



The Fighting 36th

A PICTORIAL HISTORY
THE TEXAS DIVISION IN COMBAT

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*A Pictorial History of the
36th "Texas" Infantry Division*

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*Dedicated to the fighting men of the 36th Division
who gave their lives for their country.*

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AMERICAN
CEMETERY

A Pictorial History of the 36th Division

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ABOUT THE BOOK—This is primarily a book of pictures, intended to convey to each of the fifty thousand wearers of the T-Patch, their relatives and friends, a first-hand recollection of the battles we've fought and the places we've been. No one volume could begin to do this completely nor to cite individual honors as they ought to be told. Therefore it is a very general story about the 36th Division and names are rarely mentioned in the body of the text. Historically, though limited in scope to the point where a platoon action may be lost as it is woven into the bigger picture of the Division accomplishment as a whole, the book is accurate, done in the light of the combat records and verified by a personal check of our combat leaders. The story of the 36th at Salerno, at the Rapido, in the Vosges and through the Siegfried, is a grim one which the pictures available can only partially portray. The mud and the sweat, the sleepless nights and the noise cannot be brought into your living room in a crisply bound book. But we hope it will serve even your children's children as a memento of the strained months and years you marched and fought with the 36th.

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PICTURE CREDITS

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following Salerno Story

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bot.: A.P.

facing Million Dollar Mountain

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facing Sammucro

bot.: A.P.

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top, cen.: Cochrane

bot. rt.: Judd

Occupation

top: Judd

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(36th Division photographer: Max Shaffer)

DRAWINGS

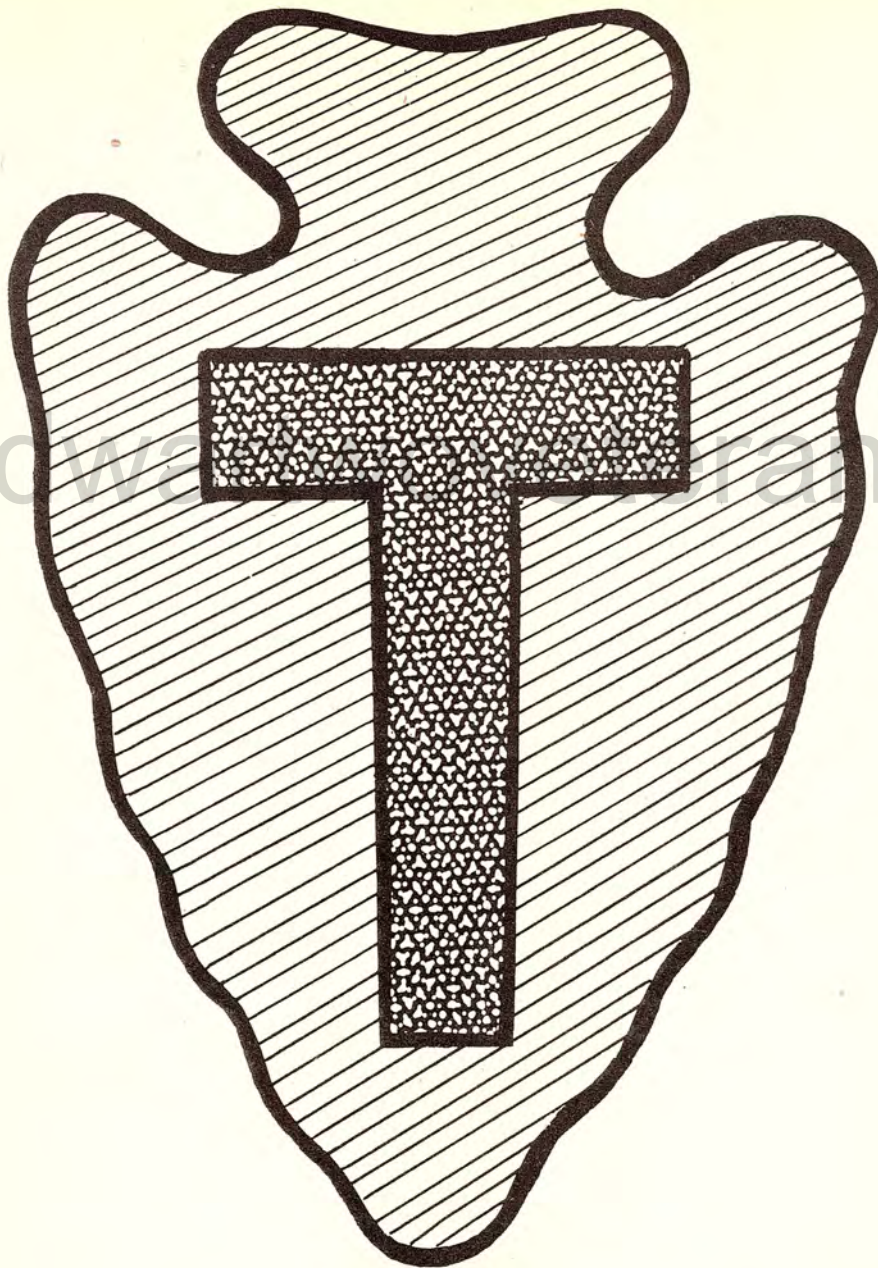
Drawings of Mt. Soprano, Altavilla, Mt. San Chirico, San Pietro and Minturno, are by Frank Duncan, War Department artist.

Imaginative drawing of the Germans in the Salerno Attack is by Julien Binford, used by permission of LIFE.

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Map sketches by R. A. Huff.

ABBREVIATIONS: A.P., Associated Press; bot., bottom; cen., center; Int., International News; lft., left; rt., right.



THE T-PATCH

The war had ended. So had the career of a military intellectual who had chosen it as a lifetime profession. Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, the ace defensive specialist and a connoisseur of matters soldierly, sat hunched up on the corner of his cot, brooding in retrospect, and puffing on the last quarter of a bungled cigarette.

"Tell me, Field Marshal," persuaded Seymour Korman, Chicago Tribune war correspondent, "what do you consider the finest American Division to have opposed you?"

Without looking up and without a moment's hesitation, Kesselring sputtered, "Your 3rd and 36th Infantry Divisions. I've been continually amazed by

their audacity, at their long flanking tactics and the way they turned up in so many different places. I've had to pit my best troops against them."

Even without tribute from captured enemy generals the "Texas" Division stands out as one of the truly veteran divisions of the Second World War. Girded with a spirit borne of fierce pride, the 36th made two amphibious assaults, at Salerno and on the Riviera, and saw intense action in four countries: Italy, France, Germany, and Austria during 366 days of combat operations.

Originally composed of Texas National Guardsmen, the 36th was mobilized into the Army of the United States on November 25, 1940, at Camp



TEXANS WERE MOBILIZED AT CAMP BOWIE

Bowie, Texas. Although Selective Service trainees later filled the Division to combat strength and reinforcements from all over the Nation gave it an All-American flavor, the citizens of Texas still regarded it as their own.

Prior to Pearl Harbor the Division was triangularized from four to three infantry regiments. With the advent of war, elements of the old 131st Field Artillery Regiment were sent to the Pacific and caught in the Japanese drive through Java early in 1942. (Survivors of the battalion, lost throughout the war, returned to the United States in October, 1945.)

In the formative years following, men of the Division bore the distaste of early army shortages, transformed a fledgling muddy camp into habitable quarters, "fought" with General Walter Kreuger's Third Army in the swamplands of Louisiana. It moved overland to sandy Camp Blanding, Florida, in February, 1942, and there was primed for an early overseas shipment. But orders changed, and so did the Division as cadres departed and recruits were added. After extensive maneuvers in the warm Carolinas during the summer, the 36th moved to a Yankee station on Cape Cod, Camp Edwards, Massachusetts. Here, living in tent cities, Division men practiced the then new art of amphibious operations, launched a mock invasion on Martha's Vineyard in late October. It was cold-tested at twenty degrees below zero in a blustery winter on the Cape. Parts of the Division engaged in a final, quick mountain maneuver at Piney River, Virginia, in March. Then on April 2, 1943, having come together from staging areas at Camp Edwards and Fort Dix, New Jersey, a solemn 36th sailed out from the New York Port of Embarkation and by fast convoy arrived at Oran, Algeria, eleven days later.

North African spring flowers and green valleys surprised T-Patchers when the '40 and 8's carried them one hundred miles inland to a training ground at Magenta. Until Rommel's Afrika Corps was decisively whipped at Tunis and Bizerte, the Division was held in combat reserve. Then, in a political move to avert Spanish or German designs on French

Morocco, the 141st and 143rd Regiments, Division Headquarters and Special Troops shuttled westward five hundred miles to spend a leisurely summer in the cork forests near Rabat and Casablanca. The 142nd went to Tlemcen, in Algeria, and patrolled a wide area in search of stray Germans thought to be heading for the Spanish border from Tunisia, "captured" one prisoner in one month.

The Division formed the backbone of the newly organized Fifth Army. Serving as school-troops at the Army's Invasion Training Center on the Mediterranean at Arzew, it put through the paces the veteran 1st and green 45th Divisions before these shipped on the Sicily invasion. Then the 36th's own time came at Salerno, September 9, when all that the long months of training had prepared them for paid dividends as an unyielding 36th clung to the threatened beachhead.

In so doing the 36th was justifying its proud heritage. Its history was one that dated back to 1835 and the Alamo when the 141st was born during the whirlwind of the Texas Revolution. In World War I the 36th "Lone Star" Division served in the Champagne sector during the Meuse-Argonne offensive, spent 23 days in active sectors, captured 813 men, 9 artillery pieces and 294 machine guns. Its record less brilliant than that of its 1943-45 counter-part, the 1918 36th fought in the same glorious tradition legendary with fighting men of Texas.

In World War II, in nineteen months of combat, in five major campaigns, and in two amphibious assaults, the 36th Infantry Division had expended the maximum in heroism and hardship. The 36th is proud of its 175,806 enemy soldiers captured, its 15 Congressional Medals of Honor, its 10 Presidential Unit Citations, and numerous other battle awards. At the same time its casualty list, third highest of any American division, numbered 27,343, of whom 3,974 were killed, 19,052 wounded, and 4,317 missing in action.

The 36th had had a tough time of it, but they had given more than they had taken.

