, about twenty-five miles in a direct line south of Rome, with the intention of quickly driving inland, cutting Highway 7, by which the enemy supplied his forces on the Garigliano-Minturno front, and with the eventual purpose of cutting Highway 6 at Valmontone, trapping the German forces who opposed the bulk of Fifth Army on the front at, and around, Cassino.

Few foresaw a bitter, four-month struggle, in which our stalemated beachhead was to battle for its life on three separate occasions against fanatically attacking Germans who had orders from Hitler himself to eliminate this threat completely, destroying or capturing its defenders. Few contemplated the fruitless, holding warfare of World War I type; doughboys standing for hours and days at a time in water up to their ankles; crouching in the foxholes in the daytime because of the almost complete lack of defilade; front lines that faced each other at distances no greater than fifty yards; above all, the devastating artillery barrages from weapons

up to and including 280mm pieces that were apt to land at any time on any part of the beachhead.

Within the lifetime of surviving veterans of the beachhead there will be endless arguments as to "What did Anzio accomplish?," and in military textbooks and service schools the discussions will probably outlast the lifetime of any of the soldiers who engaged in the fighting there. The military student may ponder every aspect of it in the future. The why and wherefore of the situation are not such a major matter of interest to us now, however; the fact remains that when the explanations, accusations, and fulminations of the people and newspapers of the United States and Great Britain died down we still had the beachhead, and we had to live there, and give lives in order that it remain a beachhead. In short, we had a bear by the tail and could not let go.

Against this is to be held the undoubted fact that many German divisions, badly needed to stem the Allied effort on the southern front, were tied down; several divisions were brought into Italy at a time when Germany was scraping the bottom of the barrel for enough strength to counter the impending invasion which finally took place on the Normandy coast on June 6; and also the fact that the beachhead, as long as it remained intact, was in the nature of a cocked



and loaded pistol pointed at the back of Field Marshal Kesselring's forces at Cassino. It represented a staging area for the major assist in the Allied drive that eventually carried to Rome and beyond.

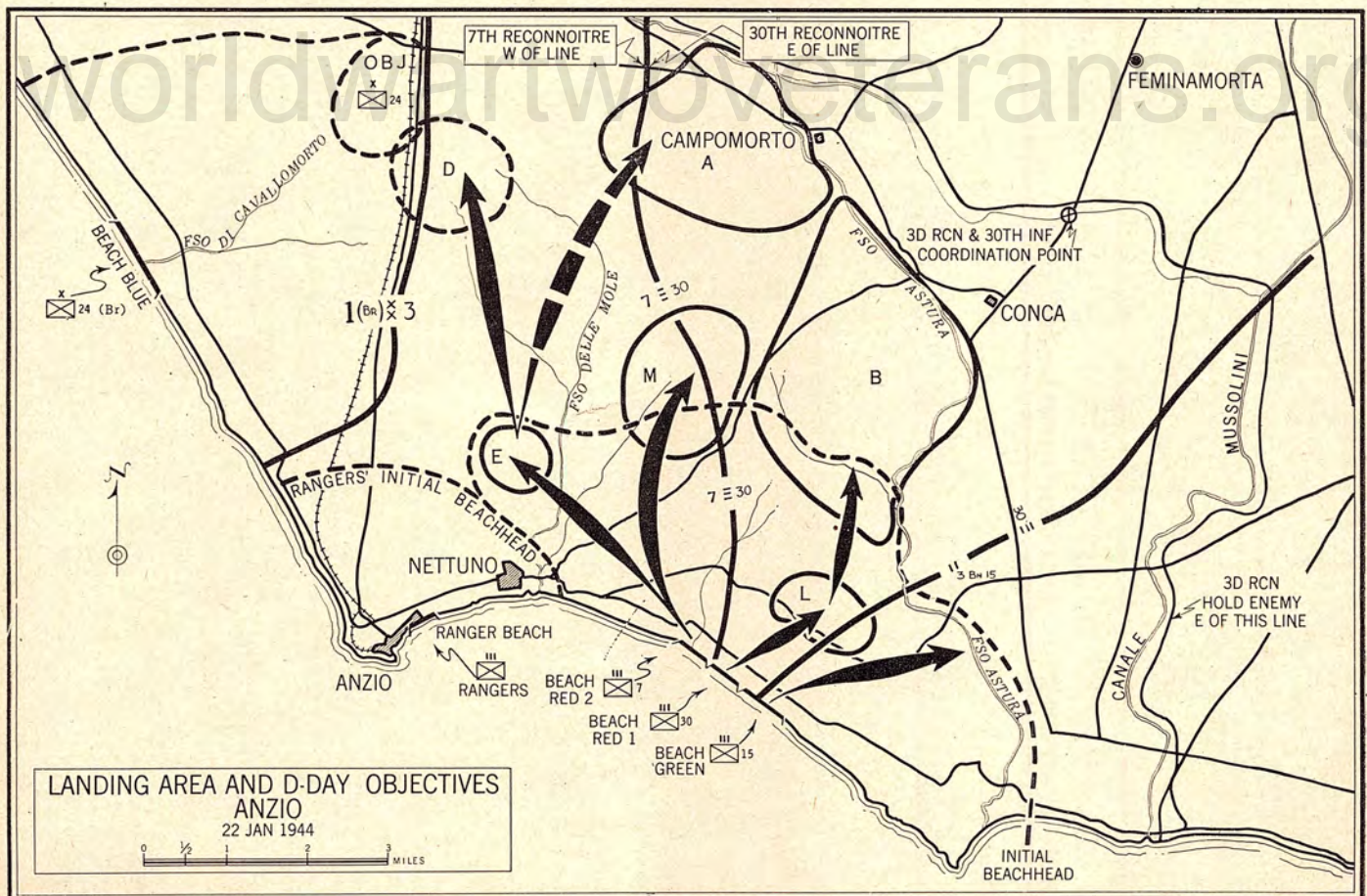
Together with its companion divisions, the 1st, 5th, and 56th British, and the United States 45th, 34th Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions; Special Service Force; 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, the 3d Infantry Division was to add a brilliant chapter in defensive warfare to its already bright record of achievements. This new feat—rarely equalled by a United States division engaged in defensive warfare—occurred when, on two occasions, the 3d bore the brunt of attack across its entire front, and not only did it give no ground, but each time cost the enemy extremely serious losses in men and matériel. As in 1918, when it had been the "Rock of the Marne," it became the "Rock of Anzio" in 1944. It was once mentioned in official dispatches as stemming the main force of the enemy's most determined attempt to eliminate the beachhead.

It is interesting to note the short time allowed for the planning, training, and mounting of Operation "Shingle"—an amphibious landing, the most complex of all military operations. The same phase of the

Sicilian operation had taken a full three months. Only past experience and an expeditious and enthusiastic approach to all problems enabled the Division to accomplish its assigned task in the three weeks allotted. The landing itself was the proof of the pudding. Never before in amphibious warfare had carefully laid plans been executed so letter perfect by the Army Ground Force-Navy-Army Service Force team that mounts every operation of this type. As it developed, men and equipment were to pour ashore with almost monotonous regularity and strictly on schedule in the fulfillment of a logician's favorite dream.

The plan called for landing of the 3d Infantry Division (reinforced) and one brigade of the 1st Division (British) on the beaches north and south of Nettuno, with remaining elements of 1st Division as floating reserve; 3d Division landing on beaches south of Nettuno and 1st Division landing on beaches north of Anzio. As soon as the beachhead was established, U. S. 1st Armored and 45th Infantry Divisions were to follow ashore, prepared to move quickly in continuation of the attack.

The 3d Infantry Division's mission was to land, destroy enemy beach defenses, and capture an initial beachhead line extending generally to the line of Musso-



lini Canal and its northwest branch. The Division's left boundary was the main highway between Anzio and Albano. The assault plan called for landing assault battalions of all three regiments of the Division simultaneously, as well as a battalion of Rangers just east of Anzio. The Rangers were to be tactically attached to the Division as soon as contact was physically established ashore.

Order of landing was 7th, 30th, and 15th Infantry Regiments from left to right. The assault battalions were 1st Battalion, 7th; 2d Battalion, 30th; and 3d Battalion, 15th. These battalions were organized and trained as units and sub-units or teams specifically designed and trained to attack and destroy pillboxes, fortifications and coast defense weapons and to cross beach wire and minefields.

Following the assault battalions, the other two battalions of each regiment were to be landed in column from LCIs. These battalions of the 7th and 30th Infantry Regiments were to be advanced to the north, northwest, and northeast sectors and clear and occupy the beachhead in the Division sector; 15th Infantry, on the 30th Infantry's right, was to relieve elements of the 3d Reconnaissance Troop on crossings over the Mussolini Canal, protect the right flank of the Division, and be prepared to pass to the west with remaining forces behind the 30th Infantry and 7th Infantry.

Elements of the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 751st Tank Battalion were attached to regiments, to be loaded on LCTs and landed before daylight. The 441st Antiaircraft Battalion was likewise to land prior to daylight and protect the beaches until Corps anti-aircraft could be debarked and set up. Naval gunfire preparation, once scheduled, was cancelled at the last

minute in favor of surprise, although two rocket boats accompanied the convoy to fire barrages on the Division's beaches at H-Hour minus ten minutes. Actually there were no enemy targets ashore which suffered from these barrages.

The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, whose previously scheduled drop on a flat rise north of Anzio had been cancelled, was to be landed from LCIs on Division beaches as Corps troops.

Late in the afternoon, January 21, 1944, the invasion convoy set sail from Naples. H-Hour had been finally set for 0200 on the following day.

The following, though fragmentary, gives some idea of the ease with which the actual landing was accomplished. It is an extract from the Division staff (War Room) journal as of January 22:

0145: Rocket Ships fired.

0220: 2d wave hit Red Beach. Landed dry.

0229: No opposition met by 1st or 2d waves.

0245: From 15th Infantry: Landed on Green Beach. Left company advancing rapidly. Right company fair. 4th wave has hit the beach.

0300: LCIs are using LCVPs. (*Unloading onto LCVPs: Ed.*)

0330: Message from Liaison Officer, 30th Infantry: "Our leading elements are at . . . (*Location in code: Ed.*) No opposition.

0335: 15th Infantry reports: Initial operation believed successful. Now regrouping.

0335: 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry Reports: All companies now fairly well together. No opposition. Five boat waves have landed.

0350: 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, reorganizing on road directly behind Red Beach.



Enemy planes bomb the landing-craft off shore at Anzio-Nettuno on D-Day morning.



Men and materiel move inland across the beaches of Anzio on D-Day.

0405: 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, advancing from coordination line to objective "E."

0410: Intercept from 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry: "Sabotage the transportation and put the krauts under guard."

0430: 30th Infantry; No MG, mines, or artillery encountered.

0430: All six waves landed on Green Beach.

0450: Congratulatory message from Commanding General, VI Corps.

0515: 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry now fording stream at . . . (*Gave location in code: Ed.*). Bridge OK.

0548: Message from 15th Infantry: Our progress satisfactory. We are not yet hull down (*not yet dug in. Ed.*).

0550: From Assistant Commanding General: Prisoners report one battalion extending 25 miles north of this point.

0600: Tanks, TDs, artillery landed successfully on Red 1.

0615: 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry moving toward objective.

0625: 30th Infantry reports companies in positions between 3d parallel road and . . . (*Code location name: Ed.*).

0915: Division command post opened.

Except for a few mines and elements of an understrength enemy battalion on beach-watching duty, the operation went off like a well executed maneuver. The enemy had been entirely surprised, indicating that the secret of the operation was well kept beforehand. (It was subsequently discovered that the area around the Lido di Roma to the north, at the mouth of the Tiber, and the shores of the Golfo di Gaeta to the south, were heavily mined and fortified. It is probable that the enemy *had* expected a landing but did not accurately determine where it was to strike.)

By daylight main elements of the infantry regiments, artillery, and some armored units were ashore. By noon of D-Day the infantry regiments had consolidated on initial objectives and were reconnoitering to the front and flanks. The 3d Reconnaissance Troop and 3d Provisional Reconnaissance Troop had reached and prepared for demolition all bridges on the Mussolini Canal from the sea to Bridge 7. Bridges 1, 3, 4, and 5 were demolished. Guards were placed on all bridges.

In order to understand the series of attacks and counterattacks, patrol actions and defensive measures undertaken during the 3d Infantry Division's nightmarish stay on Anzio Beachhead, it is necessary to become acquainted with the natural setting, and to learn the names of a few places which figured prominently in all these actions.

The beachhead, in the form it was finally to assume following the main German counterattack of February 16-19, comprised an area of little more than a hundred square miles, being about ten miles deep and fifteen miles wide in its greatest dimensions. The twin towns of Anzio and Nettuno lay in the southwestern corner, about two miles apart, Nettuno being farther east along a curving bay.

The eastern boundary of the beachhead lay generally along the Mussolini Canal, which was a wide, shallow man-made trough about 120 feet across at the top but with only a six-foot water gap in its bed. It had orig-



It was approximately from this point North where troops of the 3d Division landed. Nettuno is in the background.

inally been dug to drain the area and reclaim the marshy ground for farm land. The result was a series of model farms. Just south of the beachhead line lay the Pontine Marshes.

About six miles inland the canal branched. One fork ran northeast toward the mountains back of Cisterna di Littoria. The other ran west and slightly north for another six or seven miles, where it finally petered out into a small, natural stream. This western fork was a natural defensive line inasmuch as it provided defilade against ground observation, and a small wet gap which was impassable to tanks and vehicles.

There was no true high ground on the beachhead, the only significant elevation being a gentle rise just south of the town of Le Ferriere which reached a maximum height of 220 feet above sea level. Elsewhere the terrain was flat or very gently rolling, except for small ravines formed by the streams. North of the western fork of the Mussolini Canal, where the terrain sloped gradually upward toward the foothills of the Colli Laziali, these ravines assumed greater proportions, being forty to sixty feet in places and very steep-sided, but generally carrying a trickle of water in the bottom.

The perfectly flat terrain immediately north of the canal was further crisscrossed by a series of drainage ditches, which varied from small scratches in the ground to a twenty or thirty-foot width, and fifteen or twenty-foot depth.

Aside from Anzio and Nettuno, there were no real towns, as such, on the beachhead. In the 3d Infantry Division sector there were clusters of buildings at Acciarella, Conca (Borgo Montello on some maps), consisting of an old castle, a church, and two or three houses and sheds, Le Ferriere (a group of large buildings clustered around a woolen mill with a prominent, high smokestack), Campo Morto, Carano, and Feminamorta—"Dead Woman"—(Isola Bella on some maps). For a time in the early part of February, the British

held the little settlement of Aprilia, famous in news stories as the "factory area," which lay due north of Anzio at the western edge of an absolutely flat plain, and the railway station at Campoleone, still farther north.

Immediately back of the beachhead line were several larger towns: Littoria, on the eastern flank; Cisterna di Littoria, usually called simply Cisterna, an important road junction on Highway 7 (Appian Way) just northeast of Feminamorta; Cori, a few miles northeast of Cisterna, which nestles low on the western slopes of the Monti Lepini, and Velletri, on the slopes of the Colli Laziali mountains. Both could be plainly seen on a clear day (of which there were all too many) from almost any part of the beachhead.

There must be kept in mind also, in order to understand the development of the situation at Anzio, the following points. The knowledge that the build-up of friendly forces on the beachhead would of necessity be slow, together with the lack of knowledge of the enemy's ability to counteract our action, cautioned the Division not to overextend itself and thereby lose its ability to defend itself against counterattack from any direction. At the same time it was necessary that the Division advance and seize the terrain most favorable both to its defensive position and to its ability to continue the attack forward. Therefore the Division rushed inland boldly to secure its objectives within the initial beachhead line and thereafter consolidated its won positions and continued the advance only in consideration of the above-mentioned factors. The enemy was surprised but was quick to become aware of the threat, occasioned by the landing, to his forces in the south. His immediate concern was to dispatch as rapidly as possible to the threatened area all available units in an effort to contain the beachhead in as small a space as possible, until such time as he could arrive there with forces in strength capable of effecting a counterattack that would destroy the invader. Thus there took place initially a series of

meeting engagements which gained in intensity as the forces increased in strength.

On the morning of January 23, just twenty-four hours after the landing, enemy elements began efforts to establish themselves on bridgeheads over the Mussolini Canal. It is likely that these were the *Hermann Goering* Division, an old "friend" of the 3d Division, which had engaged it twice before. This was in an area which had been almost entirely free of enemy troops the day before. It gives some indication of the speed with which the enemy reacted. The 1st Battalion, 30th, engaged infantry and tanks during the night and morning. During the afternoon the enemy crossed the canal at Bridges 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with strong combat patrols. Most of these patrols were supported by tanks. During the evening our units began counterattacking these enemy bridgeheads with the mission of destroying them and clearing the area south and west of the canal. It was an ominous harbinger of the trial of strength that was shortly to take place.

The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment began moving into an area adjacent to the Mussolini Canal between the sea and Bridge 5, to relieve the 3d Reconnaissance Troop and to retake some bridge sites. The 4th Ranger Battalion relieved the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, from the position it had reached the day before. The 1st and 2nd Battalions, 7th Infantry, were assembled in Division reserve in the vicinity of a road junction on the Nettuno-Le Ferriere road.

January 24 the attacks against the enemy bridgeheads were continued and by 1010 the last bridge site was cleared. Two infantry companies of the 15th Infantry, with tank reinforcements, were ordered north across the canal at Bridges 6 and 8, and similar forces from the 30th Infantry were to cross at Bridges 12 and 13 with instructions to advance as far as possible without taking excessive casualties, and to take and hold the ground so gained.

The companies of the 15th Infantry did not move out in time to accomplish their mission prior to an attack by the 2d Battalion the following morning. The companies of the 30th Infantry moved north and became involved in fire fights at key road junctions north of the Mussolini Canal. One of these became famous as "Britt's Corner," so named in honor of Capt. Maurice L. Britt, commanding Company L, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor for gallantry in southern Italy.

After the 3d Division had driven the enemy from his small defensive bridgeheads across the Mussolini Canal, and had established strong forces north of the canal, the enemy undertook a vigorous program of defensive works, with the object of halting our advance on flat

ground and eventually building up reserves behind these defenses for a counterattack which was to drive us into the sea.

To accomplish this, we learned from later information, the enemy began to organize an MLR (main line of resistance) along the railroad line running northwest from Cisterna. This line crossed several low, rolling rises in the ground by means of alternating cuts and embankments, leaving few good level crossings for tanks and vehicles. This MLR terminated at the town of Cisterna as the enemy did not then dispose enough troops to attempt the extension southeast of Cisterna.

Having got this work started, the enemy began pushing his outposts down toward the canal in an effort to stop us and hold us as far south of his MLR as possible. With one or two companies he dug in along the road which looped down from Cisterna through Ponte Rotto and Carano, while other units were pushed down along the roads running south from Ponte Rotto and Cisterna. The German early realized the value of the masonry farmhouses, barns, silos and outdoor ovens for defensive purposes. He dug fire trenches around the outside foundations of the houses and put his machine guns inside the houses and the ovens (invariably located fifteen to twenty yards from the house), where they had blast protection and overhead cover against artillery time and percussion fire, and protection against small-arms fire. Only tanks, TDs and heavy artillery proved effective against these positions.

On January 25 the 4th Ranger Battalion and 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, moved north and occupied a line, keeping contact with the British on their left. The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment moved across the Mussolini Canal to the east in several groups, the 2d Battalion reaching Borgo Piave without much resistance prior to dark. The 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, and 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, attacked northeast at 0500. Heavy resistance was encountered by both battalions about a mile and a half north of the canal. Plans were made for 1st Battalion, 15th, to attack up the Conca-Cisterna road on the left of the 2d Battalion, which was ordered to hold an outpost position. The 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, had a vicious fight to capture an important road junction on the Ponte Rotto road. After Company F, 30th Infantry, had driven to within 300 yards of the junction on the 24th, the 1st Battalion next day drove through and captured the junction, losing two tanks in the attack. The enemy was able to look down the throats of the attackers as the junction was open. The attack flanked enemy positions to the east. Having reached this junction (thereafter known throughout the 30th as "Kinney's Corner" after Maj. Oliver G. Kinney, 1st Battalion CO) the battalion was ordered to outpost the position astride the road.

On January 26, the 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, and 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, held and improved their positions. A road junction was captured by Company L, 30th Infantry, and Company K, 7th Infantry. The 504th Regiment withdrew its battalion from Borgo Piave, where it had withstood a counterattack during the night. The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, was to attack northeast. The battalion attacked at 1400 and met heavy resistance. It reached a line and held there during the night. Some enemy was driven out by enfilade fire from the 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry. The 7th and 30th Infantry Regiments remained in position and began to prepare to dig defensive positions along the canal.

January 27 the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, and the Ranger Force advanced. Infantry elements of the Division south of the Mussolini Canal line were instructed to begin work on the defensive positions along the canal in order to provide a firm base for further operations as well as to provide security against a counterattack. The 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, attacked through

the 2d Battalion with the mission of cutting the Conca-Cisterna road north of the 2d Battalion which it relieved. The 2d Battalion moved south of the canal in regimental reserve. The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, demonstrated with fire to assist the attack of the 3d Battalion. The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, relieved 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry. Patrols which reached the line of the railroad track west of Cisterna reported enemy digging in.

This maneuvering and displacing—small, stiff fights and small patrol actions—were the prelude to the bloody January 30-31, February 1 full-scale Division attack. The first zephyrs did not indicate the full fury of the coming storm.

By the morning of January 28, it was apparent that our front was too wide. If further advances toward Cisterna were to be made, the now-strong enemy resistance dictated a narrower zone of advance in order that maximum force should be concentrated for the attack. This was discussed with the Corps Commander, who agreed, and accordingly the Division boun-



Aerial view of the town of Nettuno with Anzio in the distance.

dary was moved to the stream north and south through Carano, and the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment was relieved as far north as Bridge 5 by elements of the 179th Infantry of the 45th Division.

The Ranger Force and 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, were relieved on the left by the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion.

This still left the Division (reinforced) front at nearly ten kilometers, which had to be held even during the attack.

Company A, 15th Infantry, repelled an enemy counterattack of platoon or company strength at daylight, January 28, destroying two armored vehicles.

On the right flank of the 30th Infantry there was an enemy pocket which would have to be eliminated prior to the Division attack against Cisterna. At 1100, January 28, Company I, 30th Infantry, moved out toward the line of departure to destroy the enemy pocket. Under a heavy concentration of friendly artillery fire the infantry penetrated the enemy position. Enemy reaction was quick and determined, a dense concentration of heavy machine-gun, mortar and artillery fire being called down upon our advancing infantry, which caused them to take cover after having suffered many casualties. Captain Boddy, the company commander, rallied his men quickly and assaulted the enemy position through a hail of deadly fire. His attack destroyed six enemy machine-gun positions, killed at least 23 enemy, captured 19 and wounded an estimated 35 more. While this attack was progressing, the 2d Squad, 2d Platoon, protecting the company's left flank, was engaged in ejecting the enemy from the Fossa Feminamorta.

In previous campaigns T/5 Eric G. Gibson, a company cook, had often volunteered for combat assignments.

In Sicily Gibson had voluntarily led a pack train several miles across rugged mountainous terrain. His mission accomplished, he acted as number-one scout, locating several enemy positions. The following day he had killed one and wounded another enemy. At Acerno, Formicola, and Mt. Rotundo, Gibson had likewise distinguished himself.

Said Rifleman Pvt. Joseph E. Chilcoat: "The attack (of January 28) began at 1200. By 1215 our squad had moved forward 400 yards and we had just entered the ditch, T/5 Gibson leading. . . . One of the men said Fossa Feminamorta meant the 'Ditch of Dead Women.' We were afraid it would be the 'Ditch of the Dead Men' before we got out of it. T/5 Gibson told us to stay fifty yards behind him, while he went ahead and found the Germans for us . . ."

The squad had proceeded only a few steps when a blast of machine-pistol fire opened up from a clump of brush along the ditch bank. Gibson did not even

take cover, but ran twenty yards up the ditch, firing his tommy gun from the hip as he went. He poked the gun muzzle into the brush and finished the German hidden there.

Under a heavy artillery concentration the squad again moved out. Knocked flat under the concussion of one close shell, Gibson had no sooner risen than he was fired upon by a machine pistol and rifle. Again he charged down the ditch, to fire his submachine gun into another pile of brush.

"When we came up to T/5 Gibson this time he had killed one German in the hole and another just climbing out with his hands up," related Pfc. John J. Slatery. "I wondered if we would have to do any fighting at all while T/5 Gibson was leading us."

Once again the squad took up the trek down the ditch. Instead of ordering his squad to assault the next machine gun which opened fire, Gibson ordered the men to build a base of fire while he crawled along the top of the ditch and flanked the position. Over the protestations of his squad he climbed the ditch bank and crawled 125 yards across the corner of an open field under the fire of artillery and two machine guns. When he reached a point within thirty-five yards of the machine gun positions in the ditch he threw two hand grenades, arising before the second went off to charge the position. Here he killed two more Germans and captured another.

Down the ditch again, until the bend was reached. Gibson told his men to stay behind until he found if there were any Germans around the bend. The tensely waiting squad heard a machine pistol, followed by Gibson's tommy gun. When they ran around the bend they found two bodies—Gibson and that of the enemy soldier who had opened fire. Gibson lay fallen in a firing position.

"T/5 Gibson brought his squad through its first combat safely," said BAR-man Pfc. Joseph W. Fiebelkern, "though he died doing it. . . . There isn't very much you can say about T/5 Gibson except that there are very, very few like him."

In less than an hour he had eliminated four German emplacements, killed five of the enemy and captured two more.

For this action T/5 Gibson was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

For its action on January 28-29, Company I, 30th Infantry was later cited. During its overwhelming attack Company I destroyed six enemy machine-gun emplacements and killed 23 and wounded at least 35 enemy soldiers. Elements on the flank eliminated four enemy outpost positions. After attacking continuously for one and a half hours, Company I reached a point within 50 yards of its objective and was met with intense

machine-gun fire from enemy positions in a house on the right flank which enfladed the ranks. Elements of the company assaulted this enemy strongpoint, killing six and capturing 27 enemy, and enabling the company to reach its objective.

Patrols over the night of January 28-29 met enemy dug-in positions, especially along a line south of the railroad tracks west of Cisterna, and along the 15th Infantry front. On January 29, preparations were begun for the attack on Cisterna.

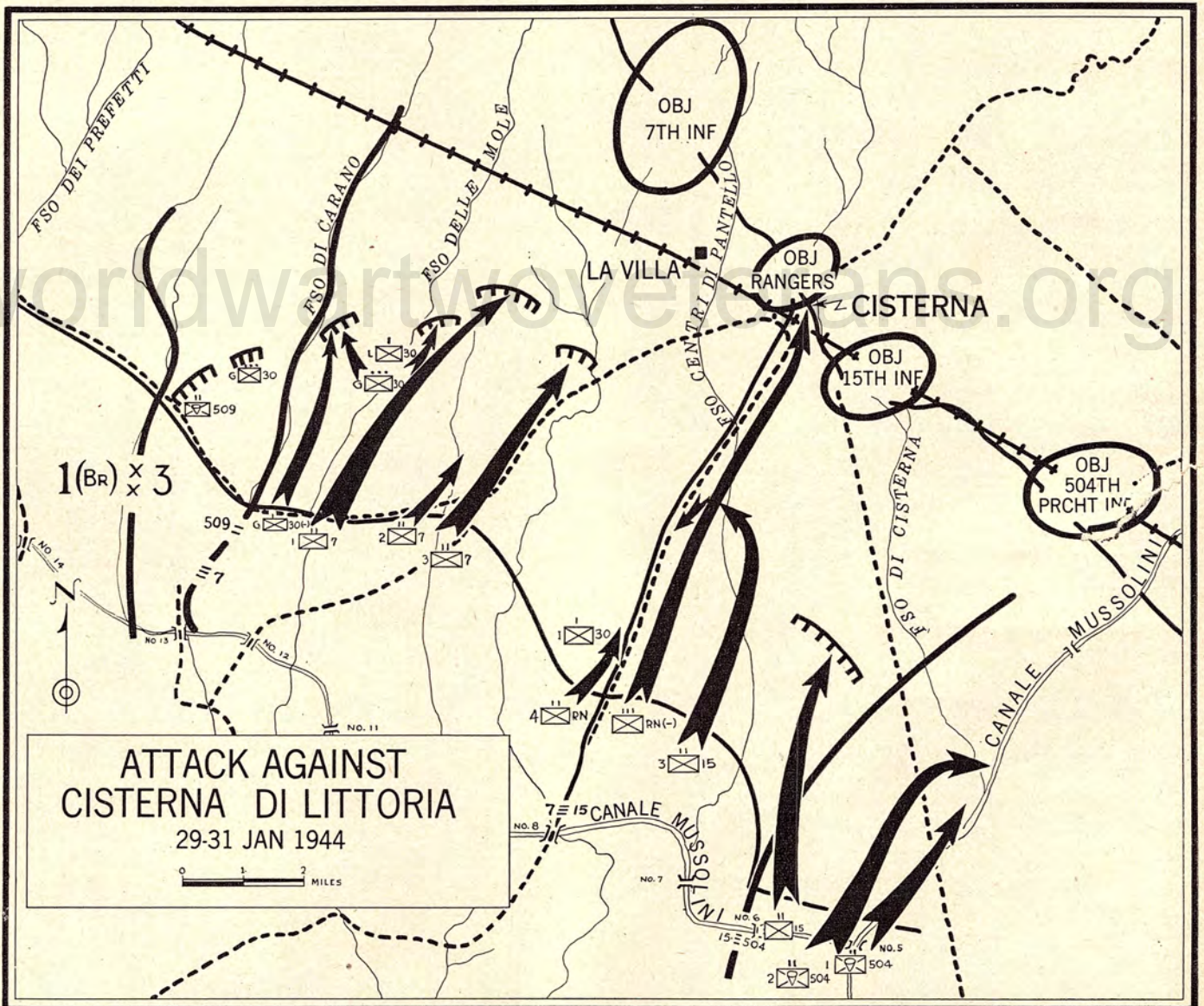
Plans for our attack on Cisterna were carefully worked out and discussed at a meeting of all unit commanders the afternoon of January 29. The 7th Infantry was assigned objectives astride Highway 7 northeast of town; 15th Infantry was assigned similar objectives southeast of the town on the highway. The Ranger Force was to capture and clean out the town it-

self by infiltration of two battalions one hour before H-hour. The 7th and 15th Infantry Regiments were to start one battalion each moving by infiltration at H-hour, following up with armor and more infantry prior to daylight, at an hour selected by each regimental commander. H-hour was 0200. The 30th Infantry was to hold the line between 7th and 15th Regiments, act as Division reserve, and assist the other regiments by fire.

Corps order directed the attack and capture of the town, cutting of the highway, and preparation for resumption of the attack toward Velletri.

At 0100, January 30, the 1st and 3d Ranger Battalions advanced from their line of departure, infiltrated through the enemy strongpoints and met virtually no resistance. It was a paradoxical beginning of a day that was to witness their complete destruction before noon.

At daylight they were 800 yards south of Cisterna.



Here a wave of fire from tanks and self-propelled guns hit them and they were immediately pinned down in ditches. They were attacked by tanks and Flakwagons which debouched from Cisterna, infantry of an enemy parachute battalion which also emerged from the town, and by enemy machine-gun fire from every one of the houses that lined the roads into town. Almost immediately they were surrounded and the capture of two battalions of some of the finest troops in the United States Army began.

Behind them the Commanding Officer of the Ranger Force was trying to shove his 4th Battalion through to them.

Part of what happened to all three battalions may be found in the pages of the War Room journal, with its record of telephone conversations:

0415: No news from 1st and 3d Battalions. Apparently OK. 4th Battalion is getting fire from all houses along the road.

0450: Still out of contact with two battalions. Things are going well. 4th Battalion is definitely held up on road. Commanding Officer of Rangers says he will send up tanks and TDs if things don't break soon.

0610: Hasn't heard from 1st and 3d Battalions. Artillery trying through forward observer. 4th Battalion having a tough time. 3d Reconnaissance Troop platoon attached to Rangers passed through them in jeeps, came back, were fired upon (a survivor reported that "a solid sheet of machine-gun fire and hand grenades struck them!") and hit truck driven onto road by enemy; most of personnel killed or captured. (*There were approximately forty men and officers in this group*: Ed.)

0820: Halftracks and TDs being sent up by Rangers hit artillery and mines south of road block.

0835: Call received from 1st and 3d Battalions, in south edge of Cisterna completely surrounded. Both battalion COs out, one killed, one wounded. Can't adjust fire; enemy in buildings; town strongly held.

1030: 4th Battalion well shaken up.

1210: Commanding Officer, Rangers, informs party with radio near Cisterna that a company of American PWs have been seen marching north toward town, instructed Rangers to try and rescue them.

1210: 504th Parachute Regiment, on right flank of Division, told to get its attached tanks down to rescue PWs if possible.

Sometimes a fragmentary conversation composed of jerky sentences and half sentences can tell more than fifty thousand words. There is on record such a conversation, mostly one-sided, in the journal. It is the Commanding Officer, Colonel William O. Darby, Ranger Force, talking by radio to his old Sergeant Major who was with a small group that had the only radio left in operation. It is a poignant conversation.

1215: *Sgt*: Nobody is giving up. . . . Shoot them if they come any closer. *Darby*: Issue some orders but don't let the boys give up! . . . who's walking in with their hands up? Don't let them do it! Get the officers to shoot! . . . Don't let them do it! . . . Do that before you give up! . . . Get the old men together and lam for it. . . . We're coming through. Hang onto this radio until the last minute. How many men are still with you? Stick together. . . . Who's with the 1st Battalion? Use your head and do what is best. . . . You're there, and I'm here, unfortunately, and I can't help you, but whatever happens, God bless you!

1215: *From Commanding Officer, Rangers*: They came and got them at the last minute. My old sergeant major stayed with the last ten men. It was apparently too much for them.

The prosaic journal closes its account on the 1st and 3d Ranger Battalions, Ranger Force, United States Army. They were then, to all intents and purposes, written off by the War Department as "destroyed."

The plight of the 4th Ranger Battalion, meanwhile, was almost as desperate. It is also best revealed by a telephone conversation:

0820: I am afraid we have had some bad luck. They (tanks and TDs) got up past 4th Battalion's position and down the road to the roadblock, tried to outflank the roadblock and ran into artillery fire and minefields. One half-track and M-10 knocked out. We got the men out of the M-10. The machine-gun fire is terrific from both flanks. The shells are landing all over the place. Look like 170s. 4th Battalion is the boy that is in the jam. All of his communications are out. An officer just came in and apparently he is pinned down badly. He is trying to work them out by fours.

Meanwhile, every effort was also being made by the 1st and 3d Battalions, 15th Infantry, to push north and contact the surrounded battalions. An attempted breakthrough by halftracks and M-10s was halted south of Feminamorta and our infantry was held to a slow rate of advance by enemy well-entrenched in and around all the houses along the roads.

The flat, coverless nature of the terrain was ideal for infantry defense and our troops advanced through dense bands of fire. The enemy had to be cleaned out house by house; even so, small enemy detachments were unintentionally by-passed and held their positions and fired on our troops from the rear.

By noon, 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, was about 2000 yards from the last reported position of the ill-fated Ranger battalions.

The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, moved out on schedule but gained not more than 3000 yards that day, and the 2d Battalion, committed on the right of the 1st Battalion, was stopped with even less gain. The 3d Bat-

talion was committed the night of January 30-31, to advance along the axis of the Ponte Rotto—Cisterna road, and succeeded in reaching the stream west of Ponte Rotto the morning of January 31.

The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, also made slow progress the same day in the face of heavy resistance almost from the line of departure, and by nightfall had done well to gain 2000 yards. The 3d Battalion was attacking, by-passing this resistance on the right, toward a road junction from the east; this mission was accomplished successfully and the battalion had seized the crossroad before dark of January 30.

The 1st Battalion, 30th, battling against the most intense Flak, tank, artillery, mortar, *Nebelwerfer*, and small-arms fire encountered to that point, gained 1500 yards after having had to fight 500 yards to secure its own line of departure. The battalion drove to within 1500 yards of Cisterna, the closest any battalion of the 3d Division was to get until the breakthrough in May. When ordered slightly later to withdraw from his exposed and most forward position, Major Oliver G. Kinney, commanding, said, "Hell, no! We can hold!"

The Commanding General could afford to take no chances, however, and Major Kinney was ordered to withdraw to protect his exposed flanks and come within range of supporting artillery.

It was on January 30 at 1500 that Pfc. Lloyd C. Hawks, Medical Detachment, 30th Infantry, brought great glory to himself and to the combat medical man. He braved an enemy counterattack to rescue two wounded soldiers near Carano, who were lying helpless in an exposed position within thirty yards of the enemy. Two riflemen had previously attempted to reach their wounded comrades but had been driven back by the fierce fire of the enemy. An aid man had been critically wounded in a similar attempt. The citation of War Department General Orders No. 5, dated January 15, 1945, awarding Pfc. Hawks the Medal of Honor, best describes his deed of heroism and is quoted here in part:

"... Private Hawks nevertheless crawled fifty yards through a veritable hail of machine-gun bullets and flying mortar fragments to a small ditch, administered first aid to his fellow aid man who had sought cover therein, and continued toward the two wounded men fifty yards distant. An enemy machine-gun bullet penetrated his helmet, knocked it from his head and momentarily stunned him. Thirteen bullets passed through his helmet as it lay on the ground within six inches of his body. Private Hawks crawled to the casualties, administered first aid to the more seriously wounded man, and dragged him to a covered position 25 yards distant. Despite continuous automatic fire from positions

only 30 yards away and shells which exploded within 25 yards, Private Hawks returned to the second man and administered first aid to him. As he raised himself to obtain bandages from his medical kit his right hip was shattered by a burst of machine-gun fire and a second burst splintered his left forearm. Displaying dogged determination and extreme self-control despite severe pain and his dangling left arm, Private Hawks completed the task of bandaging the remaining casualty and with superhuman effort dragged him to the same depression to which he had brought the first man. Finding insufficient cover for three men at this point, Private Hawks crawled 75 yards in an effort to regain his company, reaching the ditch in which his fellow aid man was lying."

The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment captured crossings over the Mussolini Canal, both bridges having been demolished by the Germans before they could be seized and destroyed by our troops.

A member of 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, particularly distinguished himself during the night of January 30-31. By the evening of January 30, all assault battalions had suffered heavily, and the 1st of the 7th was no exception.

Said 1st Lt. Jan Capron, CO of Company B "The battalion took up a defensive position behind the crest of a small ground rise, in a horseshoe formation. Company B was occupying the center sector, with the battalion command post about 100 yards behind it.

"... Automatic weapons were at a premium... Company B had only one machine gun for its sector. This weapon was in position about twenty-five yards in front of our riflemen, overlooking about 600 yards of clear area between us and the enemy, who was occupying another section of the high ground to our front.

"Sgt. Truman C. Olson... was in charge of the six-man crew manning this... one machine gun."

The enemy counterattacked continually throughout the night. Sergeant Olson's machine-gun crew bore the brunt of the counterattacks and fired intermittently all night. When morning came five of Sergeant Olson's six men were casualties. At daybreak the enemy launched another counterattack. For two hours Sergeant Olson beat off the enemy almost single-handedly, operating his weapon without assistance. He was the sole barrier between Company B and the enemy. There the Germans concentrated all types of fire in an effort to eliminate him.

After the fight, it was learned by Lieutenant Capron that Sergeant Olson had received severe mortar-shell fragment wounds in his back and leg. Though suffering terrible pain and losing blood constantly he continued to man his machine gun and to beat off the

enemy for an hour and a half, until the counterattack was broken and the enemy repulsed.

Said T/Sgt. John H. Earl: "... I brought the medics to Sergeant Olson. He had serious shell-fragment wounds in his back and left leg and was just about done for when we arrived to evacuate him. His wounds were so severe that he died while being carried to the rear.

"... It is only because he carried on when he knew his life was slowly ebbing away from his grievous wounds that others of us are alive today."

Sergeant Olson was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

On January 31, the attack was continued by 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, attacking through 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, on the Ponte Rotto-Cisterna axis and by 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, on the Conca-Cisterna axis. The attack was launched at 1400 and both battalions encountered strong opposition. The 1st Battalion, 30th, made about 1500 yards, and 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, made about 2500 yards.

The storm, having spent most of its full fury, began to die away in rapidly diminishing smaller actions. January 30 was the day its vortex fully swept over the 3d Division.

An attack by 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, on February 1, toward a vital road junction was stopped before dark without attaining its objective. Two counterattacks, one against 3d Battalion, 15th, and one against 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, were both repulsed with heavy casualties to the enemy.

Pfc. Alton W. Knappenberger of Company C almost singlehandedly repulsed the latter attack. During the attack all officers in the area were killed or captured and every noncommissioned officer either killed, wounded, captured, or dispersed. Eight men remained on the company's right flank, which was on the battalion left. One man had a bazooka, and the other, Knappenberger, had a BAR.

"During the counterattack, Pfc. Knappenberger took up a firing position on a small exposed knoll," said Pfc. Charles McGregor. "At about 0900 his position was rushed by a German platoon in strength, all of them armed with automatic weapons, fire from which struck all around his knoll."

A German machine-gun crew moved into position about sixty-five yards to Knappenberger's flank. He took his BAR and rose to a kneeling position, placing several well-aimed bursts into the crew of four, which killed two, wounded a third, and forced another of the enemy to flee. "As Pfc. Knappenberger was firing his BAR at the machine gun, two Germans attempted to kill him with potato masher grenades, which burst but a few feet away," said S/Sgt. Ralph W. Moody. "A

Flak gun, also, was covering the area with 20mm shells, Flak from which flew right over his knoll. As soon as he had destroyed the machine-gun crew, Pfc. Knappenberger fired at the two grenade-throwing Germans and killed them. . . ."