—HAD A BLUSTERY WINTER ON CAPE COD





DIVISION COMMANDERS

MAJOR GENERAL CLAUDE V. BIRKHEAD, Granddaddy of the modern 36th Division, General Birkhead nurtured and watched over the Texas National Guard in the twenty-year interval between wars as Chief of Staff and, subsequently, Commanding General. He was CO of the old 131st Field Artillery with the AEF in World War I. Though a native of Oregon, where he was born in 1878, the General has been a staunch Texan since completing his schooling in Fort Worth. He entered prominently into Texas law and politics for nearly half a century. General Birkhead led the 36th at the time of its activation into Federal service, November, 1940, and retired from active duty in June, 1942.



MAJOR GENERAL FRED L. WALKER. Soft-spoken, mild-mannered General Walker developed the 36th into a polished fighting team during its training days Stateside and in North Africa, then led it through the tough, heart-breaking Italian campaign from Salerno to Piombino. A graduate engineer from Ohio State University, General Walker was commissioned a lieutenant in the Regulars in 1911, marched with Pershing into Mexico, was wounded while serving with another crack outfit, the 3rd Division in World War I, where, as a battalion commander he won the DSC in repelling a major German attack along the Marne. Forced to accept heavy losses with the 36th in the winter months at the Rapido and before Cassino, General Walker engineered the famed breakthrough move at Velletri and paced the Texans swiftly northward in the smashing drive above Rome. He later was assigned Commandant of the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and became Director of Military Training, Army Service Forces. Currently General Walker heads the newly constituted National Guard of Texas.



MAJOR GENERAL JOHN E. DAHLQUIST. Energetic, unassuming General Dahlquist took charge of the 36th just before the Southern France invasion, spirited it through that highly successful venture and the spectacular drive that followed, and carried T-Patchers to final victory nine months later deep in the Austrian Tyrol. From Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota, as a young lieutenant he joined the Occupation Forces in Germany after the last war. Later he had a tour of duty in the Philippines and before the shadow of World War II appeared he became a qualified air observer. In July, 1942, General Dahlquist was appointed Deputy Chief of Staff to General Eisenhower in England. Tireless in battle, the General roved from point-to-point to spur on his front line units, once saw his aide, Captain Wells Lewis, killed beside him while leading the attack to relieve the "Lost Battalion" in the Vosges Forests. He determined the Division role which carried it over hitherto impregnable St. Marie Pass. Soon after V-J Day General Dahlquist was called to assignment with the Secretary of War's Personnel Board in Washington.

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BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT I. STACK

Long-time Assistant Division Commander (February, 1944-October, 1945) and frequent task force leader, big, white-haired "Uncle Bob" was trained especially in tank tactics during his Army career and commanded a Combat Command of the 1st Armored Division in the battle of Tunisia. On the last day of the war he headed the mission that sought out and captured Hermann Goering deep within the German line. General Stack succeeded General Dahlquist as Division Commander in October, 1945, and brought the 36th home in December. He is from New York.

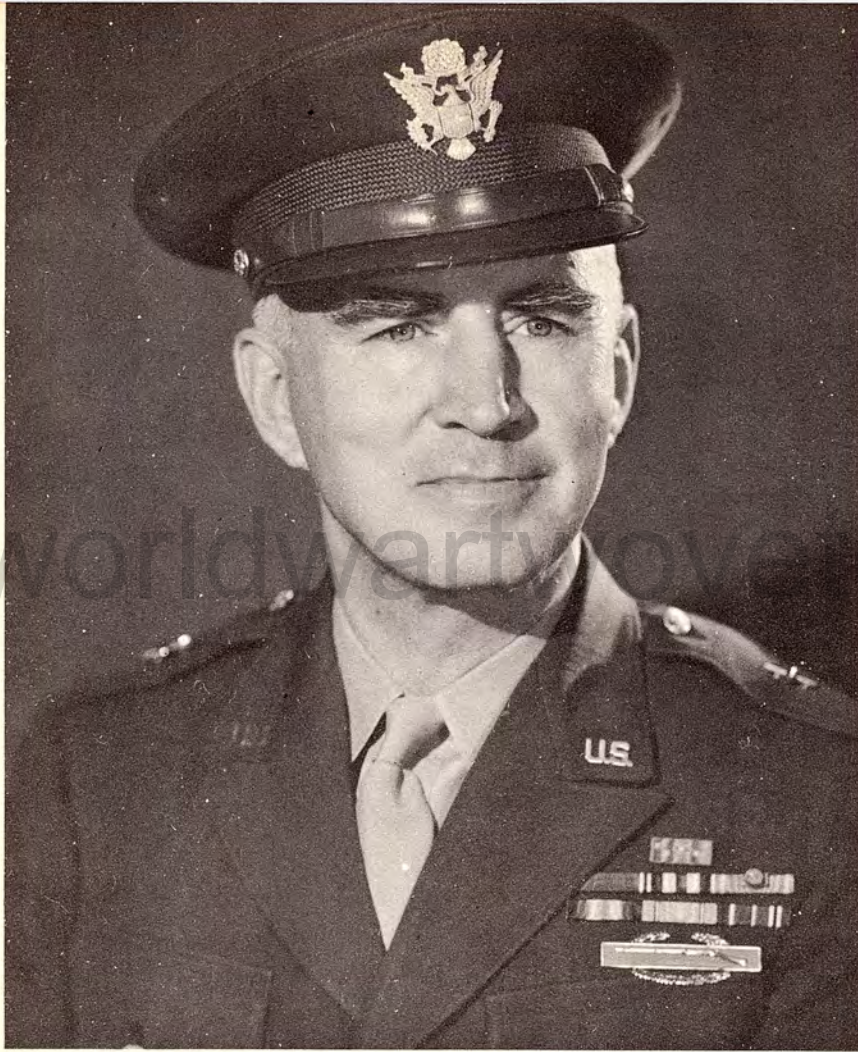


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BRIGADIER GENERAL WALTER W. HESS

A West Pointer of the famous Class of 1915, General Hess was appointed Division Artillery Commander in November, 1943, in time to coordinate the big barrage on "Million Dollar Mountain." He served extensively with artillery units in World War I, commanding a battalion in the Argonne and Ypres-Lys Offensives. General Hess is proud of the artillery support his command was able to deliver to 36th Division infantry in World War II. A pet scheme of his was the "Bingo"—calling down all available artillery on one target at one time. His home is in Pennsylvania.





BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM H. WILBUR

One of the few general officers to hold the Congressional Medal of Honor, General Wilbur won the award as a colonel in the North African landings near Casablanca in November, 1942. Again, at Salerno, where he joined the 36th, General Wilbur coolly led a small unit forward to smash an enemy detachment during a critical period in the bridgehead's defense. As Assistant Division Commander, he frequently visited troops on rock ledges at Mignano Gap, gave the order that first halted the slaughter on the Rapido.



BRIGADIER GENERAL MILES A. COWLES

As the Artillery Commander of the 36th Division during the preparatory training phase in North Africa and the landing on the beaches of Salerno on 9 September 1943, General Cowles exhibited outstanding ability as an artilleryman. He was an instructor at the Artillery School at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, for many years prior to his assignment with the 36th Infantry Division.



BRIGADIER GENERAL OTTO F. LANGE

General Lange joined the 36th as Assistant Division Commander at Camp Blanding, Fla., in the spring of '42. He served in that capacity during the final training days on the East Coast and in North Africa. A West Pointer, also, General Lange fought at Verdun and Toul in World War I, was awarded the French Croix de Guerre. He had several teaching assignments between the wars, became Professor of Military Science at the University of Florida.



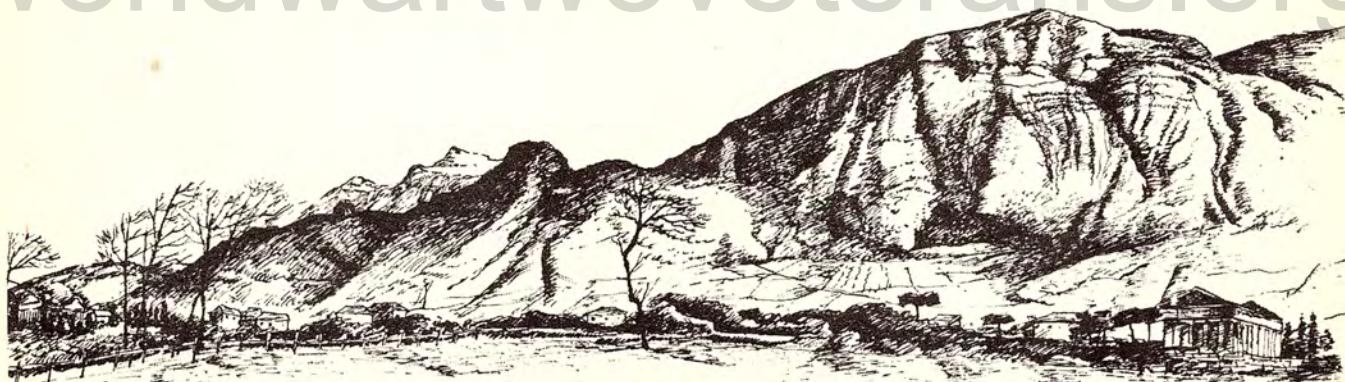
SALERNO

Salerno was one of the bloodier, more critical operations of the Second World War. For a time the action hung in the balance as strong enemy counterattacks smashed and threatened the very existence of the initial beachhead. But at the last a gallant defense held firm and Salerno was won. This was the opening struggle of the long and bitter Italian campaign.