A grenade went off, killing the third. Said Pfc. Daniel P. Vasion: "A little later a Flakwagon opened fire on Pfc. Knappenberger and just missed him by inches. His position was attacked at about 0900 by a platoon. He kept a continual stream of lead pouring out of his BAR. He killed and wounded several of the enemy and stopped the platoon attack."

"... But for the determined resistance against overwhelming odds of the small group of which Pfc. Knappenberger was most outstanding," stated Lt. Col. Edgar C. Doleman, "much more serious losses would probably have been suffered. Had the enemy attack not been disrupted by these men for approximately two and one-half hours its continuation could have had a serious effect on later operations by forcing occupation of less advanced and less favorable defensive positions. . . ."

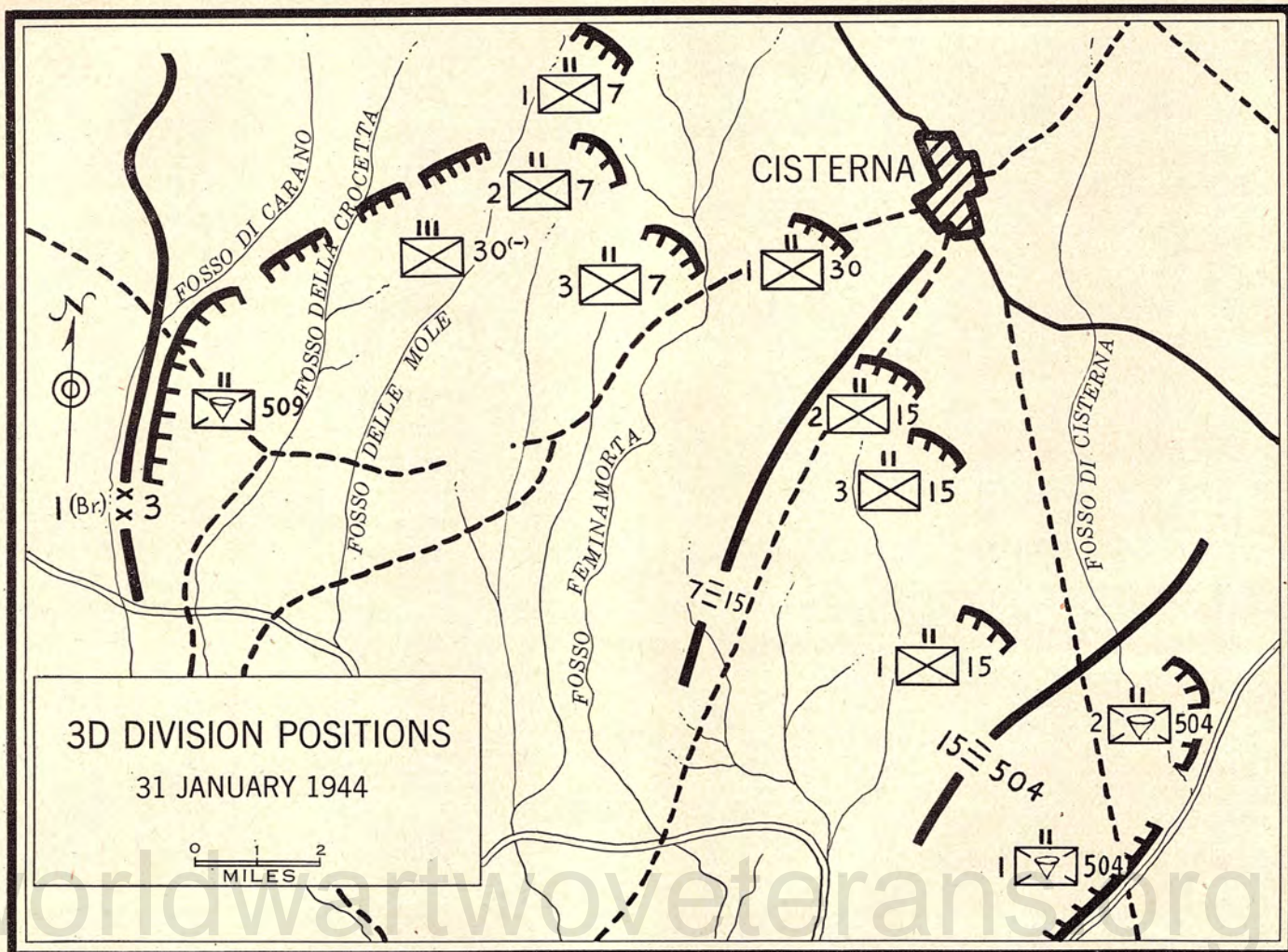
For his action Pfc. Knappenberger was awarded the Medal of Honor.

The 7th Infantry's 2d Battalion relieved the 1st Battalion, which was considerably reduced in strength, and the regiment repulsed a counterattack on the morning of February 2. Aggressive patrolling and continuation of defensive preparations were the main activity of February 2. About fifty PWs were taken in cleaning out small pockets of resistance behind the lines. A counterattack against 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, at 1600 was stopped without any loss of ground. Engineers took over the guarding of bridges across the northwest branch of the Mussolini Canal.

The Division prepared on February 3 to hold forward positions with outposts and to construct and occupy a main line of resistance along the northwest branch of the Mussolini Canal.

We now know that the enemy Order of Battle on the 3d Infantry Division front on February 1, when our attack on Cisterna had been definitely stopped included:

- 1st Battalion, 104th *Panzer Grenadier* Regiment, 15 *PG Division*
- 1st Battalion, 1st Parachute Regiment, 1st Parachute Division
- 171st Reconnaissance Battalion, 71st Infantry Division
- 356th Reconnaissance Battalion, 356th Infantry Division
- Parachute Machine Gun Battalion
- 114th Reconnaissance Battalion, 114th Infantry Division



2d Battalion, 1st Panzer Grenadier Regiment, *Hermann Goering* Division.
Luftwaffe Jaeger Battalion zBV 7
 Assumed reserves: 67th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, 26th Panzer Division. *Schutzstaffel* Brigade *Reichsfuehrer*
Hermann Goering Engineer Battalion

Thus the enemy had seven divisions represented by eleven battalions with which to oppose our attack, and roughly half of this total had not even been identified in our sector at the time our attack started. It will be noted that five of these battalions were reconnaissance units, which were speeded into action because of their mobility and comparatively heavy fire power. All but the *Hermann Goering* Reconnaissance Battalion were far away when we landed on January 22. The enemy had indeed moved swiftly.

Nor should one overlook the enemy artillery, which was brought up rapidly and was already present in strength at the time of the first attack on Cisterna. This consisted of 105mm howitzers and rifles, 150mm howitzers, 170mm rifles, 88mm antiaircraft-antitank self-

propelled and towed rifles, and six-barrelled *Nebelwerfers*.

But—what happened on January 30? Overwhelming opposition was not the only explanation.

Perhaps the lessons learned that day, bitter as they were, help best to explain the halting of our attack.

To begin with, infiltration tactics were chosen in the hope of establishing strong infantry forces in the enemy rear, isolating his forward defenses, and avoiding the necessity of attacking by daylight through interlocking machine-gun and observed artillery fire. Great emphasis was placed on moving up supporting armor and antitank weapons prior to daylight.

The tactics used were not those best adapted to the attack on a numerous enemy, well dug in on a more or less continuous line. Later beachhead operations showed that these defenses could be penetrated only by overwhelming them from the front in a series of violent, carefully coordinated attacks against forward positions. Elements which infiltrate the forward positions are apt to find themselves cut off without succor, because, to reach them, other troops have to attack and eliminate the intervening defenses anyhow.

Second: Flat, treeless terrain is tough on the daylight attacker unless he has overwhelming artillery and air superiority, a carefully devised smoke plan, and a pinpoint knowledge of enemy positions and weaknesses. These elements were simply not present in sufficient degree on January 30, 1944.

Third: The enemy house-silo-oven defenses were virtually new to the Division and proved tremendously effective. Later when we learned about them more fully we learned how to cope with them successfully.

Fourth: For the first time in the Division's World War II history, the enemy was employing everything he had in defense, and not merely delaying. Thus, a battalion of parachutists not known to be in Cisterna provided one nasty surprise; counterattacking enemy who became more numerous in spite of heavy casualties another, copious and expertly-handled artillery still a third.

In spite of all these adverse factors, the Division's attack was delivered with great violence, and gained a good deal of important ground, while inflicting enormous casualties on the enemy, probably more than the Division took itself. Actions of our magnificent infantry battalions during that two-day period will remain long in the memory of the Division.

There was the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Frank B. Izenour. This battalion had been chosen to infiltrate to Highway 7 northwest of Cisterna starting at H-hour. Almost from the line of departure it ran into strong, stubborn resistance, so that its "infiltration" movement rapidly became a sticky infantry fire fight with all companies heavily engaged. Late in the morning the battalion had made only 1000 yards and was being fired at from the front and the two flanks. It was decided to commit the 2d Battalion on the right to clear the flank and enable it to keep rolling.

The afternoon witnessed the near-destruction of the 1st Battalion—but it also witnessed the killing of an estimated 200 enemy at the very least and the wounding or capture of many more. Colonel Izenour was himself wounded in the shoulder by machine-pistol bullets. In an orchard the battalion over-ran two enemy 105s. Led by Capt. William Athis, commander of Company D, about twenty men turned the weapon around and used it to good effect on the enemy. Shortly before dusk it was reported that the battalion's leading elements had crossed the railroad track, a feat that was not repeated until the breakthrough of May 23. Maj. Frank C. Sinsel, who assumed command following Colonel Izenour's wound, received the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions during this engagement.

A witness (a fighting soldier of the 1st Battalion) described the kind of an afternoon all the battalions had:

"Hollywood would have paid five million dollars to have had that on film. Here we were, *walking* in on the enemy and he had every weapon from machine guns on up zeroed in on us. Small arms and artillery were intense. Men were dropping all around. It made you wonder when you were going to get it. The rest of the men never even hesitated, just kept walking forward, only stopping to shoot. The tanks and TDs were moving right along with us, shooting hell out of houses and haystacks. When we got in on the Jerry positions they couldn't take it. They poured out of those fox-holes. So then it was our turn. The fellows with their rifles and BARs and the TDs and tanks with their .30 and .50-caliber machine guns went to work on them. We knocked off a hell of a lot of kraut. In the orchard they were practically piled one on top of each other. The Marines at Tarawa had nothing on the 3d Division at Cisterna that day."

The battalion had gained about 3000 yards since H-hour against violent opposition. Unfortunately, it was reduced to 150 effectives, and the battalion commander was compelled to withdraw about 400 yards south of the track and set up a defensive position for the night. Later he was ordered to fall back even farther, approximately to the 2d Battalion position because of the exposed salient he occupied.

Patrols which visited this area later told of the carnage and loss of equipment on both sides in the area covered by this battalion. It was an example outstanding among examples of fighting quality, ferocity in the attack and will to achieve an objective.

There was the 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry. Ordered to attack north across country, east of the Cisterna—Conca road in an effort to relieve the surrounded Rangers, this battalion organized in an area occupied by the 4th Ranger Battalion (which was to have followed the infiltration of the 1st and 3d Ranger Battalions) and, under heavy fire from the start, moved 2000 yards across flat terrain and succeeded in capturing Femina-morta by nightfall, although this crossroad settlement was held in strength by enemy well equipped with anti-tank weapons. This attack might never have succeeded but for the heroic work of our armor, especially TDs which closed in on the built-up area, destroyed three enemy antitank guns with pointblank fire and neutralized many of the most strongly-held houses by pumping high-velocity projectiles right through them.

There were the 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, which made a gallant bid to smash their way into Cisterna the afternoon of January 31. Each battalion got to within about 2000 yards of the city in slashing attacks. The 2d Battalion of the 15th approaching from Femina-morta, got within

2000 yards of Cisterna, and the 1st Battalion of the 30th, attacking from Ponte Rotto, got within 1500 yards. Both battalions were rolling forward when halted by Division because the stiffness of the opposition, coupled with the advanced positions reached by these battalions, made it questionable whether their forward elements could be supported or reinforced. Some of their gains had to be sacrificed in order to hold a stable line later on, but this does not detract from the brilliant work they performed that day.

There was the 1st Battalion of the 15th which emerged from the three-day battle with an average of eighteen to twenty men per company remaining.

These battalions are mentioned, not because their conduct was the exception, but rather the rule, of all the battalions and attached units during that period.

No newspaper accounts have ever been given a reasonable explanation of what happened to the 1st and 3d Ranger Battalions in the first Battle of Cisterna. But in light of what was later learned about the enemy, and in light of the Division's most determined efforts to relieve the Rangers, it is possible to view their tragic isolation and destruction as a sober military fact rather than only as a gallant but unsuccessful struggle against overwhelming odds.

First: A prisoner from the 356th Reconnaissance Battalion, defending the Feminamorta sector, later said his unit had been ordered to allow our leading elements to pass through unmolested, in the expectation that they would be cut off and destroyed by enemy troops further back. This may explain why the Rangers' infiltration succeeded initially, as they reached the outskirts of Cisterna without having to fire a shot.

Secondly: The Rangers, having been originally organized for fast-moving individual operations on foot, were not strong in automatic weapons, mortars, and communications equipment as the ordinary infantry battalion. They were actually primed for house-to-house

fighting in Cisterna rather than for a defense against enemy tanks south of the city.

Thirdly: The tanks and TDs which were to have reached the Rangers by daylight scarcely got started before one M-10 and one halftrack hit mines and were immobilized, and the others were unable to move forward until they had reached Feminamorta with the 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, later in the day. The 4th Ranger Battalion, which was to attack north with the armor, was disorganized by intense enemy shelling and machine-gun fire at the line of departure and was unable to progress beyond this point.

Fourth: Enemy armor and Flakwagons which debouched from Cisterna and attacked the Rangers on flat country shortly after daylight, succeeded in cutting them up into small uncoordinated groups which were later mopped up piecemeal. Success of our venture actually depended on the Rangers getting into Cisterna before daylight, as it was known that the *Hermann Goering* Division had tanks available for the town's defenses and could easily stand off the Rangers outside the build-up area. Presence of the enemy parachute battalion was an additional reinforcement over and above the tanks.

Commendations later awarded individuals and units of the 3d Infantry Division reflect the spirit of these tremendous battles more truly than any prose.

That was the first battle of Cisterna. It was the most savage and disappointing action the Division had fought up to that time, and the first time the 3d had ceased to move forward in 100 days of action. But in accepting that setback, and withstanding the most terrible assaults the Germans could hurl against it in the months that followed, the Division took its place beside the greatest fighting units in our country's history.

The beachhead siege, which was to last four months to the day from the first landing on January 22, had set in.

2. The Tide of Battle Turns

February 2 to March 3

THE people of the United Nations, had they been completely informed on the situation, might have realized that between February 2 and March 3, 1944 a basically simple question was being hammered out in terrific strife and mental agony of thousands of men and women, on a ten-by-fifteen-mile patch of ground in Italy.

The question was simple because it boiled down to this: Were the British War Office and the United States War Department going to have to write off some of their most experienced combat divisions with the notation . . . "Destroyed" as happened in the case of the 1st and 3d Battalions, Ranger Force?

There were also the Special Service Force, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, the 4th Ranger Battalion, 36th and 39th Combat Engineer Regiments, the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, thousands of service troops, doctors, nurses, airmen, and ground crewmen. Were they to be doomed to confinement in German prison camps or consignment to military cemeteries? Was a quantity of material to be lost in a military debacle such as the Allies had not known since the days of Gallipoli? The threat of all this was, unfortunately, all too real and absolutely not to be underestimated in considering our position on the Anzio Beachhead in February and early March, 1944.

Anyone who was on the beachhead had a pretty fair idea of the fate that awaited if the beachhead line had not held. The better part of thirteen German divisions sat in a watchful ring about that little patch of ground and did their best to make it the sort of Inferno such as a native son of Italy had once described as awaiting the souls of those who sinned on earth. Danté's descriptions, however, were imaginary. Anzio unfortunately, was not.

February was the most crucial month the 3d Infantry Division experienced since it began fighting in World War II. We were fighting for our lives and we knew it. There was no place to go if the Germans broke through our lines and no one was in a better position to know it than we. If the Germans made a serious penetration and were able to exploit that penetration quickly, it is hard to say what mercy we would have been shown, but it took no master mind to say accurately what would have been the military fact of the matter. In front of us was the enemy, behind us the Tyrrhenian Sea. It was a long swim back to Naples.

The enemy, who had begun his counteraction against the newly-formed beachhead with as unlikely a con-

glomeration of units as could be formed anywhere, had nevertheless acted with unexpected rapidity in getting units into the line first to stop, then to counter-attack the Allied forces.

We were fortunate in having gallant British allies, and worthy comrades in other United States divisions. They contained much of the enemy punch. But the ultimate trial of strength took place between some of the best troops in the German Army and the "Sturm"—United States—3d Infantry Division. It ended in a complete defensive victory for the 3d.

While the first enemy units in contact were slowing, then holding the attack toward Cisterna di Littoria and the vital Rome-Naples Highway 7, the Germans were pouring reinforcements of men and artillery into the beachhead sector at a very rapid rate. Orders had gone out from the High Command to stop—stop at any cost—the threat to the German Army's rear in the south, and at considerable cost to the enemy it *was* stopped. But by February 3 we had more than evened the score. We had lost two battalions of the United States Ranger Force; one battalion of each of the regiments had taken terrific punishment, and the others in lesser, but still heavy, degree, as had the remaining 4th Ranger Battalion and the attached parachutists of the 504th Regiment and 509th Battalion. But the enemy had absorbed much greater punishment from our combined artillery, bombing, naval artillery, tank and tank-destroyer onslaught, combined with the magnificent way in which the doughboys had moved in on enemy positions.

We know now, from completely reliable sources, that Adolf Hitler gave orders to push the beachhead into the sea. Let us see how the enemy went about attempting this:

For more than two weeks in February his attitude was chiefly defensive. He began by reorganizing and replacing his shattered units. Segments of organizations which had been hurled into various gaps in his defensive line were withdrawn or supplemented by more elements of the same organizations, in order better to reform his lines. He perfected his defenses in our sector, his main line of resistance following the line of the railroad track northwest of Cisterna on the line of Fosso di Cisterna-Mussolini Canal south of the town. Then he continued to regroup his forces for his first big offensive.

February 3 and 4 found the 3d Infantry Division improving and consolidating its positions. Aggressive patrolling and continuation of defensive preparations was the main activity. On February 4, as the main line

of resistance along the Mussolini Canal neared completion, weapons were sited and manned in forward areas, and these positions were stocked with ammunition and rations, in preparation for enlarging the beach-head line by the difference in distance between the canal positions and the forward positions. Erection of wire obstacles and the laying of defensive minefields began. Although their use signified defense rather than attack (attack had characterized the United States Army in the Mediterranean Theater since commencement of operations in French North Africa) a couple of vicious new antipersonnel mines which the Ordnance Department had developed gave us our first chance to strike back at the enemy with one of his own predominantly favorite weapons.

One company each from the 1st and 2d Battalions, 7th Infantry, remained on forward positions attached to the 30th Infantry. The remainder of the regiment moved to Division reserve in the vicinity of Le Ferriere. The 15th Infantry redispensed its forces, with about one-third of each battalion on the forward outpost line of resistance, one-third on the secondary line, and the remaining one-third on the main line of resistance.

Elements of the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, in the 15th Infantry sector, remained on forward positions attached to the 15th (southwest of Ponte Rotto). The remainder of the 1st Battalion occupied primary and secondary defensive lines in the 30th Infantry sector. The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, moved to the vicinity of Le Ferriere and began working on MLR defenses. The 3d Battalion was released from Division reserve and moved to the vicinity of Campo Morto. The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment was organized on three defensive lines in its sector.

The reason for the scheme was obvious. We needed a defense in depth, and the only way to secure it was to have three separate lines which could be defended in their turn. If it became necessary to fall back from the first, the second could be defended, and if that had to be abandoned there was always the main line of resistance, behind which there was no retirement. The main line of resistance, if ever reached, would mark the turn of balance in the enemy's favor, and absolutely had to be defended to the last man. As it turned out it was never necessary to abandon even the first line.

At 1700 February 5 an estimated company of enemy hit our outpost line, preceded by a short, intense artillery preparation, which caused the outpost line of resistance to fall back. The 7th Infantry found enemy Mark III tanks in its sector. This attack broke off shortly after it had started, and the enemy withdrew under cover of his own artillery. Elements of the 2d

Battalion, 7th Infantry, scheduled for relief by the 30th Infantry, reassembled south of the Mussolini Canal and rejoined the regiment. Company K, 7th Infantry, counterattacked and restored all positions by 0230, February 6.

February 6 the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, moved into positions along the canal vacated by the 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry. The remainder of the 7th Infantry was in assembly southwest of Le Ferriere.

At 0420 the 15th Infantry repulsed a platoon-size counterattack. Over the night of 6-7 the 3d Reconnaissance Troop and 3d Provisional Reconnaissance Troop patrolled, probing enemy positions.

During that night Divisional units were regrouped. The 15th, 30th and 504th Regiments were to defend forward areas with two battalions each, holding one battalion each in regimental reserve. The 7th Infantry was to organize and occupy a line on the northwest branch of the Mussolini Canal.

Company E, 15th Infantry, attacked on the evening of February 7, with the objective of taking the farm at Ponte Rotto. Strong opposition was encountered, and the fight continued until midnight. The company took four bitterly contested houses but did not reach its objective. Company F also attacked, going east toward Ponte Rotto with the mission of clearing the road junction there. The enemy was driven 1000 yards west of Ponte Rotto and out of some houses, but this attack also stopped short of its objective.

During the night the enemy attacked the 15th Infantry along the Cisterna-Isola Bella axis, and reached the crossroad at Isola Bella (Feminamorta), but withdrew before daylight. The enemy also attacked down the west bank of Fosso delle Mole, but was driven off. An enemy platoon attacked Company K, 30th Infantry, at midnight and was repulsed.

On February 8 the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion repelled an attack northeast of Carano. In this action, Cpl. Paul B. Huff of Company A particularly distinguished himself. His company came under fire from its right flank which was exposed due to the company's forward position. Huff volunteered to lead a six-man patrol to investigate and determine the strength and location of the enemy forces.

Commencing at 0730, the patrol advanced toward a draw which was covered by fire from three enemy machine guns and a 20mm gun. In addition to being mined it was the only route of approach offering any cover whatsoever, and the patrol was forced to take it.

"As the patrol proceeded toward the objective the men came under small-arms and machine-gun fire and a concentration of mortar fire," said 1st Lt. Joseph J. Winko. "Moving ahead of his patrol, Cpl. Huff came

under the fire of the machine guns and the 20mm gun covering the draw. Realizing the danger to his patrol, he had them wait while he advanced through the minefield along the edge of the draw to within seventy-five yards of the nearest machine-gun position, having traveled 275 yards under fire of these guns."

Said 1st Lt. Albert L. Kinderknecht, "Still under fire, which was striking all around him, he crawled the final seventy-five yards to the enemy machine gun and poking his weapon into the emplacement, killed the crew and destroyed the gun. Upon returning to the patrol he was continually under mortar, machine-gun and small-arms fire.

"Cpl. Huff reported back to his company with his entire patrol, suffering no casualties and giving valuable information. . . ."

"At 1300 hours," said Pfc. John E. Pumphrey, "without rest and under sniper fire, Cpl. Huff accompanied a combat patrol, led by Sgt. Kelly C. Bath, into position. The patrol attacked, killed 27 Germans, captured 21 prisoners and forced the remaining enemy to flee in disorder. His leadership of one section of this later patrol was a deciding factor in the success of the mission.

"The terrain was favorable to the enemy. With the exception of one ditch under enemy mortar fire there was no cover or concealment. The enemy had a clear field of observation and fire.

"Enemy sniper and mortar fire was heavy for much of the two patrols; mortar shells were landing within five to ten yards of the men and bullets were striking within two to three feet of them. During the attack enemy machine-gun fire and sniper fire were heavy. Visibility was excellent from 0730 hours to 1630 hours and the enemy were dug in 400 yards from our lines."

Corporal Huff was awarded the Medal of Honor for this action.

At this time an enemy force estimated at two divisions was beginning the first big effort to knock in the left flank of the beachhead in the British sector. Fighting for the "factory" at Aprilia was fierce, and although the line gave at some points the enemy did not succeed in penetrating it seriously enough to cause a major threat to the entire beachhead. Casualties were high on both sides. This attack died down after about three days of furious attacking by the enemy and intensive counterpreparations of the famed "meat grinder" British artillery fire. The lines held.

Between the last attacks early in the month and the time of the first big attack directed at the 3d Division there was somewhat of a lull. No description has yet been given of the more human visual aspects of the beachhead. Perhaps the viewpoint of a replacement

who came to join the Division at this time should be included:

Our LST was sitting in the harbor about 3000 yards offshore when most of us came on deck that morning. There were several hundred of us, mostly replacements and return-to-unit men of the Division. Most of us were pretty curious about the beachhead, and scared, because we'd already heard a lot about it in the two and a half weeks since it was first made.

We got a typical greeting. There was a swishing sound, a vicious crack, and a geyser shot up about 400 yards from our ship, sending some of us back into the hold after our helmets. Several of us looked to some of the veterans of lower Italy and Sicily; hell, we didn't know the score.

A young kid of a sailor standing near me, so young he couldn't have found it necessary to shave more than once a week, said: "They got a couple of railroad guns sitting back by those hills that they can't spot. The Air Corps has been trying to get them for two weeks. Mostly the guns shoot into the town. That last one was about as far out into the water they can reach. Boy, I'll be glad when we get turned around and headed back for Naples."

I looked where he pointed. The hills were large mountains against country that was flat as a sand table—our territory. The air was clear as a bell and they loomed up there as though they were cut from blue cardboard.

"Have we got those hills?" I asked.

"No, that's Jerry's territory," said the sailor.

I found out later that it was the Monti Lepini, a foremost tip of the Apennine Mountains. On its side was a cluster of buildings—Cori. To the left—north—was a pass through the "hills" and there was another mass of rugged high ground that ran back toward the sea ending before reaching it to leave another flat space along the water. This was the Colli Laziali, and on the side of it I could see another town, higher up than Cori. I found out later that this was Velletri.

Anzio was a mass of masonry behind which was a small rise and some trees. Even from where we were I could see there was considerable damage done to it. It was of about thirty feet elevation, rising away from the water. It fronted on a narrow sandy beach which seemed to run south for at least a couple of miles. Along that beach the ground away from the beaches rose into a cliff that was about a hundred feet at its greatest height. Farther the ground smoothed out again and a pine forest hugged the water.

About eleven o'clock we were moving toward shore. There were thirty or so barrage balloons rising over and around the town. The gun had not fired again.

We docked at a paved-over stone jetty sticking out like an arm into the water. It took about half an hour to get our group off the LST.

The officer in charge led us off in groups of platoon size, taking interval in a single column on either side of the street. I got a good look at Anzio. It *was* hammered, but as we got into it further I could see there were a lot of buildings which were fairly intact. There was a lot of



Immediately after the burst of a 280mm shell near the stone jetty at Anzio. Five men were killed.

the usual rubble around, of course, timbers, crumbled plaster and glass. We walked several hundred yards and turned left to follow a road along the sea. There were frequent antiaircraft emplacements sandbagged in. The crews looked us over as we marched by. There were a few British M.P.s and a lot of signs pointing to ration dumps, unit headquarters, different towns, and listing orders on traffic restrictions.

When we had gone about half a mile we came to a large, open field. There were about twenty six-by-six trucks dispersed around the field. An officer met the officer commanding our group and had us deployed over the field.

Finally we got called together again and assigned to regiments. We were packed into the trucks and they got moving. We started down the road back through part of the town. We drove over a black-top road lined with evergreen trees. We got out into a clear stretch and then went into Nettuno. The trucks barreled right along.

We had no sooner got out of town than a hell of a

racket sprung up all around us. It was antiaircraft fire of all calibers. We looked up, and there, streaking through the sky were three planes. There was a flock of black puffs around them. They headed right for the harbor, and when they got near it they went into a shallow dive. You could see the glint of bombs. Then they turned north and streaked away as they'd come, with the guns still shooting at them. Around one of the LSTs in the harbor there were several terrific explosions and huge waterspouts, but when the water had settled back down, the ship was still there and looked undamaged.

A few minutes later and six or seven friendly planes were flying circles over the harbor.

After a couple of miles along a rutted road the trucks turned off into a field. On the right was a large patch of scrub oak. We could see quite a few men and tents scattered through it. We unloaded. It was the regimental service company and rear command-post area.

The men there were all wearing brown overall-like combat suits and jackets of the same color, most of them tucked inside the suits. Most of the suits were mud-stained; everyone wore helmets and most of them carried sidearms or rifles.

We all had overcoats and a two-blanket roll. We were told that we would be assigned to battalions and taken up the next day, after the regimental commander had spoken to us. So we slept in the open that night and damn near froze.

While we were still trying to thaw out the next day, we were lined up by an officer doing his best to sound tough, and pretty soon the regimental commander came up in his jeep. He was rough, and he didn't waste any words.

"Close in so you can hear me," he barked. When we had closed in the Colonel looked around. "You're now part of the —th Infantry," he said. "You're going up as replacements to the best goddamn regiment in the United States Army. You're joining a crack unit of a crack division. You will be expected to live up to the traditions of that regiment and that division.

"You're going to suffer. You came here to suffer. You're going to suffer everything that the Boche can throw at you and you're going to suffer everything that goes with a miserable goddamn climate. But you're going to take it like men.

"We've quit playing games. This is serious business. The Boche is sitting out there with seven or eight divisions and trying to shove us into the ocean. Upon you men depends the future of every living soul on this beachhead. Don't make any mistake about it. It's men like you that're going up into front-line foxholes and stop the attack that the Boche is going to throw within a week. And you're going to get up there with the idea that you will kill as many of them as possible. That's the only thing that's going to keep us from being shoved into the sea, is killing Boche.

"Listen to what the men up there have got to tell you about how to kill Boche, but don't listen to any defeatist talk from any of 'em. You're new, but as far as we're con-

cerned you're every bit as good a man, each one of you, as the best man in the division, until or unless you show us otherwise."

There was some more on the same line. Then the colonel saluted and got into his jeep and drove off.

I joined my battalion on the side of a hill. They had dug in there. We got sent out to our companies. The one I was assigned to was on the other side of that hill. They were just out of the lines for a short time, and there weren't many of them. They'd just finished a big attack on Cisterna and a lot of them had been killed and wounded. The men looked tired, and most of them were unshaven.

They didn't say much when we came in, clean and shiny in our new overcoats, packs, and helmets. They just looked at us. But they came in close to see what we were like.

The company commander, a young second lieutenant, grouped us into a semi-circle and made us a little speech right there on the side of the hill. He said we were welcome and that we were badly needed. He said he was glad we were so well equipped because there was a big supply problem, and while we could get anything we needed it was better to start with it than have to requisition it. He said we only had a few days before we would probably return to the lines. He said we only had a few combat suits that the hospitals had taken off the casualties and sent back to us, so until we could get us one we had better hang on to our overcoats. He said keep your weapons in good order and pay attention to all the pointers the old men could give us. He said, last, that he hoped we were glad to be joining a first-class fighting outfit and good luck to all of us.

We got assigned to platoons and squads.

We stuck around that area for a week. The weather turned rainy, and the holes we dug filled up with water. We were a miserable bunch. The only thing to be done was bail out, get some straw, and try to get the bottom of the hole dry enough to lay on. The wind was sharp and ice-cold. The old men told us it wasn't so bad here, to wait until we got into the line where we couldn't get out of our holes. It was bad enough already for us.

We moved up into the line starting about six o'clock one evening. It was black as pitch and you had to watch the man ahead. I don't know where the road led, all I know is that we marched for about five or six miles, with a couple of halts.

You could tell when you were getting close to the line. You passed most of the artillery, which was popping away from time to time. You looked off to the front and flank and every once in awhile you could see a squirt of white tracer and it seemed to float its way toward our lines. That was Jerry. Ours answered with bursts that had red tracer in them. They seemed to be steadier. Then, from far off there was the blurt of a machine rifle, or the tack-tack-tack of one of our machine guns. It got louder as we got closer.

Once we heard a couple of shells coming in and hit the dirt, but they landed quite a ways away. The old men told us in whispers that it was a pretty quiet night and for us

to hope it stayed that way. We were spread out, of course, and keeping a good interval between us.

Pretty soon we got off the road and on to a plowed field. It was rough and muddy and hard going. Pretty soon it was all you could do to keep going. After some time we halted and the word was passed to spread out and get down. After marching we were pretty warm, but when we lay on that wet ground we began to get cold almost right away. After a while the squad leader rounded us up and led us forward. We waded a creek and got told, in whispers, not to make so goddam much noise. We got to the top of a little rise and we were in the front line.

It was pretty quiet, but that only made us all the more nervous. When a Jerry flare popped about a quarter mile away we all hit the dirt. The squad leaders took two of us to a two-man foxhole. We could just barely see a couple of boys rounding up some equipment. They climbed out and said, "Here it is. You're welcome to it." Then we climbed in.

The bottom was squashy. It wasn't a very big hole, about chest deep. Part of it was boarded over. At the front was a dirt ledge. I felt around this and found a bandolier of ammunition and five hand grenades.

The squad leader came around a few minutes later and said that one of us had to be awake at all times, and for Chris's sake if we heard or saw anything in front of us, not to challenge too loud or hesitate to shoot if we didn't get the right answer.

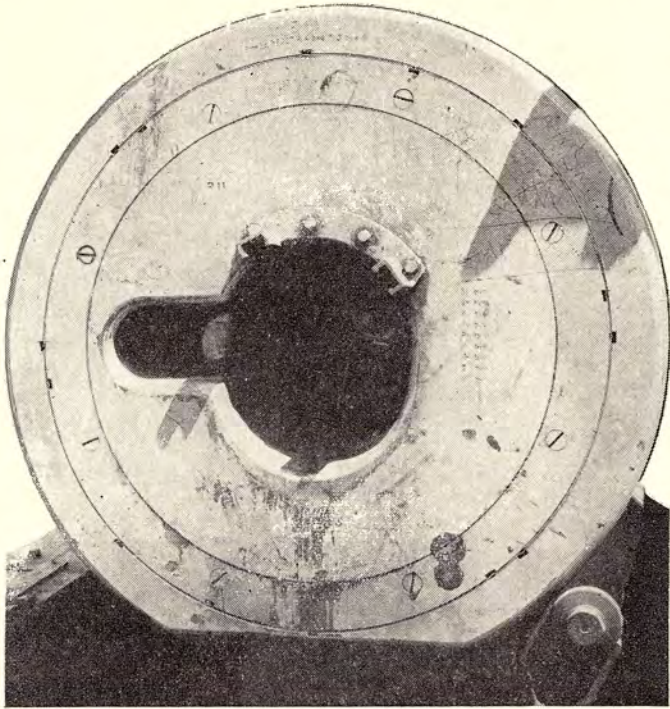
It was cold as usual the rest of that night, but it was pretty hard staying awake. All through the night there were flares going up from the Jerry lines. Once Jerry threw in a terrific artillery barrage which landed about five hundred yards behind us. I was scared.

We were around for ten days. It was just plain hell all through the day, and the nights were worse. We had five days of rain. The hole got about six inches of water, and you couldn't do anything but try to bail it out with your helmet. We wrapped shelter halves and blankets around us but they didn't do much good. They got soaked with rain and then you sat on a piece of wood or something and shivered and cursed. If you "had to go," you had to think about it before daylight because you couldn't get out of that hole once the sun came up, or ever show the top of your head.

At night we got canned "C" rations. Toward the last they brought them up warmed up a little, and coffee, only a little warm by the time it got to us, and once in a while a beef sandwich or some doughnuts. Those did more to help our morale than anything else, except mail. But it was pretty fierce.

You had to get out of the hole when it got dark for several reasons, one of which was to get some circulation back into your feet. A lot of the boys went to the medics with bad cases of trench foot, but I wasn't that lucky.

Jerry threw in a lot of artillery and mortars. The best thing to do was pull in your head and pray. Some of that big stuff would cave in the side of a wet foxhole like it was sand, and a couple of the boys got buried right in



The breechblock of a captured German 280mm gun.

their hole fifty yards away from me. We had two or three casualties every day, mostly from artillery and mortars. If you got it at night you were lucky, because they could get you out right away. God help you if you got hit in the daytime, because you might have to lay there all day before somebody could get to you. A couple of our medics got Silver Stars for going out in the daytime to help wounded men. One of them got his posthumously.

We stayed there through the first big attack around the middle of February. . . .

The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment repelled an attack northeast of Bridge 5 on February 9. February 10 the attack was resumed with one or two companies, but was repulsed. The 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, moved up to the canal to be ready to meet the threat against the 504th. The 4th Ranger Battalion was attached to the 504th.

At 0330 February 12 an enemy company attacked Company C, 15th Infantry. The outposts were temporarily forced back, but positions were restored by 0505.

On February 13, 7th and 30th Regiments reconnoitered each other's positions in preparation for relief of the 30th Infantry by the 7th. Two enemy platoons attacked Company D, 504th Regiment at 0315, but were driven off. A few enemy penetrated the outpost position but were all either killed or captured.

The night of February 14-15 the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, relieved the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, and was attached to the 30th. The 1st Battalion, 30th,

moved to the other's old position and was attached to the 7th.

The frequency of patrol clashes and small-scale counterattacks had the appearance of probing for weaknesses in our lines. It seemed certain that the enemy was shortly to mount a large-scale attack in our sector, something he had not yet attempted. It is possible that he found the standpat defenses of the British a nut too tough to crack and hoped, by a sudden shift, to catch us off balance and drive through our lines, splitting the beachhead down the middle, following which would be a mere cleaning out of the entire beachhead.

Before going into the description of that day, his method of attack should be briefly examined. As it was to develop, his main effort on February 16 took place along the Albano-Anzio road axis, and the full force of it enveloped the 45th Infantry Division on our left flank. At the same time, however, he struck at seven separate places in the sector of the 3d Infantry Division, and any weaknesses displayed in our lines could have been quickly exploited by reserves who were waiting for just that chance. If he had succeeded in his major effort, the beachhead would have been effectively cut in two, the British and the 45th Division on one side, and the 3d Division, its attachments, and the Special Service Force on the other.

Added to our knowledge that the Germans had moved in troops and men to the immediate beachhead area was the fact that now was the time for the enemy to strike. If he waited any longer, we would be stronger in minefields, barbed-wire entanglements, and anti-tank and machine-gun emplacements. He knew that, and we knew that. Thus an attack was expected by our Intelligence almost hourly, as February 16 approached.

Enemy armor continued to build up in the Cisterna area. For several days during early February the daily Intelligence summary carried the following warning: "His (the enemy's) attitude is that of active, aggressive defense, with attacks being launched on any Allied penetration that threatens the security of his main defense position. Active reconnaissance, similar to the attack on our front on 5 February and limited objective counterattacks may be expected frequently as he attempts to determine our dispositions, strength, and consequent intentions. Enemy strength in the 3d Division sector is now believed to be such that should he appreciate a change on our part from an offensive to a defensive attitude, he would well be able to contain a large portion of the front with light forces and mass considerable strength for an attack in any chosen sector."

On the eve of the attack the following units had been identified at one time or another in the beach-

head sector: elements of 71st Infantry Division, *Schutzstaffel Reichsfuehrer* Division, 26th *Panzer* Division, 715th Infantry Division, 3d *Panzer Grenadier* Division, 114th Light Division, 1st Parachute Division, *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division, 65th Infantry Division, and 4th Parachute Division. In addition there had, at one time or another, been identified the following, or elements thereof: *Luftwaffe Jaeger* Battalion, *zbV 7* (a special mission group), Parachute *Lehr* Regiment, 356th *Fusilier* Battalion, and 1028th Grenadier Regiment.

Naturally, not all of these units were in the line. But their presence at some time in the beachhead sector indicated the mass of men available to the enemy for his major effort.

While the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, was relieving the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, information of heavy vehicular traffic toward Cisterna was beginning to sift into the Division Headquarters War Room. This began in the late afternoon, February 15.

At 0735: A report came in from PW interrogators at VI Corps that a captured German said his officer had told him to "take a good look at the terrain, because something big is coming off February 16." The PW said there was a rumor of a big attack, the object being to reduce the bridgehead and split it down the center.

At 0005, February 16: A radar report received at the War Room told of a big concentration of armor in the vicinity of Cisterna.

0035: Call from 30th Infantry: "A patrol just returned and they said they thought the enemy might be forming for an attack."

An intercepted radio message revealed that a big attack was planned to begin just about daylight. Quickly a VI Corps artillery "shoot" (or "Bingo") was arranged for 0430. The total weight of every piece of artillery on the beachhead would be brought to bear on targets all around the beachhead to last half an hour. Further fires would be on call from observer.

At 0430 the skies split wide open. Cannon roared and argued; it was like a huge eruption, and brought to mind moving pictures of the first World War. It was the greatest artillery concentration that had yet been fired on the Anzio Beachhead. German front lines were pounded. At the same time known routes of supply, enemy artillery emplacements, road junctions, likely assembly areas, and reserve assembly areas were also hit.

About the time the sky grew gray with light the German artillery began to interject its note of returning fire. Intermingled with the solid crack and thunder of "outgoing mail" was the whine and crash of incoming shells. And about the time our barrage began to slacken off the enemy fire reached its vicious peak. Artillery of

all calibers fell on our front lines and worked its way back to our secondary line. Greatest caliber was 170mm. From distances as great as a half mile these shells sounded as though they were landing right next to one. Huge geysers of wet earth blossomed and descended on the torn ground. The earth was churned up yard by yard. As this preparation began to lift, the German infantry attack began.

0545: Call from 30th Infantry: "Just received word from F Company, 7th Infantry, that there was approximately a company of enemy moving toward their position and that artillery fire had ceased."

0635: Call from SSF: "Jerries have a little show up here coming toward our lines. They're putting some heavy barrages on our left."

0645: Call from VI Corps: "45th Infantry Division just called that heavy artillery just started on their front and from the way the thing just started, it looks like today should be the day."

0655: Call from 509th: "We have a PW who stated that the general attack was to take place down the draw between 509th and 30th. There has been a large patrol reported in front of us. 1st Battalion, 7th, reported an impending attack, but it seems to have slowed down."

0715: Call from 504th: "We need some more artillery help here. Called Divarty (Division Artillery) and they allotted me half a battalion. I need more—they're out in front of E and F company. Using our own artillery."

0730: Call from 30th: "Seem to be having a little activity. Talked to I Company and he said that about one-half hour ago about a hundred Germans came over that hill out of Ponte Rotto and they laid mortar and machine gun on them and about forty of them kept coming. They are in defilade now in that little creek. Another group tried to come over from the northwest above the little tip 83 (*Refers to Hill: Ed.*) and they've got them under fire and they are pinned down by that. That seems to be fairly well under control. Company K met an attack of approximately a hundred men and they have been taken under artillery fire. Also had a report of an uncounted number of tanks in the K Company area. Have alerted the TDs and ordered the AT defense in that area. In front of F Company the same situation, but no armor. Got a PW taken by the Para who claims that there was a battalion of tanks supposed to come down the draw by the graveyard. They had an 88 SP gun attached to the battalion. Said they had armor, about thirty 'Tigers' and forty 'Panthers.' This man was a private and that is a lot of information for a private. Everything seems to be pretty well under control."

0730: Call from 15th: "Enemy artillery concentra-

tion along 1st Battalion front. Small infantry action in front of B Company."

0745: Call from SSF: "The actual size of opposition is not fully determined. No penetration as yet."

0810: Call from 30th: "There has been a penetration of K Company's position by approximately a company. L Company, the reserve, is alerted and is going to have to hit it on the point or take it in the flank if possible. K Company forward positions are holding. Tanks are reported to the left of K Company—are being taken under fire by TDs at the present time."

0815: Call from 509th: "The Germans are laying smoke all along the front . . . We have been in contact with the enemy and killed a few and the enemy seemed to withdraw. We are putting mortar on them now."

0825: Call from 601st TD: "I have some information from my people in 30th sector. They fired on some tanks. They said observation was poor and the tanks seem to have gone into a defiladed position. They are keeping close watch for them. I also have some information from a PW. He states that at the graveyard there is a battalion that is going to make an attack. If it is not successful, they have 30 Mark VIs and 40 Mark IVs which will try to make a breakthrough."

0830: Call to Divarty: "The attack seems to have moved up north."

0835: Call from VI Corps: "CO, SSF, says it has died down on his front."

0955: Call from Bridge 5: "There are two ME 109s hedgehopping over the canal keeping spaced and trying to knock down the 3d Division Cub plane."

1050: Call to VI Corps: "Slight penetration between K Company, 30th, and E Company, 7th, that they are restoring with a local counterattack. Still fighting along the front, but it has died down."

1115: Call from 30th: "Element of G Company is moving over to retake that area in E Company. C Company is moving up behind our 3d Battalion and will push in through K Company positions to restore the two front line platoons . . . C Company of the 7th is going to go through L and K Companies and push on the positions held by the two platoons and clear the Germans out of that house . . ."

By noon it was clear that our artillery counterpreparation delivered at daylight had greatly succeeded in breaking the attack before it got into full swing. That will be brought out later. Two slight penetrations had been made. The enemy had succeeded in driving a wedge between Company E, 7th Infantry, and Company K, 30th Infantry. Company C, 7th Infantry was preparing to counterattack to wipe that out. A small part of Company E, 7th Infantry, had been pushed off position. Company G moved over rapidly to retake this ground.

1300: Call to Asst. CG from CG: CG: "What is the score over there?" *Asst. CG*: "C Company attack is about to jump off. The left of the 3d Battalion is receiving another attack on the left flank of K Company. Estimated to be a company. The other attack is about to go. We are starting from behind K Company and will go through it with concentrations prepared to lay on the objective, which is a house . . ."

1410: "The attack is going off but slowly . . ."

1605: "This attack is moving along and it looks like we have it straightened out . . ."

1630: Call from CG 45th Division: "We are all set over here. Our lines are pretty well restored over by that factory (Aprilia) now. The Boche had quite a lot of men clear across the area down to the sea and there were some tanks in there. We've had some good shooting today—I believe they've taken quite a few casualties (the enemy)."

1630: Call from SSF: ". . . Everything is quiet now . . ."

1825: Call from 504th: "As a result of the action in front of D Company this morning, there was a mixup this afternoon. A truce was declared to enable the dead and wounded to be collected and one of our medics who speaks German was out talking with the kraut medics. They told him that the attack was made by one company. He was smart enough to take a count of the bodies, and he counted thirty-eight of them . . . He says they are all very young. The wounded casualties would be in proportion to the dead so they must have taken quite a beating."

1800: Call from 509th: "Small enemy groups have been trying to infiltrate through our left forward position, around A Company, which have been driven off."

2020: Call from Asst. CG: "I've contacted CO 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, and CO 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry . . . 2d Battalion CO states his right flank is in vicinity of where it was this morning . . . The whole of companies C and G with two tanks are cleaning it up."

During the night of February 16 the Division completed cleaning up elements of attacking enemy units remaining on the front and restoring the salient along Fosso delle Mole. Patrols maintained contact with the enemy during the night. Enemy attacks of February 16 were estimated to have involved five battalions on the 3d Infantry Division front and to have cost the enemy 150 dead and 250 wounded.

During the course of the day's action the 15th Infantry's Company "J", a provisional company made up of drivers, cooks, and mechanics of the 15th Infantry, repulsed an attack of about a hundred enemy, inflicting many casualties.



Brigadier General Whitfield P. Shepard, Assistant Division Commander.

the ditch I looked back toward the house; shells were landing all around it. There must have been at least eight direct hits—the house was just one big cloud of smoke and dust . . . When I looked back the last time, there was only one wall left standing; the rest of the house was only rubble.”

Lieutenant Kasper was captured. He was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The main attack was a limited success on February 16 against the 45th Infantry Division on our left flank. The enemy succeeded in making a penetration of several hundred yards. The following day, February 17 he continued the attack in this sector and succeeded in enlarging his gains to about 3000 yards. It thus became urgent to commit a strong force in this sector to gain back the lost ground. Any further gains would constitute a serious threat to the security of the entire beachhead. The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, had just been relieved by the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, a relief that had been delayed one night by February 16's attack. The entire 30th Infantry was now in Division reserve south of Le Ferriere. Accordingly, on February 18 the 30th Infantry was attached to the 1st Armored Division and instructed to plan for a counterattack in the 45th Division sector for the following day.

Continuation of February 16's attack in the 45th Division sector also brought a small attack between the

7th Infantry and the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion on its left, over the night of February 17, but this was repulsed.

At this time the 3d's Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott, was ordered by the Commanding General, Fifth Army, to take command of the VI Corps, which then included the 1st and 56th British Divisions, the United States 45th, and 3d Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions, the 36th and 39th Combat Engineer Regiments, United States-Canadian Special Service Force, 4th Ranger Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion. In addition to these combat organizations, VI Corps had thousands of organic and attached special and service troops. General Truscott had commanded the 3d Division since its training period at Port Lyautey, French Morocco, in 1943, eleven months before. Brig. Gen. John W. "Iron Mike" O'Daniel, Assistant Division Commander, was assigned as commander of the Division and Col. (a few days later Brigadier General) Whitfield P. Shepard became the Assistant Division Commander.

In his published farewell order, General Truscott ended by saying "The memory of your fine spirit, your self-confidence, your devotion to duty, and your splendid discipline that brought about your many victories in the last year will be with me always and I will cherish that memory as one of my most priceless possessions.

"Good luck and Godspeed to victory to you all."

Just before daylight on February 19 the 2d Battalion, 30th, crossed the line of departure on the right of the 6th Armored Infantry Regiment of the 1st Armored Division, to take part in what was to be one of the most smashing successes of all limited-objective counterattacks on the beachhead. The 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, followed at 0700. They were preceded by an intense artillery preparation. Initially only long-range machine-gun fire and antitank fire was received, but resistance shortly got very stiff. Company F proceeded against little opposition, but Company E found the going extremely difficult.

Despite this, at 1030 the 2d Battalion was 1200 yards forward of the line of departure and still moving. The regimental plan contemplated passing the 1st Battalion through the 2d Battalion in continuation of the attack. The VI Corps Commanding General, however, decided that any further gains would put the 30th Infantry in a dangerously exposed salient into the enemy lines, and at 1645, as the 1st Battalion was preparing to pass through, the attack was called off and the 2d Battalion was ordered to consolidate the ground gained.

During the day, the 2d Battalion had taken about 200 prisoners and killed many more enemy. The regi-

ment was still moving when the attack was called off, and casualties suffered were low in comparison with the ground retaken, with its significance to the security of the beachhead.

The attack also proved costly to the 2d Battalion, for the commanding officer, Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard, was wounded one-half hour after the jumpoff and replaced by Lt. Col. Woodrow W. Stromberg, who was at the time observing from Division Headquarters. Every officer in Company E, as well as the First Sergeant was killed; every officer in Company F, but one, as well as the First Sergeant, was killed or wounded, and the losses among the other enlisted men in these companies was proportionately high.

The outpost line established upon the ordered withdrawal of 2d Battalion was held by Company G, some 1,400 yards ahead. During the two days this company remained on outpost, a line was prepared behind them for occupation by 45th Infantry Division elements.

Prisoners for several days afterward continued to talk of the intensity of United States artillery fire, losses suffered by their individual units, and the low quality of their own replacements.

At 1210 on the same day (February 19), an estimated enemy battalion hit strongly between the left flank of the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, and the right flank of the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion. It was immediately taken under a devastating artillery barrage and small-arms fire and the attack was stopped within an hour. The enemy took a breathing space, regrouped, and at 1545 three or four tanks followed by infantry resumed the attack. This was repulsed with no penetration within two hours.

1650: Call from VI Corps: "They did a wonderful job out there today. Took plenty of prisoners and knocked them around a bit."

2100: Call from VI Corps: "Swell work today. Keep after them. General Lucas."

Major General Harmon, 1st Armored Division Commanding General, also praised the 30th Infantry for its outstanding role in his successful counterattack, stating that this attack had "saved the beachhead." The same sentiment was echoed on high level at VI Corps.

On the same day the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment also had a fire fight, but no attack developed.

The usual aggressive patrolling marked February 20 and 21. The 30th Infantry was detached from 1st Armored Division and placed in Corps reserve, in the vicinity of Campo Morto and Le Ferriere.

On February 22, the 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was released from Corps reserve and attached to the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, moving into positions extending from Carano 1500 yards northward. A forming

attack by an enemy battalion in front of the 509th was broken up by artillery.

From February 23-28 the Division continued to hold on to all positions and the usual aggressive patrolling was carried out.

The enemy had by no means exhausted his resources, nor his will to attack with the intention of destroying the beachhead. The Intelligence Summary for February 27 warned:

"The enemy has now had eight days since the attack down the Albano-Anzio axis in which to regroup and reorganize his badly disorganized forces. During this period there has been some indication that he has displaced his artillery, in part, to alternate positions. The bulk of his artillery still, however, remains in the western sector of the beachhead, from where it can support a resumption of the attack in the Carrocetto area. Replacements have been received in some of the units; and sufficient time has elapsed to have permitted the enemy to bring up additional ammunition and other supplies. It is believed that he is now capable of continuing the attacks on the beachhead; and that, when the weather affords him artillery observation and is suitable for the employment of armor, he will resume his offensive action. The increase in activity along the eastern flank of the beachhead makes it seem likely that some diversionary effort may be made at this time, possibly in the vicinity of Bridge No. 5, in conjunction with the main effort, which will, in all probability, be continued on the western flank. It can be logically assumed that the *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division, the chief elements of which have been out of the line resting for some days past, will spearhead this effort. *The offensive capabilities of troops now in contact in the 3d (US) Infantry Division sector are not believed great enough to lend much assistance to this effort.*"

In reality, the enemy was shifting considerable strength to this sector in preparation for his huge attack of February 29. He was also employing a process of attrition, or infringement on the beachhead line. In the British sector, where he held Carrocetto and the "factory," wherever he could seize a small portion of ground he immediately moved up enough troops to hold it, laying wire and mines. Every salient point he could take he deemed worthy of holding.

He had available for the attack of February 29 the following divisions or elements thereof:

362d Infantry Division
 26th Panzer Division
 715th Infantry Division
Hermann Goering Panzer Division
 29th Panzer Grenadier Division
 114th Jäger Division

In addition he had a battalion-sized force, called "zBV 7", and the 1028th Grenadier Regiment (Motorized).

That he used strong forces from all of these divisions against the 3d Infantry Division during the period February 29-March 3 we know from identifications of the large numbers of prisoners captured in our sector during that time. Five divisions against one.

The enemy now intended to force a decision.

February 28—1600: Call from Divarty: "Report of three enemy tanks . . . We're firing on them with the 9th Field Artillery . . ."

1745: Call from VI Corps: ". . . PW said there was quite a few tanks coming into Cisterna and the attack would come very shortly."

2007: Call from VI Corps: "77th Field Artillery reports trains running in and out of Velletri. Smoke-screen laid on front and troops moving up . . . Company or more observed in this group. Personnel running around there all day. PW said he had heard that tanks were rolling forward for a new attack . . . Another PW . . . said 300 tanks, mostly Tigers, are nearing Cisterna and that an attack will come very shortly" (*this was a prisoner estimate and not to be taken too literally*: Ed.).

Beginning at 2130 the Commanding General called all regiments and informed them to be especially alert, and to be sure that patrols were active and alert. During the night enemy artillery increased noticeably.

0500: Call from 7th Infantry: "Both of our front-line battalions are receiving a hell of an artillery barrage which started fifteen minutes ago. . ."

At first light the enemy attacked in the area of Fosso Carano, against the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, and south of Cisterna against the 15th Infantry, and in the center of the Division sector against the 7th Infantry. The attacks were supported by a total of forty Mark IV and VI tanks, and the 362d Infantry Division was identified for the first time as spearheading the attack. Elements from *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division, 26th *Panzer* Division, and at least a regiment each from the 715th Infantry Division and 114th *Jäger* Division also took part in the assault.

At 0605 the first infantry attack hit between 2d and 3d Battalions, 7th Infantry, and an hour later the left flank of the 2d Battalion came under attack. Company F was immediately shifted to back up Company E on the left flank.

0643: Call from 7th Infantry: "There is a 20-man penetration between L and A companies of our outfit. Reported to 300 yards behind L Company, which report is unconfirmed so far."

0650: Call from 7th Infantry: "2d Battalion is being attacked on both flanks but they said situation was in

hand. Had report that few enemy got in vicinity of K Company and are being cleaned up."

0735: Call from 7th Infantry: "Just lost contact with 509th. Understood they withdrew a unit. Would like further information. The 2d Battalion CO thinks they have broken through over there but he doesn't know for sure. I've ordered F Company to move on that flank and C Company to back them up."

0745: Call from 7th Infantry: "Received radio message from 509th: 'Breakthrough on our lines—need tanks—urgent!'"

A great battle lies behind the cryptic lines. In some sectors of the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, an old German battle tactic was being used—rush in closely packed, screaming. The machine gunners were having a field day. It was a dirty, bitter fight, however. The morning was miserable, wet, and cold. Shivering soldiers stood in water-filled holes and forced themselves to hold rifles steady enough to shoot. From one artillery OP could be seen figures in gray-green long overcoats, carrying shiny messgear, infiltrating down draws. The observer waited until the draw had filled, then gave orders for a concentration of fire. When the smoke had cleared, green figures lay still, or writhing, on the ground.

Lt. Col. John A. Heintges of the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, saw about 200 Germans formed in defilade, about to attack the 2d Battalion on his left, and ordered artillery on them, completely smashing the attack and leaving dozens of dead enemy lying on the ground.

Tank destroyers of the 601st Battalion pulled out from behind sheltering houses and blasted away, almost pointblank, at attacking tanks. Gunners from the regimental antitank companies stood their ground with their comparatively small 37mm and 57mm antitank guns and shot until their targets, or they themselves, were destroyed.

Most serious situation developed in the 509th sector where the lines were stretched extra 'thin. The enemy had attacked at daylight in battalion strength and penetrated about 700 yards on a 1000-yard front, with a maximum penetration of 1500 yards. The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, was given orders to prepare for a counterattack to regain the lost ground.

A 40-man patrol infiltrated into a 15th Infantry position. The bulk of the patrol was captured, and the remainder killed or driven out. About noon, fourteen enemy tanks supported by a company of infantry attacked Isola Bella and drove a platoon of Company G, 15th Infantry, out of position north of the crossroad, but other positions were held. Company F, 15th Infantry, moved up and relieved Company G at Isola Bella, digging in immediately south of the crossroad, astride the road. Company G moved a short distance south on the Conca-Cisterna road and took up position.

Said Lt. Col. Jack Toffey, CO 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry: ". . . A German company, with machine guns and tank support, assaulted our outposts near Ponte Rotto. Control of this tiny settlement was essential to our operations and the machine gunners and riflemen lodged in the houses around it were ordered, although outnumbered, to hold at all costs. . . ."

"The brunt of the kraut attack struck at a house some 800 yards beyond the company CP," said MG squad-leader Robert L. Jones, "which was held by Pfc. John B. Silva . . ., his machine-gun crew, and about half a dozen riflemen. Through the haze and mist, a whole company of krauts, backed with two machine guns, approached our position and opened up with a terrific volume of fire."

Silva waited until advance enemy elements were within fifty yards, then opened fire, mowing down every German who exposed himself.

The enemy continued to advance. Two machine guns laid down intense fire on the barricaded window which Silva was using for a gun position. Rifle-grenadiers opened fire, while others rushed up to within a few yards of the house and hurled hand grenades.

"In spite of the odds and the terrific punishment he was taking," said Sergeant Jones, "Pfc. Silva kept his gun going continuously. As long as we could hear the fire of our machine gun, we were able to forget our fear and keep on sniping at the enemy."

The enemy was stopped for two hours, at the end of which time he brought up a Mark VI tank and placed it in turret defilade in an irrigation ditch about a hundred yards from the house.

The tank fired eight rounds, from its 88mm gun, at point-blank range. The house, seriously weakened by previous artillery concentrations, came tumbling down in a rain of masonry, rafters, and other debris. Silva, in spite of the shaking up and the cuts and bruises he sustained, dug himself out of the mess, and found his machine gun buried beneath the mass of rubble. He commenced cleaning and checking its serviceability.

Said Sergeant Jones, "Picking myself up in the midst of the dust and rubble, I saw Pfc. Silva frantically removing debris which had covered his machine gun. Bleeding and bruised, he rapidly wiped the barrel and slot with a rag and *ran a cleaning rod through the dust-covered barrel.*"

". . . The Germans were advancing," said Sgt. (then Private) Willard Plegge, "believing that the Mark VI had knocked out our machine gun and that all they had to do was mop up. Pfc. Silva quickly disillusioned them. He dragged his machine gun to the opposite corner of what had been the building and set up a new firing position in the mass of rubble. I heard his

machine gun go into action a second time; again the kraut was stopped dead."

Silva, in this newly-exposed position, continued to fire his gun until he had exhausted his ammunition. Then, instead of withdrawing, he ran through the wreckage of the house, found four boxes of ammunition, carried them back to the gun and resumed fire.

Said 2d Lt. (then S/Sgt.) William H. Trachimewicz, "All day he operated his machine gun single-handed, holding off the strong enemy force. At twilight, he exhausted his ammunition for the second time. Instead of taking advantage of semidarkness to withdraw, Pfc. Silva seized a carbine and continued to fire at the enemy. In this way he managed to hold off the Germans until fresh supplies of machine-gun ammunition came up from the rear.

"After thirteen hours of virtually single-handed combat, he turned over his gun to a relief crew. Through his gallant action he had thwarted an attack by approximately a hundred Germans, killing about thirty of them. The house was held. We had broken a powerful enemy attack without yielding ground."

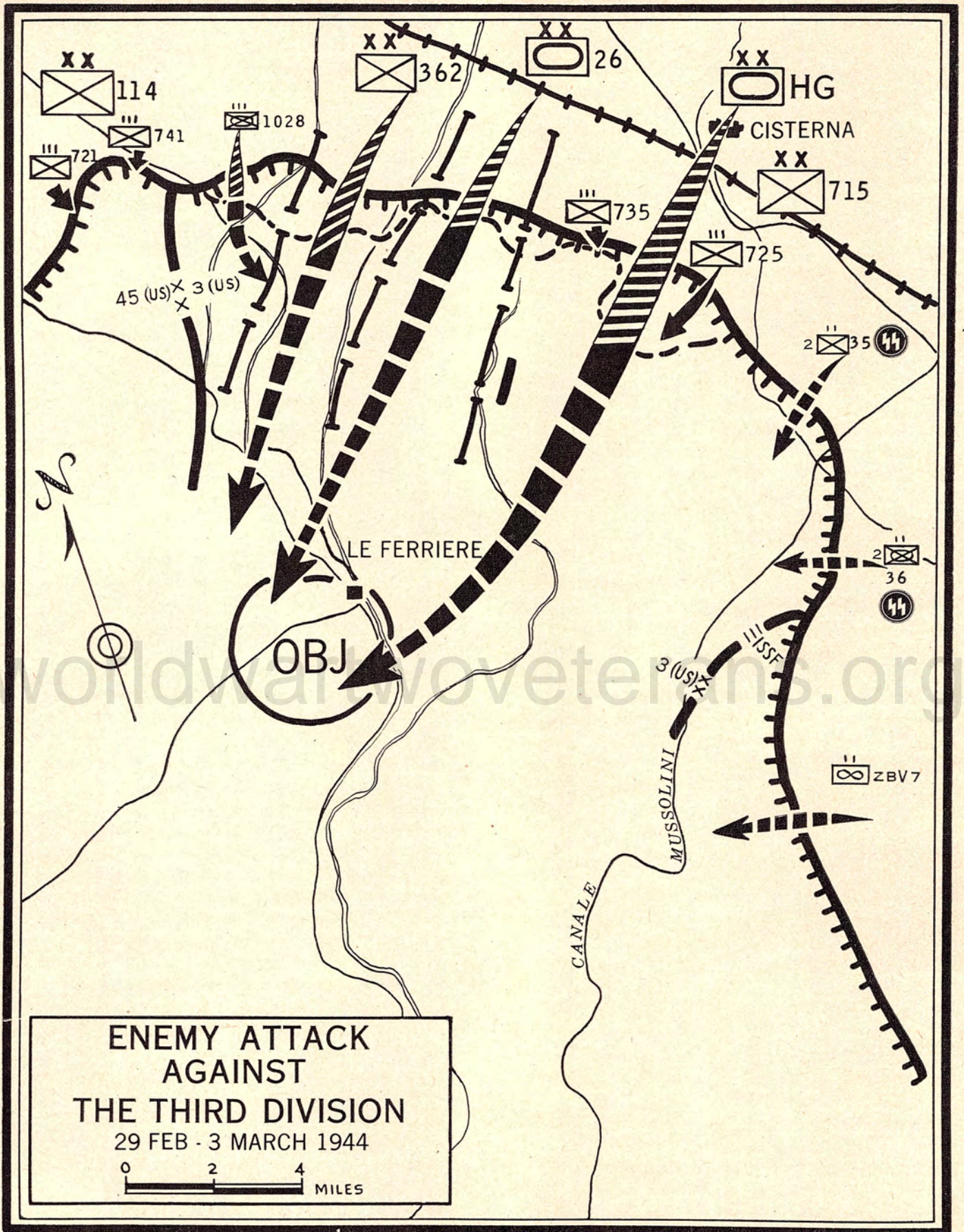
Another epic defense that day was put up by Pfc. Frederick Vance and Pfc. Eugene Procaccini of Company I, 30th Infantry, in which both men lost their lives.

"At about 0530 hours, the enemy attacked in great strength," said Capt. Maurice Rothseid, CO of Company I, "utilizing at least two companies of infantry, supported by artillery, in their first wave. After fighting for about twenty minutes, the left flank and center outposts withdrew to the MLR. However, the right flank outpost, which was manned by Pfc. Vance . . . assistant BAR man and his gunner, Pfc. Eugene Procaccini, held fast in the face of the enemy onslaught."

About sixty enemy concentrated their efforts in an attempt to eliminate the outpost, using heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery fire to "soften it up." When the fire was lifted the enemy began advancing in short rushes and succeeded in reaching to within twenty yards of the position. Meanwhile another wave of Germans struck the left flank, forcing the company to divert most of its firepower to that sector, leaving Vance and Procaccini unassisted. Nevertheless they remained in position and cut down enemy who charged. Suddenly a figure arose from the outpost and began crawling back to the MLR.

"As the figure got closer, I saw that it was Pfc. Vance," related Squad Leader S/Sgt. William C. Beeson. "He was moving as fast as a man can on his belly and elbows, coming right through an artillery concentration. He had left his rifle back in the outpost."

Procaccini, meanwhile, having run out of BAR ammunition, opened fire with Vance's M-1 rifle.



Captain Rothseid told Vance that he had done his job and that it was time for the two men to abandon the outpost, but Vance merely continued stuffing a couple of sandbags with ammunition. When he had filled them he picked up another M-1 from a nearby casualty and commenced crawling back toward the outpost. When he had got about halfway an enemy machine gun opened fire from a range of about seventy-five yards, the bullets tearing through his pack. Vance stopped crawling, worked his M-1 into firing position, and with two shots disposed of the enemy gunner and his assistant. Then he continued his slow crawl until he had reached the emplacement.

During his absence Procaccini had been keeping the Germans at bay with his M-1 by standing up despite withering small-arms fire, and firing at every enemy soldier he saw, but they had continued to infiltrate toward him. With the increased firepower, the two men again began to hold their own.

After about an hour the enemy abandoned hopes of an infantry assault and wheeled a self-propelled gun into position. Said Rifleman Pfc. Herman E. Johnson, ". . . While the gun was getting the range, Pfc. Vance and Pfc. Procaccini turned their attention to the attack on our MLR and directed intense and effective fire on the flank of the attacking krauts, throwing them into confusion. Finally, the SP gun scored a direct hit, which killed them both instantly."

"Their unselfish heroism held back an overpowering enemy attack for over two hours, giving the rest of the company time to adjust artillery fire which completely stopped it," said Sgt. Beeson. "Later, when we went to the outpost, I saw these two men had fired the M-1 until its rifling had been completely worn out; the weapon was absolutely useless. In all, these men had killed eighteen krauts and wounded at least eighteen more. Five of the krauts they had killed lay within ten feet of their emplacement."

Both Pfc. Procaccini and Pfc. Vance were posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment stopped two attacks, one of small scale against Company A, and one of company size against the 4th Ranger Battalion, attached.

The attacks against the 7th Infantry were heaviest, but nowhere did the enemy gain and hold any ground. In the afternoon the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, and Company C, 7th Infantry, both initiated counterattacks, Company C attacking up the Fosso della Crocetta on the right of the 2d Battalion's attack through Carano. The company attack continued until nightfall, and succeeded in clearing out some infiltration down that stream, which was just to the left of 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry.

The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, jumped off on its second large-scale counterattack within ten days, at 2130, February 29. It was a bloody affair for both sides, but the attack was absolutely essential to the security of the beachhead.

The attack reached its first phase line 1,200 yards beyond the line of departure by 0130, March 1, when the battalion encountered extremely heavy small-arms and automatic-weapons fire in pitch darkness and heavy rain. At 0545, after reorganizing in the dark, and coordinating all three companies under trying weather, the attack resumed. By 0815 the entire enemy penetration attacks had been eliminated, and 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, took over the 509th position.

How dangerous the situation had been prior to the attack was revealed when the regimental commander of the 30th, Lieutenant Colonel McGarr, inspected the ground over which the attack had been made and found German bodies a bare hundred yards north of Carano.

Nothing has yet been said of the artillery in the day's attack. When all the accounts of the day's action were finally compiled, it was clearly evident that the artillery was the instrumental arm in breaking the force of the attack. Principal employment was against enemy reserves. PWs taken revealed that practically all communications had been cut, reserves scattered and demoralized, attacking units severely cut up and further reduced by accurate small-arms and machine-gun fire. The fire of over 1200 pieces of artillery was employed that day, and several batteries fired a total of shells during the period exceeding any number they had ever before fired.

During the day the enemy lost fourteen tanks, more than 150 prisoners, and several hundred killed and wounded in the 3d Infantry Division sector. By noon of March 1 the PW count had swelled to over 300.

Engineers cratered and mined roads leading into our sector over the night of February 29-March 1. The 3d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment, moved into the 3d Division area in general support.

Three enemy attacks, one supported by tanks, were repulsed during the afternoon of March 1. Artillery fire broke up an attack of 200 men against the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry. An attack of two companies supported by tanks against the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry was repulsed only after six tanks had broken into the platoon positions of Company K and fired pointblank at the men in their foxholes. Artillery fire repulsed an enemy push against the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry. During the night of March 1-2 our positions were consolidated, wire and mines placed, and cratering and mining of roads leading into enemy terri-

tory continued. Prisoners continued to stream in, a total of 153 being counted in the 24-hour period between noon of March 1 and noon of March 2. During the same period twenty tanks were destroyed.

On March 2 and 3, several small-scale enemy attacks supported by tanks were repulsed successfully, except southwest of Ponte Rotto where two tanks ran right up the road and got into platoon positions of Company L, 7th Infantry, and behind one of their forward platoon positions. This forced an element of Company I on the right of the road to fall back, and the abandonment of the forward position on the left of the road by L Company.

Companies A and B, 7th Infantry, formed for a counterattack, Company A on the right of the road, and Company B on the left. From the beginning A Company came under terrific *Nebelwerfer*, artillery

self-propelled, and small-arms and machine-gun fire, and Company B likewise received a good deal of artillery and time-fire from self-propelled weapons, but nevertheless pushed as far forward as was practicable. Company A received very heavy casualties, but after nightfall was able to reconsolidate the ground lost by Company I.

The line again rejoined and rested on the Ponte Rotto road, although 300 yards remained in enemy hands, and could not be retaken on account of intense artillery and small-arms and machine-gun fire. That night the road was cratered and mined.

An attack of eight enemy tanks and a company of infantry was repulsed by the 15th Infantry the same day. Two tanks were destroyed. From noon of March 2 to noon of March 3, eight enemy tanks were put out of action.



"Hospital Row" on the Anzio beachhead more frequently than not under long range artillery fire or night-bombing attacks.

This day marked the end of the enemy's offensive effort and his return to the defense.

Prisoners taken from February 29 to March 3 included men from the following units:

Hq. Company, 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th Companies, 954th Regiment, 362d Infantry Division

1st, 2d Companies, 362d *Fusilier* Battalion, 362d Infantry Division

Hq. Company, 2d, 3d, 5th, 6th, 7th Companies, 1028th Grenadier Regiment (Motorized)

Engineer Company, 1028th Grenadier Regiment (Motorized)

5th, 6th Companies, 67th *Panzer Grenadier* Regiment, 26th *Panzer* Division

1st and 3d Batteries, Artillery Regiment, 715th Infantry Division

Hermann Goering "Alarm" Companies: "Alarich," "Pauke," "Vesuv"

Hermann Goering Light Weapons *Jaeger* Battalion.

2d, 3d, 4th Companies *zbV* 7.

1st and 2d Companies, 715th Engineer Battalion, 715th Infantry Division

7th Company, 35th *Schutzstaffel PGR SS Reichsfuehrer* Division

1st, 2d, 3d Companies, *PGR* 2, *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division

Hq., 955th Regiment, 362d Infantry Division

Hq., 2d Battalion, 955th Regiment, 362d Infantry Division

1st, 2d, 3d, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 13th Companies, 955th Regiment, 362d Infantry Division

1st Company, 60th Engineer Battalion (General Headquarters)

1st Company, 362d Engineer Battalion

5th Company *PGR* 9, 26th *Panzer* Division

4th Battery Artillery Regiment, *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division

3d Company *PGR* 129, 15th *Panzer* Division

1st Company, 2d Company, Engineer Battalion, 715th Division

GERMANS' ANZIO OFFENSIVE A COSTLY FAILURE; FORTS BOMB RAIL YARDS

ALLIES REGAIN ALL LOST GROUND

3D DIVISION BORE BRUNT OF ATTACK; FINAL NAZI TANK BLOWS REPULSED*

By the Associated Press**

Allied Headquarters, Naples, March 3—A strong German drive into the center of the Anzio beachhead this



Lieutenant Colonel Albert O. Connor, Division G-3.

week was described officially today as a "costly failure." Allied Headquarters said defense positions remained intact with all lost ground regained.

The enemy offensive, the third large-scale attempt to drive the American and British forces into the sea, had now collapsed. Two final German assaults with tanks and infantry late Wednesday were repulsed, it was announced, and no new attacks came yesterday.

U. S. Troops of the 3d Infantry Division bore the brunt of the attack and scored "a complete defensive success," a headquarters spokesman said. Less than a week ago, the 3d, originally composed chiefly of troops from the Pacific Coast, was officially commended for previous exploits on the beachhead.

"Rock of the Marne"

(Graham Hovey in a dispatch from the beachhead today said the 3d's stand was a brilliant repetition of the performance which won it the title of "The Rock of the Marne" in July, 1918, when it played a major part in repulsing the last great German offensive of the last war.)

(A Regular Army unit, the Fighting 3d landed in French Morocco on November 8, 1942, and played an important role in the quick success of the American Expeditionary Force. Later the division paced Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's march through Sicily and has carried a big share of the Fifth Army's fighting in Italy since shortly after Salerno.)

Hovey said the 3d took 430 prisoners and left hundreds of enemy dead on the beachhead in this week's battle . . .

*Headlines in the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, March 4, 1944.

**Associated Press dispatch dated March 3, 1944.



Campo Morto, the Division Forward Command Post on the beachhead. The tower served daily as a check point for enemy artillery.

ITALIAN ALLIED HEADQUARTERS, NAPLES. (UP)*

The German 14th Army has abandoned its third major attempt to crush the Allied beachhead below Rome, it was disclosed officially today, after taking a savage, 36-hour beating from the veteran American 3d Infantry Division and a record concentration of Allied planes and cannon.

Counting their dead in the hundreds, the . . . (Germans) . . . fell back to their initial jumping-off place yesterday as the Americans completed the liquidation of the 1500-yard salient won and lost by the Germans at a staggering cost. . . . (Lt. Gen. Mark W.) Clark paid tribute to the American 3d Division—the Rock of the Marne—whose doughboys smashed the last Hindenburg offensive in France in July, 1918.

The 3d, supported by a number of other units, took on

*United Press dispatch dated March 3, 1944.

the full weight of the German attack and broke it in embittered, hand-to-hand fighting. . . .”

Truly, the 3d Infantry Division had earned its niche in military history. From the ashes of this great defeat, the *Wehrmacht* could not, or at any rate did not, mount another attack of the same proportions against the Anzio Beachhead. The terrible losses inflicted against the enemy were sufficient to make him realize that we were on Anzio to stay. As the months wore on in their monotonous bitterness, the area became a supply dump bristling with munitions and materiel, and before the German hold was broken in May around the edge of the beachhead line, two more United States divisions came to swell our strength sufficiently to be of major value in the drive on Rome.

Said the Commanding General, 1st British Division: “Congratulations on your work out there today. Our lads have been bucked up quite a bit.”

3: The Big War of Little Battles

March 4 to May 21

THE ill-fated German attack proved to be the last kick of a do-or-die German effort to push the Anzio Beachhead back into the sea—Kesselring's hopes for destroying our beachhead had vanished forever.

Breathing heavily, the enemy retired to the security of his prepared positions, which he immediately began to strengthen.

Brig. Gen. John W. "Iron Mike" O'Daniel, the new Division Commander, well aware of the enemy impotency at this time, ordered that all front-line men be given a two-day rest beginning March 8, and a rest camp under the supervision of Maj. Robert E. Mitchell, Division Special Service Officer, was set up in a clump of woods about five miles south of the "hot" zone. The rest period was also devoted to unit reorganization. Infantry units took advantage of the opportunity to rest a company at a time.

The camp was not in a quiet zone by any means but the men were given new uniforms to wear (and no forms to fill out), they had hot showers, they went to the movies (even during blackout hours), they had barber service (including shaves) and, most important of all, they had two nights of uninterrupted sleep, for many the first in seven weeks.

Although the usual lull that follows all storms prevailed, there was no let-down in patrolling, consolidation of position and the laying of harassing and interdictory fires.

For the first time in its combat experience in this war, the Division had been required to hold a defensive sector after seizing an objective and the assignment was made doubly difficult by the tremendous importance which the enemy attached to the destruction of our beachhead.

Even in the wake of his setback, the enemy continued to move his outposts nearer our lines. Our combat patrols, always active, seldom failed to find resistance somewhere, as on March 8 when a patrol of the 15th Infantry, working along the canal near the Cisterna-Sessano road, was engaged in two fire fights. On the same day an enemy patrol of platoon size tried to infiltrate our positions and was brought under artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire southwest of Ponte Rotto and forced to withdraw.

A German wire-laying detail was surprised while operating near our front line the following day and two prisoners were taken by members of Company B, 7th Infantry. The 30th Infantry captured the pilot of an enemy plane that crashed in its sector the same day.

Many attempts to probe our defenses and infiltrate

our positions added to the population of the Division PW cage, where interrogators obtained much information during the somewhat quiet days that marked the month of March.

The stone houses of standard design that lined the few roads to our front were fortified centers of resistance and generally contained bunkers dug into floors. When the houses were destroyed, the debris fell on top of the bunkers and served to increase camouflage and protection.

Ovens, built in every yard, were used as machine-gun nests while manure piles and straw stacks frequently served as positions for automatic weapons.

The situation became such a see-saw affair that every house in the Division sector was pin-pointed on the War Room map, with each dwelling designated by number, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.

The houses numbered 5 and 6, northwest of Carano, became objects of special attention. Houses 1, 2, and 3, or what remained of them, were in our hands, House No. 3 being on the rim of the Division outpost line. House No. 4 was in "no man's land." Beyond lay Houses 5 and 6.

On March 10 a strong combat patrol of the 30th Infantry made a sneak attack on the houses and ran into terrific fire from both inside the houses and from concealed positions around them. A tank also came out of hiding to take part in the melee.

The battle raged for two hours but the odds were too great against the patrol, whose members were caught in cross-fires of machine guns and automatic weapons. The patrol fought until its ammunition ran out and withdrew.

On the same morning 15th Infantry sent out a patrol from Company L, commanded by 1st Lt. James W. Coles, to attack House No. 7, about 300 yards from House No. 6. Again, well-protected machine guns and automatic weapons were met in abundance. This patrol also fought to the end of its ammunition and caused one German to emerge from the house with upraised hands. One of his own machine guns cut him down as he advanced toward the patrol to surrender.

Fights similar to these were frequent.

In the early hours of March 12, 1st Lt. Richard B. Peckinpaugh, commanding Company K, 30th Infantry, led a combat patrol into a draw and headed northeast into enemy territory.

The men encountered an enemy machine gun guarding a road junction and destroyed it with an AP rifle grenade, killing three men. They continued up the road a few hundred yards and destroyed another

enemy machine gun with the same tactics, this time killing two. Machine-gun and rifle fire from nearby houses drove the patrol to cover and Lieutenant Peckinpugh and his men were making their way back through another draw when they caught an enemy position by surprise, killing six and capturing twelve. The patrol's record for the day: eleven enemy killed, twelve captured, two machine-gun nests destroyed.

Houses 5 and 6 were still operating when the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion received orders to silence the inhabitants who for weeks had resisted attempt after attempt to evict them. Once before the 509th had tried to take House No. 5 but didn't succeed. This time it would be different. The plan for attack was arranged, the 'chutists fully briefed on their mission.

On the night of March 13-14 the battalion's mortar and machine-gun crews moved out under cover of darkness and stole into positions within range of Houses 5 and 6. All night long they dug with muffled sound, placed their guns, built up a supply of ammunition. They spent the following day in concealment near their guns, studying the targets, ranging in.

Company L, 30th Infantry, sent an outpost to the vicinity of House No. 6 to assist in securing a line of departure for the 509th's attack.

The attack had been minutely planned before Company C moved out to the attack at 0100, March 15, followed by Company A in reserve. The inevitable occurred when the attackers neared their objective. Machine guns, pistols and small arms spat from the houses with a spontaneity that turned the night's darkness into a sieve of white and black.

Tracers screamed across the marshes from House No. 7. Enemy artillery and mortar fire was brought into play and the horizon blazed as two *Nebelwerfer* batteries opened up from positions along a railroad track 5,000 yards to our front. Four German 81mm mortars that had been spilling death in our area of attack fell into silence when Corps Artillery answered a call for counterbattery with perfect accuracy. Even the Long Toms (155mm. gun) couldn't reach the *Nebelwerfers*, however.

A bake oven in the back yard of House No. 6 suddenly came to life, but it wilted quickly when two fragmentation grenades hit their mark. White phosphorus smoke from grenades sent over to shield our positions added to the stench, which was made somewhat more unbearable by the light drizzle that had started when the attack began. House No. 6 fell at 0430, ending a terrific two-hour struggle that brought death and injury to many paratroopers, but which reflected much credit on the entire battalion. House No. 5 still hung by a thread.

At 0530 the enemy started a counterattack at our left

flank with an estimated two platoons. This was smashed in its infancy by a terrific barrage from our 105s.

All during the night a 4.2 mortar company of the 84th Chemical Battalion and the 60mm mortars of the parachute battalion kept surrounding houses under fire, notably House No. 7, which later was the starting point for another counterattack that was stopped at its inception, mainly by BARs employed at close range.

The Germans in House No. 5 surrendered late in the afternoon, just as the 'chutists were preparing to level the house with pole charges and bangalore torpedoes.

The 509th had avenged a previous setback, and moved the 3d Division front line 500 yards nearer Rome by taking Houses 5 and 6.