On their first combat mission, 36th Division troops under the command of Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker became the first American division to invade the European mainland and test Hitler's continental fortress. Before dawn of

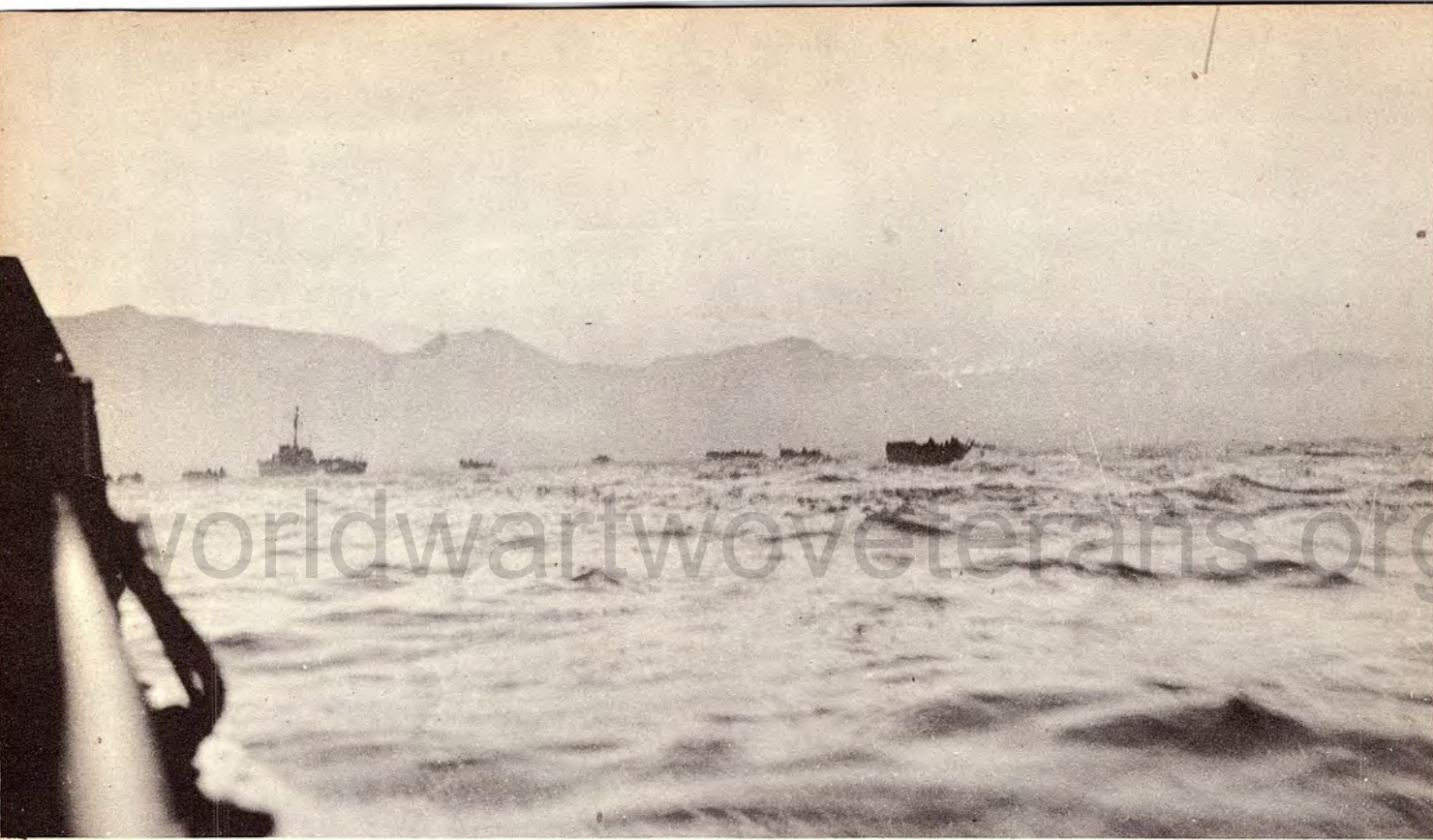
Thursday morning, September 9, 1943, without previous naval or air bombardment, the leading waves stepped ashore on the sandy beaches near ancient Paestum.

The Italian surrender had been announced only the night before. Unwarranted optimism was soon reduced as the Germans in waiting faced the invaders. Shoved back from the beaches, the enemy thrust powerfully at Altavilla and along the Sele River. Casualties were heavy. Airborne reinforcements arrived from Sicily at the height of the battle. A new line was formed, and on September 14 the enemy's heaviest blows were warded off. The beachhead was secure.



F. Duncan Jr.

INVADING TROOPS faced imposing Mount Soprano. In the plain below were olive orchards, orange groves and well-cultivated fields. The ancient Greek Temple of Neptune at Paestum (lower right) marked the only settlement on the plain. Frank Duncan, the artist, was a member of the 36th Division and sketched many of its battle scenes.



SMALL LANDING CRAFT (LCVP'S) MOVE INLAND PREPARATORY TO INVASION ON GRAY MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 9.

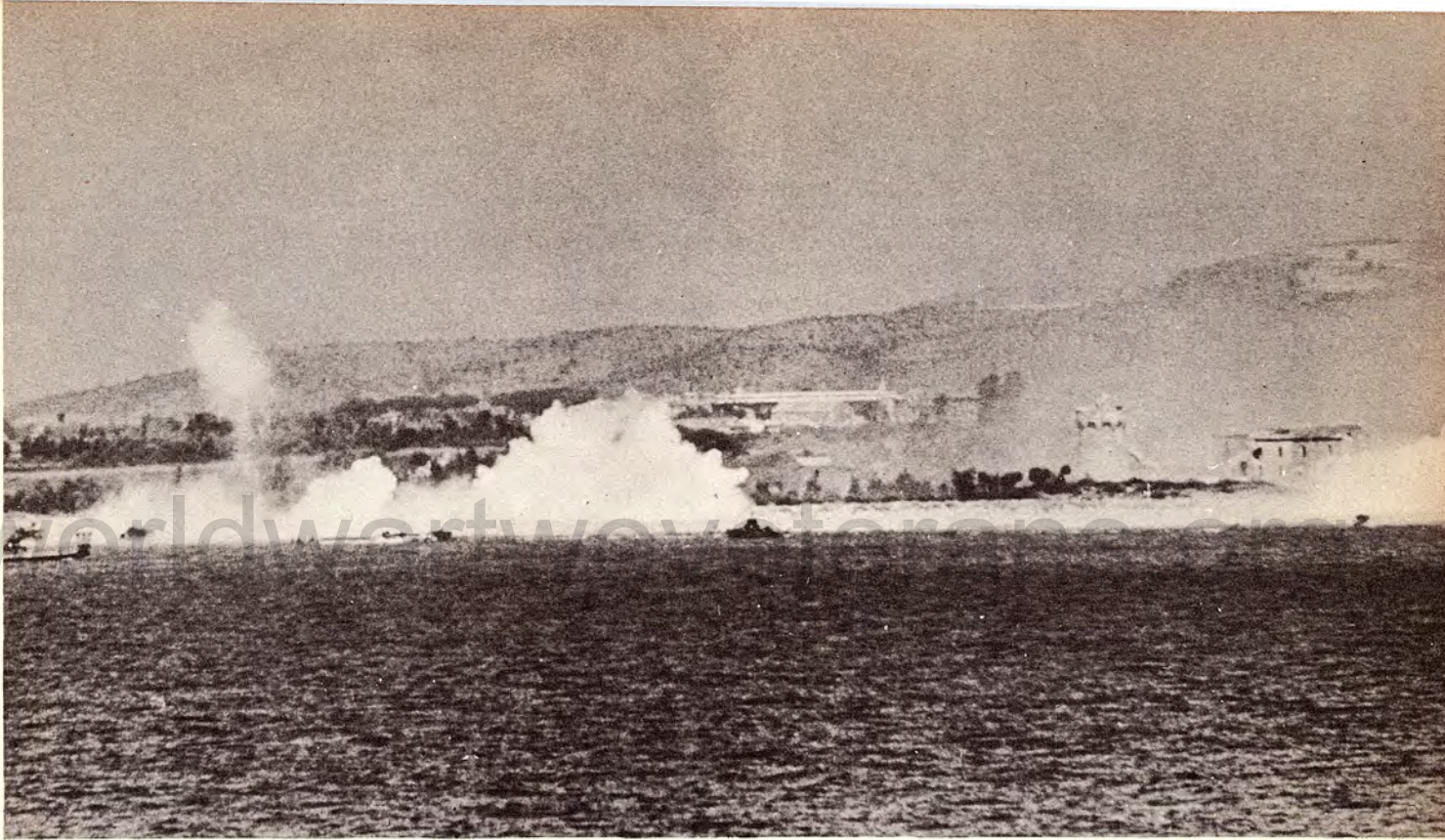
PAESTUM BEACHES ARE STORMED

From the high range of hills surrounding the Salerno plain, German artillery was emplaced to protect the invasion shoreline. The enemy had been forewarned of the approaching fleet and had issued an alert to its beach defenders at 1600 of September 8.

Soon after the first two assault waves had slipped silently ashore under the cover of morning darkness, enemy gunners were aroused. At the medieval Paestum tower (upper left) German machine gunners and snipers fired from the balcony.

INFANTRYMEN POUR ONTO THE BEACHES AS BULLDOZER, LATER HIT BY ENEMY SHELL, WORKS TO CLEAR BEACH OBSTACLES.





GERMAN ARTILLERY THROWS GEYSER WHILE ALLIED SMOKE SHIELDS LANDING. TOWER WAS ENEMY STRONGPOINT.

WHILE GERMAN ARTILLERY RAINS

At daylight German artillery began to pound the beaches. To counter, Navy craft laid smoke screens while landing boats laden with troops, guns and supplies edged in. As infantrymen slugged forward toward their objectives, bulldozers and engineers (lower left) feverishly worked to

clear the beach obstacles, teller mines, and barbed wire. Engineers also prepared roads and outlets in order to receive the massing stores of supply.

Enemy planes in ever greater numbers skipped in to harass the landing operations.

IN MID D-DAY MORNING ITALIAN SUNSHINE IS CRISP. NAVAL BEACH OFFICERS SPEED UNLOADING AND TROOP MOVEMENT.

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WH-OOP-BANG!

FLUSHED WITH THE EXCITEMENT of making the long-awaited invasion of the Italian mainland, Texas



Division troops disembark on-the-double. Enemy artillery fire has been heavy and machine guns on

the trucks are trained skyward. The MP in foreground ducks instinctively as a shell hits nearby.



WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EASY

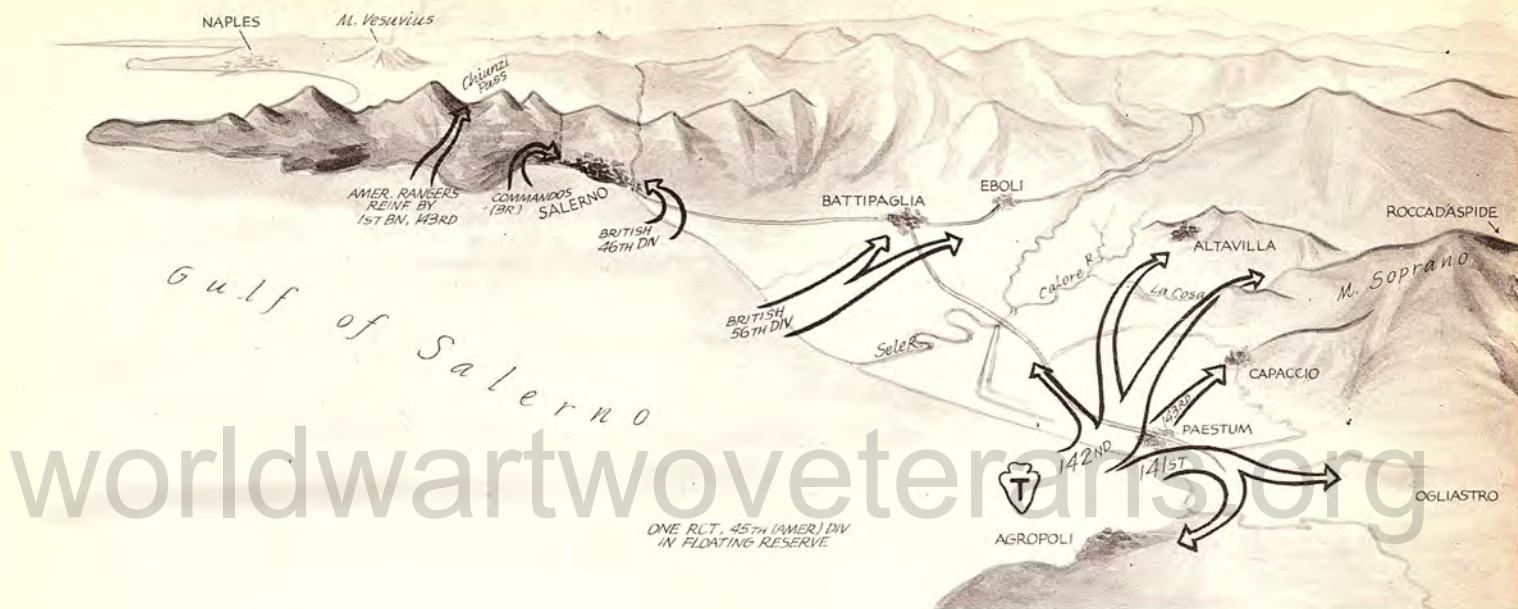
GENERAL EISENHOWER'S dramatic announcement of Italy's unconditional surrender came over the ship's radio at 1830 on the eve of the invasion and started wild speculation as to whether there would be any fighting at all on the following day. Commanders assured the troops that there would be, but smiles and moderate celebrations could not be restrained.

INVASION FLEET SAILED FROM ORAN ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1943.



ARZEW, NEAR ORAN, WAS A 36th DIVISION STAGING POINT.





SALERNO STORY

The first wave fanned out onto all four beaches exactly at H-Hour, 0330. Enemy guns roared as 36th Division infantrymen leaped into the water and started inland for the pre-designated assembly areas. On the left at Red and Green beaches the 142nd Infantry, commanded by Colonel John D. Forsythe, began the push that was designed to take it to the core of the beachhead and to the high ground around Albanella and Altavilla. On the right at Yellow and Blue beaches, the 141st Infantry under Colonel Richard J. Werner, moved to maintain contact with the 142nd at Mount Vesole and Magliano, seize Agropoli and defend the right flank. The second and third waves hit the beaches at eight-minute intervals.

Both assault battalions of the 142nd on Red and Green beaches were pinned down from time to time. On the right flank the assault battalions of the 141st Infantry landed on schedule and began working through wire obstacles and mines. Intense fire from machine guns, field pieces, mortars, and tanks made their progress difficult.

Everywhere there was great confusion. Officers and men were separated; assembly points were not easily located. Shortly after 0530, the amphibious "ducks" came ashore. The 133rd Field Artillery Battalion brought in twelve 105-mm howitzers. Each of these guns was loaded on a "duck," together with 21 rounds of ammunition and a gun section of seven men.

At 0640 the 143rd Infantry, initially in reserve and commanded by Colonel William H. Martin, crossed the beaches and began moving toward Capaccio, a village on the slopes of Mt. Soprano.

Almost from the moment of landing, enemy tanks in scattered positions had made it difficult for all combat teams to reach their objectives, but not until 0700 did they attack on a large scale. At this time the battalions of the 141st were still attempting to reorganize when they were struck by 15 or more Mark IV's, five on each flank and at least four in the center. Then a column of the 36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop landed on Yellow Beach and helped to fight off seven Mark IV's which were firing opposite the right flank. In the center of the 141st line, the men of the 2nd Battalion beat off tanks with infantry weapons. Meanwhile, more tanks threatened the 1st Battalion in the fields south of Blue Beach. For its role in repulsing the enemy tank attacks, Lt. Col. Edward D. McCall's 3rd Battalion of the 141st was awarded the Division's first Presidential Unit Citation.

By noon the main tank assault on the southern beaches had been brought virtually to a standstill. Naval gunfire and fire from mortars and howitzers had helped to make the operations costly for the enemy, but to a large extent the battle had been fought by infantrymen with infantry weapons.

To the north the principal tank attacks came later. At 1145 Division CP personnel in the tobacco warehouse at Casa Vannulo saw 13 German tanks approaching. From the ditches along the railroad the men watched the enemy come within easy range. On the main coastal highway an artillery piece, set hastily in defense, opened fire. Another howitzer was brought up and unlimbered from its "duck" carrier even as the tanks were nearing, and fought off the German armor. When five of the enemy tanks



AN INFANTRY OFFICER takes cover in an abandoned enemy emplacement as German mortar fire sweeps the beaches during an early stage of the invasion. Prepared positions and mines were numerous on Salerno beaches.



MUTILATED GERMAN MARK IV TANK (above) which had counter attacked on the beaches in an attempt to drive the 36th back into the sea. On the second day of the battle, units of the 45th Division (below) pass an enemy tank which was knocked out near the 36th Division CP in the tobacco warehouse. Four other German tanks lay shattered in fields nearby.



were KO'd, some at 200 yard range, the rest of the Germans turned.

Throughout D-Day, while the 142nd on the left flank fought toward Hill 140, and the 141st on the right struggled forward, the 143rd RCT was forced to occupy a wide front in the center as it advanced. On the left flank of the Division, Lt. Col. Samuel S. Graham had assembled elements of the 2nd Battalion, 142nd near Paestum station at 0645 and with them moved east to the Capodifiume River, a half-hour later. By 1000, Colonel Martin assembled the 143rd's two leading battalions, the 2nd and 3rd, at the railroad. Their objective was Hill 386, a projection running northwest from Mount Soprano and ending abruptly in a cliff just above the junction of the roads to Capaccio and Rocca d'Aspide. Mount Soprano, dominating the entire area, was an important objective of the Division. By nightfall on D-Day the 143rd controlled the southeast slope of Mount Soprano and a vital stretch of the road leading to the plain.

In anticipation of the fierce struggle, Lt. Col. John N. Green, commanding the 132nd Field Artillery Battalion (Pete Green's Mortars) coined a Division classic on the eve of D-Day.

Asked by one of his men, "What are we going to do if we run out of ammunition?"—

"Fight with the Rammerstaff!" was the Colonel's bellowing reply.

The 36th Division, untried in battle, had landed under fire, overcome prepared beach defenses, and reached its initial objective. The Allies now controlled the plain south of the Sele River and occupied the high ground, an average distance of five miles from the beaches. On the right flank, the 141st Infantry had absorbed vicious enemy attacks, but was ready to occupy its assigned objectives on September 10. Men, vehicles, artillery, and supplies continued to pour onto the beaches, where the engineers labored efficiently under constant fire. The hours of confusion had passed.

Dumps were set up, exit roads were operating, anti-aircraft batteries were in position, and communications finally working.

The Salerno landing had been successful in spite of a prepared and alerted enemy. The 36th now occupied the important hills from Altavilla to Ogliastro. On the 10th of September, the second day ashore, the beachhead was enlarged, positions consolidated, and more tanks brought in to prepare for heavier clashes to come.

The 142nd Infantry moved forward in preparation for an attack on Altavilla and Hill 424.

NAVAL BEACH PARTY ASSUMES THE HORIZONTAL WHEN ENEMY PLANE SKIPS IN. NOTE BOMB SPRAY.



ALTAVILLA

Throughout the next few days the struggle raged furiously back and forth over the Altavilla hills. On the morning of September 11, the 142nd Infantry's attack against Hill 424 and the high ground beyond succeeded with deceptive ease. The 1st Battalion began the march on Altavilla itself and occupied it shortly after noon.

During that night enemy units infiltrated around Hill 424. At daybreak T-Patch troops received fire from so many directions that the enemy seemed to be everywhere. Communications were severed; no amount of work could keep the lines open.

The fight grew steadily more desperate; the enemy broke through and pushed down to Altavilla, cutting the battalion in two parts, then regained Hill 424. Now to retake and hold Altavilla, a greater force would be needed.

In the meantime, units of the 141st Infantry were moved north of the Sele River to strengthen the left of the Sixth Corps, and the 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry was ordered into an exposed position between the Sele and Calore Rivers to fill a gap in the center of the Corps. Colonel Martin was ordered to assemble a force from two regiments for an assault on Altavilla and Hill 424. The 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry marched from Albanella; the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry moved on to an assembly area northwest of Altavilla.