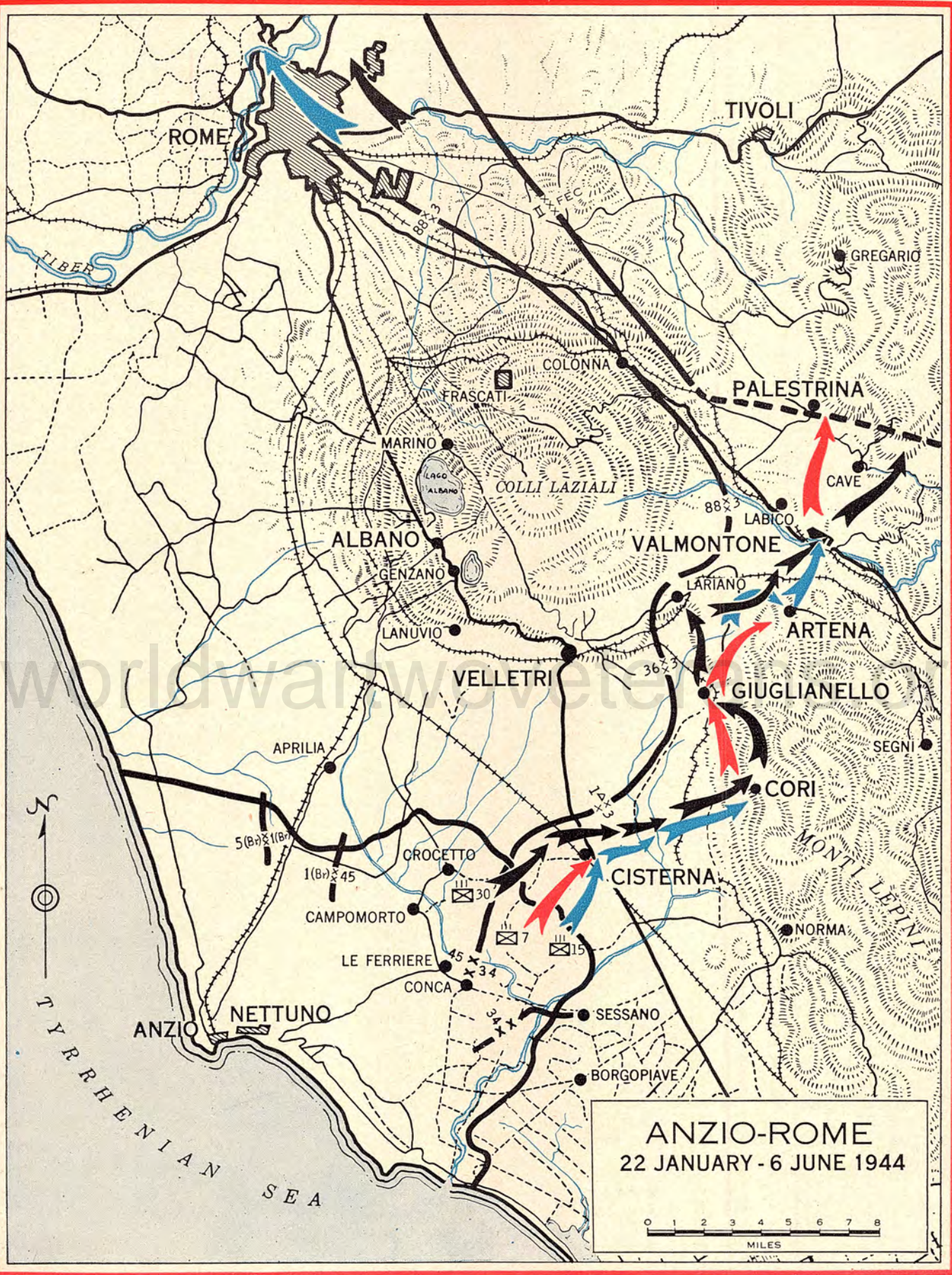
The night of March 15 saw 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, relieving 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion completely. Company L, under Capt. Robert B. Pridgen, was ordered to take over the two houses. Relieving the parachutists in House 6, the company moved to take over 5 and found that the enemy, in the process of counterattacking both houses, had again seized number 5. This counterattack was repulsed after vicious night-long fighting, in which Company L sustained eighteen casualties, including two officers wounded.

After Company L had secured House 5 and occupied House 6, it and the remainder of 3d Battalion began outposting all houses to prevent enemy infiltration from the north; improved the positions with barbed wire and hasty minefields, and placed guns at strategic points to defend against another counterattack. The rears of the houses were broken out to enable tanks to take up positions inside. The houses had been a tough objective to take and the doughboys of the 3d did not intend to lose them—and they didn't, although the Germans made several futile attempts to regain them.

The strong defenses set up around Houses 5 and 6 demonstrated the value of ground on the beachhead. The situation was best described by Colonel Yarborough when he briefed the 'chutists prior to their attack.

"The price of ground here is skyrocketing like the price of Scotch whiskey—high as hell and just as hard to get," he said.

The miserly affection with which the ground was coveted is shown by the fact that during March the Division Engineers, assisted by infantrymen, erected no less than 17,400 yards of double-apron fence and laid some 7,000 antitank mines in the Division area. Triple-concertina and barbed wire entanglements enmeshed all infantry positions while bridges within our control were kept prepared for demolition at all times. Road craters were used extensively as antitank measures and on one occasion an enemy SP gun,



ANZIO-ROME
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 MILES

stopped at a crater, was knocked out by AT fire and a Mark IV tank which tried to by-pass it suffered the same fate. Varied antiparachutist defenses dotted our rear areas.

Daylight movements were held to a minimum, due to excellent enemy observation. Messenger runs, except in emergency, were invariably made under cover of darkness. Despite this handicap more than 22,000 runs were made during the month by the operations platoon of the 3d Signal Company. More than 400 miles of wire circuits were maintained, and much of the wire was placed under ground, especially in the forward areas. Lt. Col. Jesse F. Thomas was the Division Signal Officer.

The 3d Division learned that to seize a beachhead was one thing—to hold it indefinitely was another.

As the end of March drew near the conquered ground was well nigh impregnable. In fact, it was so secure that activities took on the appearance of garrison life right under the nose of Kesselring's forces.

A naturalization ceremony in which thirty-seven members of the Division became citizens of the United States, was held on the beachhead. Thomas S. Estes, United States vice-consul at Algiers and special representative of the United States Department of Justice, conferred the citizenship upon men whose residences were listed from fifteen states.

A romance which began in Sicily ended in a sand-bagged hospital tent in the battle zone when 2d Lt. Genevieve Clark, an Army nurse, was married to 1st Lt. Thomas G. Rose of the 3d Signal Company. A pair of improvised candelabra, stained red with iodine, added dignity to the setting as some 300 nurses, officers and enlisted men sat on cartridge cases and cots to witness the nuptials. There was a reception after the wedding and the bride cut the 25-pound cake with a trench knife.

The Division started relinquishing its portion of the beachhead line March 22 and units withdrew piecemeal from their positions as units of the 34th Infantry Division moved in to replace them.

The final week in this area also marked the dissolution of the pack trains commanded by Capt. Raymond E. Baker. The departure of the animals recalled many outstanding deeds performed by the mounted reconnaissance and pack troops in the long trek through mountains in Sicily and Southern Italy.

In the Avellino area of southern Italy, 1st Lt. Jack Hallett had led a reconnaissance detachment on a 30-mile scouting trip which took his men fifteen miles behind the German lines seeking demolished bridges, pillboxes and strongly fortified enemy positions. Their radio stopped functioning far up in the mountains

and each bit of information was sent back to headquarters by runner. When the detachment returned, two men had been lost to enemy action and sixteen had been sent back as individual messengers.

Their main mission, however, was to harass the enemy, screen the Division movement and protect our flanks. How well they did this job was reflected by the sadness that marked the passing of the 3d Provisional Reconnaissance Troop, 3d Provisional Pack Train, 3d Provisional Pack Battery and the Provisional Mortar Platoon from the 3d Infantry Division.

The men who had comprised these outfits, all volunteers for the duty, were returned to their former status in the Division.

At 0900 March 28 the Division was officially relieved of command of the sector, ending sixty-seven consecutive days in the line from 0200 January 22, 1944.

The units enjoyed a two-day breathing spell at the rest camp which was interrupted by an air attack March 29. Men of the 441st AAA AW Bn hit six enemy ME 109s and FW 190s during the fight. From D-day to the rest period, the 441st, under command of Lt. Col. Thomas H. Leary, downed twenty-three enemy planes, damaged three and had three probables.

The Division, after its rest, moved into the Torre Astura area where it trained intensively for the next two weeks on defense and limited-objective attacks.

On April 7, the following message was received by General O'Daniel from the Commanding General of VI Corps :

To the Officers and Men of the Third Infantry Division:

Upon the relief of the Third Infantry Division from front-line duty, where it has been since D-day, I desire to express my appreciation for the complete and loyal cooperation of every officer and man. The outstanding accomplishments of the Division during the entire battle since 22 January and, particularly, the outstanding work in connection with stopping the final German attack on 29 February and succeeding days, will be a bright page in our future history.

(Signed) L. K. TRUSCOTT, JR.,
Major General, U. S. Army, Commanding.

While enemy harassing tactics continued throughout the training period, reports from adjacent units indicated the Germans were continuing a defensive attitude throughout the sector.

On April 9 the 34th Division reported that four remote-controlled tanks (Goliaths) had exploded close to their front lines and that a rifle grenade had destroyed a fifth one.

The British, on the left flank of the 34th, reported that a "rocket-like projectile with a 3,000-foot-long streak" had been observed but unidentified.

After a two-week layoff from combat, the 3d began to move into position to relieve the 45th Division on April 11. By 0600 April 16, the Division had completed the relief and was in command, with a mission to straighten out its lines, relieve enemy pressure on vital strong points and improve its defensive positions.

The 7th and 30th Infantry Regiments occupied the new front-line positions, with the 15th in reserve. The 7th's sector, on the left, was wooded and cut with draws, affording the enemy good opportunity for infiltration into our positions. The 30th's front was more open, although it was cut with one unusually deep draw, the Spaccasassi Creek, down which the enemy was to attempt several attacks.

The regiments spent the first day locating sniper posts, improving their defensive works, and establishing outposts and listening posts. The 7th sent out a combat patrol to find approach routes for infiltrating troops to more favorable positions.

On the following day, the 2d Battalion of the 30th celebrated its return to combat by firing all its organic weapons on known enemy positions in a five-minute barrage that shook the lethargic beachhead. That night, the 191st Tank Battalion, attached, fired 120 rounds in a single shoot and started a large fire in the enemy area. The Division had returned to action, blazing away.

The Germans were intent on containing the 3d in its present position and the 3d was determined to straighten the weaving front that offered opportunities for enemy flank attack.

Our combat patrols annoyed the enemy for several days but with no noticeable effect—the scalloped front still remained. On April 21, three combat patrols tried in vain to oust four enemy machine guns that created a bulge in the 7th's sector between Companies K and L. A limited objective attack, the kind the Division had been training for at Torre Astura, was launched against the positions at 2200 April 22 with Company G, supported by four tanks, assaulting. Companies K and L were in support. It was an all-night fight but by daybreak the enemy positions had been destroyed and twenty-seven prisoners had been taken.

Two other plans for raids into enemy territory had been completed and were ready for execution—the operations known as "Mr. Black" and "Mr. Green."

The enemy had made three attacks down the Spaccasassi Creek bed against Company B, 30th Infantry on April 22, so General O'Daniel decided to forestall future pushes by taking the ground to the immediate



This is a "fosso," the Italian word for ditch. The beachhead was covered with "fossi" of various sizes.

front of the 1st Battalion of the 30th, in the initial operation.

The "Mr. Black" operation was an attack by Company A of the 30th that developed into one of the bloodiest small encounters that the Division had ever known.

The assault, which began at midnight April 23, was preceded by artillery and mortar fire and introduced the "scorpion" as an advance road-clearer for foot troops. The scorpion, a medium tank with a rotating flailing device made of chains and designed to detonate land mines, led the attack across "no man's land" and up the road that led into the enemy lair. The scorpion, as well as the radio-equipped light tank which followed it as a guide, was quickly put out of action by enemy antitank rocket launchers and two T-2 recovery vehicles were disabled trying to retrieve them and clear the advance route.

Following closely behind the scorpion the company attacked in column of platoons, each platoon supported by a medium tank from the 191st Tank Battalion.

Two houses, located about 400 yards apart on alternate sides of the road, were objectives of two of the platoons. The third platoon was to cross the open fields, drive the enemy from the banks of Spaccasassi Creek and establish an outpost near the bend in the river.

The attack was to be "fast, aggressive and ruthless," but the medium tank with the leading 3d platoon struck a mine and the advance was temporarily halted. Enemy mortar and artillery fire caused numerous casualties among our bunched-up infantry, mostly members of the 1st platoon, which was following the 3d.

With their platoon leader, two squad leaders, the platoon guide and radio operator wounded and out of action, the remaining members of the 1st platoon joined with the 2d platoon, which by now had bypassed the 3d platoon and was crossing the open fields toward the Spaccasassi.

Fire from machine guns and small arms was turned on the men from all directions as they headed for the creek—from houses far up the road, from ruins of battered dwellings in the vicinity, from the irrigation ditches and from the numerous shell holes that pocked the area. These hideouts, unoccupied in daylight, had become centers of destruction at night.

One squad reached the river bank and plunged down the 25-foot slope that led to the bed, screaming, shouting, and shooting. Several Germans were killed and a number were captured by this audacious act. Other members of the raiding force who had lived through the withering fire in the open field slid down the river bank. The group was being reassembled when point-blank fire from enemy guns placed in the river bend drove them back with more casualties. The 3d Division men stood toe-to-toe and slugged until the enemy withdrew to a point of safety beyond the bend.

The enemy had converted the high river banks into a system of foxholes and dugouts that were interconnected by narrow footpaths which afforded convenient avenues of approach and exit. Facing an emplaced enemy, the platoon came under heavy artillery fire at this point and was forced to move north up the gully out of range.

This "battle of the river bed" continued all night but fire gradually subsided because neither force could see the enemy positions on account of the intervening river bend. During the night a platoon from Company K, 15th Infantry, arrived and one squad took positions in the river bed while two evacuated the wounded.

The first light of day revealed an unoccupied ditch with a clear field of fire into the enemy's foxholes and dugouts. It was here that Pfc. John C. Squires particularly distinguished himself. Squires, at the time 18 years old and engaged in his first combat, had been performing far above and beyond the normal call of duty all through the night's hellish activity. When Company A's 1st platoon was badly hit during the night, Squires volunteered to go forward and see what had become of it, returning to report that its platoon

leader and platoon sergeant were wounded, and that his platoon could go around and carry on the fight.

"Not many of us thought very much of the idea," said Radioman Pfc. James T. Simmons. "There was nothing ahead except high explosive and lead all the way to the creek. Nevertheless, our platoon leader gave the order to move out."

The platoon moved forward under a terrific concentration of fire, suffering along the way. When it reached Spaccasassi Creek the situation became nearly intolerable. In addition to heavy fire which converged on the creek the enemy was within hand-grenade range.

One after another each NCO became wounded. Squires thereupon took charge and coolly placed the remaining men of the platoon in firing positions as though it were a tactical exercise and the battlefield miles away. Following this he volunteered to return to the company CP for reinforcements, which he did, returning about an hour later with his trousers ripped to shreds from enemy fire, but bringing with him Company A's 2d platoon, a light machine gun, and a bazooka squad from Company K, 15th Infantry.

" . . . The Germans counterattacked our outpost three times in the early morning of April 24," said Pvt. Cleo A. Toothman, "from our front, both flanks, and our rear, using every weapon at their command . . . I should like to express the opinion that Pfc. Squires was in great part responsible for our successful defense. In the first attack he operated a German Spandau machine gun until it jammed, then used both a rifle and BAR just as effectively. In the second, he used the borrowed BAR. Before the third attack he obtained information concerning the operation, assembly, and disassembly of his Spandau machine gun from a captured German officer, reduced the stoppage in his weapon, and surrounded himself with ammunition. When the counterattack developed Pfc. Squires fired three full belts of ammunition (750 rounds) into the oncoming enemy, inflicting heavy casualties. He was, in every sense of the word, an inspiration to all of us.

"After the third counterattack Pfc. Squires went down the Spaccasassi Creek bed alone in a personal manhunt for Germans who still remained in their holes. One by one he silenced enemy machine pistols which opened up on him, setting up his Spandau in the midst of the enemy fire which missed him by only a few inches each time, and firing his weapon until the Germans were forced to surrender. Alone, Pfc. Squires captured twenty-one prisoners in this unique manner, and collected thirteen more Spandau machine guns. These he distributed among the men in the outpost, placed them in firing position, and instructed his comrades in their cleaning and operation."

OPERATION "MISTER BLACK" DEVELOPMENT OF ATTACK

0 100 200 300
YARDS

FRIENDLY ARTILLERY FIRE
ALONG BOTH ROADS

FRIENDLY ARTILLERY,
TANK, MORTER FIRE

worldwar2veteran.org

FIRE FIGHT
& 4 PW'S
H+90

SQD K CO RELIEVES
BASE OF FIRE H+380

2 SQDS & LT MG SET UP
FOR DEFENSE H+30

MED TANK DISABLED
BY MINE H+23

2ND SQD BADLY
DISORGANIZED H+90

LIGHT TANK DISABLED
BY ROCKET H+20

3RD SQD LT MG SQD &
SUPPORT SQD
DISORGANIZED H+75

HOUSE & 6 PW'S
TAKEN H+30

PLT SETS UP
NIGHT DEFENSE

SCORPION DISABLED BY
ROCKET H+15

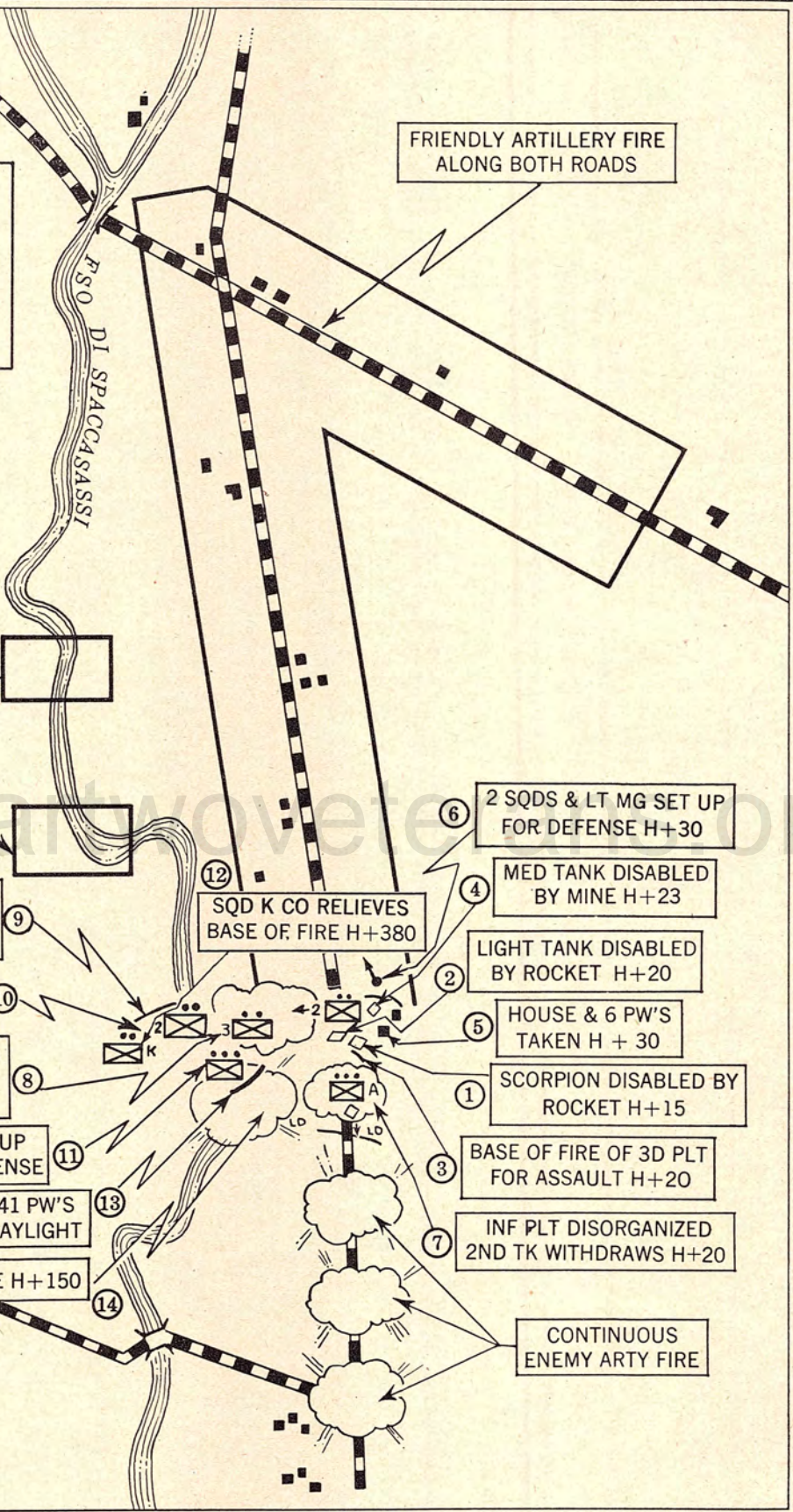
FIREFIGHT & 41 PW'S
67 EY DEAD DAYLIGHT

BASE OF FIRE OF 3D PLT
FOR ASSAULT H+20

EY ARTY FIRE H+150

INF PLT DISORGANIZED
2ND TK WITHDRAWS H+20

CONTINUOUS
ENEMY ARTY FIRE



Said Rifleman Pvt. Aubra Smith, "The desire to close with and eliminate the Jerries whenever and wherever he could find them inspired confidence in me as this was my first taste of real offensive fighting and I was not overly confident. Although it was Pfc. Squires' first fighting, too, he couldn't wait to get at the Jerries and clean them out of their holes.

"Pfc. Squires was an inspiration to all of us. His fearlessness showed us what a determined man could do to the so-called Nazi superman."

Pfc. Squires was killed in a subsequent action. He was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The "battle of the river bed" successfully completed the Division's first limited-objective, infantry-tank attack, since the 3d platoon had seized its objective early, capturing a number of prisoners, an 88mm antitank rocket launcher, and fourteen machine guns in the process.

Operation "Mr. Black" extended our outpost line, resulted in penetration of the strongly fortified Spaccasassi Creek banks, brought in forty-seven PWs and marked the decimation of two companies of the 29th *Panzer Grenadier* Division.

While the Division prepared to execute Operation "Mr. Green" another small, but important, objective was seized; an objective that had become a symbol of German resistance and a stubborn target for our troops.

It was an ordinary country windmill of the type that dots the rural areas all over the United States and it was located in a farmyard only a few hundred yards to our front. The enemy had used it for weeks as an outpost and we had tried many times to take it without success. Few Daily Operations Reports were issued that didn't mention the windmill in some manner.

". . . windmill at (906299) attacked by our combat patrol which withdrew under heavy S/A and MG fire." This was a common notation in our records for more than a week.

The doughboys wanted this picturesque, but lethal, windmill; so, on April 24 a heavily armed combat patrol of the 7th Infantry stormed it, killed four Germans in the ensuing fire fight, captured two machine guns and took possession.

The enemy tried desperately to retake it the next day and several times thereafter but we posted it with one officer, eight men and a section of machine guns and flanked it on both sides by protective outposts manned in strength. A serious enemy hotbed had been eliminated and we had added a picturesque outpost to our line.

"Mr. Green" operation was awaited with anxiety since details about it had been circulated among the

men in advance. It was to be something new and different.

It was to be the first "psychological attack" ever conducted by United States forces since the war began and it was the first time that words instead of bullets were to be used by the 3d Division against the enemy, although the verbal barrage made up only a small part of the attack. Several loud speakers directed toward the enemy lines were to be used in urging the Germans to surrender at a psychological moment during the attack.

Like "Mr. Black," it was a small-scale offensive, directed against the 362d *Fusilier* Battalion, which occupied a defensive position west of Cisterna.

The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Woodrow W. Stromberg, made the assault, with Company F, under Capt. Paul W. Stanley, actually staging the attack. The remainder of the battalion was in support.

At 0300 April 25, the usual sporadic night fighting which was common to the beachhead was sharply punctured when our 155s awakened the enemy with a thirty-five-minute concentration designed to set his nerves on edge.

This harassing fire suddenly stopped at 0405 and the beachhead seemed to start rocking as nine battalions of field artillery, reinforced with fire from tanks and self-propelled guns, cut loose. For nearly five minutes the projectiles from all these guns hit their target simultaneously. The roar was terrific. Designed to impress the enemy with the amount of artillery at our disposal, it also impressed the inhabitants of Anzio, some seven miles away.

Instantly, at 0407, all firing ceased.

A voice that could be heard 1,000 yards away blasted forth from the loud-speakers hidden in the weeds along the front lines. In their own language, the Germans heard that more and heavier artillery was to come. They were told about the impending attack that faced them. And they were urged to lay down their arms and enter our lines at once, or "else." Over and over they heard the words repeated. Then the loudspeakers became silent—and the artillery again took up the "appeal" with a deafening roar.

The fire of our artillery placed the enemy positions in a "box." The sides of the box remained stationary as our shells fell continuously and precisely along the edges, 1,000 yards apart. The rear wall moved forward like the lid of a roll-topped desk, to force the enemy out of their holes and toward our lines. This barrage lasted twenty minutes and finally gave way to harassing fire placed on known enemy positions to soften them further and provide noise to cover the movement of our tanks into position.

Again our guns were silenced, at 0445, and the loudspeakers blared forth a final chance for surrender. With monotonous repetition came the "Surrender! Surrender!" as German NCOs raced from hole to hole threatening death to any *Landser* who heeded the words. The last words died in the renewed thunder of artillery as Company F, with tank reinforcement, moved out of the area in the vicinity of Campo Morto and went into attack at 0500.

Advancing by rushes, our men dropped to their knees to fire tommy guns into German positions at close range, stuck M-1s into dark foxholes and pulled the triggers, and took and generally overran their objective by 0520, the time set in advance plans for the attack to cease. Captain Stanley and his men stayed five minutes overtime "just in case," but they were ordered to withdraw according to plan.

The withdrawal of the company, which ordinarily would have been a difficult operation under the circumstances, was made easy by the close support given by the remainder of 2d Battalion.

Company E, commanded by Capt. James H. Greene, operated the smoke pots that created a covering screen which enveloped the area and hid the men from enemy view as they withdrew. The company also placed small-arms fire on the enemy during the withdrawal.

Members of Company G, under Capt. Hugh E. Wardlaw, Jr., guided the attacking troops and tanks in and out of the zone of action, pointing out the openings in our own and enemy wire and minefields which had been gapped by Division Engineers the night before the attack. The engineers also marked the clear lane with luminous buttons.

As the attack came to a close, Company H, commanded by Capt. Eric W. Tatlock, laid 81mm smoke shells on predesignated points and the Cannon Company, under 1st Lt. Norwood L. Snowden, maintained continuous fire as the company withdrew down Fosso delle Bove.

The attackers were happy and proud of their achievement—they captured nine PWs and killed some fifty Germans.

"Mr. Green" is perhaps the most unforgettable character that Company F and the remainder of 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, ever met.

The stabilized situation which existed in the 3d Division sector was a perfect setting for such limited-objective operations as "Mr. Black" and "Mr. Green" and the Division learned to employ them effectively.

Late April found the Division still attacking in small groups while the enemy continued to probe our defenses, looking for the opening that never appeared.

Enemy aircraft became especially active just when we were being relieved by the 45th Division.

During the night of April 28 about forty planes dropped high-explosives, antipersonnel and rocket bombs on our front lines and in the beach area. Nine planes were shot down. Some fifteen enemy craft bombed and strafed the area the following night, our last in the line, and four of them were brought down.

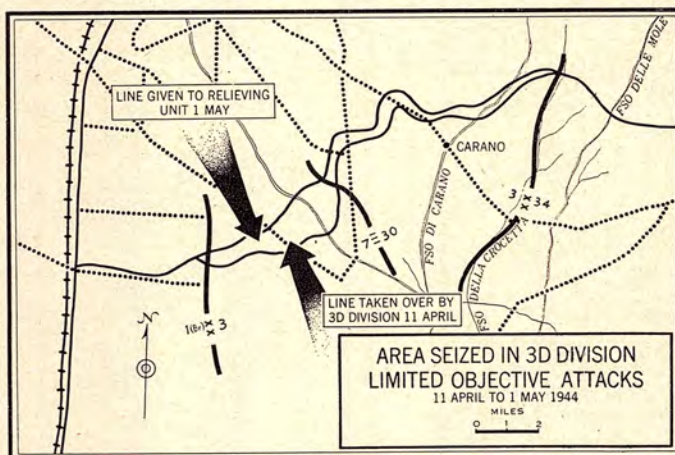
On the following day, at 0600 May 1, 1944, the Division passed control of the sector to the 45th and moved back into the dune area near Torre Astura to prepare for an offensive that would break the beachhead stalemate.

The period of fighting that came to a close with the relief of the 3d Infantry Division by the 45th Infantry Division is known as the "Big War of Little Battles." When the "little" battles were over, however, and the stage was being set for the big battle that was about to be fought, it was known in high staff and command circles that this "Big War of Little Battles" carried on chiefly by the 3d Infantry Division from March 4 until May 1, had accomplished much more than a straightening of the lines, than killing, wounding and capturing enemy and destroying enemy equipment. It had made for one of the chief factors that was to attain its full importance and recognition in the great battle pending. It had raised the morale of all troops on the beachhead and had changed the attitude of the Allied soldiers from one of defense to one of offense.

For nearly four months the beachhead forces had served as a poised dagger, ever threatening to stab into the right flank of the German army that was slowly being pushed north up the Italian boot by other elements of the United States Fifth Army.

The 3d Division was to be the dagger's point. It was the instrument that would penetrate the enemy's defenses and cut rapier-like through his fixed positions. In anticipation of the stab, the first three weeks of May were devoted to sharpening the dagger.

All phases of training centered on the attack with emphasis placed on storming of pillboxes and other in-





3d Division infantrymen practice "tank-busting" tactics during the training in early April on the beachhead.

fantry emplacements, use of battle-sleds, street fighting, coordination of the infantry-tank team, defense against tanks, attack over open country and attack against protected "fossi."

The training of all three regiments of the Division was similar, excepting the 7th Infantry, which spent a short period in Nettuno, where live ammunition and explosives were used in training for street fighting. Two battalions of the regiment were employed in this phase, which stressed the use of rifle grenades, maintenance of control and use of supporting weapons. The 7th had the mission of assaulting Cisterna di Littoria and no stone was left unturned in preparing for the task.

Infantry-tank cooperation similar to that involved in the operations "Mr. Black" and "Mr. Green" received the special attention of all regiments and additional hardening exercises were given members of the battle patrols which previously had been organized in each regiment, and the Division Reconnaissance Troop. The patrols comprised forty-five to sixty men and were heavily armed for special assault missions.

A battle-sled team of sixty men was organized in each regiment and the innovation created much interest in the Division. The sleds, invented by Maj. Gen. John W. O'Daniel, were narrow steel tubes mounted on flat runners and were wide enough to carry one armed infantryman lying down. One medium tank towed twelve of them, which meant that a regimental team comprised one platoon of tanks and sixty sleds. They were used to transport personnel through enemy barrages to the front, the armored tubes serving as protection against shell fragments and small-arms fire.

The artillery units reconnoitered all the area available for gun positions so that when D-day arrived

gun pits had been dug, surveys completed, camouflage erected and communication lines laid.

A nightly "cover preparation" program, fired by all artillery on the beachhead, started May 12 and was highly successful in inducing the enemy to expend much protective fire which could have been used later when the real preparation was fired.

Another innovation created for the breakthrough was the organization of a provisional machine-gun battalion, using all the .50-caliber machine guns in the Division. Applying artillery methods, the battalion was trained to place interdictory and harassing fire on known enemy assembly points and routes of advance during the early stages of the attack.

The 10th Engineer Battalion built wooden bases for the machine guns that provided stable supports for the tripods.

In fact, the engineers made many nonroutine contributions to the advance preparations.

They built a splinterproof Division CP in a quarry just south of Borgo Montello, where they also erected a predesigned PW cage for reception, segregation, interrogation and evacuation. It had a capacity of 5,000.

Each regimental sector was provided with two additional footbridges across the Mussolini Canal, safe from interdictory fire, while great stores of "fascines" (compact bundles for improving traction on soft ground) were placed at appropriate spots for use by armored vehicles.

Personal reconnaissance, study of air photographs and the knowledge of all the surrounding terrain gained after four months on the beachhead, led to experiments in running vehicles along creek bottoms.

Mines no longer needed for defense of the Mussolini Canal were removed and methods devised for breach-



General O'Daniel directs a training manoeuvre in the employment of "battle-sleds," while Generals Clark and Truscott observe.

ing enemy minefields quickly and safely. One of these devices comprised twelve connected 100-foot lengths of primacord with one attached to a 60mm mortar and the other end held stationary at the gun position. The cord was detonated after being propelled to its destination by the mortar shell. The cord would detonate antipersonnel mines that lay along its path and clear a way into enemy territory. Another contrivance, called the "M-2 Snake," was a steel trough filled with Bangalore torpedoes laid end to end along its 200-foot length, which could be shoved into an enemy antitank field by a tank.

These mechanical aids, however, did not reduce the amount of training that the Engineers received in breaching minefields by hand, the method which proved highly successful during the Cisterna attack.

Six tank crossings were made at the Fosso Femina-morta and Fosso di Battagone, draws that criss-crossed our area and averaged sixty-five feet in width and thirty-five feet in depth.

A new road, to supplement the two main arteries that were used by adjacent units, was built between Borgo Montello and the rear beachhead area, a distance of five miles.

The first warning order to move up came during the day of May 20, but by evening it had proved to be a false alarm. The day of attack, however, was imminent. At night it was now possible to see gun flashes from the southern front in the clear Italian skies. The push north from Cassino started May 12, and was destined for clear-cut success from the beginning. Sure enough, the next day the order came out "The regiments will move up tonight."

The coincidence of dates was unintended. It was now May 21. On January 22 units of the 3d Infantry

Division had first touched ground below Nettuno. It was the eve of the first landings which touched off the ill-starred campaign.

That evening, May 21, 3d Infantry Division moved out from the pine forest in full marching order.

It was a balmy evening. As if to justify, finally, the cognomen "Sunny Italy" after so many months of nothing but rain, wind, and snow, all the days had been warm lately, even hot. There were few clouds in the sky this evening and it was still full daylight when the leading Division elements were to be seen emerging from the protective concealment of the wooded bivouac. The smoke-fog machines were going full blast, and the sickly-sweet streams of man-made mist merged into a low-hanging blanket which screened the telltale rear areas of the beachhead.

The 15th Infantry, from its encampment on the sandy wastes north of the pine forest, took its route through the forest, then struck out up the road for the front. The 7th and 30th Infantry Regiments followed.

In the green fields which fronted the wooded area, a few sheep were grazing. Their Italian herders looked at the troop-filled roads with interest.

Along the main road which skirted the forest's edge the 3d Division Band under the leadership of Chief Warrant Officer Eugene Kusmiak had taken a vantage point. As the doughboys moved past, the band played "Dogface Soldier," and a selection of marches.

As judged from the attitudes and remarks of the passing columns, never had the men been in finer fettle; never had the morale been higher.

They joked with the bystanders, the bandsmen, the MPs along the route and themselves. They sang or whistled. They held their heads high.



The price of Victory. This is a portion of the Allied Cemetery at Nettuno, where many 3d Division soldiers are buried.

To those persons who had been at Bizerte the soldiers' attitude was reminiscent of the condition and mental attitude of the same Division just prior to embarkation for Sicily. Of those men then it has been said that, "never, anywhere, was a division of any army better equipped, mentally or physically, for combat."

Ahead but a short distance were the front lines which for four months had been braced and strengthened to a point almost unparalleled in the war of movement which prevailed from 1939-1945. There were thousands of antitank and antipersonnel mines laid by both sides. The enemy had sited his weapons in order to cover most favorably all routes of approach. The ground was flat, with few folds and a scarcity of ditches.

Added to all these disadvantages for the attacker was the fact that the southern front was rapidly moving north. Kesselring's intelligence knew that the Anzio front was soon to move into action. If ever it was to be of value, now was the time. Surprise, therefore, could only be the limited surprise of exact date and exact place.

The steadily marching men of the 3d Infantry Division advanced toward one of the bloodiest single encounters fought by any Division in one day in World War II and what might well be classed as the greatest

victory of its total combat career. The sky darkened, and still the columns lined the roads. The artillery commenced its nightly serenade and the gun flashes merged their fire, like chain lightning.

TABLE OF CASUALTIES*

Anzio Beachhead

(Jan. 22, 1944 through May 22, 1944)

	<i>KIA</i>	<i>WIA</i>	<i>MIA</i>	<i>Total Battle Casualties</i>	<i>Non-Battle Casualties</i>
	1074	4302	919	6295	6455

Reinforcements and Hospital return-to-units personnel

	<i>Reinf.</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>Hosp. RTU</i>	<i>EM</i>
<i>Off</i>			<i>Off</i>	
249		6755	197	7967

KNOWN ENEMY CASUALTIES

<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Captured</i>
433	255	1588

*These figures were provided by the A C of S, G-1, 3d Infantry Division.

VII
THE PUSH TO ROME

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I: The Second Battle of Cisterna di Littoria

TROOP LIST—Operation "Buffalo" Third Infantry Division (Reinf)

Organization for Combat

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. <i>Hq and Hq Co, 3d Inf Div</i> | 6. <i>441st AAA AW Bn</i> |
| 2. <i>7th Inf Regt</i> | 7. <i>3d Rcn Trp</i> |
| 3. <i>15th Inf Regt</i> | 8. <i>3d QM Co</i> |
| 4. <i>30th Inf Regt</i> | 9. <i>3d Signal Co</i> |
| 5. <i>3d Inf Div Artillery</i> | 10. <i>3d Med Bn</i> |
| 9th FA Bn | 11. <i>10th Engr Bn</i> |
| 10th FA Bn | 12. <i>84th Chem Bn</i> |
| 39th FA Bn | 13. <i>601st TD Bn</i> |
| 41st FA Bn | 14. <i>751st Tk Bn</i> |
| 24th Armd Field Regt (105H) (Br) | 15. <i>703d Ord Co</i> |
-

AT about dusk May 25, 1944, a rather slack-appearing German officer, wearing a lieutenant colonel's uniform, appeared in the interrogation room at the 3d Infantry Division's cage just south of Borgo Montello, on what had been the Anzio beachhead. He was the commanding officer of the 955th Infantry Regiment, which had been charged with the defense of the city of Cisterna di Littoria and its immediate environs.

At this moment, his regiment no longer existed as a fighting force; Cisterna was in United States hands, and only small, disorganized groups and individual soldiers were falling back in front of our forces, or fleeing in an effort to reach previously selected areas and reorganize.

The presence of the German lieutenant colonel in our cage was symbolic of the two salient facts of the Second Battle of Cisterna: first, the tactics of the German defenders, which were to defend in place and face the alternatives of success or destruction; second, the total triumph of the Division's attack, which in three days had fulfilled that portion of the familiar directive contained in the field order for the operation which read: "To destroy the enemy in the Division's zone of action."

Next morning's headlines carried the news that the southern Fifth Army and the beachhead forces had met on the swampy flat-lands of the Pontine marshes; less attention was given to the fact that Cisterna, after nearly four months of intermittent siege, was at last firmly in United States hands. Yet this latter item contained the story of one of the greatest attacks ever delivered by an infantry division, without which the advance on Rome might well have been delayed for days or even weeks.

It was one of the strange coincidences of war that the victors of the Second Battle of Cisterna had been

the losers of the First Battle of Cisterna nearly four months before. On January 30, 1944, the 3d Infantry Division, reinforced by Ranger and Parachute units, fought a gallant, heartbreaking and unsuccessful battle to capture Cisterna. The Division staff learned on that day, from prisoners of war, what it could not have learned previously from any normal intelligence source: that Hitler had ordered the beachhead destroyed, and that enemy reinforcements were streaming toward Anzio from northern Italy, southern France and the Balkans. Enemy numbers plus the flat, coverless terrain defeated the 3d Division that day and foreshadowed the long, near-stalemate that followed. The destruction of two Ranger battalions in the space of eight hours at Cisterna was a somber detail in a dark picture.

The situation was vastly different in May. Not the smallest difference was the fact that our forces had the enemy completely "cased" for the latter attack, almost down to each machine-gun nest and firepit. Long and careful interrogation of prisoners, detailed study of air photos, and constant patrol activity gave our staff an intimate knowledge of where the enemy was located and how he defended his positions.

The enemy, likewise, enjoyed many advantages. He still had perfect observation of the entire beachhead area from many vantage points. He had three and a half months in which to dig in, lay wire and mines, sandbag his positions, erect tank obstacles and coordinate his fields of fire. His artillery was registered on every worthwhile target and road junction in the battle area. His troops knew every wrinkle in the ground, and knew that a major Allied attack was coming.

Yet this position was broken in three days, and every living German killed or chased from the battle area.

Terrain, in the battle of Cisterna, played a largely

negative role. In many small sectors, the battle might as well have been fought on a billiard table, the ground was so flat and devoid of cover. There were, however, certain interesting irregularities worth a brief review.

Several ditches (Italian "fosso") cut the battle area into compartments, running generally north to south, with anywhere from a few hundred to several thousand yards between ditches. These "ditches" are actually small canyons in many cases, sometimes reaching a depth of sixty feet or more, representing absolute barriers to vehicle movement and serious obstacles to infantry movement. South of Cisterna they are not so important, the ground being flatter and the ditches shallower; north of the town, however, the ground rises and the ditches become deeper and their banks steeper. In addition, there are many minor drainage ditches which intersect the fields and prevent cross-country vehicle movement.