Artillery preparation for the attack on Altavilla began at 0545 on the 13th. The infantry jumped off

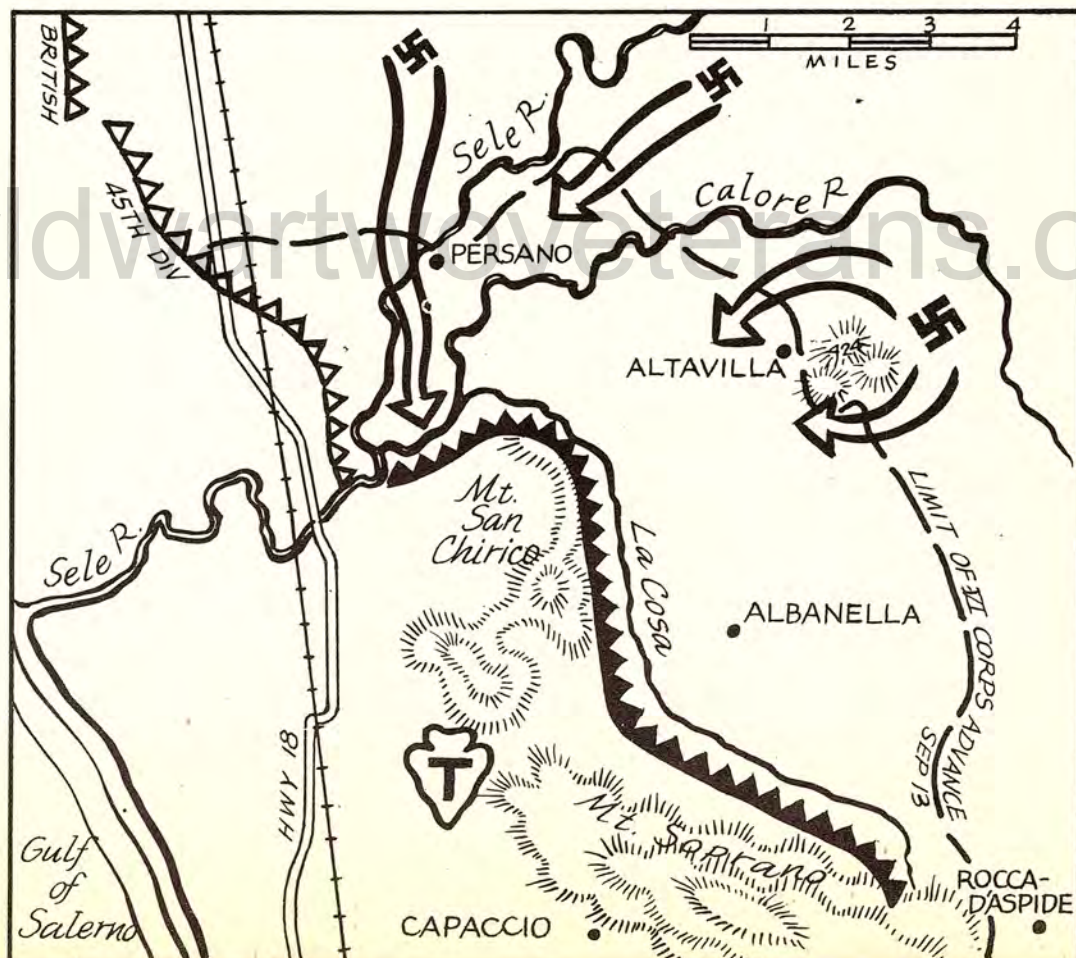
15 minutes later, and the artillery advanced its concentrations to support the attack.

On the right flank, Companies I and K, 142nd Infantry, fought their way up the slopes of the neighboring unnumbered hill. After neutralizing machine gun positions which had held them up, Companies I and K reached the top at 0730. There the enemy, reinforced by artillery, stopped their advance. Companies L and M could not move beyond the lower slopes of the hill. Later, I and K were forced back and dug in with the rest of the battalion.

The 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry came up through the draw south of Altavilla, where the length of its formation was caught in heavy concentrations of German artillery fire. The companies became disorganized and it was nearly midnight before the 1st Battalion could be pulled together.

On the left the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry under Lt. Col. Barnett, pushed up the ridge northwest of Altavilla. The battalion reached the top of the ridge and sent Company K into Altavilla to protect the right flank.

That same day the Germans launched a powerful tank attack on the Corps center against the exposed 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, attacking it from three sides. The battalion was overwhelmed and completely disorganized, and many of the men were surrounded and captured by the Germans. This misfortune gave the enemy full possession of the ground between the Sele and Calore Rivers and





THE VINE-COVERED, TERRACED SLOPES LEADING UP TO ALTAVILLA MADE CAPTURE OF THIS OBJECTIVE DIFFICULT.

paved the way for a counterattack, which was not long delayed, on the exposed left and rear of the 36th Division, now in possession of Altavilla.

The enemy's counterattack was made simultaneously from the front at Altavilla and from the left rear across the Calore River. Time and again the Germans, attacking from the front, beat against the battalion defenses and every time they were thrown back.

But German troops advancing across the Calore River from the North and rear were not strongly opposed. They gained a position in rear of the infantry battalions from which they fired on our artillery battalions and forced them to change positions. Snipers and machine gunners opened up on our infantry from the rear, the Germans threatening to cut off our troops in Altavilla.

A grave situation faced the commanders as they assembled at Corps Headquarters. There was a gap in the center of the Corps position. In the 36th alone, the 1st and 3rd Battalions, 142nd Infantry, and the 3rd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, were about to be cut off. The 143rd's 2nd Battalion had been smashed in the Sele-Calore lowland. These men had fought well at every point against the overpowering mass of enemy armor, artillery and infantry,

but troop-power had been too extended to meet the attacks that the enemy had launched.

When, after dark, the order came to withdraw, Company K had been surrounded and had to remain in Altavilla until the night of the 14th. The rest of the battalion and the two battalions of the 142nd Infantry withdrew to La Cosa Creek. The effort to recapture and hold Hill 424, so nearly accomplished, had failed.

All night long, a new and last line of defense was hastily formed along the little La Cosa creek from the Calore to Mt. Soprano. It was but a slight natural barrier but the best defensive position available. To man the defense it was necessary to draw troops from every possible source, for the 36th had been so extended and had suffered so heavily during the 13th that it did not have the strength to adequately occupy and prepare the position.

That same night in the Gulf of Salerno, naval vessels moved shoreward to pound enemy installations with their heavy shells, and Allied planes carried out one of the war's heaviest bombings in support of tactical operations. Before midnight, massed flights of C-47's, friendly orange identification lights glowing, swept in from the sea bearing



**ENEMY WOUNDED GETS WATER FROM
MEDIC AT ALTAVILLA.**

paratroop reinforcements from Sicily. Confidence mounted and determination settled.

With the coming of dawn, the battle raged in new fury as the Germans tried to force an opening. At 0930, with German infantry and a company of Mark IV Specials approaching Mt. San Chirico, six tanks of the 751st Tank Battalion moved up to meet the challenge and knocked out eight Mark IV's with the loss of only one. At 1043 at least three more tanks, supported by a battery of self-propelled guns, attempted to cross the Calore at the burned bridge and road northeast of it.

The successful defense of the 14th indicated that the Salerno beachhead was assured. The men of the

36th Division were proud of their success, proud of the standards of gallantry and fighting efficiency that they had set to be maintained in future battles.

For five more days German and Allied troops sparred. Then on the 19th, after paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne had recaptured Altavilla and elements of the 36th Division had pushed east to Serre and Ponte Sele, every part of the Salerno plain was firmly in our hands.

Our supporting fires repelled the whole attack and the enemy withdrew. At about 1300 the Germans attacked again, this time from an area near the Calore north of La Cosa Creek and against the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry, which had arrived by truck from Tempone di San Paolo to buttress the infantry line. Naval and artillery gunfire was thrown back at the German formation. Although several enemy tanks managed to penetrate our positions during the next few hours, they were all destroyed.

The 363th Tank Destroyer Battalion also did much to defend the line that day. Within 30 minutes the crew of the TD "Jinx" ko'd five tanks and one ammunition carrier.

Division Artillery had fired more than 4,100 rounds.

By dusk, the Germans ceased attacking along the La Cosa Line for the effort was proving too costly.

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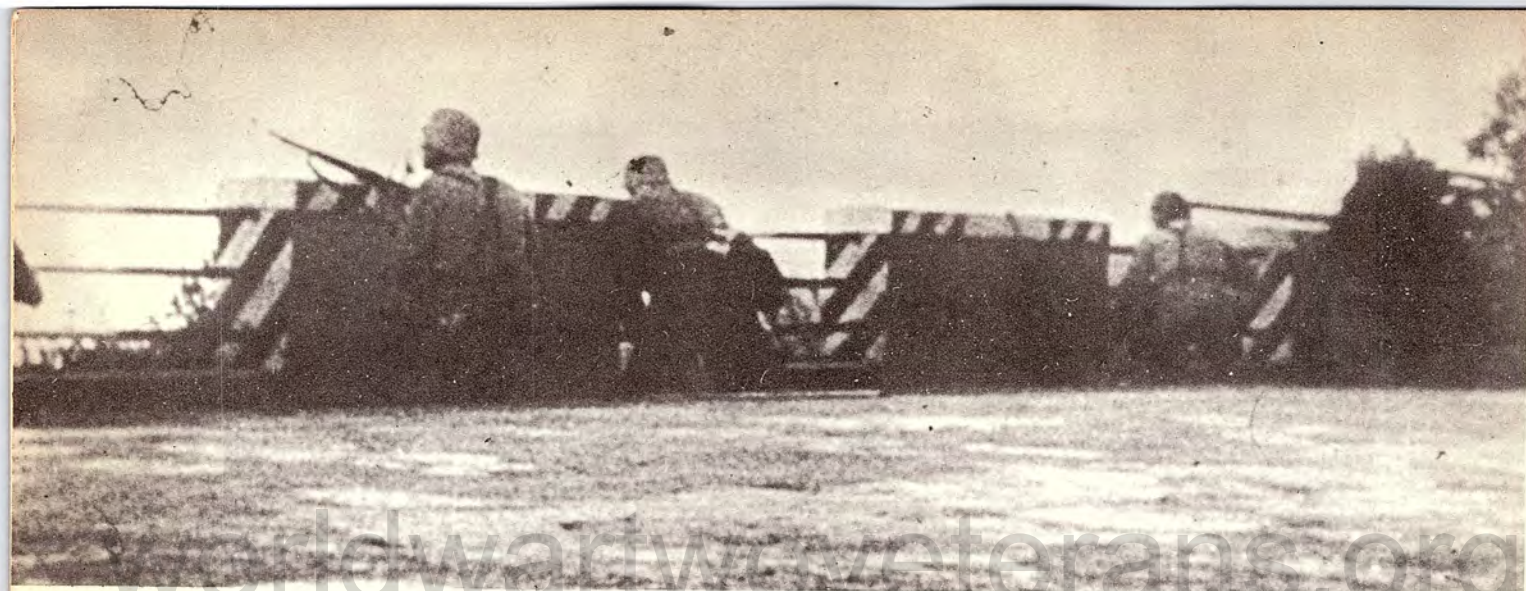


F. Duncan Jr.

CENTER OF THE LOW HILL BARRIER on the west of the 36th Division defense line September 14, was Mount San Chirico. La Cosa Creek, flowing into the Calore River, passes Mount San Chirico on the east. Here the Texas Division made its stand.



ON THE FIFTH DAY German attacks nearly split American and British forces along the Sele-Calore River. During the night, while Allied infantry hastily dug-in on a last line of defense, a tremendous naval and air attack was delivered from Salerno Bay. LIFE artist, Julien Binford, has imagined what the Germans saw from near Altavilla at the height of their attack.



CAPTURED GERMAN FILM shows how the Nazis observed the Salerno landings from their positions on the mountains overlooking the beaches. *Above:* A mountain-ledge road offers enemy good vantage, looking out upon Salerno Bay.



HEAVY COASTAL GUN is directed seaward. Allied naval gunfire and bombings took care of the enemy's big gun emplacements. *Below:* An ack-ack crew from hillside position tries to hold off invading ground troops.





MEDICS FOLLOW THE BATTLE DOWN INTO THE SMOKEFILLED NAPLES PLAIN, FAMED MT. VESUVIUS IS ON THE RIGHT.

CHIUNZI PASS

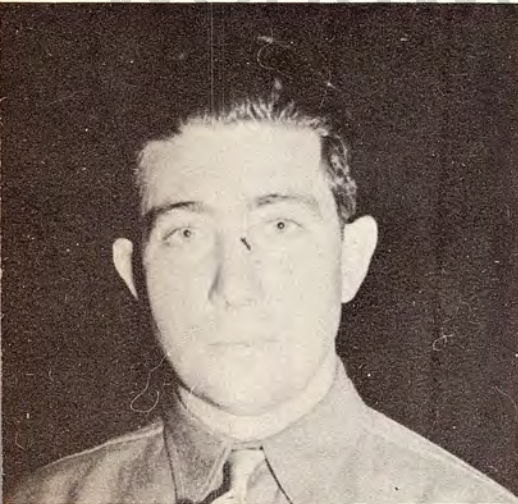
Soon after the D-Day landings, the 1st Battalion, 143rd, commanded by Lt. Colonel Fred L. Walker, Jr., and troops of the 133rd Field Artillery were withdrawn from the Paestum sector to reinforce American Rangers at Chiunzi Pass, a vital gateway across the rocky Sorrento peninsula. From the pass

artillery shells were dropped on German mortar positions at the foot of the mountain. These troops, which remained in the line almost two weeks longer than the remainder of the Division, greatly aided the British Tenth Corps in its sweep into Naples and the drive up to the Volturno River.



T/SGT. CHARLES E. KELLY

T/Sgt. Charles E. Kelly, the 143rd's one-man army, emerged as the war's most publicized and beglamored GI. The "Commando" Kelly legend began with his famous stand at Altavilla where he heaved 60mm. mortar shells from a second story balcony, killing a score of Germans, and virtually saving the day. It culminated in a swarm of moving picture, biographical, and advertising offers. His homecoming parade in Pittsburgh introduced the fad of hysterical celebrations for returning veterans. Kelly was first to be decorated with the CMH for action on the European continent.



T/SGT. JAMES LOGAN

T/Sgt. James Logan, chunky Luling, Texas infantryman landed with the first wave of the 141st's assault echelon and earned his Congressional Medal of Honor on the beaches while still a private. Trying to stave off a fierce enemy counterattack, Logan abandoned cover, shot two enemy gunners, then hurdled a wall and turned the Germans' own gun on them. He liquidated a troublesome machine gun, captured two Germans and then proceeded to kill several more. Sgt. Logan fought on with the Division throughout the entire Italian campaign.



PVT. WILLIAM A. CRAWFORD

Pvt. William A. Crawford, an I Company scout of the 142nd Infantry, gained recognition by attacking three machine gun emplacements dug in on terraces in front of his company at Altavilla. Crawling close enough to the first two to throw hand grenades at the crews, he killed the gunners and destroyed their weapons. At the third emplacement, Crawford's grenade proved fatal to only one, but he downed the others as they attempted to escape. Just a little later Crawford was taken prisoner.



1ST. LT. ARNOLD J. BJORKLAND

1st Lt. Arnold J. Bjorklund, 142nd platoon leader, merited award of the nation's highest honor by leading his men up the slopes of Hill 424 and knocking out two machine gun nests and a mortar emplacement, killing all members of their crews with only three hand grenades. Prior to this the lieutenant had fired both his own and a German rifle until he had exhausted all available ammunition. Lt. Bjorklund, seriously wounded during the action, returned to the United States and was presented his medal by the late President Roosevelt at the White House.



S/SGT. MANUEL "UGLY" GONZALES, 142nd Infantry squad leader, was considered by his company commander to be the finest soldier in the regiment after herculean feats D-Day. His chest ripped by shell fragments, his pack set ablaze by tracer bullets, "Gon" tossed off the pack, grabbed several grenades and consecutively scored kayos on a machine gun, an 88 (above), an ammo dump and a mortar. This performance netted him the Distinguished Service Cross.

SALERNO HEROES

And they were heroes, everyone who stepped from landing craft and waded ashore at Salerno, not only infantrymen, but artillerymen, medics, engineers, signalmen, ordnance and quartermaster men, recon troops and headquarters personnel. On a confining beachhead shells played no favorites; supporting troops to the rear proved equally as vulnerable. As the operation unfolded, untested rookies matured into battle veterans in a single day.



FROM THIS BALCONY IN ALTAVILLA, "Commando" Kelly heaved mortar shells on the Germans. Bullet-chipped walls mark enemy attempts to get him.

THIS CREW of the 636th TD, "Jinx," struck a crushing blow against the Germans during 25 minutes of fighting in the La Cosa Line defense. The six-man crew, all awarded Silver Stars for gallantry, knocked out 5 Mark IV's, 1 ammunition truck, 1 armored half-track, 1 pill box and a house harboring Germans. *Left to right:* S/Sgt. Raymond G. Murphy, Jacksonville, Fla.; Sgt. Edwin A. Yost, Gorham, Kans.; Cpl. Alvin V. Q. Johnson, Snyder, Texas; Pfc. Joseph R. O'Bryan, New Haven, Ky.; and Privates Clyde T. and Claude H. Stokes, twins from McAlester, Okla.





MANY FAMILIES escaped the bombings and artillery fire but returned to find their homes destroyed.



LT. REX T. McCORD, SGT. CLEBURN KROLL AND PVT. PETE BURNS talk with an Italian town mayor shortly after the invasion.



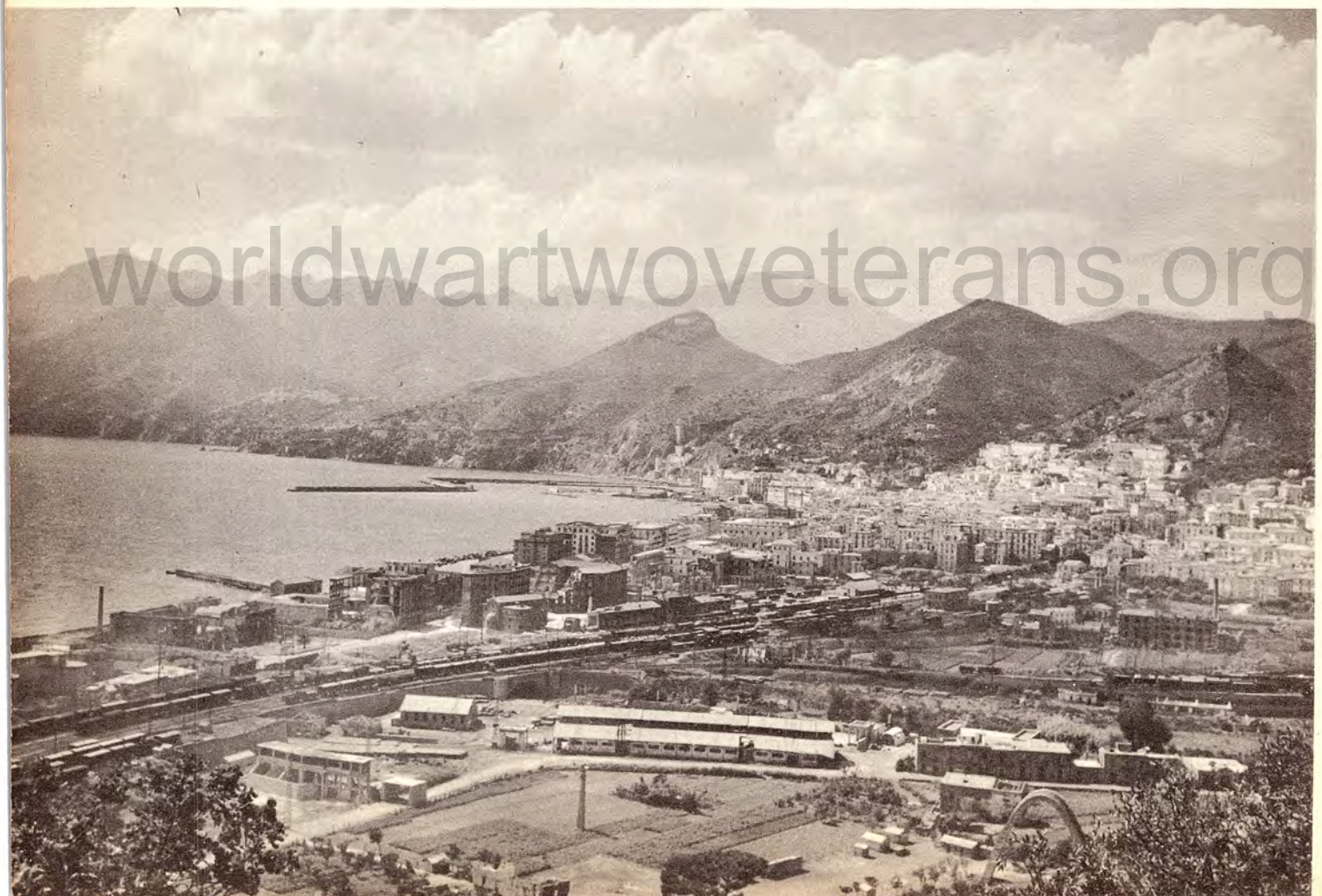
BUILT IN 700 B.C., the Temple of Neptune at Paestum recalls an ancient Greek civilization.