The area around Cisterna was well-settled and there were numerous farm buildings of concrete or masonry construction. Most of these buildings had been totally or partially destroyed by artillery fire, and were very useful to the enemy as strongpoints or gun emplacements, as the walls and rubble offered considerable protection against small-arms fire and shell fragments.

By the time of the attack in late May, field grasses and grain had grown to a considerable height in places, affording some concealment to creeping men. Scattered patches of woods, well chewed up by artillery fire, still concealed enemy strongpoints, supply distributing points or tank-assembly areas. Nowhere did the vegetation offer any particular barrier to movement.

The ground itself, muddy and covered with patches of standing water during the early spring, had dried out sufficiently at the time of the attack to permit the passage of tanks almost anywhere.

Back of the battlefield itself, to the north and northeast, was the real high ground which gave the enemy his observation and defilade. North beyond Velletri were the Colli Laziali, or Alban Hills; northeast were the Monti Lepini, whose nearest peak, Monte Arrestino, was obviously the key terrain feature in the entire sector and actually was the first hill captured by the beachhead forces.

The road network in the battle area was fairly good, but it was discovered after the breakthrough that German road maintenance was far worse than ours, due to our air superiority and the greater intensity of our shelling. Highway 7, the only first-class road in the area, ran diagonally across the battlefield from southeast to northwest, passing through Cisterna.

The Rome-Cisterna-Naples rail line, which also passed through Cisterna itself, was a feature of some importance. In January the Germans had begun to

prepare this line as their MLR, but when the front solidified two or three thousand yards south of the railroad, nothing further was done to improve the positions which had been begun along it. The physical barrier of the railroad embankments and cuts, remained, however, as well as the weapon pits and dugouts which already had been prepared.

Division headquarters as well as higher headquarters, had been hard at work for many weeks on a series of plans to resume the offensive and break out of the beachhead. Everyone recognized that our defensive attitude was purely temporary, and that as soon as sufficient strength in troops and supplies had been built up, the big attack would be unleashed. Earlier hopes had depended on the first two abortive efforts to break through the southern front at Cassino, but when these attempts failed, the Allies raised their sights to a grand offensive in which every unit which could be spared would be hurled into the Italian drive.

The beachhead forces had three principal lines of action in mind, each dependent on the speed with which the southern campaign proceeded. They were:

First, in the event of a slow, grinding advance from the south, beachhead troops planned to drive due east to high ground south of Cori, in the Monti Lepini, and then push southeast to effect a union with our units in the south.

Second, in the event of a steady, assured advance on the southern front, beachhead forces would smash enemy defenses at Cisterna and push due north toward Valmontone in order to cut Highway 6 and contribute to the defeat of Kesselring's southern forces.

Third, in the event of a German debacle and hasty withdrawal to the north, beachhead troops would hasten the push on Rome by cracking through the factory area at Carroceto and attacking northwest along the Albano-Rome axis. In all these plans, 3d Infantry Division played a key part in the assault.

The second of these alternatives was ultimately adopted, as the Germans in late May were being steadily forced back but had not yet been knocked off their feet.

In this attack, the 3d Infantry Division's assignment was to assault Cisterna frontally with one regiment and to by-pass it with a regiment on each side, continuing the advance northeast to Cori and anchoring the VI Corps right flank on high ground behind Cori. Special Service Force, operating independently, was on the Division's right flank, and 1st Armored Division on the left. Early capture and reduction of Cisterna was the key to success, as the main roads to Cori and Velletri passed through it. Once Cori was captured, the attack was to turn north toward Valmontone, and eventually toward Rome.

Responsibility for the defense of the Cisterna sector was divided between two German infantry divisions, the 362d and 715th. Neither was up to full strength; heavy casualties and the gradual shriveling of the German divisional organization (each division had only six battalions of infantry) left them with a probable frontline combat strength of about 2500-3000 men apiece. However—and this is important—the enemy was well supplied with automatic weapons and mortars, and had enough ammunition stacked on his positions to keep shooting as long he could hold out, barring a long siege. By the time we attacked, our artillery superiority was marked, and in this department the enemy suffered possibly his greatest disadvantage.

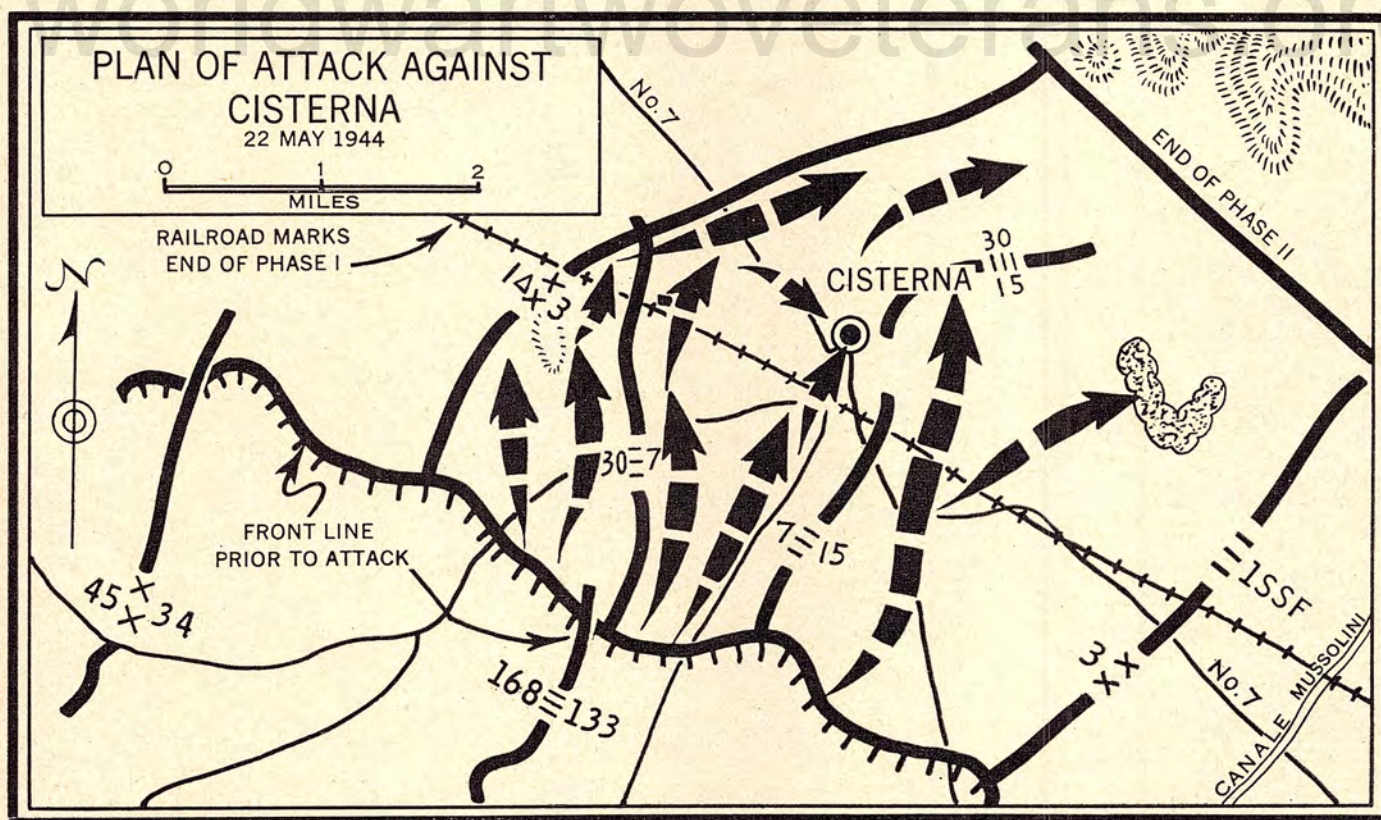
The 362d Infantry Division was responsible generally for the sector west of the Borgo Montello-Cisterna road (Borgo Montello is called Conca on some maps), and the 715th Infantry Division, reinforced by 1028th PGR, for the sector between the road and the coast to the southeast. Battalion sectors normally covered a frontage of about 2,000 yards; our Division, attacking on a 7,000-yard front, therefore found about four enemy battalions in its path, with the equivalent of two or three battalions in reserve.

The enemy defense consisted of a series of platoon strongpoints based on clusters of buildings or terrain features such as clumps of woods, knolls, ravines, etc.

These were backed up by similar strongpoints organized to a depth of about 3,000 yards; these positions were of such density that they presented a continuously occupied zone across the front of the Division, with hardly a spot in the entire zone that could not be brought under the fire of automatic weapons from at least two directions, if not from all sides at once. The enemy had virtually completed a belt of double-apron or concertina wire across his entire front, using the wire chiefly to prevent the approach of foot troops to his strongpoints. Antipersonnel and antitank mines were thickly sown along all avenues of approach, both in front of and between his positions.

Each strongpoint was organized for all-around defense, utilizing three to six machine guns and outlying rifle pits to hold off our threats from any direction. Automatic weapons were generally sited close to the ground in order to get maximum effect against crawling or crouching troops. Overhead cover was provided for many, but not all of the positions.

Firing positions had been prepared for, and employed by, the tanks and SP guns which the Germans had in fair quantity. The enemy was very clever in staking out these positions so that the weapons could deliver effective harassing fire, even at night, then pull out and return to a safe spot before our counterbattery could attack them. The enemy was not especially strong, however, in towed antitank weapons, which



would have been of great advantage to him in well-dug-in forward positions.

It was known that enemy strategy called for a defense on his positions, even at the expense of annihilation, because the successful extrication of his troops on the southern front depended absolutely upon his ability to contain the beachhead. It was upon this basis that our plans for attack were made.

Promptly at 0545 May 23 the artillery preparation for the attack began. For the next forty-five minutes, ten battalions of light, medium and heavy artillery poured high explosives into enemy fortifications and gun positions. Dive bombers, hampered by low clouds, began a counterbattery program which was frequently interrupted by poor visibility.

At 0630 the doughboys attacked. Their movements were covered locally by smoke and seconded by fire of tanks and TDs which initially occupied static firing positions.

For the preceding two nights, troops, trucks, tanks, guns and supplies had been moved into assembly areas in ditches and draws on the flat ground south of Isola Bella, and along the Mussolini Canal. The slightest movement in daylight would have aroused enemy suspicion and drawn a hail of artillery fire—yet these large-scale preparations were carried out without a flaw, and a very real element of surprise was gained.

30TH INFANTRY

The 30th Infantry commanded by Col. Lionel C. McGarr, making the Division main effort on the left, attacked north from a line of departure along the road running west from Isola Bella, thence northwest across the Fosso Feminamorta and the road southwest of Ponte Rotto. The regiment advanced with 2d Battalion west of Fosso Feminamorta, and 3d Battalion (with Company A attached) was astride the ditch and east of it. 1st Battalion (less Company A) was in regimental reserve, occupying an assembly area in Fosso Feminamorta about two miles south of Ponte Rotto.

Enemy reaction to the attack was immediate and violent. The 2d Battalion met strong fire from small arms, SP and artillery before it hit the line of departure. The battalion was in column of companies in the order G, E and F. Company G fought its way about 300 yards north of the Ponte Rotto road, at a point 500 yards west of that settlement, where it received fire from both flanks as well as the front, since friendly units on the flanks had not caught up. At this point a hundred Germans in a quarry were surrounded but could not be routed out as it was impossible to place fire on them. They surrendered the following afternoon. Wardlaw's Wadi (named after Capt. Hugh E. Ward-

law, G Company's commander), a small creek running parallel to Company G's axis of advance proved difficult to clean out; during the process, heavy fire was received from Ponte Rotto.

Company E passed through Company G and continued to meet strong opposition as it fought its way about 800 yards farther north. The company then turned east and wiped out an enemy strongpoint in a group of buildings just west of Fosso Feminamorta. In these buildings, concealed in the rubble, the enemy had placed automatic weapons, SP guns and dispersed riflemen.

The extent of the enemy defense in depth was revealed when Company F passed through Company E and headed for the next objective about 1000 yards due north. Strong fire was received all along the front from well-entrenched enemy. The company moved up a series of small ditches, wiping out enemy opposition, and by nightfall it was attached to 1st Battalion for an attack on enemy positions along the railroad track.

A brief consideration of this attack will make clear the reasons for 2d Battalion's difficulty in maintaining control during the night. Each company ran into strong and continuing opposition; even while Company F was preparing to cross the railroad tracks from its lately-won position, Company E and Company G to the rear were still engaged by scattered groups of enemy in fossi, cellars, dugouts and isolated sniper posts. The battalion was thus strung out in a depth of about 2500 yards, and was fighting bitter, small-scale engagements over the entire area. Elements of 6th Armored Infantry, attacking on the Division's left, made slow initial progress but later arrived at the railroad track prior to the 2d Battalion; some of the armored infantry personnel who accidentally crossed into 2d Battalion's sector assisted in the reduction of some enemy positions.

Company L, the left company of 3d Battalion, assigned to clean out Fosso Feminamorta as far north as Ponte Rotto, had one of the most bitter experiences of the entire attack. About 700 yards southwest of Ponte Rotto, at a point where Fosso Feminamorta swings sharply south, the enemy had installed a company strongpoint based on machine-gun positions dug into the shoulders of the ravine, outlying rifle pits, concertina and double-apron wire, and similar positions stretching northwest across the road. Company L moved rapidly up the stream until reaching the bend, where withering fire was received from the enemy weapons. A light tank, which was to have accompanied Company L up the ditch and to have attacked the enemy positions with 37mm canister, entered the ditch too far south and got bogged down in about five feet of water. Two M-4 medium tanks were also to assist

in the attack, one going up each side of the creek. One of these tanks never showed up; the other hit a mine before reaching the line of departure and was of no value in the attack. The company finally moved into the position by sending one platoon up the creek and one platoon along the crest of each bank, and was later reinforced by a platoon of riflemen from the battle-sled group, whose tow-tanks had been immobilized by mines. After a struggle lasting nearly twenty-four hours, during which five separate attacks were made, Company L finally cracked the position and took the last remaining enemy prisoners although the bulk of the defenders had been killed or wounded. An enemy battalion CP, well dug-in and equipped, was found in the ditch just northeast of the strong point, and was later occupied by 3d Battalion as its CP.

Company A, attached to 3d Battalion for the attack, enjoyed the most rapid initial success of any unit of the division. Attacking north along the east side of the road running south from Ponte Rotto, the company rapidly overcame resistance in the houses on its side of the road, killing 16 enemy and capturing 6 in the open fields, besides taking 15 prisoners in the first house, 17 in the second and 13 in the third. It was not until after the company had passed through this zone that the enemy laid down his defensive artillery fire, which fell well behind the company as it advanced. Attacking the strongpoint in the house southeast of the Ponte Rotto road junction, the company captured two officers and 13 soldiers, as well as two 75 mm antitank guns. This objective was captured and organized for defense shortly after 0730, only one hour after moving out; success was due chiefly to following friendly artillery fire very closely, at an interval of 50 to 100 yards.

Company I had reached its objective at Ponte Rotto road junction seven hours ahead of time with its radio out of order. Friendly artillery was falling, since higher headquarters had no way of knowing that the company was so far ahead of schedule. In addition to this the enemy was firing direct fire with an 88mm mobile gun and three machine guns, and a large group of enemy riflemen about 300 yards distant were also adding their fire.

"We had been sitting there about 30 minutes, helpless, unable to do a thing about the situation, when the BAR man in my squad, Pfc. John Dutko, shouted to me, 'Toothman, I'm going to get that 88 with my heater!'" related S/Sgt Cleo A. Toothman, adding, "He always called his BAR a 'heater.'

"Before I could say a word he took off like a ruptured duck. He made the first hundred yards in a dead run. Machine-gun bullets were striking the ground only a foot or two behind him but he was running

faster than the krauts could traverse. The kraut 88 crew let a couple of fast shells go at him also, but they exploded about thirty yards from him, and he dived into a shell hole which one of our own big guns had conveniently made a split second before he got there. I told myself that he would never make it. The enemy fire, coupled with our own artillery, was the heaviest that I had ever seen in such a small area. The enemy machine gunners converged their fire on the shell-hole occupied by Pfc. Dutko, making it, in my opinion, impossible for him to advance farther."

This was not the case. After a short rest Dutko jumped from his hole and ran in a wide circle toward the 88mm gun, followed by Pvt. Charles R. Kelley. By flanking the gun Dutko had succeeded in aligning the machine guns so that only one could fire at him, which it continued to do in long, murderous bursts. After running about 175 yards Dutko hit the dirt and threw a hand grenade into the machine-gun position, killing the two-man crew.

Kelley speaking: "Pfc. Dutko was a madman now. He jumped to his feet and walked toward the 88mm firing his BAR from his hip. He had apparently forgotten the other two machine guns; at least he was ignoring them. When he had gone about halfway to the 88mm he reached a point within ten yards of the weapon and wiped out the five-man crew with one long burst of fire. Pfc. Dutko then wheeled on the second German machine gun and killed its two-man crew with his BAR.

"The third German machine gun opened fire on Pfc. Dutko. This gun was only twenty yards away and its first burst of fire wounded him, making him stagger, but like a wounded lion he charged this gun in a half run. Pfc. Dutko killed both the gunner and the assistant gunner of the enemy weapon with a single burst from his BAR and, staggering forward, fell across the dead German machine gunner. When I reached him he was dead."

Pfc. Dutko's heroism won him a posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor.

The enemy launched three counterattacks against the company's defenses. The first was repulsed by small-arms fire, the second by artillery, and the third by small-arms and mortar fire.

After reaching this objective, the company was subjected to all types of fire from the front and both flanks during most of the day, but was well dug in and did not suffer unduly.

Company K suffered many casualties, possibly fifty, before crossing the line of departure, as the enemy had opened up with artillery and mortars as soon as our artillery preparation started; the company was also under machine-gun fire coming from the left and left



3d Division Infantrymen in house to house encounter with the enemy in the Battle of Cisterna di Littoria.

rear. The company commander, 1st Lt. Arnold Spillman, and executive, 2d Lt. Ben Seward, were among those hit.

Company K's mission was to attack up the west side of the road running south of Ponte Rotto, keeping abreast of Company A on the east side of the road. Upon the loss of the two ranking officers, Lieutenant Ethridge took over the company and led his men over 600 yards of flat terrain, exposed to searing machine-gun fire, by crawling through small ditches in the field. The company reached its initial objective at the Ponte Rotto crossroad in this manner, then attacked north, across the road to seize high ground immediately above Ponte Rotto. The platoon of tanks towing battle sleds, as indicated previously, was committed in this attack, but the tanks were immobilized by mines at the dog-leg in the road south of Ponte Rotto, and the personnel were attached to Company L for its attack on the strong point in Fosso Femina-morta. The battalion was never able to employ the sleds.

Company I, in reserve, was committed about 1400 to move around the right flank of Company A and attack objective F, a short distance northeast of Ponte Rotto. The company, commanded by 1st Lt. Norbert B. Sauer, accomplished this mission by crawling across open ground around Company A's flank. By late evening K, I and A Companies occupied a bulge north of the Ponte Rotto-Cisterna road, just east of Ponte Rotto. This position was organized by Capt. Kenneth A. Noseck, A Company commander. The

battalion suffered about 300 casualties during the day's fighting.

About midafternoon May 23, 1st Battalion was ordered to move north, pass through 2d Battalion (which was fighting for objectives between the Ponte Rotto road and the railroad track) and seize high ground on both sides of the railroad just west of Fosso Femina-morta.

Artillery and mortar fire began falling on 1st Battalion after it crossed the road west of Ponte Rotto, and shortly after passing through 2d Battalion, Company E which was leading, began meeting heavy resistance from enemy dug in around ruined masonry houses on two small hills south of the railroad track. Large numbers of automatic weapons were employed against our troops, and artillery and mortar fire were continuous.

As Company E, 30th Infantry came abreast of Ponte Rotto, an enemy machine gun opened fire on the company's left flank from a position about a hundred yards away. Four men were killed almost instantly, and the rest took cover.

"Pfc. Patrick L. Kessler, an antitank grenadier in my platoon," related Pfc. Nicholas Rusinko, "ran fifty yards through a hail of machine-gun fire to a point where three of us were huddled in a ditch and suggested that we form an assault team to knock out the gun, which we instantly agreed to. Using us as a base of fire, Pfc. Kessler climbed out of the ditch and began to crawl toward the machine-gun position. He suc-

ceeded in making his way about 50 yards forward before the krauts spotted him and fired directly at him. Bullets struck so close to him that Kessler was almost obscured by the dust. Later I learned that he had been lightly wounded."

Charging forward, side-stepping like a broken field runner in a football game Kessler got to within two yards of the enemy emplacement. Here he kneeled and shot both the enemy gunner and assistant gunner with his '03 rifle. He then jumped into the gun position, overpowered one more soldier, and wounded a fourth attempting to make a getaway.

No sooner had he accomplished this deed than two machine guns and a group of enemy riflemen opened fire from a position about 175 yards to the rear. Ten men who had left covered positions when the first machine gun was eliminated were killed. Mortar and artillery concentrations began to fall in the area. The picture looked black. Two men attempting to assault the machine guns were also killed.

Kessler, who had been escorting his prisoner to the rear, turned him over to a nearby soldier and crawled thirty-five yards to the side of a BAR man to secure the BAR and ammunition belt. Then, under shellfire, the concussion of which rolled him over several times, Kessler kept up his steady crawl, passing through the length of an antipersonnel minefield. The enemy, who had spotted Kessler shortly after he had left the BAR man, converged the fire of both guns on him, yet he kept going for seventy-five yards.

Said Pvt. Alan C. Smith: "Just as he crawled out of the minefield, Pfc. Kessler occupied a position in a ditch about fifty yards from the kraut strongpoint and engaged in a duel with the two machine guns. Throughout this action, the German artillery and mortar fire kept coming in. Pfc. Kessler had fired about four magazines into the krauts when an artillery shell landed almost directly on top of him. For a moment we all thought that his number was up yet, when the smoke had cleared away, Pfc. Kessler had risen to his feet and was walking toward the machine guns, firing his BAR from his hip as he advanced."

Reaching the enemy strongpoint under continuous fire directed at him, Kessler killed the gunner of each of the two machine guns and took thirteen enemy prisoners. But he was not quite through.

"Pfc. Kessler had not traveled more than 25 to 30 yards to the rear with his prisoners before he was fired on by two snipers, who had infiltrated to positions to the rear of the company and about 100 yards away from him," said Pvt. Richard J. Alexander. "When this happened, several of the prisoners made a break for it; however, Pfc. Kessler fell to the ground and placed a burst of fire to either side of the prisoners, forcing

them to hit the ground. Then he fired at each of the two snipers, causing them to surrender."

This heroic deed was later recognized by award of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Both sides employed flares during the night, the enemy to illuminate our attacking troops, our units to light up enemy fortifications and to facilitate control. The night was very black, and during the attack parts of Company F, as well as one company of the 6th Armored Infantry, were fighting in the 1st Battalion zone.

Company B, led by Capt. Samuel B. Seetin, attacked frontally against the eastern of the two hills, which was immediately south of the railroad and west of Fosso Feminamorta. Upon receiving fire from the other hill to the west, one platoon of Company B was sent to attack the hill and reduce the machine-gun position which was causing the trouble. Enemy resistance on both hills was overcome at about 0200 or 0300 May 24.

Company C, following Company B, swung to the right before reaching the Company B objectives and attacked east across Fosso Feminamorta, which was a deep gorge at this point, presenting a considerable obstacle to movement. The company successfully crossed the gorge and succeeded in taking its objective with the assistance of direct fire support from tanks and TDs at about daylight May 24. The objective was high ground southeast of the railroad bridge over Fosso Feminamorta. Some casualties were suffered from the company's own direct-fire support weapons.

On the preceding day, the battalion had had a brief



Enemy run out of Cisterna with hands raised in sign of surrender.

fight for Objective C, about 1200 yards north of the Ponte Rotto road, which had already been partially occupied by elements of 2d Battalion. Constant enemy artillery and mortar fire failed to cause disproportionate casualties, as the advance was conducted with men well dispersed. Ditches were used for movement whenever possible. Enemy positions on the final objective were reduced by direct assault, with tommy guns, BARs, rifle grenades and hand grenades the principal weapons used. Rifle grenades were particularly effective; the grenadier would normally crawl within twenty-five to forty yards of a position before firing. NCOs equipped with carbines did good work, shooting rapid-fire at troublesome spots from wherever they happened to be. Coordination of fire support weapons—tanks, TDs and cannon company weapons—was a big factor in the success of the attack. A battalion staff officer was normally forward with each company, his chief duty being to see that these weapons were properly and effectively employed.

Artillery fire supporting 30th Infantry was delivered chiefly by the 41st FA Battalion. Infantry officers normally adjusted fire over infantry radios to battalion CP, from where the artillery liaison officer relayed adjustments to the fire direction center. Most of the fire was observed, insofar as this was possible at night. Artillery was used to a greater extent than mortars in smothering enemy fire while the infantry was closing in on enemy positions.

Control was excellent, and no important element of the battalion was out of touch with battalion headquarters, or with its own company, for any length of time.

7TH INFANTRY

The 7th Infantry had the mission of attacking Cisterna di Littoria frontally, with the Borgo Montello-Cisterna road as the main axis of advance. The 2d Battalion was designated to attack northeast astride the road with 3d Battalion on its left, adjacent to 30th Infantry. 1st Battalion was in reserve.

The 3d Battalion attacked in column of companies, in the order L, I and K, with machine guns from Company M sited to deliver fire from both flanks.

In order to escape the enemy's retaliatory shelling in answer to our preparation preceding H hour, Company L crossed the line of departure two hours before H-hour and waited at a 34th Division outpost for the time of attack. The line of departure was the lateral road running northwest from Isola Bella; the ground rose gradually north of the road and provided no cover and little concealment.

The initial objective was the crest of the slope, about

1800 yards due north of Isola Bella; however, the first resistance was encountered at a strongpoint located in a stream junction about 500 yards north of the line of departure. In addition the company received fire from houses on the right flank, in the 2d Battalion sector. The company was unable to advance until these houses had been captured by 2d Battalion troops. One platoon then worked its way to the objective, by-passing the strong point under cover of a smokescreen and an early morning fog. Unfortunately the fog and smoke cleared before the rest of the company moved up, and the enemy strongpoint had to be attacked and reduced before the company could continue. The company joined its leading platoon on the objective by crawling up the stream bed. Heavy enemy fire from the north caused several casualties and forced the company to dig in on the south slope of the objective for the remainder of the day.

After Company L reached its objective, Company I was sent around its left flank with the mission of advancing up a nose due north of Company L. Company I, however, advanced about 300 yards too far west, entering a draw to the left of its objective. Here it ran into a hornet's nest of opposition, getting fire from both flanks and the front. Company K was committed between Companies I and L but was likewise stopped by enemy fire, most of it coming from the railroad track. The commanding officer of Company K was killed, and the officer who replaced him was killed later. The battalion remained generally in this position during the night, fighting a continuous action against enemy who were attempting to infiltrate. The night was extremely dark, adding to the difficulty of reorganizing and supplying the battalion. This was accomplished, however, and the battalion was prepared to continue the fight the following morning.

The 2d Battalion attacked on the right of the 3d Battalion from a line of departure along the first small stream northwest of Isola Bella, and the road running east from Isola Bella. Company E was designated to attack along the west side of the Isola Bella-Cisterna road and Company F along the east side, with Company G in a reserve position along the ditch running south from Isola Bella. The battalion was supported by a platoon of medium tanks.

Before the attack the battalion suffered casualties from enemy artillery, which opened up before our own preparation was completed. As soon as our troops rose up out of their ditches and foxholes to attack, they began to receive intense automatic weapon and tank fire from two enemy strongpoints. One was in a group of three buildings west of the road and 500 yards beyond the line of departure; the other was organized around a single house east of the road and 700 yards



3d Division Infantrymen take cover from enemy fire during the Battle of Cisterna.

beyond the line of departure. Both had excellent fields of fire toward our lines, across flat terrain. The strongpoints were surrounded with barbed wire and Italian box mines; both had numerous automatic weapons and outlying rifle protection, besides the support of tanks. As the attack started, the fire of all our supporting weapons—five tanks, 37mm guns, heavy and light mortars, heavy and light machine guns and individual weapons, was placed on the two strongpoints.

Company E, attacking the strongpoint west of the road, sent one platoon around to the west in a flanking maneuver. This platoon had difficult going, advancing over absolutely flat terrain, and reached the objective two hours after moving out with only eighteen men left of its original thirty-four. The five tanks supporting the action were all immobilized by antitank mines shortly after moving out.

Company F attacked the strongpoint east of the road in a frontal assault with troops widely deployed; and reached its objective in forty minutes. After consolidating on the objective Company F organized a task force consisting of a rifle platoon reinforced, one tank destroyer, one medium tank and one light tank, with the mission of assaulting two further points of resistance. The first was on the Fosso di Fantano about 1200 yards northeast of Isola Bella; the second was 300 yards farther up the creek, where it was bridged by the Isola Bella-Cisterna road. The medium tank became mired in several feet of mud and water in the creek and the TD was destroyed by enemy SP fire, hence only the light tank aided in the attack. However, both points were overcome, and the enemy withdrew along the creek to the north. Meanwhile Company E advancing from its first objective, attacked enemy positions on a

slight knoll just across the road from Company F, and occupied the knoll by 1130.

Company F had suffered severe casualties, so Company G was committed east of Company F to clean out resistance on the right flank among some houses about 700 yards east of Company F's last positions. Resistance was heavy, and fighting lasted through the afternoon and into the night. During hours of darkness several groups of enemy attempted to infiltrate the battalion's positions and intermittent fighting resulted; however, the battalion was able to supply itself in preparation for the next day's fighting.

The 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, was not committed in the attack during the first day's action, but was employed in mopping up pockets of resistance which had been by-passed by the other two battalions. Very light casualties were suffered by 1st Battalion in this action.

15TH INFANTRY

The 15th Infantry had an initial mission complementary to that of the 30th Infantry, that of attacking on the right of the 7th Infantry, by-passing Cisterna to the southeast and seizing objectives along Highway 7 and the railroad embankment. The initial plan was to attack with two battalions abreast, 3d Battalion on the left and 2d Battalion on the right, with 1st Battalion in reserve; however, so much resistance was expected on the right flank, in the gap between 3d Infantry Division and Special Service Force, that a special task force built around Company A, 15th Infantry, commanded by the 1st Battalion executive, was constituted to operate in the gap. This task force was called Task Force Paulick, after its commander, Maj. Michael Paulick.

The 3d Battalion attacked at H-hour in column of companies, in the order L, K and I, with its first objective a road junction 1500 yards east of Isola Bella. The terrain was perfectly flat but was crossed by a series of drainage ditches, most of which ran north and south. Along the road running east from Isola Bella was a series of houses, usually in pairs facing each other across the road, and located 100 to 200 yards apart. One house, just southwest of the initial objective, was very strongly held with machine guns in the ruins of the house and nearby positions. Oddly, there were no antipersonnel mines south of the junction, although both roads were lined with antitank mines.

Company L, in the lead, started east from an assembly position in a drainage ditch about 1000 yards east of Isola Bella. Almost immediately, the company ran into fire of every description—from small arms, machine guns, mortars, artillery, and SP guns. By a series



German Infantrymen rush out of their shelters in Cisterna to surrender.

of rushes Company L took the first two houses, and almost immediately afterward patrols reached the next two, making it impossible for our artillery to fire on the houses. However, supporting TDs delivered fire on the houses and aided in their reduction.

In the first two or three hours of the attack, Company L's strength was cut from 150 men to only thirty or forty effectives, and the company was so badly disorganized that the attack lagged for the next three hours. The battalion was then redispensed in echelon formation to the right rear, with remnants of Company L guiding on the south edge of the road about 400 yards beyond the junction. Fire was received from

"Chateau Woods," 1000 yards east of the junction, in addition to fire from the frontal sector along the road. At this time the battle-sled team was ordered into action. Tanks hauling infantrymen in battle sleds moved up the north-south road to the junction which formed the previous objective, then turned east on the right side of the east-west road. About 200 yards east of the junction the tanks encountered a drainage ditch too wide to cross, so the infantry personnel left the sleds and moved on foot against the houses 200 yards away. This move was coordinated with the continuation of the attack by the remainder of the battalion, and the front started moving forward again.

Company L's commander was wounded at this time and the remainder of the company stayed at the first objective to reorganize. It was later attached to I Company.

K Company moved up a ditch running generally parallel to the road and hit a number of antipersonnel mines, suffering about ten casualties. The rest of the day was spent cleaning out "Kraut Woods" and adjacent houses; the enemy was well dug-in with machine guns in mutually supporting positions, and as usual he took full advantage of ruined houses for use as strongpoints. All positions were wired in, necessitating a separate assault on each one. The battalion Ammunition and Pioneer platoon built a road from near the line of departure to the woods, in order to bring the TDs into position without their traveling over mine-filled roads. The battalion remained in this area during the night.

First objective of 2d Battalion on D-Day was the patch of trees known as "Chateau Woods," just southwest of the first main road junction south of Cisterna on the road to Sessano. The battalion began its attack in column of companies, with E Company leading, followed by F and G in order. Company E advanced slowly across flat terrain and was subjected to powerful ground opposition. The enemy had established his strongest line of defense along the south edge of the woods, and was supported by SP guns, tanks, and registered artillery fire. Company E was halted by fire about 1000 yards beyond the line of departure, and F Company was committed to the west, on E Company's left flank. While Company F was drawing fire from the woods, E Company reorganized rapidly and launched one of the most successful *bayonet attacks* of the war. The attack was ordered because the company was low on ammunition; in the charge, fifteen Germans were killed in their holes and eighty more were captured. An unestimated number managed to escape to the northwest.

Company E was well supported by tanks in this charge. Originally the battalion had no allotment of

tanks, but one platoon of mediums was made available in the afternoon. The tanks advanced to within a short distance of the woods, where they were halted by mines, but were able to support the attack by fire. When Company E entered the woods, Company F moved forward and assisted Company E in cleaning out the last enemy resistance.

While the other two companies were fighting for the woods, G Company by-passed that fight and moved north to the next objective, the road junction at the northeast corner of the woods. Light resistance was encountered, so the company continued north to clean out Fosso di Cisterna. In this deep ditch G Company found and captured more than a hundred enemy, who were cowering in deep caves and surrendered when approached. The caves were well prepared as living quarters and were immune to air attack or artillery fire, but were useless as fighting positions.

After "Chateau Woods" were cleaned out, F and E Companies followed Company G, with Company E being in reserve. Company G reached the point where Highway 7 crosses Fosso di Cisterna and moved out across the flat ground toward the railroad. Here the opposition increased considerably. The company received direct fire from the vicinity of the railroad track and was able to make little headway during the night. In spite of the intensity of the fighting and the blackness of the night, battalion headquarters was able to maintain contact with Company G with W-130 wire. The fighting was still going on as daylight approached.

Because it was necessary to keep the bulk of the 1st Battalion in regimental reserve, Task Force Paulick was organized to fill the 3000-yard gap on the Division's right flank. The Task Force consisted of Company A, 15th Infantry, a platoon of medium and a platoon of light tanks from 751st Tank Battalion, a section of TDs from 601st TD Battalion, the regimental Battle Patrol, a platoon of machine guns and a section of heavy mortars from D Company, a platoon of Cannon Company, a medical detachment and a squad of engineers. The Task Force attacked at H-hour and immediately encountered bitter opposition.

Enemy machine guns, antitank guns, and SP guns from the left flank, in vicinity of "Chateau Woods," hit the company and its supporting armor heavily. Other machine guns and an antitank gun fired south into the force's flank from the direction of Cisterna, along the north-south road which the Task Force had to cross. A ditch which ran northwest-southeast across a flat field immediately south of Chateau Woods had been converted into a strongpoint, with excellent fighting holes rendering the enemy virtually immune to artillery fire. Machine guns on the enemy flanks afforded cross-fire against our troops, and for about 600 yards along

the Cisterna road every house had been converted into a strongpoint protected by rifle, machine-gun and tank fire.

The commander of Company A was killed early on D-Day. German tanks were so skillfully placed to cover antitank mine fields that in the first day the Task Force lost two medium tanks and one light tank from this cause, while one TD and one medium tank were lost on improperly marked friendly mine fields prior to the attack. Company A, however, managed to reach Fosso di Cisterna by dark, and worked its way north to its initial objective, the bridge just southeast of "Chateau Woods."

Although unable to get ammunition or food because of the bitter fighting, the long haul, and lack of personnel, the Task Force continued after dark to clear out the houses along a road running parallel to, and 600 yards east of Fosso di Cisterna. The houses finally fell when two medium tanks were sent across the Fosso di Cisterna over the next bridge to the south, in the Special Service Force sector, thus flanking the strongpoints. Firing down the road into the enemy positions, the tanks forced the enemy infantry to withdraw and A Company occupied the area.

Immediately afterward the Task Force attacked east, against "88 Woods," about 600 yards east of the road just referred to. Little opposition was encountered here, but the Task Force's right flank was endangered when an enemy Mark VI tank counterattack forced the Special Service Force, which had no heavy anti-tank weapons, to give up a position on Highway 7 and the railroad line to the east. After Company A had cleaned out the woods, the Battle Patrol passed through the woods toward a road junction just 300 yards to the east. There was no opposition between the woods and the road junction, but upon arriving at the latter point, the patrol discovered an estimated reinforced enemy platoon moving down the road in column of twos, apparently to take up a defensive position, unaware that United States troops were so near. A two-minute fire fight followed, during which the Battle Patrol killed approximately twenty enemy and took thirty-seven prisoners. The next day they rounded up six more wounded enemy. An ammunition dump was discovered and set on fire, and an SP gun destroyed by the patrol.

Mission of Battle Patrol, 15th Infantry, was to cut Highway 7 southeast of Cisterna. To reach the highway it was necessary to clear the enemy from a large area, protect the regimental right flank, cross a long wheat field, a road, move through a woods and cover some more open terrain before reaching the objective.

The 53-officer-and-man Patrol encountered its first task when it reached a ditch beside the road it had to cross. Enemy small-arms fire was already being directed

on the men. Suddenly four snipers opened fire from the patrol's rear.

Pfc. Henry Schauer, whom S/Sgt. Joseph M. Brown calls "the best BAR-man I have ever seen," climbed out of the ditch and walked slowly toward the snipers. Two of them were at the base of a house 200 yards to the rear, one on a road near the house, and the fourth concealed in the wheat field to the left of the house. "Pfc. Schauer was made of ice," said Sergeant Brown admiringly. "He stood upright, raised his BAR to his shoulder, and went to work. The snipers 170 yards away alongside the house were low to the ground, blending in with the grass. Two bursts from the BAR killed both snipers. Pfc. Schauer turned his body slightly. The sniper lying on the shaded road was only a dark shadow. One burst from the BAR finished him. The last sniper, the one in the field, was almost impossible to spot. Pfc. Schauer fired again. One burst was enough.

"As Pfc. Schauer ran to catch up with us he glimpsed another sniper hiding behind the chimney on the roof of a house 150 yards to our front. He stopped, aimed, and his burst of fire tumbled the sniper's body off the roof."

Crossing the tree-lined road, the patrol proceeded up the ditch on the right side of the road. Another smaller patrol moved out to the right in a parallel ditch. Schauer was fourth in line in the latter formation. Two German machine guns opened fire, one, sixty yards to the front, the other, about 500 yards to the right of the road. Everyone took cover except Schauer.

"The man acted as though nothing could kill him," according to 2d Lt. James M. Dorsey, Jr. "He assumed the kneeling position on the bank of a ditch. Bullets from both machine guns swept about him, miraculously missing him by inches. Fragmentation from enemy shells which burst no more than fifteen yards from him, hit the ground all around him. He permitted none of this fire to ruffle his composure. Pfc. Schauer engaged the first machine gun, the one sixty yards away, opening up on it with a full clip of ammunition. In one long burst of fire he killed the gunner and the man alongside him. He put a new magazine in his BAR, fired two short bursts and killed the two remaining Germans who ran to man the weapon."

Schauer jammed another magazine into the BAR, aimed, and with one burst killed the gunner of the second machine gun, plus three other soldiers near the gun.

On May 24, after pushing on to Highway 7 the patrol moved south, paralleling the highway. An enemy machine gun opened fire when the men had proceeded about 800 yards south. At the same time an enemy

Mark VI tank began pumping shells at the patrol from a position 600 yards to the left.

Schauer climbed out of the ditch and crawled toward the machine gun. After twenty yards of this, he stood up. The tank fired four rounds directly at him, and the enemy machine gun kept up its vicious rate of fire.

"But looking at Pfc. Schauer," stated 2d Lt. Max R. Hendon, "you would think he was taking aim at target practice on the firing range. He fired a full clip of twenty at the enemy machine gun. The entire crew of four enemy were riddled by his bullets and fell dead.

"Pfc. Schauer's calm courage, his remarkable skill and accuracy, removed three enemy machine guns which hindered our advance, killed the entire crew in each case, and killed five enemy snipers."

For his deeds Pfc. Schauer was later justly awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The part played by the engineers in the operation was largely completed during the preparational phase; however, their line companies were subattached on the basis of one squad per battalion, with an additional platoon attached to Task Force Paulick. They worked in close support of the infantry, clearing mines from roads and road shoulders, gapping tactical wire and minefields, with advancing troops. Enemy employment of mines and boobytraps was on a far heavier scale than anything previously encountered; there were even instances reported in which the Germans booby-trapped their own dead, in the hope of killing our medical personnel.

As the first twenty-four hours' fighting drew to a close, the shape of victory was already beginning to appear. While there was still contact with fixed enemy defenses all along the front, except in the sector of Task Force Paulick, the main enemy positions were known to have been broken through, with only reserve elements in previously prepared positions trying to keep the back door shut. Remaining resistance was strongest in front of Cisterna, but faded away progressively to the flanks.

Battle casualties on May 23 had been 995, believed to be the largest number suffered by any single United States Army division in one day in World War II, even though the attack was successful. The figure reveals in some measure the wholesale ferocity of fighting on both sides. During the next two days—May 24 and 25—the battle for Cisterna unfolded exactly according to plan, as though an invisible power, holding a copy of the field order, were directing the actions of both sides. Yet it must not be forgotten that the actual course of the battle was not the result of the foreordination of fate, but of meticulous planning, objective training, and above all, fiery execution and dogged hammering at objectives in the face of last-ditch opposition.



3d Division Infantrymen cautiously advance into a portion of the ruins of Cisterna.

The role of the 30th Infantry during this period was to implement its breakthrough west of Cisterna by continuing its drive northeast across Highway 7, toward Cori.

The last phase of the breakthrough occurred when Company F, attached to 1st Battalion, succeeded in driving north across the railroad track and overcoming enemy opposition there, at a point about two miles northwest of Cisterna. The enemy had tanks, SP guns and automatic weapons covering the rail bed with enfilade fire and every possible route for crossing the tracks was zeroed in with artillery and mortars. The Germans were extremely well dug-in (this was the old MLR dating from January and February), and automatic-weapon positions were protected by other weapons. Company F casualties in advancing to the railroad were not heavy, because numerous ditches provided favorable routes of approach.

Coordination between our tanks and infantry during the crossing was poor, and Company F suffered casualties from its supporting armor. The tanks were not informed when the infantry was forced out of its zone of advance, and fired into the foot troops when they changed course to outflank enemy weapons.

However, the attack, carried on entirely during hours of darkness, was finally successful.

During the morning of May 24, Company F was returned to 2d Battalion, which was ordered to follow the 1st and 3d Battalions in their wide flanking drive north and east of Cisterna. While there was virtually no opposition from enemy in position along the route of advance, many enemy falling back from the 7th Infantry's attack retreated into 2d Battalion columns, forcing our troops to deploy locally and deal with them. Enemy in isolated positions around La Villa, which had already been passed through by the 7th Infantry, caused considerable trouble. Fire was also received from the Cisterna cemetery, which the battalion by-passed on the north. During the evening of May 24, fire was received from both front and rear, as the battalion reached and occupied its objectives, but the opposition was overcome during the night.

The morning of May 25 the battalion reverted to regimental reserve, both 1st and 3d Battalions having passed through it and begun the advance on Cori. The 2d Battalion moved out for Cori during the afternoon, following the other two battalions. About 800

yards short of the line of departure, which was a crossroad two miles northeast of Cisterna, the battalion received some casualties from friendly artillery fire. Shortly afterward six Allied planes flew over and bombed and strafed the road, causing casualties. This was blamed on the rapid advance of our forward elements, and the fact that the planes were apparently aiming at a battery of 88mm guns which had been recently abandoned and were still smoking. The planes flew perpendicular to the marching column, instead of parallel to it, which would have been the case had the troops been the target; also, only three planes dropped their bombs. The battalion went into an assembly area short of Cori that night.

During the morning May 24, 3d Battalion was alerted to move north up the Fosso Feminamorta, following 2d Battalion, to pass through 2d Battalion north of Cisterna and capture objectives 1000 yards northeast of the town. The battalion moved out about 1630, following 2d Battalion north to the railroad track, then southeast to La Villa. Along the eastern side of La Villa there was a small ditch, and two or three hundred yards farther east was a larger ditch; 2d Battalion started up this larger ditch, planning to cross Highway 7 and then move east cross-country to its objectives, thus by-passing Cisterna. Company L, following 2d Battalion, ran into a strong concentration of friendly artillery fire just after passing La Villa, and drew back to the protection of the smaller ditch. When the column moved forward again, it crossed Highway 7 just north of the cemetery. At this time, 7th Infantry launched an attack toward Cisterna from the northwest; the German reaction was the general firing of machine guns and mortars from the north edge of town. It was dark by this time, and the enemy had no observation, yet the battalion suffered several casualties. The battalion then drew back west of Highway 7, reorganized, moved several hundred yards north, crossed the highway, and proceeded east toward its objectives on a compass bearing. Company I was then leading.

The battalion reached its objectives (the crossroad two miles northeast of Cisterna, and high ground immediately northwest of the crossroad) and put in a defensive position prior to daylight May 25. The battalion had orders to attack at 0630 that morning toward Cori, with 1st Battalion on its right between it and the Cori-Cisterna road. However, the attack could not be coordinated by that time, due to difficulties of supply, so the battalion remained in position.

The attack got under way at 1600, with no opposition encountered. At 1700, however, the troops were caught in the same air attack that hit 2d Battalion, and Lieutenant Colonel Bennett, the battalion commander, was injured and evacuated. Lieutenant Colonel

(then Major) Neddersen assumed command. The battalion had a series of objectives en route to Cori, and moved through the objectives without difficulty. The battalion reached the road junction just west of Cori at 2030, then moved due north to the Cori-Giuglianello road, closing and completing organization for defense by 2300.

By evening of May 24, Company A, which had captured twenty-six Germans in caves while clearing Fosso Feminamorta, had been returned to 1st Battalion, which assembled astride the railroad just east of Fosso Feminamorta. The battalion CP was in the ditch itself. Shortly after midnight the battalion received orders to move to the crossroad two miles northeast of Cisterna, relieve 3d Battalion there, and prepare for a coordinated attack toward Cori the following morning. The 3d Battalion had already moved out toward the crossroad; 1st Battalion was to follow roughly the same route, by-passing Cisterna on the north, and assemble on the objective, while 3d Battalion was to move a short distance to the north, prepared to attack toward Cori on the left of 1st Battalion. The Cori-Cisterna road was designated as the boundary between 30th Infantry on the left and 15th Infantry on the right.

Officers of the 1st Battalion, reaching the crossroad shortly after daylight on reconnaissance, found small elements of 3d Battalion at the crossroad with a squad outpost to the northeast. The battalion itself initiated its march in column of companies, in the order B, C, D (—), Headquarters and A. The battalion passed immediately beyond the northwestern limits of Cisterna, moving east, and received considerable fire (mostly mortar) from enemy in Cisterna prior to daylight. During the morning, Germans made continuous efforts to escape from Cisterna by infiltrating to the north and northeast along draws and ditches, and it was necessary to leave Company A behind to stop this infiltration and cover the battalion's rear. However, the battalion was able to reach the crossroad, relieve 3d Battalion and organize for the attack toward Cori. One company was placed west of the crossroad and patrols were sent to contact the 15th Infantry.

The battalion had not been in position long when it began receiving strong enemy artillery fire from medium and heavy guns to the north and northwest, and other artillery fire from Cori; there was some 88mm fire mixed in, but the bulk of the fire came in battalion concentrations of thirty to forty rounds. A group of friendly tanks in an assembly area just north of 1st Battalion doubtlessly drew the fire. Casualties in the 1st Battalion were light, as the men were well dispersed and dug-in, but movement and control were difficult.

The enemy artillery apparently began displacing



Cori, perched high upon the forward slopes of Monti Lepini was captured by the 3d Division in its "Push to Rome."

during the afternoon, as the intensity of fire diminished, and at about 1600 the battalion attacked as planned, with 3d Battalion on its left and 15th Infantry on the right. Enemy resistance had faded away during the day as scattered groups of Germans, cut off from their units and driven from their positions, retreated into the hills. There was virtually no resistance as the battalion advanced and after crossing the north-south railway east of Cisterna the battalion was moved out onto the highway, with only a patrol operating on the left flank. High ground immediately north of Cori was reached just before dark. One company was stationed in the mountains one mile north of Cori, but there were no enemy there. All personnel were greatly fatigued, and only minimum security personnel were kept alert while others slept.

During the 1st Battalion advance toward Cori, Company A passed through and continued on to Cori where it took eighteen prisoners. The battalion was then assembled north and east of Cori and outposts established.

The heaviest fighting during May 24 and 25 was done by 7th Infantry, which had the mission of capturing Cisterna itself and cleaning out the city. The 1st Battalion, which had been in reserve all during D-day, was committed to attack at daylight May 24. The battalion took its first objective, a nose north of the Cisterna-Ponte Rotto road about half way between those towns, with little difficulty, and immediately moved north to capture La Villa. Shortly before reaching the railroad track, at about 0930, Company C encountered fierce enemy fire and was halted. The enemy was dug in all along the railroad bed and on the high ground to the rear. The railroad bed itself was crisscrossed by enfilade fire from machine guns, rifles and 88mm guns. The approaches to the railroad were covered with antipersonnel and antitank mines.

By working one platoon across the railroad track at a time, Company C overran German positions and occupied a point north of the railroad shortly before noon. The company was rather disorganized, however, and in order to occupy La Villa, Company A was sent

around Company C's right flank to take high ground east of La Villa. It reached its objective with only scattered rifle and machine-gun fire opposing it, and by its occupation of high ground outflanking La Villa on the east, forced the enemy to withdraw. Company C then moved in and cleaned out the area.

While a platoon of tanks and a platoon of TDs remained at La Villa and assisted by fire, Company B attacked and occupied the Cisterna cemetery 1000 yards northwest of town by 1600. The area was heavily pounded by our tanks and TDs and by Division Artillery, and the advance of 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, to the north of the cemetery assisted in causing an enemy withdrawal into Cisterna. Company B had little trouble taking the cemetery, where it stopped and reorganized. The battalion organized a defensive position in this area, and repulsed one counterattack during the night, which came from the direction of the city. At 2200, 3d Battalion passed through 1st Battalion to assault Cisterna on the axis of Highway 7.

At 1400 May 25, 1st Battalion began its advance into Cisterna, following 3d Battalion. The battalion moved in column of companies in the order A, C and B. Seven medium tanks assisted the battalion in its move into the town. Many enemy strongpoints were encountered in buildings, in the streets and in Fosso di Cisterna. The enemy had taken full advantage of the four-month lull to build strong positions in the rubble caused by our bombing and shelling. Enemy at the north edge of town provided strong opposition for the tanks but were finally neutralized. Company A met the greatest resistance, but suffered only moderate casualties. Company C, which swung to the right of Company A, cleaned out opposition in its sector and then took up a defensive position in the east edge of town. While 3d Battalion was left in the city to clear out the last remaining enemy, 1st Battalion left town at 1700 May 25 and moved to an assembly area two miles north of Cisterna.

The 2d Battalion, which had advanced 1500 yards up the axis of the Isola Bella-Cisterna road during the first day, continued the attack astride the road on May



The remains of the statue that adorned the village square of Cisterna.

25, with Company G on the right of the road and Company E on the left. Enemy strongpoints on the immediate front had been evacuated during the night, and the only initial opposition was in the form of harassing artillery fire. When it was about 600 yards south of Cisterna, however, the enemy opened up with machine-gun, SP-gun, rifle and mortar fire from the railroad, and artillery fire increased greatly. The battalion was unable to advance during the remainder of the day.

At 2100, Companies E and G attacked abreast across the railroad and both got across after heavy close combat. The enemy was thoroughly dug-in and Company G suffered several casualties from mines around the Cisterna railroad station. In spite of extreme darkness and heavy resistance, the attack progressed well because it had been planned in every particular and previously rehearsed. After the railroad line was breached, Company F was sent into town at 0300 May 25, and by daylight had one-third of the town in its hands. Casualties crossing the railroad line were not excessive, probably because the battalion crossed on a wide front at six different places. German lines were then attacked from the rear and most of the enemy killed.

During the morning of May 25 the battalion was joined by eight light tanks, two medium tanks and two platoons of Cannon Company. Company F was halted by resistance in a large castle at the center of the town, so Company G was sent around the south side of the castle with two platoons of tanks as assault guns. Company G advanced along the Fosso di Cisterna, but it too was held up by fire from the castle. The castle had only one entrance, and it was covered by an antitank gun. Company F placed a machine gun on top of a house across from the castle; while the machine gun

fired on the enemy antitank gun and kept the crew away from it, a medium tank roared through the castle entrance and destroyed the gun. Company F closed in and routed 250 prisoners from a cave underneath the castle. Included were the commanding officer of 955th Infantry Regiment and his staff. Company G was then able to push through the town and took sixty more prisoners from caves north of Cisterna. The 1st and 3d Battalions were contacted, and resistance in the town was completely wiped out by dusk May 25.

The 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, spent the first night of combat—May 23-24—south of the Cisterna-Ponte Rotto highway, and a few hundred yards east of Ponte Rotto. Next morning, 1st Battalion passed through 3d Battalion, and the latter followed in column of companies in the order L, I, K and M. Upon reaching the Cisterna-Ponte Rotto road, moving north, the battalion headquarters group came under a concentration of twenty-five rounds of enemy 88mm air-burst, wounding two officers and six men. The battalion executive was wounded and evacuated, and the Company M commander took his post.

The battalion passed through 1st Battalion at La Villa, having suffered few other casualties. During the evening it moved out toward high ground across Highway 7, and northwest of the Cisterna cemetery. Some elements of the battalion became mingled with 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, but no other trouble was encountered as 1st Battalion had cleaned out all enemy resistance.

Upon reaching its objective, the battalion swung southeast to attack Cisterna along the axis of Highway 7. With Company I on the right and Company K on the left, the battalion attacked at 2000 May 24. A half-hour before the attack the battalion commander was wounded, and the former commander of Company M, Capt. Glenn Rathbun, took command of the battalion. Resistance at the cemetery was heavy (although Company B had previously captured it—most probably, enemy retreating from Cisterna had bumped into the 1st Battalion around the cemetery and had gone into temporary defensive positions). The enemy still had positions east of the cemetery, and delivered strong mortar and artillery fire. The two leading companies fought all night and into the next day, coordinating a second attack at 1630, when they received excellent support from a platoon of tanks and a platoon of TDs. Between the Fosso Centri di Pantano and the highway the battalion received a small amount of fire, but this was followed by the prompt surrender of 120 prisoners, including several officers. Cisterna had already been taken but there was considerable by-passed resistance to be cleaned up. The enemy had taken to numerous caves and abandoned dugouts which were prepared against

attack from the south or west, but could not hold out against the drive from the northwest.

The battalion moved to the northwest end of town to complete its occupation, then moved to an assembly area about three miles above Cisterna. During the last phase of the attack a platoon of Company L, which was intended to be used in battle sleds following medium tanks, was out of the fight altogether after the tanks were disabled shortly after H-hour. The platoon did not rejoin the company until May 28.

Resistance on the front of the 15th Infantry lasted longer than that against the 30th, possibly because the attack of both the 7th and 30th Infantry Regiments passed to the west of the town, although resistance was lighter during the second day than during the first. Early May 24, 3d Battalion reached the road junction two miles south of Cisterna which 2d Battalion had captured the evening before, and immediately attacked up the improved road toward Cisterna. There were about thirty-five houses lining this stretch of road, but none was strongly held. Chief resistance came from SP and artillery fire from pieces located northeast of the railroad. As the battalion approached the intersection with Highway 7, it received fire from an open field to the west, and from Fosso di Cisterna to the east. This fire was neutralized by mortar and artillery fire, plus mortar fire from 2d Battalion which was fighting in Fosso di Cisterna. The 7th Infantry Battle Patrol was contacted at the road junction, and the Patrol assisted 2d Battalion in cleaning out resistance between Highway 7 and the railroad.

Meanwhile two companies of 3d Battalion advanced north along Highway 7, reaching the railroad overpass at the southern edge of the city. The battalion went into position along the railroad shortly after dark and sent outposts across the railroad. Enemy fire during the night was moderate. TDs took up positions south of the battalion area, and a platoon of tanks, which had joined the battalion during the day, occupied positions in "Kraut Woods."

At 0530 May 25 the battalion left its position, moved southeast about 2,000 yards on Highway 7, then turned northeast and completed the encirclement of Cisterna by occupying an assembly area 2,000 yards northeast of town, adjacent to 30th Infantry positions. At 1000, the battalion moved out toward Cori, in an attack coordinated with 1st Battalion and 30th Infantry, 3d Battalion advancing along the southeast side of the Cisterna-Cori highway. There was virtually no resistance at 2000 and the battalion remained in this position during the night, sending patrols into Cori from the south and west.

The 2d Battalion had more trouble May 24 than did 3d Battalion. At first light Company F was sent up

Fosso di Cisterna, crossing under the railroad bridge and moving onto open ground north of the railroad. Here, too, the ground was flat, and foot-high wheat provided the only concealment. When the company reached a point about 500 yards north of the railroad the enemy opened up with fire from an estimated three tanks. Enemy infantry was well dug in to the north, immediately east of Cisterna, and occupied several house strongpoints that swept the company with cross fire.

Company F moved out at about 1330 to seize and hold a large strongly-fortified house 600 yards beyond our foremost elements. It was situated in the center of a flat open field, and all approaches to it were covered with interlocking bands of grazing machine-gun fire. Prior reconnaissance had indicated the advisability of proceeding along a narrow draw which appeared to lead directly to the objective, in order to minimize what seemed must inevitably be numerous casualties.

Pvt. James H. Mills, in his second day of combat, was the leading man of the foremost platoon, as number one scout. After proceeding about 300 yards, he disappeared around a sharp turn in the fosso. A vicious burst of machine-gun fire was heard, followed by a single rifle shot. Second Lieutenant Arthur J. Mueller, foremost man, rushed around the corner. There he saw Mills leaning against the steep bank covering an enemy soldier with his rifle. Crumpled over a machine gun lay another enemy soldier, dead, shot between the eyes.

"I had to do it, sir, he almost got me," said Mills apologetically. Then he turned on his heel and struck out down the ditch once more, with Lieutenant Mueller close behind.

First, Mills captured a German in the act of pulling the pin from a potato masher grenade. As the prisoner was being searched by others, Mills spotted another soldier immediately above the men's position, and killed him as he was in the act of pulling the pin of a grenade. The advance then continued, with Mills still leading.

Once more he rounded a bend, to engage in a duel with six enemy soldiers. He charged.

"The sheer guts displayed by Private Mills must have unnerved the enemy, for when he had reached a point within about ten feet of them they threw their helmets to the ground and chorused 'Kamerad!' as loud as they could shout," narrated S/Sgt. Dewey A. Olsen. "Six heavily-armed Germans had surrendered to one lone United States soldier."

Enemy mortar fire began plastering the edges of the draw. Mills pointed out a shallow drainage ditch which ran from the draw to within fifty yards of the house-objective. It was pointed out also that although the

ditch was too shallow to permit passage without being observed by the enemy, a strong diversion by fire might allow a force to proceed up the ditch while the enemy's attention was centered elsewhere.

So . . . Mills took it upon himself as a one-man task force to create the diversion. He climbed from the cover of the draw under heavy enemy fire and emptied his M-1 toward the enemy, shouting defiance all the while. Then he sought cover and reloaded. A small group, meanwhile, began working its way toward the house.

Said Pfc. Charles L. Hyson, Jr.: "I do not know how many times Private Mills repeated this process but he was still standing out there firing when we reached the closest point to the house and began our assault.

"The enemy had been completely taken in by Private Mills' plan and we caught the enemy with his 'pants down,' taking the position and forcing his surrender before he knew what was happening. We captured twenty-two enemy soldiers, three machine guns, and three heavy mortars without a single casualty. Private Mills was directly responsible for our success."

Private Mills later received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Supporting TDs played an important part in the attack. They moved to a point near the railroad southeast of the battalion and fired across the battalion front at strongpoints on the left front. At this time Company E was committed in an effort to outflank the enemy on the right, but flat terrain continued to work against the battalion and little progress was made.

Under cover of darkness, antitank guns were brought up, and just after first light they were brought to bear on enemy strongpoints, neutralizing most of them. The remainder of the enemy withdrew and the battalion advanced to a crossroad about a mile and a half northeast of Cisterna.

The battalion then received orders to move to a U-shaped patch of woods on flat ground two miles due east of Cisterna. The battalion displaced by company, Company C arriving first with no opposition. There reorganization was completed and the battalion marched to Cori, taking a route well to the right of the Cisterna-Cori road, and spent the night in an assembly area on the northern slopes of Monte Arrestino.

As dawn broke May 24, the 15th Infantry Battle Patrol was engaged in front of Task Force Paulick in a successful action against an enemy platoon. Company A reorganized preparatory to continuing the attack, with its objective a road junction 1000 yards north of the woods occupied the previous night. The Battle Patrol reported the location of an extensive minefield 300 yards short of the junction, and extending 300 yards on either side of it. A heavy concentration of artillery

and tank fire was laid on enemy positions, and under its protection the squad of engineers cleared three paths through the mines. The artillery fire continued while the infantry went through the left gap and the tanks through the center, reducing the outpost at the road junction and taking five prisoners.

Company A continued to a strongpoint 600 yards farther north, where twelve enemy and two machine guns were captured. One platoon remained at this position and supported by fire another platoon, which moved southeast to a point where Highway 7 contacts the railroad bed. The platoon encountered strong artillery and small-arms fire and was forced to move back south of the railroad embankment. At 1430 the remainder of the battalion joined Task Force Paulick in order to force a crossing of the railroad. Attached armor remained with the battalion. Company A casualties had been high, with one officer and eight enlisted men killed, three officers and fifty-four enlisted men wounded and two enlisted men missing.

The railroad embankment was the enemy's strongest line of defense. It was covered with enfilade fire by automatic weapons and SP guns, and was completely blanketed by prepared artillery and mortar concentrations. All the enemy's fire was brought to bear on Company B, the first to storm the tracks, and although fire was heavy the company got nearly 700 yards north of the tracks before it was stopped. There it drew fire from two enemy tanks, one of which was destroyed by our TDs.

Another heroic action was performed the same day by Sgt. Sylvester Antolak, in which he lost his life. Mission of Company B, 15th Infantry, was to cut the railroad near Cisterna and capture commanding terrain on the far side.

The 1st platoon crossed the railroad bed without encountering enemy fire and it appeared that the Germans had fled. As the lead scouts of the 2d platoon were about to follow, a hail of enemy machine gun, machine pistol and rifle fire burst on them from an enemy strongpoint about 200 yards to the right front. The German plan was evident: to bar the advance of the 2d platoon, then seal off and destroy the 1st platoon.

Antolak saw the impending danger and, ordering a base of fire set up, called on his men to follow him as he charged the German position, fully thirty yards ahead of his squad. As he moved forward in short rushes across the bare, coverless terrain he became a prime target for the enemy's concentrated fire.

After advancing a few dozen yards he was hit by automatic-weapons fire and knocked to the ground. Jumping to his feet he again charged, his shoulder gashed and bleeding. Again he was hit and knocked

to the ground, and again he picked himself up to resume the advance.

Said S/Sgt. Audie L. Murphy: "The 200-yard interval was narrowing; the Germans were firing their machine gun, their "spit" pistols, and rifles about as fast as they could squeeze the triggers. They must have sensed that Sergeant Antolak was sparking the charge and that he was the man they had to knock out."

With but fifty yards to go Sergeant Antolak was hit and thrown to the ground a third time, his right arm shattered by the burst of automatic fire. He wedged his submachine gun into his left armpit, staggered to his feet, and continued his grim charge. He advanced to within fifteen yards of the enemy strongpoint and killed both the gunner and assistant gunner with a long burst of fire. The remaining ten Germans surrendered to this man whom their bullets could not stop.

Another German strongpoint 100 yards to the right immediately opened fire. "We urged Sergeant Antolak to take cover in the machine-gun emplacement he had just captured," said Cpl. William H. Harrison, "while we arranged to get him medical aid. He looked too weak from his wounds and loss of blood to keep on going."

Antolak refused to consider this proposition. Again he led the attack against this new strongpoint, with the remainder of his men following at an interval of several yards. He made sixty yards before being hit by the concentrated firepower. By sheer will power he managed to stagger forward another ten yards before collapsing. The squad pushed forward, assaulted the German position and overran it, taking eight prisoners. When the men returned to Sergeant Antolak he was dead.

"His heroic action had enabled the squad to kill or capture twenty Germans, wipe out the last enemy pockets in the area and prevent the 1st platoon from being cut off," stated Pfc. Marion Ellis.

Sergeant Antolak was awarded posthumously the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Enemy were detected forming on Company F's right flank, apparently for a counterattack, so the Battle Patrol was committed. It met approximately a company of Germans in a small woods north of the tracks, and it was found necessary to commit Company A again. Company A received heavy fire while crossing the tracks and suffered further casualties, so Company C was sent across the tracks to the left of Company B. Company C provided the necessary manpower to overcome the enemy, and after two hours of moderate firing reached a U-shaped patch of woods two miles east of Cisterna, which 2d Battalion was to pass through later. Long-range fire harassed Company C in the woods during the night.

Meanwhile, Company A had eliminated the threatened counterattack, and joined the remainder of the battalion in the woods at 0400 May 23. Tanks had been unable to cross the tracks during the daylight May 24, so during the night the engineers bulldozed two crossings and the armor rejoined the battalion at dawn May 25.

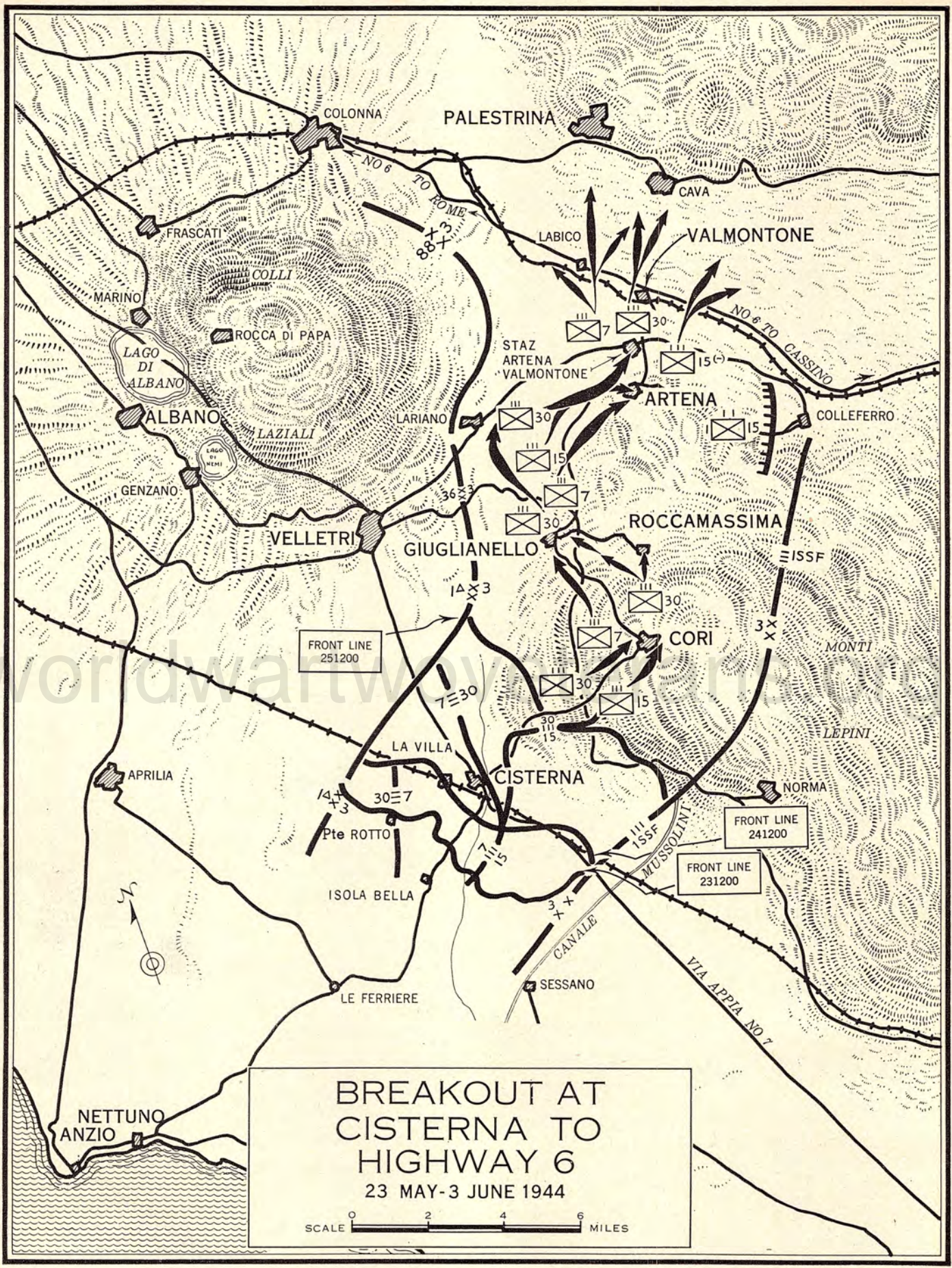
At 0800 the battalion attacked toward Cori with the mission of occupying high ground immediately south of town and protecting the Division's right flank. Company C led the attack and encountered strong machine-gun fire from enemy who had withdrawn the previous day. The terrain was rolling at the beginning of the attack but became steeper as the troops moved northeast. One tank was lost in the morning from enemy artillery fire. Both the 3d Division and 15th Infantry Battle Patrols were operating with the battalion, to maintain contact with SSF on the right and provide flank security.

Company C's drive slowed down about half way to the objective, and Company A was passed through. Advance patrols of the battalion were on the objective by 1500, and the battalion had occupied the entire objective by 1900. This position was held during the night.

With the capture of Cisterna and Cori at approximately the same time—late afternoon of May 25—the breakthrough was complete. No organized resistance remained in the Division zone of advance. While the Division had suffered heavily—approximately 1400 killed and wounded in three day's fighting—the enemy had suffered far more heavily, losing nearly 1600 prisoners to the 3d Division alone, and probably an equal number in killed and wounded. The 362d Infantry Division, ordered to defend in place, had been annihilated by the combined attack of the 3d Division and 1st Armored Division, and the 715th Infantry Division had lost at least half its front-line effectives.

In considering the success of this attack, it is noteworthy that there was little straggling. Hospitals reported that wounded 3d Division personnel were anxious to rejoin their units in combat, a not commonly-encountered phenomenon. This not only bespeaks high morale, but explains why companies, although greatly reduced in strength, could continue to attack and move forward in the face of terrific fire. Troops advanced well-deployed, minimizing losses, but every man was imbued with the desire to close with the enemy, and it was unnecessary to drive or push the men forward. This also bespeaks leadership of highest caliber, which was demonstrated time and again by junior officers who suddenly found important commands thrust upon them, and who turned in performances which could not be excelled.

Thus ended the Second Battle of Cisterna.



**BREAKOUT AT
CISTERNA TO
HIGHWAY 6**
23 MAY-3 JUNE 1944

SCALE 0 2 4 6 MILES

2: Cisterna—Rome Operation

26 May to 5 June

THE morning of 26 May marked the beginning of the Division's rapid pursuit of the enemy after German defenses around Cisterna had crumbled. Following the night of May 25-26, spent in assembly areas in the vicinity of Cori, the Division headed northward with 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, in the lead. Because there was practically no enemy opposition, the battalion moved on foot on the Cori-Giuglianello road with patrols protecting the flanks. Shortly after noon, while rounding a sharp curve at the outskirts of Cori, the battalion column was bombed and strafed by five United States P-40 fighter-bombers. The first three planes of the flight dropped their bombs, scoring direct hits on the highway. More than a hundred men were killed or wounded, including seventy from the 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, and the Adjutant and S-2 of the 30th Infantry. A number of jeeps loaded with ammunition were hit, and additional casualties were caused by exploding 37mm antitank and small-arms ammunition.

A considerable number of individual acts of heroism took place during this incident by soldiers who braved the fires and exploding shells to assist wounded comrades. Several jeeps were hit alongside abandoned German tanks in a narrow defile about 300 yards from the curve, tying up traffic for five or six hours.

Following the bombing the battalion reorganized and moved on foot toward Giuglianello, arriving there about 1800 hours.

Three large by-passes were constructed by the engineers between Cori and Giuglianello to replace bridges demolished by the enemy. The bridges were sighted

by artillery liaison planes, reported to the engineers, and work was under way shortly after elements of the 2d Battalion reached the river. The gap was fifty feet deep and sixty feet wide. Bulldozers were put across the gap shortly after work began and two other by-passes were finished a half hour after the first was completed.

Later a supply road from Cisterna to Cori was built for the 1st Battalion of the 15th Infantry.

The engineers also cleared the road of abandoned enemy vehicles and inspected for boobytraps. Four boobytrapped 88mm guns between Cisterna and Giuglianello were made harmless and 150 vehicles were cleared from the road.

The other two battalions of the 15th Infantry followed the 2d Battalion to Giuglianello, with the bombing incident at Cori the only obstacle. The three battalions assembled around Giuglianello at 1800 hours and about an hour and a half later entrucked for Artena. The truck column moved with 3d, 1st and 2d Battalions in that order, and had traveled only three or four miles when it came under intense German artillery fire. The 3d and 1st Battalions halted in that position for the night while the 2d Battalion, led personally by Brig. Gen. Whitfield P. Shepard, Assistant Division Commander, continued on wheels toward Artena, with the belief that Artena was in friendly hands, a false report by an adjoining unit commander.

Night had fallen when General Shepard halted the column about 700 yards west of Artena and went forward to seek a truck "turnaround." The General was fired on by enemy small arms and his aide slightly



Behind Cori, the Germans had placed a cemetery, where they had buried their Beachhead dead.



Villagers probe about the ruins of the village of Roccamassima.

wounded, so he ordered the battalion to organize a defense west of the town. Meanwhile rear elements of the motor column had become separated from the forward units, so Major Potter, Battalion Executive Officer halted the rear vehicles and sent out a contact patrol to find the forward part of the column. At that time enemy aircraft came over the column and the men hastily detrucked to escape the bombing and strafing. In detrucking, the men ran headlong into three German machine-gun positions covering that sector of the road. The enemy could have caused more confusion among the already frightened men by opening fire, but apparently taken completely by surprise by the headlong rush from the trucks, they gave up without firing a shot.

The remainder of the battalion was contacted shortly thereafter and a defense organized along the road facing north and east, with Company G on the right, Company F on the west and Company E behind F on the south side of the road. That position was held until morning.

The 30th Infantry followed the 15th on May 26, with the 1st Battalion protecting the Division's right flank. Shortly after noon the 1st Battalion with Company A leading, marched up the mountain trail leading due north from Cori, passing through the 1st Special Service Force, which was assembled in the northern outskirts of Cori. The SSF then followed the 1st Battalion toward Roccamassima, a small town sitting atop a high peak overlooking the Division's main route of advance. About 1500 yards south of Roccamassima, two enemy were seen in the woods down the mountainside to the west. A squad from Company A was sent down to investigate, and heavy machine-gun fire was placed on

the vicinity where the enemy had been seen. The fire brought several Germans running out, and the remainder of the 1st Battalion platoon was sent down to assist the squad in attacking them. The enemy showed no disposition to fight however, and the platoon took about ninety-four prisoners, who stated their mission was to go to Cisterna, reinforce the garrison there, and fight to the last. Three enemy were killed in this action. The battalion reached Roccamassima at about 1600 hours May 26 and organized a defensive position there before dark, covering the Division's right flank. During this period the Special Service Force started passing through to the north, all three regiments marching in column over the mountain trail.

The 2d Battalion moved to a position north and east of Cori the morning of May 26, where it spent the day regrouping and recovering from the losses it suffered around Cisterna. The 3d Battalion was ordered at 0700 hours to proceed north to Giuglianello and establish a defensive position west of that town. The battalion moved into position along a north-south ridge, extending to the main road about a mile west of Giuglianello. This was accomplished by 1400 hours and the rest of the day was spent organizing the position for all-around defense and laying wire on the final protective line.

The 7th Infantry, held up while it cleaned out Cisterna, followed the Division to the north. It moved in column along the railroad bed west of Cisterna in advance-guard formation, with 1st, 2d and 3d Battalions in that order. The regiment was held up by a fire fight between the enemy and 6th Armored Infantry Regiment along the Colli Rotundo, about two miles from Artena. At dusk the 3d Battalion moved cross-country

and took up a position on the regimental right flank west of Artena, on the forward slope of a large hill mass south of the town. During the move, with Company K in the lead, about thirty-five Germans were encountered in a meeting engagement. A 30-minute fight resulted, with four enemy killed, three wounded and three captured. The battalion then moved into position on the slope, picking up straggler enemy prisoners during the night.

Shortly after daylight of May 27, the 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, began its attack against Artena. At about the same time a roadblock held by Company G west of town captured an enemy amphibious jeep containing two staff officers from the *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division. They were on reconnaissance prior to bringing their unit into combat, and provided the 3d Division its first contact with the *Panzer-Fallschirmjäger* since the Anzio beachhead days of March.

Still under command of General Shepard, the 2d Battalion attacked toward Artena with G and F Companies abreast and Company E following F.

Both Companies G and F were halted outside Artena by fire from enemy Flakwagons, heavy artillery and small-arms fire, although Company G was able to cut the Artena-Valmontone road north of Artena. The enemy was well established in the town and it wasn't until Company E was sent through Company G on the right that the battalion was able to break into the town. It took nearly seven hours to cover the 500-600 yards distance. Casualties were relatively high, with more than seventy men killed or wounded.

While the 2d Battalion fought for Artena, the 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, marched toward the town and went into an assembly area in a 30-foot ditch at 1800 hours. A lucky enemy artillery shell landed in the ditch and caused thirteen casualties in Company M, wiping out an entire machine-gun section. Before dark the battalion was to have moved to Artena while the 2d Battalion regrouped. Company K got its forward elements into town but most of the company was under perfect enemy observation and was held up. At nightfall the company fell back to its assembly area in the ditch, then later the night of May 27-28 moved back into the town, which had previously been cleared of enemy. The 1st Battalion went into position west of the town, at daylight May 27, where it remained to protect the regiment's left flank during the attack.

The 30th Infantry moved but little during the 27th. The 3d Battalion moved its defensive position 1000 yards further west to close a gap between the 3d Division and elements on the left, and a new defensive position was organized. Wire was laid and a patrol sent along a road toward Velletri for about a mile, then swung south around the lower end of the small lake.

The patrol returned and reported contact with a patrol from the 36th Division. The battalion commander, Major R. H. Neddersen, and S-3, Capt. James L. Osgard, then went to contact units of the 36th personally to determine the exact location of the latter's forward elements.

The 2d Battalion ran into considerable fire from enemy retreating north and other enemy units moving south to reinforce their retreating comrades. This resulted in a number of meeting engagements, with neither side able to use prepared positions. Instead both the 2d Battalion and enemy relied on available terrain features.

At about 1000 hours the 1st Battalion (minus Company A, which was left on the mountain as security), moved to a position northwest of Giuglianello, reaching positions there during the afternoon without opposition. The battalion was placed in regimental reserve and remained in the one location during the 28th.

In the morning of May 27th the 7th Infantry moved toward Artena and in the afternoon took up a position southwest of the town. The regiment had three battalions on a line, with the 1st Battalion in the center, 3d Battalion on the right and 2d Battalion on the left. The position was organized for all-around defense, wire was laid, some mines were laid, and automatic weapons were sited to cover the rolling terrain. The 3d Battalion was ordered to contact the SSF on top of a hill mass south of Artena. The SSF arrived about dusk and the battalion (less Company L) went into position on the northern slope of the mass. Company L was detached to help Task Force Howze's tanks in their establishment of road blocks on the Division's left flank.

During the morning of the 28th, 7th Infantry received orders to oust the enemy from his positions along the railroad tracks between Artena and Valmontone. The 1st and 3d Battalions spearheaded the attack. Lt. Col. Frank M. Izenour started his 1st Battalion with A Company on the right and Company B on the left, Company C in reserve and Company D supporting the attack. Company A ran into extremely heavy opposition, for the *Hermann Goering Panzer* Division, fresh from the north, had had two days in which to get set for our battle-weary soldiers.

The enemy was dug-in on the reverse slope of the rolling hills and was getting a great deal of assistance from self-propelled guns and artillery. From noon until 2000 hours Company A fought without letup, at which time it reached its objective 2,000 yards from the line of departure. Enemy automatic weapons refused to move from their positions until blasted out by supporting tank fire, hand grenades or point-blank small-arms fire. The only concealment provided our attacking forces

was the two-foot high wheat. In the words of Colonel Izenour, "Company A was able to reach its objective only because my boys wanted that ground worse than Goering's did."

The position taken by Company A was at a junction of the highway and railroad tracks. Immediately after reaching its objective Company A dug in. Company B, on the left, had a great deal less trouble during its attack. Its main trouble was caused when the right platoon wandered too far to the north and encountered a column of enemy troops marching down the road. A fire fight resulted. Company B's platoon suffered a few casualties and captured ten prisoners. After the brief skirmish the company moved without opposition into position near the railroad to the left of Company A. Although it had little trouble moving forward, Company B was prevented from giving more than a small amount of assistance to Company A because the rolling hills obscured vision.

Meanwhile the 3d Battalion was meeting the same kind of resistance as Company A. With Company I on the right and Company K on the left (Company L was still with Task Force Howze's tanks) the battalion crossed the road west of Artena and moved out without too much opposition at first. At a point 200 yards south of the east-west railroad north of Artena the enemy opened up with all he had. Heavy machine-gun fire, from German positions on the high ground north of the railroad, stopped I Company. The company reorganized early in the afternoon and without additional help started out again. Meanwhile Company E had been able to move about 400 yards beyond the battalion objective, which was a hill mass nearly 1500 yards wide extending from a road junction east to a large knoll. However, the company was forced to pull back to the objective because of intense fire received from the same enemy that was firing on Company I. Company I, advancing by fire and movement, contacted Company K on the objective early in the evening and the two companies set up a defense on the objective.

At this time Company L rejoined the battalion, under the command of 1st Lt. Ralph Yates, who had taken over when Capt. Blaikie was wounded on the 24th. Lieutenant Yates personally led a patrol from his company three miles to the west along the railroad without contacting the Special Service Force or the enemy. Contact with friendly units was finally made the morning of the 29th when Company C came up on the left and the SSF on the right.