ITALIAN WOMEN open outdoor laundry under ancient ruins of Paestum. Soldiers welcomed this opportunity, had to furnish soap.

PEACE RETURNS TO SALERNO

AMERICAN AND GERMAN TROOPS have long since left Salerno in this view taken nearly two years after the landings. The structures are badly battle-scarred, but jagged mountain peaks in the background still give beauty to a panorama of the Salerno harbor.





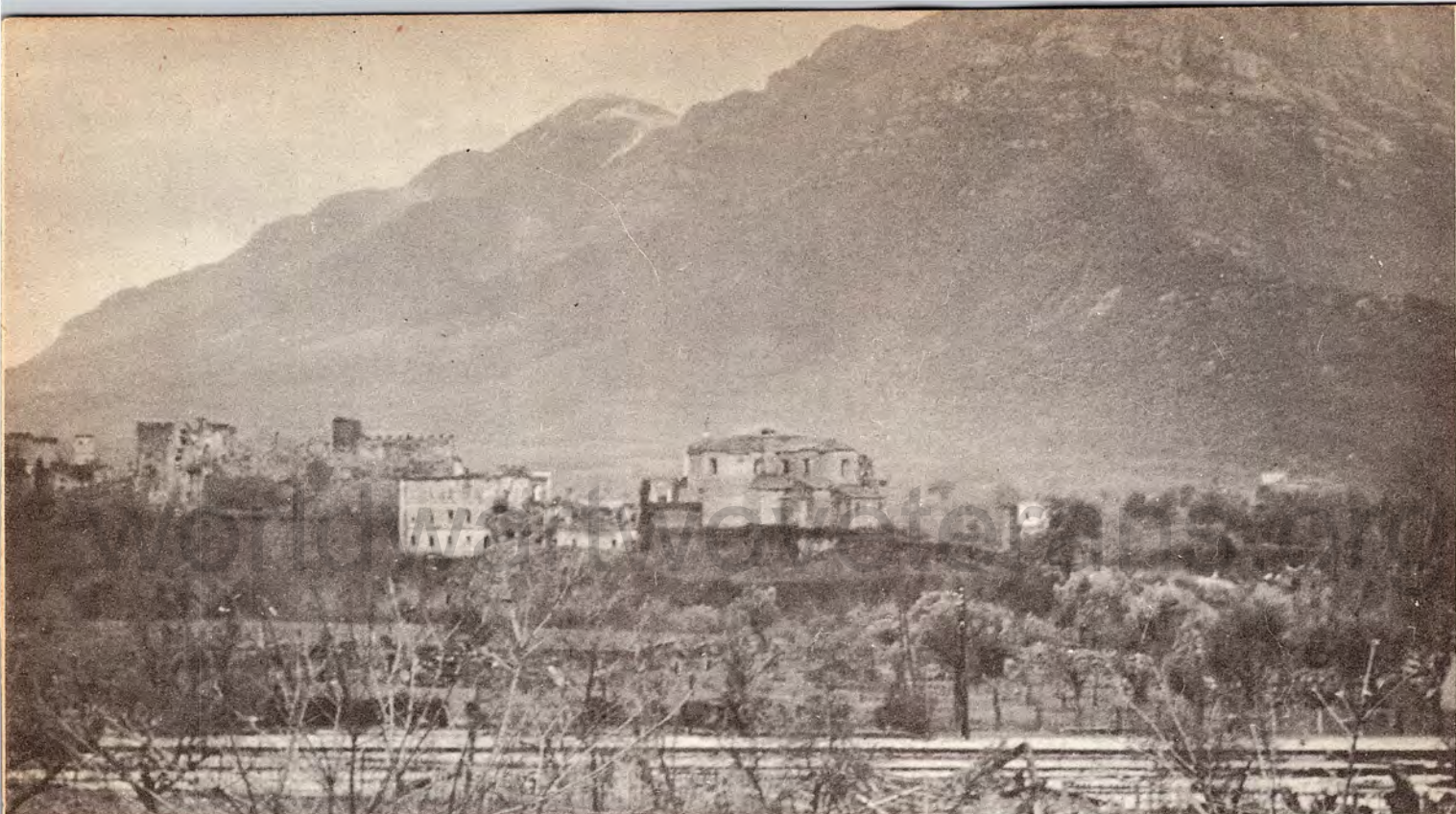
A TANK DESTROYER GUN POINTS OVER MINGANO TOWARD LIRI VALLEY. MT. MAGGIORE CAN BE SEEN ON THE LEFT.

THE WINTER LINE

German delaying action across the whole of Italy stubbornly slowed the Fifth and Eighth Army advances during late October and early November. Italy's mountains lay in the path, one after the other. The Germans, skillfully bargaining for time, made each a hard-fought objective to win. Chill and rain marked the seasonal change in weather. Nevertheless, optimism still flowed in the expectations of many that Rome would be reached before long, even "before Christmas." But Rome never looked so far away as it did from the base of Maggiore or Sammucro, with Germans peering down from the top. It rained the November night the 36th moved up

to re-enter the line near Mignano, where Highway 6 and a main railway cut through a narrow pass into the Liri Valley running north toward Rome. Elements of the 3rd Infantry Division invited relief from their cold, rock-ledge holdings on the slopes of the mountains flanking the pass.

Of the battles and of the winter months that were ahead, General Walker upon their conclusion could forthrightly state, "I do not recall any campaign in the whole history of the United States Army in which soldiers have had to endure greater hardships or have performed greater deeds of heroism than this campaign in Italy."



SMOKE SHELLS explode near the top of the Camino-Maggiore hill mass near Mignano. Division attack on December 3 worked up the ridge on the right and continued on over the top and beyond to the right. Long supply trail rose on lower slope.

36th DIVISION ARTILLERY booms out in preparation for the attack on "Million Dollar Mountain." It was one of the heaviest concentrations of the war against strongly fortified enemy positions. Some 600 Allied guns participated.



MILLION-DOLLAR MOUNTAIN

On November 15, the 142nd Infantry moved into defensive positions on the lower slopes of the Camino-Maggiore hill mass, 3,000-foot bastion guarding Mignano Gap. Hardships on the Texans increased as continual rains turned the mountain-side into a slippery, treacherous obstacle. Advantageous hill-top positions clung to by the Germans gave the enemy full observation of the valley.

For two weeks preparations for a big attack were under way. Supplies were packed by hand to forward dumps high on the mountain slopes. Patrols felt out the German positions.

Men came down from the rocky ledges briefly for Thanksgiving Day turkey. A week later, after dark of December 2nd, 600 Allied guns in the valley began the greatest artillery concentration since El Alamein. This artillery expenditure earned for the target the popular name of "Million Dollar

Mountain." Before daylight the 3rd Battalion crossed the line of departure half-way up on the eastern ridge. The attack proceeded swiftly, Lt. Col. Samuel S. Graham's 2nd Battalion moving through the 3rd when the latter's objectives had been seized, and pushing forward over the rock-cleft top to the most forward slope, a point 4 kilometers on a straight line from the start. By late afternoon Maggiore had been seized but the enormous problem of maintaining the position over the extended single line of supply had only begun. Heavy German artillery pounded back on the newly-won positions and on the supply trail. For another week, with more rain falling, our men endured the muddy holes and the enemy shells until a relief was effected. An attempt, then novel, to drop supplies by fighter plane to the men on Maggiore, missed. The Germans got the K-rations.

TROOPS BREAK AWAY from C-rations for a hot meal in a stream-bed just below Mt. Maggiore. Usually men refrain from bunching up but here heavy rock cliffs offer protection. This might be Thanksgiving Day turkey.



HILL 1205 — SAMMUCRO

The most serious obstacle impeding the capture of San Pietro was Mt. Sammucro, 4,000-foot Hill 1205. This mountain, one of the steepest heights scaled by Allied troops during the war, descends to the village of San Pietro on its southern slope. Along its icy trails and treacherous cliffs the Germans had craftily organized a formidable chain of mutually supporting pillboxes.

For the December 8 San Pietro assault, Colonel William Martin ordered the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry, to attack the summit of 1205. Upon achieving its objective, it was to attack along the ridge to a point northwest of San Pietro. The 3d Ranger Battalion was to seize Hill 950, another feature of the Sammucro hill mass. The 2nd Battalion, 143rd, was to drive over the olive orchards northeast of San Pietro. The 3rd Battalion, in support, was to follow the 2nd at a distance of 400 yards.

As night fell our artillery hammered powerfully at the enemy's main line of resistance. It was raining at H-Hour when the 2nd and 3rd Battalions crossed the line of departure. Some 200 yards forward they encountered mines and automatic fire from German pillboxes. German mortar and artillery fire were deadly by reason of excellent observation from enemy-held Mt. Lungo, overlooking our advance.

The 3rd Battalion was committed. But the advance never gained more than 600 yards. Our initial assault on San Pietro had been repulsed with heavy casualties.

On 1205, however, the 1st Battalion attack succeeded brilliantly. The 1st Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. William W. Burgess, began an exhausting five-hour climb up rugged Mt. Sammucro at 1500. Under cover of darkness the men crawled up the slopes, sometimes on all fours, sometimes chinning themselves over the sharp rocks that cut into their shoes, sometimes using their ropes as lassoes to pull themselves over the otherwise impassable

cliffs. Doing without overcoats and blankets, they still perspired freely on a night that neared the zero mark—it was work to climb that mountain. When the Germans sensed approach to the summit they rolled man-sized boulders over the top. Occasionally our own men, struggling to keep going, slipped on the ice and loosened other rocks. These boulders, gaining momentum in their descent, caused as many as a dozen casualties on one downward journey.