Except for the 3d Battalion which reverted to Division control behind the 30th Infantry, the 15th Infantry remained in its original positions during the 28th. Company I was detached and established road blocks

in the mountains east of the Giuglianello-Artena road preparatory to the attack on Valmontone of June 1.

The 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry, remained on the high ground west of Giuglianello the 28th to protect the north-south highway from Giuglianello to Artena against enemy attack from the west. The 3d Battalion received orders to attack toward Lariano and to go as far as the ridge 500 yards east of the Velletri-Artena railroad and set up a defense. Patrols had already reported that no enemy was short of the objective, and when the battalion reached the ridge without opposition, the commanding officer, Major Nedderson, obtained permission to move forward to the railroad track and organize a defense there. This was done without incident. Company I put an outpost on the south flank, tied in with the 36th Division, and Company L established a platoon outpost just south of Lariano.

During the night of May 28-29 enemy patrols and larger units began moving down into Lariano and attempting to infiltrate our forward positions.

The Division received badly-needed replacements during the night of May 28-29, each battalion getting from 150 to 200 new men. These men were needed to replace the losses suffered by all the battalions at Cisterna, by the 15th Infantry at Artena and the 7th Infantry in its push north of Artena.

The 30th Infantry moved toward Lariano the morning of the 29th with the mission of covering the Velletri-Artena road and protecting the Division's main supply route (the Cori-Giuglianello-Artena road). The regiment attacked to the northwest with the 1st Battalion, now commanded by Lt. Col. Allen F. Bacon, in the center, 3d Battalion on the left and the 2d on the right. The 1st Battalion reached and occupied positions between the Velletri-Artena road and the railroad which paralleled the road to the east.

Other units had preceded the 1st Battalion into Lariano, and reported no enemy there. However, when 1st Battalion sent its patrols into the town they were severely shelled from the direction of Velletri, and began meeting aggressive German patrols well equipped with automatic weapons and camouflaged uniforms. Enemy tanks and armored cars also came into Lariano in small numbers, but did not remain there. A period of weird, difficult fighting in the vineyards and terraces around Lariano followed. The 1st Battalion had succeeded in passing through, without resistance, a complete system of previously prepared enemy field works, dug by Italian labor and carefully camouflaged, forming part of the enemy's Velletri-Valmontone line. Enemy patrols first encountered were the advance elements of the *Hermann Goering* Division, which had come down from the north to man this defense line. The Goering troops never assaulted our positions east

of Lariano, but made continuous efforts to infiltrate our lines and reach their own prepared defenses. There was a great deal of sniping and fighting by individuals and small groups; in one case, one of our 37mm anti-tank guns in a forward position "picked off" an enemy sniper. First Battalion patrols went into Lariano, as the enemy did also; sometimes these patrols would meet and exchange fire there. Neither side made an initial effort to occupy the town, however.

The Germans, unable to occupy their prepared positions, were forced to dig in hastily west of Lariano. Our patrols reported many of these locations, and our continuous mortar fire was later learned to have produced heavy enemy casualties.

The 2d Battalion attacked in a column of companies—E, F, G and 3d Battalion's Company I, which was attached to 2d Battalion for the mission. The terrain was rolling and wheat fields provided little cover, especially since the battalion's right flank was open. Tanks were not used in force but were committed piecemeal and in the opinion of the battalion's commanding officer, Lt. Col. Woodrow W. Stromberg, were not far enough forward to support the infantry satisfactorily. In many cases hostile machine-gun nests could have been more easily eliminated if tank support had been closer. Two tanks were put out of action by enemy artillery.

The 3d Battalion experienced little trouble moving into position, but was bothered by the enemy's infiltration tactics after the regiment's objective had been reached. Fifty enemy attacked Company L's outpost the evening of May 29 but were driven off with the aid of artillery and mortar fire. Several small patrol skirmishes took place in the area between the battalion's outposts.

The 1st and 3d Battalions of the 7th Infantry remained in place the night of May 28-29 after their attack, but the 2d Battalion moved northeast to establish a roadblock at a point where the road and railroad cross. Companies E and G moved abreast and ran into enemy opposition at the objective. After an hour's battle, the infantry fire supported by mortars and artillery, the enemy withdrew and the battalion went into position with G on the left, E on the right, F in reserve.

All during the day the 3d Battalion could see German tanks moving into position on the high ground to the north. The battalion located its heavy machine guns and antitank guns on high ground south of the main line and fired long-range, harassing fire at the enemy. More than 2,000 rounds of 81mm mortar ammunition were fired during the day at enemy moving into position, plus additional artillery. Four enemy *Nebelwerfers* were silenced by our artillery fire. Two platoons of Company L moved to the right to fill in the gap be-

tween the 3d Battalion and the SSF on the right. This continual exchange of fire between our artillery and mortars and the enemy's artillery and SP guns continued through the night of 29-30 May.

The entire 15th Infantry remained in position north of Artena during this period to prevent the loss of the town in case of an enemy counterattack from the northwest.

Only action during the night of 29-30 May was an enemy counterattack along the axis of the Artena-Valmontone road. The bulk of this attack hit the SSF and did not affect the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry. The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, was also hit, but received assistance from 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, and the enemy's attempt to break through our line was repulsed all along the front.

The next morning the 2d Battalion of the 15th attacked northward astride the Artena-Valmontone road to push its defensive line farther north from Artena and pull up even with the rest of the Division's front. The tank-infantry team was at its best in this attack. Tanks moved abreast of the infantry, blasting enemy positions with 75mm and small-arms fire while the infantry mopped up stragglers. The attack halted short of a woods, about halfway between Artena and Valmontone, facing the enemy who was well dug-in along the wood line.

The rest of the Division remained in position from the 29th to the 31st, improving its defensive positions, laying wire and mines and improving all installations. Aggressive patrolling was carried out to the east, north and west to maintain contact with the enemy and to gain information about his positions. All this time the enemy worked on his own positions, laying a great deal of wire, and hastened to completion construction of positions on the ridge line just south of Highway 7 east and west of Valmontone. The 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry was relieved by a battalion of the 88th Infantry Division the night of May 30-31 and went into an assembly area well behind the front. It was attached to the 30th Infantry for the forthcoming attack on the 1st of June.

Shortly after noon of May 31, the 7th Infantry was ordered to push forward in an effort to maintain contact with the 88th Division on the left, which was attacking to the north. At 1400 hours the 1st Battalion commander sent C Company ahead to occupy Hill 331 against scattered but strong enemy resistance. A platoon of Company C reached the hill and outposted the position while the remainder of the battalion moved up.

At the same time a platoon of Company L was ordered to move out about 400 yards beyond the main line of resistance to occupy a piece of high ground. The

platoon reached its objective in less than fifteen minutes, but twenty minutes later was subjected to a terrific enemy artillery barrage followed by a German counterattack down the nose of the high ground. In addition the platoon had both flanks exposed and received fire from both sides. The platoon leader was killed shortly after the counterattack got started, when an enemy artillery shell landed in his hole. The same shell also killed the officer's radio operator and left the platoon out of communication with the rest of the battalion. At 1600 hours four tanks were sent out to screen the platoon's withdrawal, and one was almost immediately destroyed by enemy antitank fire. Company K was alerted to help the stranded platoon but shortly thereafter, a change of orders sent it to cover an objective of the 1st Battalion. A second tank was destroyed and the platoon was forced to withdraw with the supporting fire of only two tanks. Of the forty-two men and one officer sent out only nineteen men returned. Five were captured and the rest killed. One of the remaining two tanks was lost just after dark when attempting to withdraw.

The successes of the attacks of both the main forces of the US Fifth Army in the South and the Allied Beachhead Forces driving out of Anzio threatened the rout and almost complete destruction of the German Army in the south of Italy. In order to permit the orderly disengagement of their Beachhead forces and to prevent the Allied Beachhead Force from advancing to the northeast in an attempt to arrive at the rear of the forces retreating in front of the main US Fifth Army force coming up from the South, the Germans had moved the *Herman Goering Panzer* Division from the vicinity of the port Civitavecchia south into the Artena Gap. It was the apparent intention of the enemy to occupy a position on the eastern slopes of Colli Laziali, that followed across the Artena Gap and anchored its eastern flank on the western side of the Artena hill mass. Fortunately the enemy was heavily attacked before he was able to establish and organize his desired position. However, before the enemy was ejected and driven back from the positions he finally occupied, it was necessary for the 3d Infantry Division to make a coordinated major attack, which attack should be considered a very definite phase in the elimination of the Anzio Beachhead.

The Division was detached from VI Corps and attached to II Corps for the attack of June 1st and remained with II Corps until relieved from the line after Rome had fallen. All elements of the Division were relieved by the 85th Division prior to the night of May 31 and June 1, except the 1st and 3d Battalions, 7th Infantry. Those two battalions held their portion of the line while the 15th and 30th passed through.

The 15th attacked along the axis of the Artena-Valmontone road, 1st, 2d and 3d Battalions on line left to right and the 30th Infantry on the left. The 1st Battalion of the 15th Infantry moved almost directly north with the road on its left. Included in its sector was the Artena railroad station, which had been turned into a strongpoint by the enemy. Five Mark IV tanks were located at the railroad and made the battalion's advance exceedingly difficult. Company A led the attack, and though suffering a large number of casualties, succeeded in reaching the high ground beyond the station. A mist hampered visibility, making it difficult to observe artillery fire. Nonetheless two enemy tanks were destroyed—one while right in the middle of Company A. Medium tanks, supporting the attack, moved down the road. The lead tank was hit by enemy tank fire from the station and three enemy tanks retreated with the enemy infantry.

Company B passed through Company A, but shortly after moved forward under intense enemy fire from the left flank. This resulted from the unit on the left being held up about 2000 yards to the rear. A considerable amount of *Nebelwerfer* fire from the vicinity of Labico was received, but Company B reached its objective—about halfway between the railroad station and Valmontone—at 1700 hours.

Shortly thereafter eight enemy machine guns and one tank began firing at the battalion and enemy infantry formed for a counterattack from the north. Major Paulick called for Division artillery, 81mm mortar and 4.2 chemical mortar fire, and for the next forty-five minutes dropped fifty-five rounds of high explosive per minute on the enemy. The tank was destroyed and two captured Germans said all their comrades who were alive after the concentration got up and ran. Company C had no trouble moving on to the objective. Company A went to the left flank and held the high ground there.

The 2d Battalion jumped off in the attack with its direction of attack east of the Artena railroad station. Company G led and moved in the cover of a ditch. It was stopped when almost due east of the station by enemy fire from the west. The enemy was well dug-in and had supporting fire from SP guns and tanks. Further advance during daylight hours was impossible because the already-inhabited ditch provided the only cover in the battalion's zone of advance. Company F maneuvered to the left during the night of June 1-2 and drew an additional hail of 20mm Flakwagon and artillery fire as well as small-arms fire. Companies G and F continued to battle during the night, moving into enemy positions by infiltration, and by daylight had cracked the German defenses. In spite of the heavy fighting, control and communications were handled

expertly. On the morning of June 3 the battalion captured the ridge line south of Highway 6, cut the road and moved into position to defend against any enemy efforts to break back across the highway. Following the original breakthrough the enemy withdrew rapidly and failed to muster anything more than token resistance.

The 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, remained in an assembly area at a junction of five roads northeast of Artena and sent a patrol out to the initial objective, on the western nose of a slight hill, during the night prior to the jump-off hour. Therefore the battalion was bothered only by sniper fire until the next morning when it moved out. From the first objective, Company K led across the railroad tracks north of Artena. Company I followed K and both met considerable resistance from high ground north of the tracks while crossing the tracks. Both companies had to move across the ridge line of the tracks in small-group rushes.

Serious enemy resistance ceased once the railroad had been crossed and the 3d Battalion moved against only harassing sniper and SP-gun fire to cut Highway 6 by midafternoon. A defensive position was set up on the ridge overlooking the road from the south before dark and the antitank guns of the battalion were sited to stop any enemy vehicles moving into Valmontone from the east. This position was held until 1300, June 3. During this time no enemy was encountered; the battalion contacted the SSF and later the French.

On the left flank of the 15th Infantry was the 30th Infantry, making the Division main effort, with the Artena-Valmontone road serving as the right boundary for the 30th's 1st Battalion. The battalion moved up to attack with Company A on the left, Company B on the right and Company C behind the two in reserve. A machine-gun platoon from Company D was with each assaulting company; heavy mortars were placed in the railroad bed. Casualties were suffered by forward elements as they descended the slope into the railroad bed before reaching the line of departure, from enemy artillery and mortar fire. The enemy at the time held the second ridge north of the railroad track. In the 1st Battalion sector this ridge was divided into two hills, a small hill just west of the Artena-Valmontone road, and a long hill extending to the west, forming part of the same ridge. There was a six-foot bank just at the crest of the long hill, and heavy woods commenced a short distance north of this bank. The enemy main line of resistance was in the woods, but within view of the open terrain over which our troops had to attack.

The enemy was heavily supplied with automatic weapons, and had mortars in defilade directly behind

the ridge; besides, the period of four days required for us to bring in the 85th and 88th Divisions, and regroup for the attack, had enabled the enemy to do considerable digging and to improve his excellent position.

The attack did not begin auspiciously. Company B managed to get a platoon onto the small hill near the Artena-Valmontone road, but Company A, moving across exposed terrain on a forward slope facing the enemy position, had soon lost all but one of its officers. 1st Lt. Randolph Bracey, leading a platoon of Company A to the northwest in order to attack the long ridge from its west flank, was killed and the platoon was wiped out. Enemy machine guns located farther west placed enfilade fire on all elements of Company A to add to its difficulties. 1st Lt. James Packman, commanding officer of Company D, was placed in command of Company A; 1st Lt. Ray Young took command of Company D.

All of our available artillery was placed on the long ridge. Enemy positions were so well concealed in the woods that at times the effect of artillery fire had to be sensed by its success in reducing the activity of automatic weapons. Our infantry creeping down the north slope of the hill on the line of departure received bursts whenever they moved.

The only factor which made a continuation of the attack possible was the arrival of a platoon of tanks and a few tank destroyers, some of which moved up on the left of the battalion and some through a saddle in the ridge from which the battalion was attacking. In conjunction with the attack, Company C, having lost both its commander and executive, led by 1st Lt. Rex Metcalf, passed through Company A, while the latter returned to the reverse slope of the friendly ridge to reorganize. Enemy artillery, machine-gun and mortar fire was the most severe in the experience of any of the officers taking part. Enemy snipers were also active.

Our tanks finally gained the top of the enemy-held ridge and cruised among the enemy positions, while Company C's men succeeded in storming the bank and shooting and grenading the enemy, who took to their holes when our tanks appeared. Lack of enemy mines and barbed wire was a great factor in the final success of our attack; otherwise the enemy was well dug-in, and naturally was very strong. The 1st Battalion suffered about 150 casualties during the day.

The battalion continued to move north against sporadic resistance during the night of the 1st and 2d of June and finally attained its objective—high ground southwest of Valmontone, although our own artillery twice prevented them from occupying the hill.

The 2d Battalion was faced with steep hills more



3d Division Infantrymen, supported by 1st Armored Division tanks, battle the Hermann Goering Panzer Division in the Artena Gap.

than enemy infantry in its advance, and received terrific artillery fire all during its attack. Although the progress was slow, it was mostly because of the terrain and the battalion's casualties were not excessive. Company I, commanded by Capt. Lloyd K. Jensen, had been attached to the battalion and was committed at about 1330 hours on the 1st, passing through the 2d Battalion and seizing several objectives about 2000 yards west, and 1000 yards south, of Valmontone. Fourteen prisoners were taken, including a company commander whose defense was wiped out. The 3d Battalion was then ordered to continue the attack, with objectives north of Highway 6 and east of Labico. Company I rejoined the 3d Battalion on the march to the new objectives.

On the way north to Highway 6 the battalion encountered two serious obstacles—the first was a sunken road with high banks, the second a cliff which bordered Highway 6 on the south. These features did not show up on the map and the cliff cost the battalion three hours of hard work in making the descent. Formation for the advance was Companies L and K abreast, with a platoon of heavy machine guns from Company M attached to each, sweeping the area, and Company I in reserve with Company M's mortars.

After reaching the bottom of the cliff, one platoon was sent north across the highway to the high ground north of the road to see if the objective was clear. The platoon was starting up the slopes of the hill when a Corps Artillery "Time on Target" concentration fell on the objective. Fortunately the platoon was clear of friendly artillery and no damage was done. This objective was occupied by 0600 hours June 2, with one enemy straggler captured. The other objectives to the north were taken shortly thereafter. Almost immediately orders were received to proceed to new objectives north and west of Valmontone. The only

opposition encountered en route to these objectives was occasional sniper fire and machine-gun fire from a roadblock formed by a squad of enemy. The machine guns fired on Company I, which returned the fire, and the enemy evacuated the roadblock by using three combat vehicles marked with red crosses. There were three enemy wounded and one captured in this action.

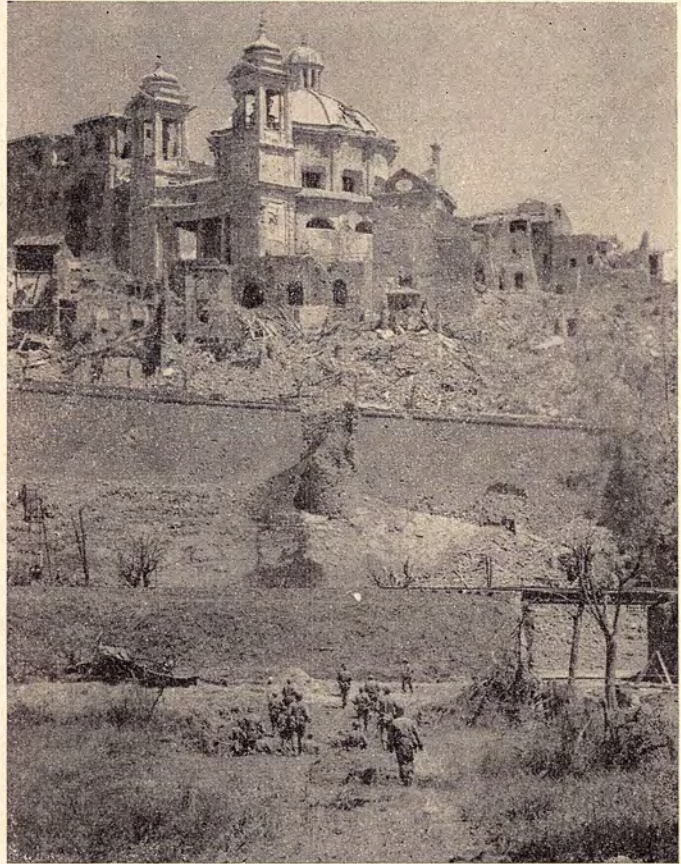
The battalion had just reached and organized the west end of the two objectives when an enemy SP gun, located to the east where a power line crossed the highway, opened up with damaging fire. Our troops tried to get artillery fire on it, but it moved in under a cliff, still firing too close to our positions. The 3d Battalion sent bazooka men after the SP gun but they were confronted by about a hundred yards of clear ground, and machine guns mounted in the SP chassis kept them away. Meanwhile friendly tanks and tank destroyers were being held up in Valmontone by mines. The 3d Battalion was never able to neutralize the gun, but it was forced out of the area by the 2d Battalion, which relieved the 3d Battalion about nightfall. The gun caused fifteen casualties in the 3d Battalion. The battalion remained on the west end of the two objectives during the night and all day of the 2d.

The 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, attached to the 30th Infantry for the attack, was committed at 0800 hours and told to cross the line of departure at the railroad west of the Artena-Valmontone road and take two pieces of high ground located just east of a three-way road crossing. Company F suffered eighteen casualties during an artillery concentration before reaching the line of departure. The attack was made with Company E on the left, Company F on the right and Company G in reserve, and the two hills were taken by 1800 hours. Opposition consisted mainly of enemy rear-guard action; that is, SP guns and Flak wagons.

The hills northwest of Valmontone were the next objective and the battalion started out after dark with E on the right and G on the left. The only opposition came from enemy aircraft dropping antipersonnel bombs, but the battalion had difficulty keeping contact and maintaining control due to the nature of the terrain and the darkness. The railroad west of Valmontone and Highway 6 were reached at 0500 hours June 2 and cut in the face of some scattered small arms fire and heavy *Nebelwerfer* fire. Company F went through to take high ground west of Valmontone, and the battalion commander then sent a nine-man patrol from the battalion intelligence section into the town. It was found cleared of enemy but the patrol ran into Flakwagon fire at the northeast edge and suffered seven casualties. Immediately after ascertaining that Valmontone was cleared, the battalion headed north to high ground about 5000 yards north of Valmontone on the road to Palestrina. There were some enemy with automatic weapons on this high ground but they withdrew as the battalion advanced.

Here the battalion was resupplied, and at 1800 hours Company G jumped off to take the crossroads south of Palestrina. This crossroads was located about 700 yards southwest of the town, which sat on high ground. Companies E and F followed Company G up the road. Some Flakwagon, SP and small-arms fire was met, but not a great deal and by 2000 hours Company G was at a cemetery about 1000 yards south of the crossroads. On reaching this point Company G was subjected to heavy tank and SP fire from the crossroads, so Company F went into a firing position west of the road and Company E deployed astride the road between Companies F and G. The battalion remained in this position during the night and the morning of June 3, sending patrols to the east and west.

The 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, did not take part in the attack until 0230 hours on June 2, at which time it moved toward Valmontone in advance guard formation, and by daylight had reached a position on the flat ground southwest of the town. At 1045 hours it moved farther north to a new objective, where it halted for a brief rest and at 1615 started for a cross road to the south and east of the 2d Battalion's objective. Company I led the attack, supported by tanks and followed by Company K. Company L was attached to Task Force Ellis. Company I received a great deal of artillery fire and tank fire while still about 2000 yards short of the objective and the battalion went into attack formation with Company I on the right and Company K on the left. The battalion received fire from hostile machine guns and Mark VI tanks from south of the crossroads. At 0500 hours on June 3,



The battered ruins of Valmontone rise above the little figures in the plain below Highway 6.

Companies I and K were still 700 yards short of their objective, held up by a couple of Mark VI tanks which couldn't be hit by supporting tanks because they were well hidden behind a small ridge.

While the 2d and 3d Battalions were moving north of Valmontone to prevent enemy from counterattacking against Highway 6, the 1st Battalion was attached to Task Force Howze. The remainder of the Task Force consisted of the 3d Battalion, 13th Armored Infantry, one troop of the 1st Armored Division Recon Squadron, and a company of tank destroyers. It was joined June 3 by a battalion of the 88th Division and by the 751st Tank Battalion. The 1st Battalion's mission was to protect the tanks from enemy infantry and wipe out infantry pockets by-passed by the tanks. Task Force Howze was organized to provide a large, mobile striking force and to protect the gap between the 3d Division and the 88th Division during the attack to Highway 6.

The Task Force jumped off with two tank companies abreast. A Company of 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry, followed behind the right tank company and had little trouble reaching its part of the battalion objective. It

advanced straight north toward Labico then swerved over to the left as it neared the highway.

Company B ran into considerably more trouble. In the first place one platoon was detached and given the mission of contacting the 88th Division on the left. The remainder of Company B failed to contact its company of tanks and ran into a fight alone in a group of low hills. It was hit by snipers from a house on the left, received intermittent machine-gun fire from a knoll to the right and then ran into a line of enemy riflemen armed with rifle grenades. Company C was committed at 1500 hours to gain contact with the left company of tanks and help Company B. By flanking the resistance which was holding up Company B, Company C forced the enemy to withdraw and Company B was able to advance. Resistance slackened and during the early morning of June 2 Companies B and C were assigned to front-line tank companies. By noon, meeting only scattered sniper, mortar and artillery fire, the Task Force reached the railroad tracks west of Labico. During the afternoon the battalion crossed the highway to an assembly area, where it remained until the morning of the 3d.

While the 2nd and 3d Battalions of the 7th Infantry were protecting the Division against a possible enemy thrust from the north, it was imperative that enemy units withdrawing in the face of the French push from the east not be allowed to hit the Division from the east. Hence, the 2d Battalion, 30th Infantry was sent toward Cave, a small town located about four miles east of Palestrina. Moving under cover of darkness the night of June 2-3, the battalions took a position on high ground to the southwest of Cave overlooking the town and the road to Palestrina. The battalion had to move almost noiselessly, as it was deep in enemy territory without flank protection.

During the night the battalion was hit by small-arms fire, antipersonnel bombs, SP guns, Flakwagons and mortars, but casualties were surprisingly light considering the amount of fire received.

The battalion formed in a huge semicircle, with a perimeter of about 2000 yards. Company E faced north and east, Company F faced north and west and Company G protected against an enemy move from the south. All day the battalion was subjected to enemy fire, Company E receiving direct fire from enemy tanks to the north. The battalion was too far to the north to get support from our artillery, but did receive some aid from two tanks and two tank destroyers that arrived shortly after daylight on the 3d. The battalion's roadblock destroyed an enemy tank and two other vehicles. Tanks fired into Cave most of the day, and a 14-man group of Germans was sighted near the town. The group was the advance part of a German unit

that was to have moved into the area. They were taken without a fight.

The 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry, took over for the 2d Battalion when the latter went to Cave, and remained in an assembly area north and west of Valmontone until June 4.

June 3 was the date of one of the most stirring tales of courage and self-sacrifice in the annals of United States military history. The way it came into being was a minute incident of the push to Rome, which otherwise would now be lost in the larger picture. Sgt. Raymond Bunning begins the epic story:

"On 2 June my patrol, an element of Battle Patrol, 15th Infantry, was ordered to cross Highway 6 . . . and proceed 1500 yards north, scouring the area for enemy dispositions. We moved out at about 2300 hours and proceeded on our mission. By 0100, June 3, we had covered the greatest part of our assignment without making contact with the enemy.

"We made our way through a lightly-wooded area and had started to cross a large clearing when we came under severe fire from our front, both flanks, and slightly to the rear. Three tanks raked us with 20mm slugs and machine-gun fire. Three machine guns traversed across our position and approximately sixty enemy riflemen fired directly on us. The patrol leader was killed almost instantly; a burst of machine-gun fire caught him squarely. The rest of us hit the dirt. The enemy had prepared an ambush and had sprung the trap, catching us entirely by surprise.

"The only way out was to the rear. Inasmuch as I was the second in command, I took over and ordered that everyone lie low until I could figure the lay of the land. While we were lying there, I saw two of my men jump up and walk toward the enemy. Pvt. Elden Johnson, my BAR man, and Pfc. Herbert Christian, a tommy gunner, had elected to sacrifice themselves in order that the rest of us could withdraw from the trap. They motioned to me, indicating that I was to take the remainder of the patrol to the rear."

"Almost at once," continued T/5 Douglas Bragg, "Pfc. Christian was hit just above the right knee by a 20mm slug which completely severed his right leg. The flares made it as bright as day and I was almost sickened by the sight. Blood was gushing from the stump. Shreds of flesh dangled from his leg. The pain must have been intense. This man Christian was like a wounded animal; instead of calling for aid he took his Thompson submachine gun and made his way forward on one knee and the bloody stump, firing his weapon as rapidly as possible. He was raking the kraut and succeeding in killing or wounding at least three.

"These two men, determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible, attracted all of the fire of the en-

trenched enemy group. So audacious was their attack that the kraut forgot about the rest of us for the moment. The sight of these two men out there, each one heading for a machine gun, not seeking cover as any normal human would do, almost hypnotized the enemy."

Said Pvt. Robert Wriston: "Private Johnson advanced a total of about twenty yards, reaching a point within five yards of the enemy. He killed the crew of the machine gun which had killed our patrol leader, with one burst of fire from his BAR. Reloading his weapon, he turned on the riflemen to the left and fired directly into their position, either killing or wounding four of the enemy. A burst of machine-gun fire struck Private Johnson, causing him to slump forward; however he caught himself and balanced on his knees long enough to kill another German before he fell forward, dead.

"Meanwhile, Pfc. Christian had continued forward, despite obvious pain, to a point within ten yards of the enemy. He traveled about twenty yards in all. Intent on covering us to the last, Pfc. Christian emptied his tommy gun into a German machine-pistol man, hastily reloaded his weapon, and sprayed one last burst of fire. About this time the enemy seemed to have completely recovered from his initial surprise and concentrated his fire on Pfc. Christian. Machine-gun, 20mm, machine-pistol and rifle fire was concentrated on him as the enemy vented his anger over the now-obvious ruse. Pfc. Christian fell forward, dead.

"The courage and self-sacrifice displayed by Pfc. Christian and Private Johnson was all that saved our lives. That's something that none of the rest of us will ever forget."

Both men were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

On the 3d of June the 15th Infantry started a dash west on Highway 6 toward Rome. The 1st Battalion had relieved the SSF on June 2 to protect the Division's right flank, then on the morning of the 3d it moved by motor to the west. The battalion detrucked at Colonna and from there patrolled on foot to the north of Highway 6. No enemy was met and the battalion contacted the French coming south from Highway 6 on the latter's drive into Rome. The battalion continued on to the Aniene River, reaching there about 2200 hours.

At 0400 hours on the 4th, 1st Battalion resumed its march, this time heading for the Tiber River. By 0600 hours it was along a small north-south creek when it received tank fire from a road about 1000 yards to the northwest. At this time the battalion was north of Monte Sacro, which is located at the northeastern outskirts of Rome. One of our tank destroyers was lost in the ensuing fight and the rest of the day was spent try-

ing to overcome enemy rear-guard action. The enemy was putting up fierce rear-guard action in this sector in an effort to get his troops out of Rome and to the north. The battalion moved west slowly, cutting Highway 4 at Castel Giubbile, about four and a half miles due north of Rome at a point where the Tiber swings away from the highway. A platoon of the 3d Recon Troop was contacted at this point. The enemy was firmly entrenched in the bluffs across the river, making it impossible for the battalion to cross, but fire was placed on Highway 3 and the enemy was unable to withdraw along that route.

The French reported at 1300 hours to take over the sector but battalion patrols had reported enemy coming out of Rome along Highway 4 so Major Paulick retained control for an additional four hours. His battalion ambushed three tanks and six trucks and scattered enemy infantry on the trucks. Eighty prisoners were rounded up and command of the sector was turned over to the French.

The 2d Battalion, 15th Infantry, followed closely behind the 1st Battalion in the move by motor the 3d of June, but stopped for reorganization in a flat open field near Colonna, a small town about half way between Valmontone and Rome, remained there during the night and continued toward the Italian capital the next day. The 3d Battalion stopped at San Cesarso, another small town on the way to Rome. The battalion then split, Company I moving to Monte Massino, Company L to a road block on high ground farther east and Company K with the battalion CP in a central position. The CP was about fourteen miles from Rome.

At daylight of the 4th the 3d Battalion returned to San Cesarso, remained there an hour and started on foot to Rome. It reached a vineyard four miles out of Rome due east of the city shortly after dark, then later walked to the Aniene River, where it was supposed to establish a bridgehead across the river. Here it ran into considerable artillery fire, the first enemy fire of any concentration it had received in two days. The 1st and 2d Battalions passed through the 3d Battalion and went into positions north of Rome. The 2d Battalion was bombed on the road, and suffered some casualties in Companies F and H. Following the bombing Company E got in a small fire fight after which the battalion established roadblocks for the night in conjunction with the rest of the regiment. Except for occasional sniping there was no opposition on the 5th and in the afternoon the entire regiment assembled in Rome after all three battalions had been relieved by the French. Throughout the regiment's pursuit along Highway 6 there was little or no opposition. Only when the 1st and 2d Battalions cut off the enemy's escape route to the north of the city did it meet any

kind of resistance and then it was mainly rear-guard action of SP guns and a few snipers.

While the 15th Infantry was heading for Rome, the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 7th Infantry continued their battle south of Palestrina. Their tactics were really an aggressive defense, for the Division did not want Palestrina other than to prevent the enemy from counterattacking against Highway 6 and cutting off our forward elements from their supplies. Because the main road leading to 3d Battalion positions were under perfect enemy observation, engineers constructed a cross-country tank road and tanks and tank destroyers were brought into position. At 1030 hours on the 3d the platoon of tanks was sent around to the left while the platoon of tank destroyers made a base of fire south of the enemy and German tanks were forced to withdraw. Because of the hilly terrain it took the tanks several hours to get into position, but once the enemy armor was endangered it withdrew immediately. Company I moved on to the crossroads at 1700 hours. Company K, receiving fire from the enemy in front of the 2d Battalion, was disorganized and unable to move forward. Its company commander was killed during an enemy artillery barrage. Lt. Col. Toffey,* regimental executive officer, was killed and Lt. Col. Snyder, tank battalion commander, was wounded by the same enemy shell during the tank action. After dark Company K was reorganized and put into position south of Company I in a defense in depth.

The 2d Battalion didn't get its attack started until 1300 hours, but once it got started it made short work of the enemy and reached its crossroads in an hour and a half. Supported by fire from two tanks, three tank destroyers and two battalions of artillery, Company G stormed the position. One Flakwagon and one Mk IV tank were destroyed, six enemy were killed, five taken prisoner and the rest forced to withdraw into Palestrina. During the night the remainder of the enemy that had withdrawn, estimated at a platoon, counterattacked but were driven off by artillery and mortar fire before they reached our front lines.

Both battalions of the 7th were relieved by units of the French by 0800 hours on the 4th; they assembled during the morning and entrucked for Rome. The 3d

Battalion spent the night at Tor Sapienza, a small settlement at the outskirts of Rome and the 2d Battalion established a company at each of three roadblocks a short distance north of Highway 6. The morning of the 5th both battalions moved by truck into Rome without further enemy contact.

As a part of Task Force Howze, the 1st Battalion of the 7th was the first full combat unit of the Allied armies to enter Rome, moving into the city during the afternoon of June 4. On June 3, preceding other II Corps units, the Task Force attacked to the left of Highway 6, guiding on the road, cleaning out pockets of enemy resistance. Armor from the 751st Tank Battalion moved out in the lead, followed by Lt. Col. Frank M. Izenour's battalion on foot. The enemy had set up a series of automatic weapon emplacements which were neutralized, and a large number of prisoners were taken at little cost to the 1st Battalion.

At 1700 hours the battalion was ordered to set up three roadblocks, a company of tanks and a company of infantry at each, between Highways 6 and 5. Company B, riding on the tanks, moved to its block without trouble and went into position. Shortly thereafter Company A, also mounted on tanks, was ambushed by an enemy roadblock. The first two tanks got past the enemy block, but the third was hit by antitank fire and thirteen infantrymen were wounded. The tanks and infantry halted, deployed in the field and drove off the enemy, then set up a roadblock at this point instead of going to its original position. Company G followed with fourteen tanks and set up the third roadblock. Shortly before dark it ambushed an enemy convoy of nearly thirty vehicles, captured all the vehicles—including two mobile 88mm guns—and 130 prisoners, including an antiaircraft battalion commander. Four of the enemy were killed. Company G had no casualties.

The battalion moved on foot to Tor Sapienza and at 1400 was ordered to move into Rome with SSF on its left. The SSF was held up at the outskirts of the city, so 1st Battalion moved ahead into Rome, outflanking the enemy in front of the SSF and forcing him to withdraw. The battalion reached the San Lorenzo railroad yards about 1700 hours without any opposition, remained there the night after setting up a defense in the streets around the station, and joined the remainder of the regiment in a Rome bivouac the next day. From June 3 until June 5 the battalion met only light enemy resistance and suffered few casualties.

All three battalions of the 30th Infantry were relieved from their defensive positions the morning of June 4, and immediately entrucked toward Rome. A number of likely points of enemy resistance—crossroads and railroad stations—were investigated, but only scattered

*Lt. Colonel Toffey had formerly commanded the 2d Battalion of the 15th Infantry but had been transferred and made executive of the 7th just prior to the breakout from the Beachhead. Toffey was one of the best-loved and most colorful characters in the Division, if not in our entire Army. He was famous for wise-cracking and coolness under fire. The tougher the spot the more exuberant he became and the dryer his humor. The story of how he got into the Division is epic. His application for transfer to the 3d from his old division—the 9th—having been disapproved, Toffey proceeded to disappear for a 48-hour period without leave. Upon his return to military control he was informed that nothing stood in the way of his transfer to the 3d any longer. General Truscott, who had known him since he participated in the landing with him at Port Lyautey, French Morocco, welcomed him with a battalion command. No one was missed more than this mad, genial Irishman. ED.

enemy snipers were encountered. The regiment de-trucked a few kilometers outside Rome and moved west to the outskirts of the city expecting resistance but meeting none. Tanks, tank destroyers and cannon company M-8 self-propelled howitzers were attached to each battalion and plans made to move into Rome during the night of June 4-5. However the plan was cancelled in order to forestall any heavy fighting in the streets at night.

Jumping off from the railroad tracks, which ran north and south on the outskirts of the city, the regiment attacked toward the Tiber River at dawn of the 5th with the 1st Battalion on the right, 3d on the left and 2d in reserve. All the regiment's companies had been split up into separate task forces, with objectives, the bridges across the Tiber. Except for Companies A and G, the regiment had no trouble.

Company A, advancing to the Aniene River on Highway 4, met resistance from an estimated platoon of enemy north of the river, reinforced by two tanks. Fire of M-8's, machine guns and mortars was placed on the enemy, and when communications were established with artillery, enabling us to shell him, the enemy withdrew. Company G got into a fire fight near the Villa Savoia, between Highway 4 and the Tiber at the north edge of town. The enemy used tank and small-arms fire, but Company G was limited to the use of small arms so as not to destroy the city wantonly. The fight lasted until mid-afternoon, when the enemy withdrew because of pressure from elements of the 15th Infantry to the north. Twenty-two prisoners were picked up and Company G continued to its bridge objectives.

Soon after our rifle companies reached the bridges, to prevent the enemy from destroying them, engineers were brought up to check all bridges and later all public buildings for mines, boobytraps, and other demolitions. Not a single mine was found, so rapid had been the enemy's retreat and so disorganized his forces.

The entire Division was relieved from the line by the afternoon of the 5th, after having taken the longest route to Rome.

On 7 June, General O'Daniel received a teletype which read:

Please give to my old Division, the Third, my thanks, and to my first regiment in the Army, the Thirtieth, and the Seventh of my Vancouver days and especially to my old China regiment, the Fifteenth, for cutting Highway Six

GEORGE C. MARSHALL
Chief of Staff
U. S. Army

THIRD RECON TROOP IN CISTERNA-ROME OPERATION

Nothing has been said in the foregoing account of the operations of the Division's principal Reconnaissance Troop, and its attached Battle Patrol. This omission was intentional, since the operations of the troop were of an independent nature and could not easily be described concurrently with the infantry action, as could the operations of the artillery, engineers and armor, without causing unnecessary confusion. However, the work of the troop was of such importance to the successful accomplishment of the Division's mission that it is described here in detail.

During most of the Anzio beachhead operation, in fact since the first week in February, the 3d Recon Troop did little but patrol Division rear areas and man three Division observation posts. The operation at Cisterna, however, brought forth a need for motorized reconnaissance and from May 26, when the enemy's defensive ring around Cisterna was broken, until June 5 the three platoons of the Recon Troop plus the Division Battle-Patrol were in almost constant use.

The Battle Patrol was an organization formed during the stagnant days of the beachhead to give the Division an extra "company," especially trained in scouting and patrolling, to work either with the Recon Troop or independently. It consisted of two officers and fifty-six men, all volunteers, armed with the following weapons: eight Browning Automatic Rifles, eight '03 rifles for grenade launching, twenty-eight Thompson submachine guns, two bazookas, eight M-1 semi-automatic rifles and a demolition crew.

It was sent into action the second day of the attack, filling a gap between the 1st Battalion of the 15th Infantry and the Special Service Force. When the 15th Infantry cut the railroad south of Cisterna the second day of the attack, the Battle Patrol pushed ahead and were the first United States troops into Cori. A platoon of the Recon Troop was sent through the breach in the enemy's lines on May 25, initially to clear a road junction north of Cisterna and immediately thereafter to proceed directly to Cori. The platoon was held up on high ground short of Cori by a barrage from our own artillery, then moved into Cori shortly after the Battle Patrol had cleared the town.

On the move into Cori the first platoon met an enemy strongpoint, destroyed a 105mm assault-gun howitzer, took twenty-six prisoners and captured two 88mm guns. Meanwhile the third platoon reconnoitered for another route into Cori. It too got into a fire fight and killed eight enemy and took ten prisoners. The third platoon continued on toward Giuglianello and ran into an enemy position beyond the town where it killed nineteen, and took fifty-eight prisoners.



Curious Italians crowd about the first 3d Division troops entering Rome.

On the 27th all three platoons of the Recon Troop moved out to the west and north of Giuglianello. The 2d platoon went into action for the first time and cut the Velletri-Artena road, engaged in a short fire fight west of Artena, then later in the day retired behind the 30th Infantry's antitank gun positions. The Battle Patrol conducted dismounted reconnaissance toward Artena for the 15th Infantry. The 1st platoon moved toward Velletri in the morning, remained there during the night, and met an enemy force the next morning. As the platoon dismounted and moved through the underbrush to deploy, the platoon leader and one enlisted man, on foot reconnaissance, were captured by the enemy. Their jeep was hit by enemy antitank fire and was destroyed by 37mm fire from the platoon's armored car to prevent its falling into German hands. The platoon remained in that position during the day, pulled back to a night position at dark and was relieved by the 2d platoon. The 3d platoon, with a platoon of tank destroyers, put in a roadblock north-east of Velletri.

The 1st platoon relieved the 3d platoon at the roadblock shortly before dark on the 29th, then pulled off the block at 2200 hours. The troop located and operated a Division OP from the 29th until the 1st of June, when the Division's attack toward Highway 6 began.

While the Division remained north of Artena, the Battle Patrol worked in front of and on both flanks of the Division to maintain contact with the enemy

and friendly units. During the night of the 31st patrols went east of Roccamassima and the next day discovered enemy along a ridge west of Segni.

With the 30th Infantry on the left and 15th Infantry on the right, the Battle Patrol was given the mission of clearing Valmontone the morning of June 2. The town was cleared by 0600 hours and six hours later the Patrol was 8000 yards north of town. The troop's 3d platoon started north of the town toward Palestrina but was held up for an hour and a half until the streets could be cleared of debris. At noon it encountered an enemy roadblock consisting of an antitank gun, two machine guns and ten riflemen. The platoon killed twelve enemy enlisted men and one officer.

The 2d platoon covered the road net south of Highway 6 west of Valmontone, and suffered six casualties from heavy enemy *Nebelwerfer* and artillery fire.

Mission of the 1st platoon was to move west on Highway 6 to the road junction 3000 yards west of Labico. As the platoon reached Valmontone its armored car was fired on by an enemy antitank gun but was not hit. It turned west on Highway 6 at Valmontone and started for Labico. The highway between the two towns is in deep defilade, with steep, wooded banks rising in height to seventy-five feet on either side of the road, necessitating careful attention to flank protection in order to avoid the typical "mouse trap" frequently employed by the Germans.

The platoon reached the eastern edge of Labico by 1100 hours without incident, then noted ten Germans

moving through the undergrowth 150 yards short of the city limits and within fifty yards of the platoon's point. The platoon leader brought his armored car into position thirty yards from the enemy and opened fire. Two Germans were taken prisoner, seven were killed and one escaped into town.

Immediately following this action the platoon received fire from two enemy machine guns and several rifles from the rear, and five minutes later received additional enemy fire from the left flank. The fire fight lasted for an hour; eleven prisoners were taken and an undetermined number killed. The platoon suffered no casualties. The prisoners said they had been withdrawing from positions to the south when they struck the rear of the Recon platoon.

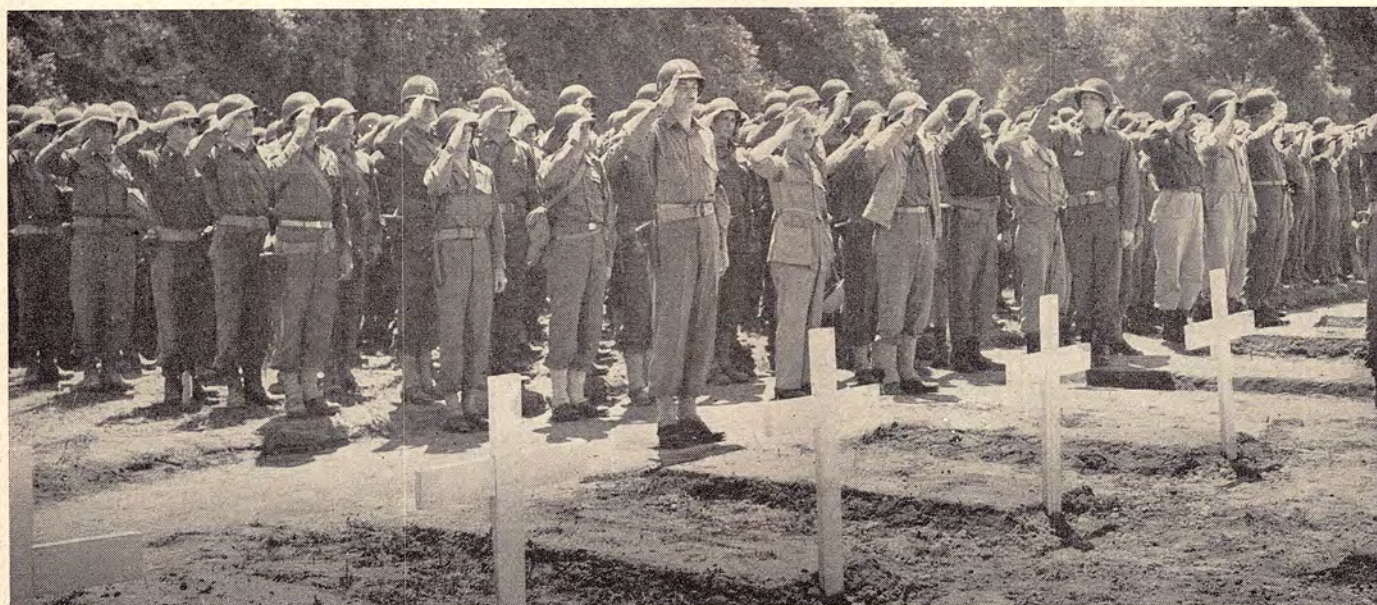
During the early afternoon the platoon received aerial-burst fire from an enemy 20mm Flakwagon located in Labico, and *Nebelwerfer* fire from the north. At 1800 hours a mixed platoon of tanks and tank destroyers arrived and began an assault of the town in conjunction with the Recon platoon. However immediately after the attack got under way the Recon platoon was ordered to return to Valmontone and reconnoiter to a point approximately 4500 yards northeast of town.

The Battle Patrol was given the mission of clearing out Labico and had wiped out enemy resistance by 0500 hours of the 3d. The 1st platoon, which had been held up five hours on its mission northeast of Valmontone, returned to Labico, contacted the Battle Patrol and continued to the road junction 3000 yards west of the town—the same road junction it had been ordered to take the day before.

It was thought best to continue until contact with the enemy was made, so the platoon moved without delay to San Cesarlo, reaching that point in the morning. Here it received harassing enemy artillery fire. After a short reconnaissance west along Highway 6, the platoon established a roadblock at San Cesarlo until late in the afternoon when it was relieved by the 2d platoon. The 3d platoon meanwhile continued its reconnaissance from Valmontone to Palestrina.

The 4th of June was a busy day for the Troop. Two platoons and the battle patrol cut Highways 5 and 4 physically and Highway 3 by fire and the 1st platoon moved into Rome. The 2d platoon, on reaching Highway 5, was fired on by an enemy Flakwagon. This Flakwagon was destroyed by the coordinated work of the mounted platoon and foot Battle Patrol, and a roadblock was set up on the highway. Several enemy vehicles were fired on by the platoon. These vehicles turned tail and sped east—into the area of the advancing French troops.

While the 2d platoon remained at the roadblock, the 3d platoon moved to Highway 4, cut it, and continued to a small knoll overlooking the Tiber River. Here it contacted a tank destroyer that had become lost from its unit. This tank destroyer was employed in firing on Highway 3—it was impossible to cut the road because the enemy was too well entrenched on high bluffs west of the river. Suddenly six enemy tanks and several personnel carriers loaded with troops counterattacked from the east, the platoon's rear. All fire, including that of the tank destroyer, was brought to bear on this counterattack and the enemy was



United States Army officers and men pay tribute to their dead comrades at Nettuno, on Memorial Day, 1944.

quickly stopped. The Germans lost two tanks and at least two tracked personnel carriers.

Attention was returned to the west. Four machine guns were spotted and neutralized with four shots from the armored car's 37mm gun. The platoon was relieved that afternoon by elements of the 15th Infantry.

While the 2d and 3d platoons cut the three highways, the 1st platoon started early in the morning of June 4 west on Highway 6 to Rome. Several members of the platoon, including the platoon leader, got into the city limits of Rome, dismounted, at 0830 hours. In doing so they had passed a number of snipers—actually stragglers using up their last ammunition, but at the point where Highway 6 entered the city at the crest of a hill, very real opposition was met in the form of a roadblock placed on the reverse slope of the hill.

The block consisted of a Mk IV tank, placed squarely in the middle of the road 150 yards below the crest of the hill, and adequately protected by machine guns and riflemen; and 500 yards beyond this was a 40mm antitank gun perfectly camouflaged. This block was reinforced by four self-propelled 150mm howitzers mounted on Mk IV chassis (Grizzly Bears). Mines were concealed beneath the pavement in front of the tank.

Two Sherman tanks were destroyed attempting to force the roadblock, one by the enemy tank and one by mines. Finally, in the late afternoon, this point was outflanked by infantrymen, the roadblock was neutralized and Task Force Howze rolled into the city. The Recon's 1st platoon, after reporting the roadblock to higher headquarters, watched the tank-infantry action against the block from a ridge just outside the city limits.

On June 5 units of the Recon Troop raced into Rome to secure bridges across the Tiber River before they could be destroyed by the enemy. All bridges were found unharmed, including a 75-foot railroad span. When foot troops arrived to take over the bridge guard the Recon Troop was relieved.

By the time the 3d Division entered Rome, approximately 3000 German prisoners of war had passed through the Division cage. Added to the 1800 prisoners previously captured on the Anzio beachhead, this made a total of nearly 5000 prisoners taken by the Division in four and one-half months of operation. During the last stages of the campaign the prisoners were from a weird variety of units—corps headquarters, base section dumps, Flak-units, assault-gun battalions, and scatterings from more than a dozen divisional formations. This spoke eloquently of the enemy's complete disorganization and the complete success of our attack.

These facts stood out following the operation:

The Division's frontal assault and breakthrough at Cisterna, against fortified and strongly-manned positions, was a monument not only to the excellence of planning and coordination at every level, but also to the indomitable spirit and sheer fighting ability of the troops. These story-book situations—bayonet assaults, daring patrol ambushes, deep reconnaissance missions, perfectly-coordinated infantry-tank-artillery attacks—actually occurred during this operation.

The rapid advance to Artena upset the enemy's timetable for withdrawal up Highway 6, and greatly hastened the fall of Rome.

The breakthrough at Valmontone, accomplished against fresh German troops by the 3d Division after having suffered so heavily at Cisterna, was overshadowed by the earlier attack only in scope and duration.

The shrewd development of the situation around Lariano, denying the enemy the benefit of an excellent and long-prepared defensive position, aided in the outflanking of Velletri by the 36th Division and the subsequent advance to the west across the Colli Laziali.

Knowing the enemy to be virtually without reserves, boldness in pushing attacks even with troops tired to the point of bogging down paid rich dividends and set up a clean breakthrough both at Cisterna and Valmontone.

The 3d Infantry Division settled down and prepared to garrison Rome.

TABLE OF CASUALTIES*

Breakthrough to Rome

(May 23, 1944 through Aug. 14, 1944)

<i>KIA</i>	<i>WIA</i>	<i>MIA</i>	<i>Total Battle Casualties</i>	<i>Non-Battle Casualties</i>
511	2575	235	3321	6783

Reinforcements and Hospital return-to-unit personnel

<i>Reinf</i>	<i>EM</i>	<i>Hosp</i>	<i>RTUs</i>
<i>Off</i> 90	1430	<i>Off</i> 98	<i>EM</i> 6612

KNOWN ENEMY CASUALTIES

<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Captured</i>
1034	245	2903

*These figures were provided by the A C of S, G-1, 3d Infantry Division.

3: Interlude: Rome

ROME—civilization. The two words were synonymous. Rome, one of the most beautiful cities on the European Continent (or anywhere for that matter) was like a haven to tired, sweat-soaked, sore-footed infantrymen of several divisions. The 3d was no exception.

Late the afternoon of June 4, electrifying news reached the large tent which housed the Division War Room about five miles from the city's outskirts. It was from Fifth Army Headquarters and read: "Third Infantry Division will garrison Rome!" (Exclamation ours.) It was the most welcome news since the fall of Messina. It seemed to herald a long rest in one of Europe's most scenic capitals.

The morning of June 6 found the CP comfortably ensconced in the spacious buildings of Rome University, with most regimental, battalion, and even company headquarters equally well-housed throughout the city. It was then that the flash announcement for which all the world had been waiting first came over millions of radios in dozens of tongues: "The Allies have landed in Normandy!" That was all, but it was enough. Added to the liberation of the Eternal City, it was enough to justify a double celebration among men of the Allied Armies in Italy, but it was also a very sobering announcement. Now, shortly, we would know whether the so-called Atlantic Wall, the strength and impregnability of which the Germans had been trumpeting for years, was reality or something less. At the 3d's most triumphant moment to date, probably the entire fate of Western civilization rested with the men, arms, and machinery then struggling for the victory on France's Channel coast.

The tremendous fact of invasion, The Invasion, all but overshadowed Fifth Army's barely-won conquest; the magnificent battle fought north from Cassino and the Beachhead. In countless newspapers everywhere, printers had hurried to tear out front pages telling of the capture of Rome, and to replace the already huge headline type with even larger letters announcing the long-awaited invasion of France.

From that moment on, Italy became the Forgotten Front.

There was a lot to be seen in Rome. The opinion among fighting men was unanimous that it had almost everything needed to qualify for a place among United States cities except United States civilians. The quality and quantity of the women were especially impressive to doughs who, for the previous four and one-half months, had seen nothing but mud, blood and death. "Gawdamighty, they even got redheads!" was a common exclamation.

There was a definite task awaiting. The city needed

to be policed. It was the seat of Fascism but a few months before, and if trouble was to be expected anywhere in Italy, it seemed commonsense reasoning to suppose that it would pop up in liberated Rome.

With this in view the 3d's task was to establish guard over every important installation which might be considered worthy of sabotage by disgruntled Fascists. Bridges, aqueducts, electric power installations, and communications centers were priority "targets" (as a later code word described centers to be guarded). The streets themselves had to be policed. It was necessary for armed guards to patrol regular beats, working in conjunction with the Italian carabinieri. Riot squads roamed the city in jeeps, tanks, and halftracks. The city was divided into zones, each of which was allotted to a regiment of the 3d Division. Unit operations officers made preparation to deal immediately with any contingency arising in the form of Fascist-hoodlum uprisings, German-inspired hysteria, or acts of sabotage.

Amazingly, despite a few small "incidents" occurring among a suddenly-liberated populace during the first few days, nothing arose which might have been termed "untoward." The same situation with respect to Fascism that had been encountered throughout Sicily and Italy was found to prevail at Fascism's seat. The word and the political movement had suddenly become unpopular, terminating a gradual swing away from it which had begun with the entry of Italy into the war in June 1940, and the subsequent military reverses, coupled with an increase in food and clothing rationing, and the ever-increasing presence of numbers of German troops in and around the city. Since the country's surrender some atrocities had turned most Italians even further from the occupying enemy.

The United States soldier has never had much trouble making friends among either civilians or women of



An Italian wedding takes place in the environs of Rome, despite the war at the gates.



Italians crowd the streets to view the victorious Yanks.

any nationality, and Rome provided a heretofore-unparalleled opportunity to test that sanguine ability. Men of Italian descent suddenly found themselves popular among their comrades beyond all explanation of personal charm; many soldiers, undyed deceivers that they were, discovered that an interpreter in the crowd is always a welcome asset.

There were those rugged individualists, however, who scorned such underhanded methods, preferring a combination of "pidgin" Italian, Basic English, and universal language to sell the desirability of their companionship. The more practical among them even went to the extent of assisting budding friendships by the judicious use of such small tidbits as chocolate, C Rations, and chewing gum, to mention nothing of the more solid rations, originally destined for United States Army consumption, which circuitously went to cement Italo-United States cobelligerency.

Along with the policing and relaxation was the resumption of a limited amount of training. This consisted largely of close-order drill, calisthenics, organized athletics, and orientation lectures. Although operations officers are notoriously never in doubt as to improvisation of training, it was not known immediately what the Division's next active participation in the war would be.

The German retreat, which actually began in the hills north of Cassino, and received a tremendous boost with the successful breaking of the Anzio "iron ring," was still in progress. With breath-taking rapidity, Allied units of several nationalities, among them United States, British, Indian, Canadian, and French divisions, had continued to force the issue with the hastily-withdrawing Germans. Rome, which but a few days before had been ahead of, then directly on, the front lines, became rear-echelon with a speed that was no less breath-

taking to the frontline combat troops. Almost before skinned feet had recovered from the devastating effect of practically continuous marching, the Base Section had moved in lock, stock, and barrel.

The first day of entry into the city had seen a hastily improvised *Stars & Stripes* with crude, black letters advertising the fact that "WE'RE IN ROME." This special edition featured the services of such high-caliber correspondents as Milton Bracker and Herbert Matthews of *New York Times*, Will Lang of *Time-Life*, Ken Dixon and Edward Kennedy of Associated Press, and Reynolds and Eleanor Packard of United Press. The combination covered every angle from the breakthrough at Velletri to a husband-wife reaction upon returning to a city which they had left just slightly more than two years before.

"A bearded, dust-grimed U. S. infantryman, holding his helmet in his hand, stepped inside the vast, vaulted coolness of St. Peter's Cathedral at 3:15 this morning, only a few hours after Allied troops had entered Rome," began one *Stars & Stripes* story.

"He stood looking straight ahead and then up and he gulped and blinked his eyes and said in a quiet, shaky voice: 'I never thought there was a place in the world as wonderful as this. I didn't know there was anything so beautiful.'

"He would not give his name, his organization or anything else. 'I'm just here,' he said, 'and I know what I'm seeing is too big to talk about.' And he walked out, down under the great high ceiling toward the tomb of St. Peter I, at the far end of the great entrance way. . . ."

Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark took time out to pay brief, oral tribute to "the men and women of the Fifth Army who made the supreme sacrifice so that we could keep going to Rome and beyond."

"This great day for the Fifth Army was made

possible by the combined efforts of French, British and American troops," he said.

And, keynoting a small, but ironic (though hardly unfamiliar) twist was the Italian carabinieri's words as quoted in the *Stars & Stripes*: "I watched the American bravely kill five Tedeschi in an old stone house. The Germans stole my oil and typewriter. The Americans are good and kind. *Do you have a cigarette?*"

General Clark attended a party given in the ballroom of the Grand Hotel a few nights after the Rome entry and pinned the second star of a Major General on the shoulders of Commanding General John W. "Iron Mike" O'Daniel, at the same time congratulating him and his command for the outstanding part played by both in the big push.

Notable among the sights to be seen were, of course, St. Peter's Cathedral (including mass audiences with Pope Pius XII), the Vatican, the Coliseum, Castel Sant' Angelo, the ruins of the Roman Forum, Mussolini's monument and balcony, Victor Emmanuel's monument, any one of several Christian catacombs, and many of the lesser-known, but no less beautiful, basilicas and churches throughout the city.

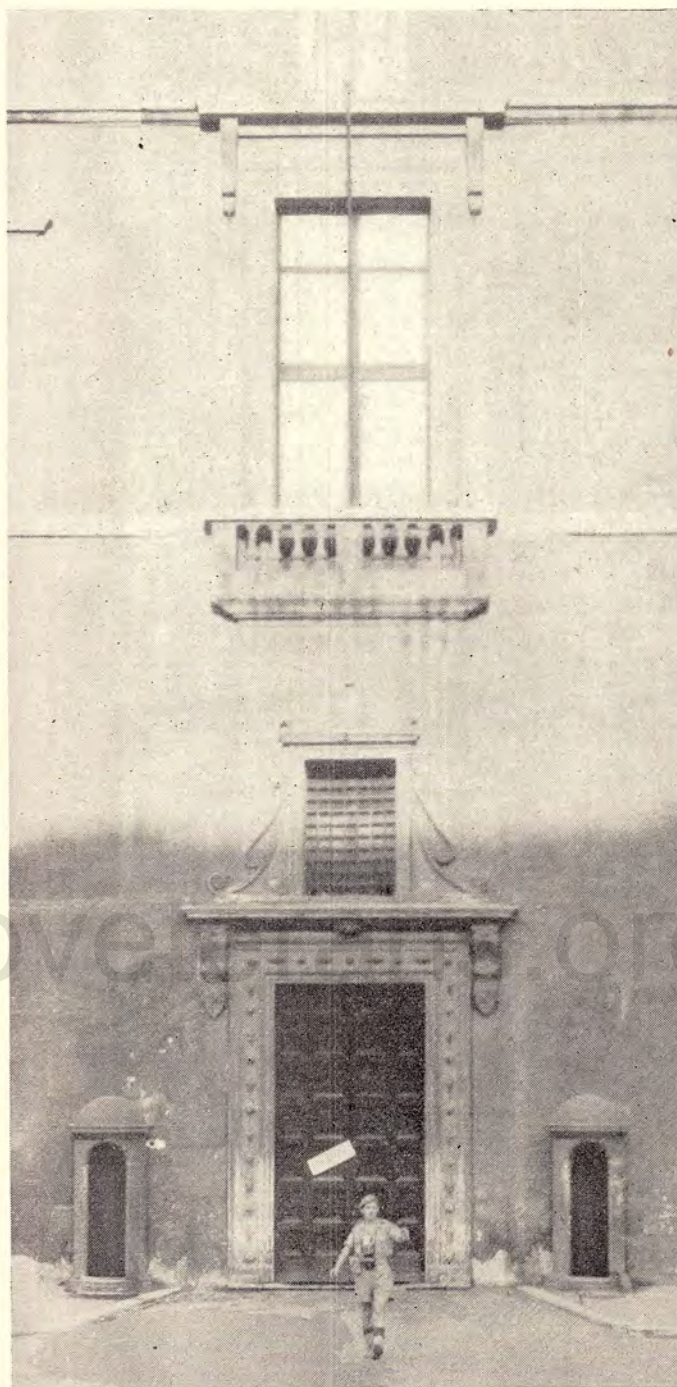
The Normandy invasion, meanwhile, had proved successful. Emerging from the flood of statements about "strategic reserves," "breakthroughs," and "build-up period" was the solid fact, undisputed even by the enemy, that the Allies had got ashore and were in a position to hold. The beachhead was secure, and a wave of optimism had set in in the allied camp which was not entirely confined to civilians.

Although few officers or men in the 3d Division knew it, our future part in the war had long been scheduled. Rome was merely a breathing period.

The seeming lap of luxury into which the 3d had been suddenly dumped was to prove only a resting place between campaigns—and a very short one at that. The doubts that it was too good to be true shortly materialized. Orders were received on June 13 that the Division would move south of Castel Prezinano, near the Lido di Roma on the Tyrrhenian Coast about twenty miles from Rome, preparatory to returning to Naples. The order crystallized in most minds as having but one significance—amphibious training. What else? The Division had never failed to commence practicing for landing operations in its several withdrawals from combat, and battle-wise veterans of Casablanca, Sicily, and Southern Italy summarized the prevalent feeling in very few words: "Where the hell's it going to be this time?"

The move commenced June 14 and was completed June 16.

Upon arrival in the new bivouac area, all units established and improved their areas and commenced a training program covering close-order drill, military

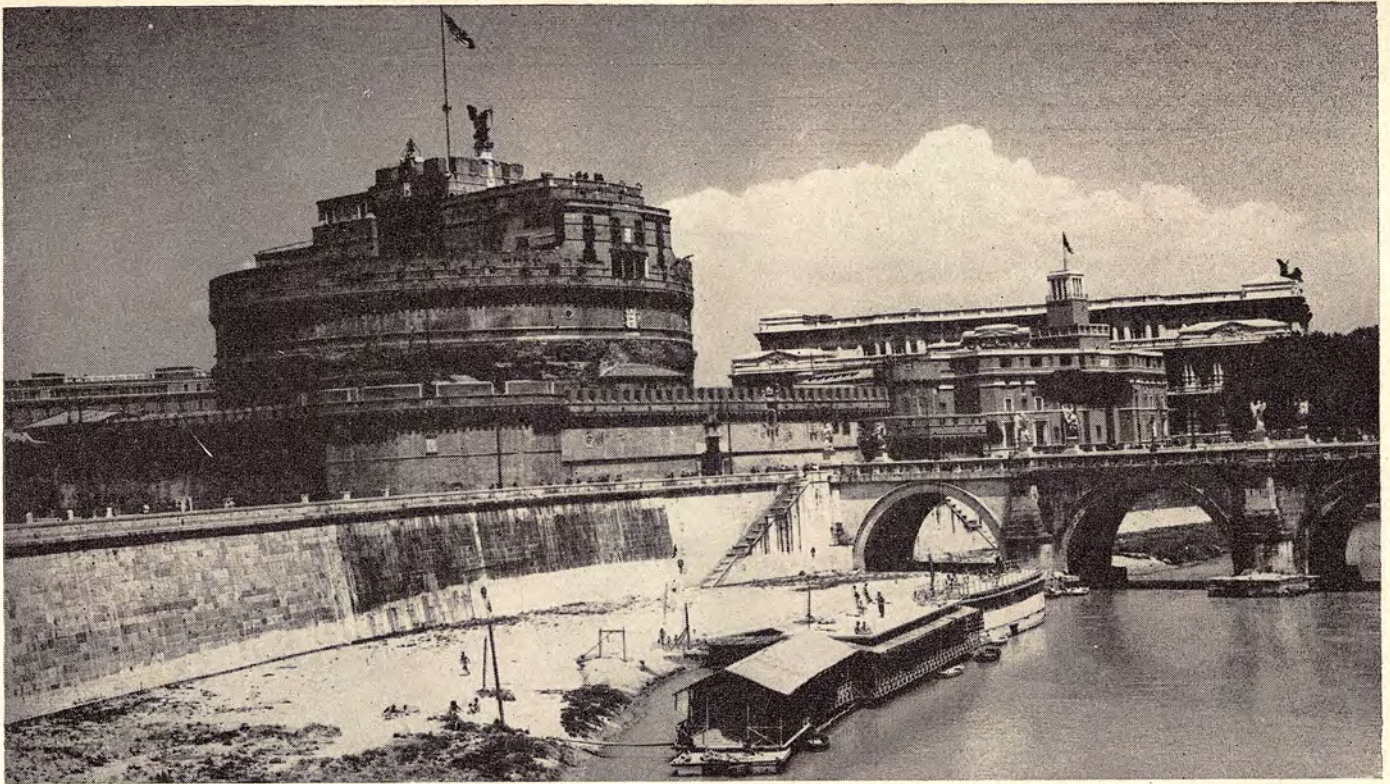


A British officer runs out of the building, from whose balcony Mussolini once delivered his orations.

courtesy, calisthenics, hardening marches, scouting and patrolling and small-unit problems.

Also included were athletics, ceremonies, and the care and cleaning of equipment.

Plans were immediately formulated by the various headquarters for the move to the Naples area. Some organizations were scheduled to move by motor, some by boat.



Castel Sant' Angelo, an historic Italian landmark on the Tiber River.

The move was undertaken commencing June 19. All wheeled vehicles and all personnel, except infantry foot elements moved overland to the vicinity of Pozzuoli (which is about five miles from the heart of Naples). Ninety-six tracked vehicles of the 756th Tank Battalion and sixty-six "ducks" of the 52nd QM Battalion were loaded aboard six LSTs at Civitavecchia, north of Rome, for shipment to Pozzuoli.

In addition to organic personnel and equipment, and attachments besides the ones enumerated above, the following were attached to 3d Infantry Division for the move: 601st TD Battalion, 441st AAA AW Battalion (two of the three "regular" attachments); 39th Engineer Combat Regiment; 235th QM Truck Company; 3334th QM Truck Company; Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 56th Medical Battalion; 885th, 886th, 887th, and 891st Medical Collecting Companies; 14th Ordnance MM Company; one-half of each of 3353d and 3355th QM Truck Companies; and one platoon of the 94th QM Railhead Company.

The move was carried to completion by June 24. Upon arrival at its new bivouac area near Pozzuoli the Division began preparations for intensive training for large-scale amphibious operations. Training was divided into three periods of five days each, followed by a day of rest. The first five-day period got under way on June 28.

As in past operations, a Planning Board was immediately set up. This functioned at VI Corps Headquarters at the "blockhouse" in downtown Naples. The board

consisted of Lt. Col. Albert O. Connor, G-3; Lt. Col. Grover Wilson and Capt. Frederick C. Spreyer, G-2; Maj. Robert Shaw, G-4; Lt. Col. Walter T. Kerwin, S-3, Division Artillery; Maj. Robert L. Petherick, Division Engineer; and representatives from the Signal, Ordnance, QM sections, and Beach Group. Later the S-3's of infantry regiments were added and shortly prior to loading each large unit of the Division set up its own planning room in its bivouac area in order to complete unit orders and to brief staff personnel and unit commanders.

An AG Detachment at the Planning Board Headquarters handled incoming and outgoing documents, and reproduced all operational publications. A rigid system of passes was maintained at the Headquarters, and all planning rooms were guarded by MP's.

Unit training was generally similar to that which had become familiar to all 3d Division veterans, with one important difference. Departing from the former practice of having one battalion per regiment trained as a beach-assault battalion, all infantry personnel were given training in the assault of beach defenses. In addition two of the Division's four special battle patrols were allotted to 7th Infantry and two to 15th Infantry for the purpose of assaulting and destroying enemy gun emplacements on the flanks of both beaches. These patrols were increased to a strength of five officers and 150 men each for the assignment.

The scheduled naval gunfire support for the Division

was: one battleship in general support of both the Division's beaches, and six light cruisers and five destroyers assigned to support individual beaches. Smaller craft carrying guns or rockets were also given missions of firing on beach defenses. Primary mission of the warships was to neutralize enemy land-based artillery. No important enemy interference from the sea was expected.

A prearranged bombardment of known battery positions was to begin at H-minus-90 and continue until H-plus-15 minutes, when the warships were to take over certain sectors of responsibility in support of the landing, and fire on targets observed by spotting planes and shore fire-control parties. There were nine of these parties, tied in not only with their respective ships but also with the Naval liaison officer at Division Artillery Headquarters. This arrangement in effect gave the Division a naval fire-direction center, by which the fire of all supporting warships could be massed on suitable targets.

The Corps air plan provided for a detailed schedule of attack for ten days preceding the operations by a powerful force of planes, as well as strong general support on D-Day by counterbattery missions, pre-H-hour bombardment of enemy beach defenses, and attack of nearby enemy airdromes.

To a few, carefully-considered individuals—top commanders—the word by now had gone out that the landings were to be conducted over the beaches of southern France. Companion divisions were the 45th on the immediate right and 36th on VI Corps right flank.

July wore on. The training program carried on and approached its conclusion. Physical conditioning was

attained primarily through speed marches and night marches. Training, following the procedure which had paid such rich dividends on previous landings, included attack of pillboxes and fixed fortifications, gapping and crossing wire, mine removal, use of flamethrowers, Bangalore torpedoes, rifle grenades, bazookas and similar specialized equipment, and infantry-tank cooperation. Assault troops were drilled in loading and disembarking from landing craft. Several landing exercises were conducted over beaches of Mondragone, about thirty miles north of Pozzuoli.

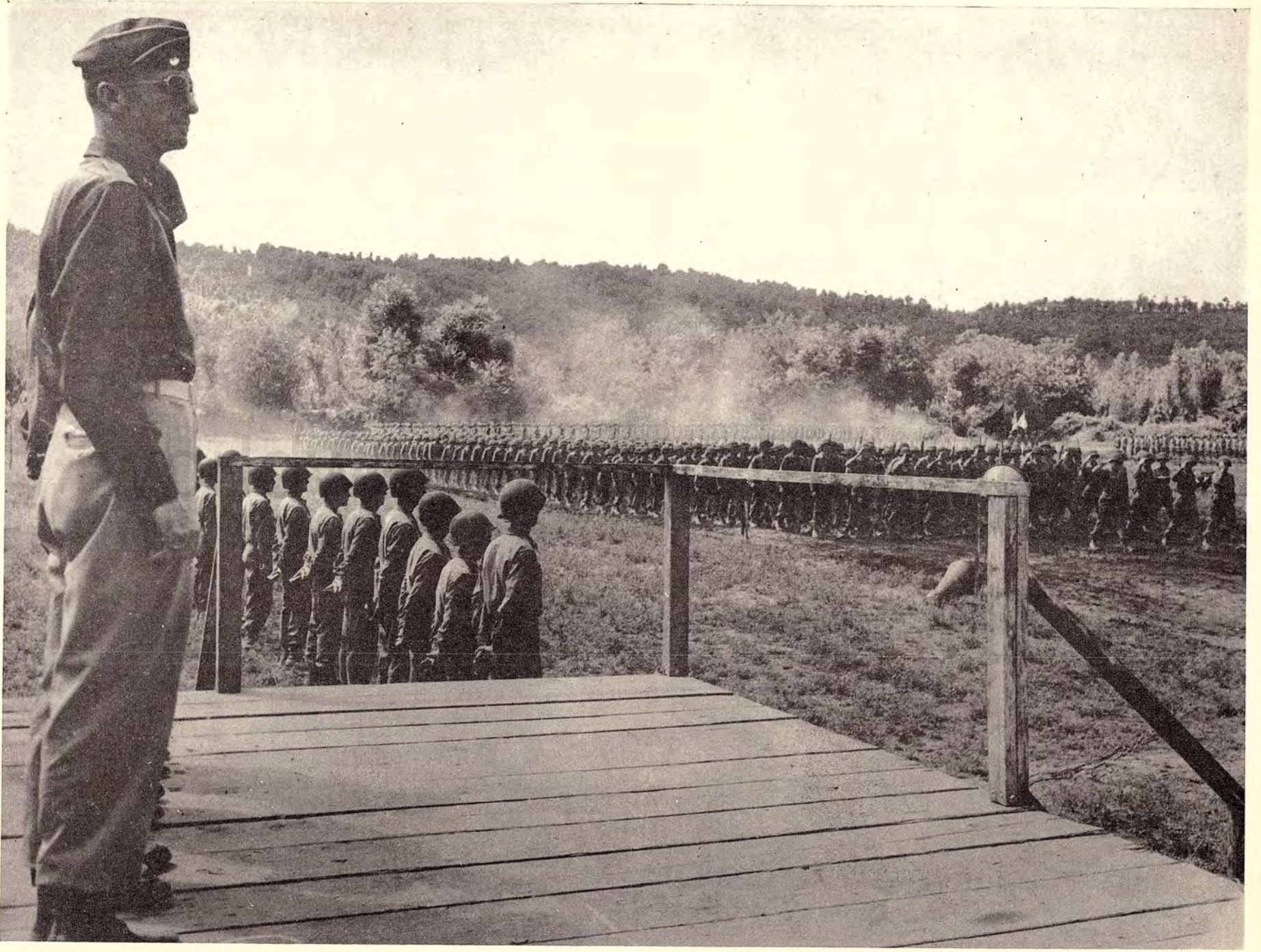
The 10th Engineer Battalion drew the nastiest assignment of the period. Previous experience dictated the necessity of a full-scale "dress rehearsal," omitting nothing but the presence of enemy troops. There was only one area within practical distance which closely resembled the actual landing area—the Formia-Gaeta sector north of the mouth of the Garigliano.

This area was directly behind the German lines all during the previous winter's campaign, having been back of the "Winter Line." German engineers had mined everything so completely that it was one of the most fortified areas in all of Italy. Friendly troops who eventually overcame enemy resistance in the push north took time only to demine the immediate roadside areas. The remainder bristled with every fiendish design of explosive and boobytrap known to the mine-conscious German Army. It fell to the 10th Engineers to clear the beaches and hills between the road and shoreline, in order for 3d Infantry Division to hold its exercise.

The battalion, in completing this mission, suffered a total of eighteen men killed and forty-three wounded;

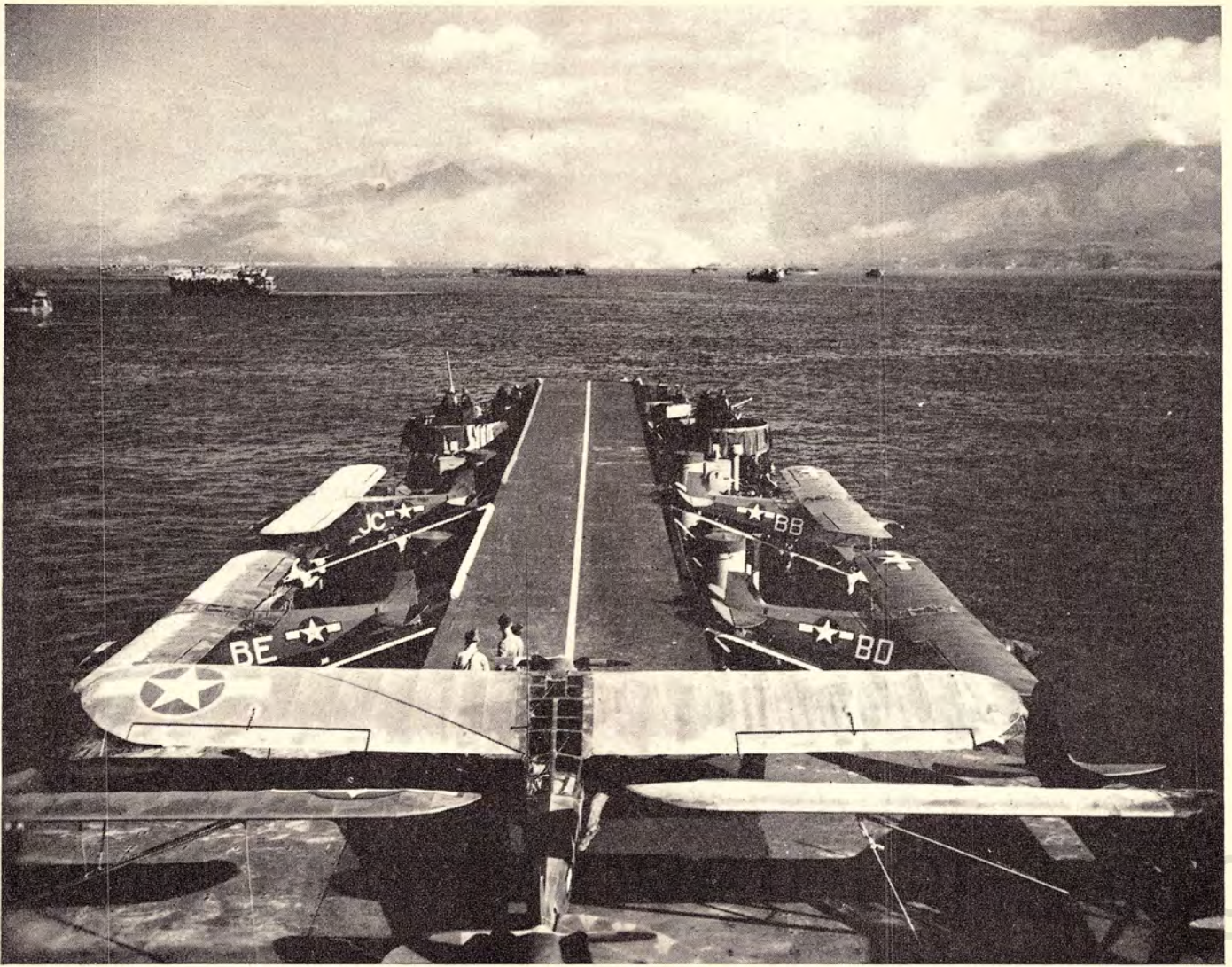


The University of Rome, Headquarters of the United States 3d Infantry Division when it garrisoned the city.



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Lieutenant General Alexander Patch, CG Seventh U. S. Army reviews the entire 3d Infantry Division near Naples immediately prior to embarkation for France.



3d Infantry Division Artillery liaison planes on the improvised flight deck of an LST off Naples harbor prior to the invasion of Southern France.

ironical to a unit at that time "out of combat." From one small knoll on the right flank of the left beach—"Beach Yellow"—alone, 750 "S"-mines were cleared before the area was given up as being hopelessly covered. When the landing operation—the final rehearsal—was conducted toward the end of July, the Formia-Gaeta area had still much hidden death in wait for the Division, and a few casualties were suffered in order that many more lives might be saved later. The last "bugs" were ironed out of landing plans on this exercise, and the Division was again at the peak of condition . . . ready for anything.

Security as to exact time and place of the coming operation was excellent, but the fact could not be disguised from German agents and sympathizers among the Italians that a large-scale amphibious expedition was shortly to set sail. There were still too many pro-Nazis and unconverted Fascists in order for our large-scale preparations to remain a secret. Consequently, the

mission coming up was probably "sweated out" by the men who were to accomplish it, more than any other since the initial landings in Africa. For several days, in the latter part of July and early August, the Axis radio trumpeted nervously that a new invasion was ready to strike at southern France. Only the fact that such shots had been apparently "called" by the enemy on previous occasions, and then subsequently carried successfully to completion anyway, prevented our forces from a too overbearing concern over the enemy's feigned knowledge of coming events. Southern France *was* a logical target, and it was much more so now that the beachhead forces in Normandy had broken loose and were in the process of overrunning the Brittany Peninsula.

The "Bomb Plot" against Hitler broke during the latter part of July. So much elation was evidenced in the Division that it was necessary for General O'Daniel to issue a memorandum reminding all personnel of the

danger of overoptimism. Salerno's eve had brought news of the Italian surrender, he cautioned, but did not alter the course of the bloody battle there, except possibly to make it even worse.

The final combat landing got under way toward the end of July. The 3d Infantry Division was the first of three divisions to load, and practically all vehicles were aboard the ships and craft before the Formia exercise. There were four ports out of which to load: Baia for LCTs, Pozzuoli for LCIs, Nisida for LSTs, and Naples for naval transports and cargo ships, Merchant Marine Liberty Ships, and British Indian Ocean passenger vessels (AP, AK, MT, & LSI, respectively).

Because of the priority on landing the Division had more time for loading adjustments, with the consequence that instead of the originally scheduled 3,337 vehicles estimated by higher headquarters as the maximum load, over 4,500 vehicles were loaded on the assault convoy.

A final briefing of all commanders of battalions and higher units took place on August 7. All naval commanders were present, all commanding generals. General Truscott opened the meeting with a brief summary

of amphibious warfare: "... Determined men can get ashore anywhere." Division commanders then outlined their respective Task Forces' plans of assault.

Sitting quietly in the bottom row of seats was a medium-sized, trim man in Naval uniform—summer khakis, black tie, black shoes—minus insignia of rank. He was practically unnoticed until the briefing was over. Then he stood up at the invitation of Vice Admiral H. K. Hewitt.

For a moment there was puzzlement among the assembled officers. Then recognition dawned, with the speaker's words. It was Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal. He spoke briefly and appreciatively of the parts played by all arms in the fight against the Axis. He mentioned the coming operation with confidence. As he talked his unassuming manner and calm poise completely won the group. His speech was short and to the point. When he sat down the meeting was at an end.

Final loading of troops was completed on August 8, and various units of the convoy began getting under way, to rendezvous later.

As yet only a few of the troops knew their final destination.