But Lt. Rufus Cleghorn's A Company gained the summit before the strongly-entrenched enemy fully realized that an assault was upon them. The infantrymen, summoning every last measure of their strength, stealthily crept up to each successive pill-box and neutralized it until the Germans withdrew stunned.

To the right the 3rd Ranger Battalion also had captured its objective, but only after successive attacks and costly casualties. For on Hill 950 the enemy had been alerted.

Counterattacks were expected. They followed quickly, seven of them in the first day. Maj. David Frazier, who had replaced the wounded Col. Burgess, and his battalion checked the Germans as they struck back with unceasing violence. The slopes of Hill 1205 were strewn with the dead of both sides.

Prisoners captured by the 1st Battalion stated that they had been ordered to retake Sammucro at all cost.

Four days later the 504th Parachute Battalion reinforced the 1st of the 143rd which threw its entire remaining strength into the push along the ridge. The attack gave out one hundred yards short of the objective when severe losses in this extreme effort forced a halt. But San Pietro was soon to fall.

It has been said by military men of wide experience that the physical discomforts of Washington's Army at Valley Forge could not have been compared to those suf-

THROUGH VENAFRO ran one of the most heavily used supply roads of the campaign for Southern Italy. Troops coming out of reserve would invariably comment, "No matter how often we go back into the line, we always start from Venafro."





THE BARREN SUMMIT of Mt. Sammucro is pictured from a point halfway up the mountain. At the left, infantrymen demonstrate their technique in getting over the sharp rocks.

ferred by the foot soldier in the Italian mountains. Hill 1205 substantiated that opinion. For ten days at an abnormal altitude the men fought on without blankets, overcoats, or raincoats. Under these conditions, freezing temperatures made sleeping dangerous. Even for those who stayed awake frozen feet was common. Then, too, for the first three days food and water were inadequate—only a single K ration unit per man during the period and a single veedon of water for a squad. If it was difficult to bring up supply, it was also difficult to take down the wounded. To negotiate Sammucro required considerable stamina even without packs or rifles. To climb it carrying a box of rations or to come down it with a litter demanded maximum effort.

Below Mt. Sammucro the 2nd and 3rd Battalions twice again attempted to break through the olive groves toward the town. Both times they met heavy German fire and were stalled. Volunteer patrols made desperate attempts to reach enemy positions and reduce the strong points but not a single member of any such patrol ever came back alive.

San Pietro had not yet fallen, but the capture and securing of strategic Sammucro threatened the German position all the way to San Vittore.

BOULDER-STREWN, sharply sloping mountains made even the most conscientious foxhole-diggers give up in despair. Instead shelter halves were rigged up wherever advantageous rock formation afforded protection from the weather and enemy artillery.





BARREN HUMP BETWEEN MAGGIORE AND SAMMUCRO IS KEY TO SAN PIETRO

MT. LUNGO'S strategic advantage can be well-approximated in this photo looking down from it onto the intersection of the lateral mountain road from Venafro and San Pietro with Highway 6. Shortly after Lungo's capture, 16 German vehicles and tanks fleeing from San Pietro were intercepted and destroyed

by our artillery observer in this position. (*Below*) Barren and rocky, Mt. Lungo lies astride the valley opening at Mignano Gap. Rock and timber shelters and heavily-mined approaches aided the Germans in holding this important ground despite large masses of artillery that were directed upon it.



MT. LUNGO

The capture of the Camino-Maggiore hill mass and Mount Sammucro had been of vital importance but the battle for the Mignano Gap was not yet completed. In the heart of the Gap stood Mount Lungo, dominating Highway 6 and overlooking San Pietro, desperately held by the Germans against all our attacks. Lungo's slopes were milder than either Maggiore or Sammucro but they were rocky, barren and well-fortified by the Germans. At its base the enemy had cleared away all trees and vegetation for unobstructed fields of fire and the approaches to the mountain were heavily mined. An Italian brigade tried to take Lungo from the South but met with disaster. A week later the 142nd Infantry, still tired from the Maggiore mission, was assigned the task of seizing Mount Lungo.

Before daylight of December 15 the two assault battalions of the 142nd were hidden on the lower eastern slopes of Mt. Maggiore to await the coming evening. Early that night, Lt. Col. Graham's 2nd Battalion jumped off, swinging around Lungo to attack it from the north and rear, while the 1st Battalion, Major Elliott W. Amick commanding, struck directly across the intervening valley to attack from the west. The enemy was caught completely by surprise, many of them asleep in their holes.

Objectives were taken rapidly, the Germans being flushed out by grenades and bayonets. Mopping-up continued throughout the night and early morning. At daylight our artillery observers with the infantry on Lungo spotted highly lucrative targets—German vehicles and tanks fleeing San Pietro, a German vehicle park, and troops being rushed up to make a counterattack—and called down massed fires with effect. Lungo was ours. The loss of this feature caused the enemy to withdraw from battle-scarred San Pietro.

LT. COL. ANDREW F. PRICE, Executive Officer, and Col. Richard J. Werner, Commanding the 141st, orient an Italian artillery commander on the Lungo objective before the Italian attack.

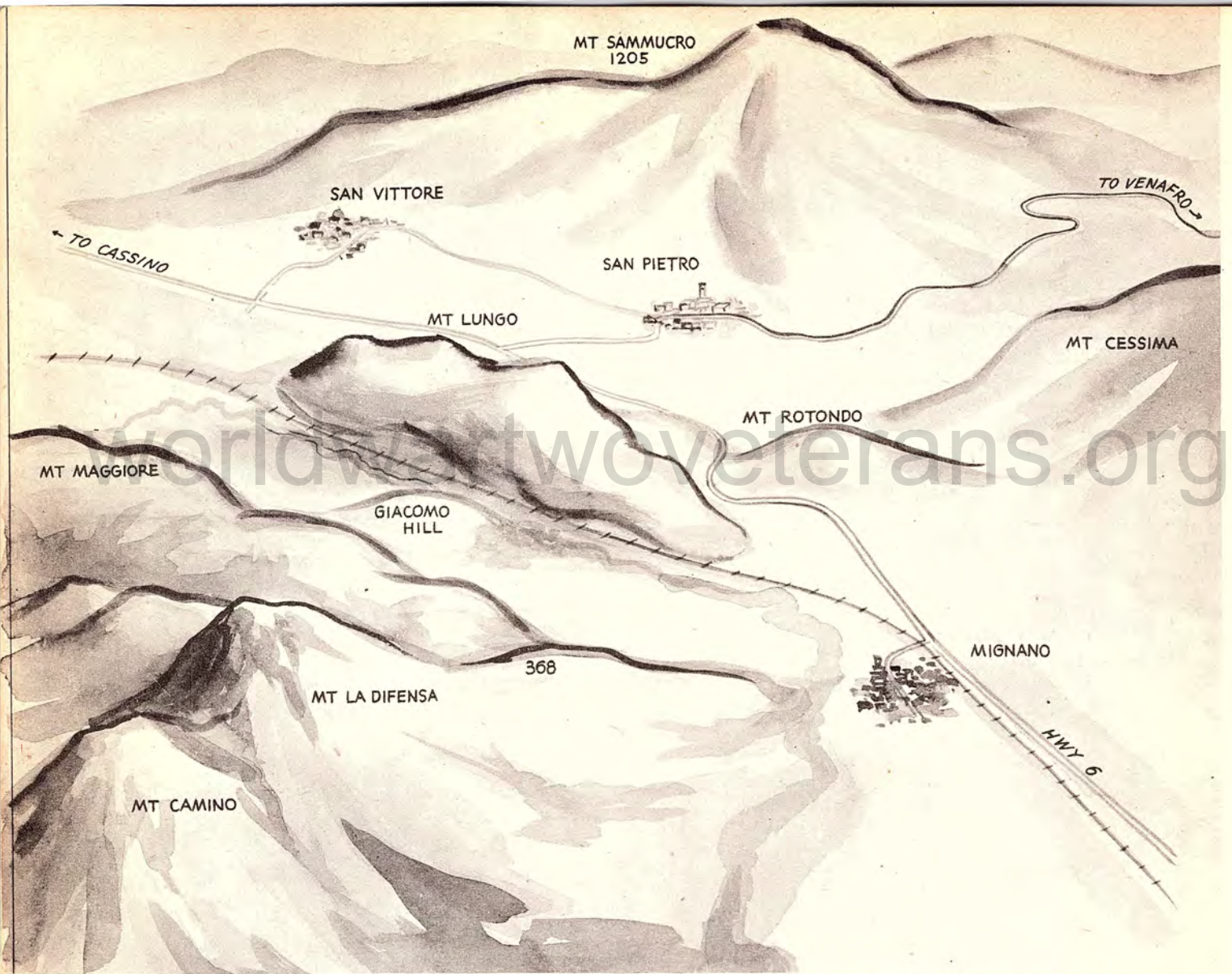


RAILROAD TIES, telephone poles, local stones and sandbags went into the construction of German shelters on Mt. Lungo. These enabled the enemy to withstand heavy artillery bombardments.



THE GERMANS blew this 57mm gun position prior to pulling out. *Below:* **THE 155th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION** turns its 155mm howitzers on Mt. Lungo. Vehicles are British.





THE GERMAN WINTER LINE stretched across Mignano Gap, with key defenses on Mt. Camino-Maggiore, Mt. Lungo, San Pietro and Mt. Sammucro. Each of the mountain fastnesses had to be painfully reduced before San Pietro fell. Then the Germans dropped back to the line of the Rapido and Cassino.



SAN PIETRO

The deadlock for San Pietro, key to the Liri Valley, was broken by a coordinated Divisional attack.

From three sides Division troops, after securing Mt. Maggiore and Mt. Sammucro, were closing in. As the attack opened at midday of December 15, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 143rd, continued to hammer in through the olive groves and terraces on Sammucro's slopes. Sixteen tanks of Company A, 753rd, moved down the narrow winding road from Venafro with the mission of breaking into

SAN PIETRO'S patron saint, having withstood the siege, looks sadly upon war's ruin.



FRANK DUNCAN'S DRAWING OF SHELL-TORN SAN PIETRO SHOWS ARMY MEDICAL AID STATION AND CIVILIAN WASH.

San Pietro. The 141st Infantry struck frontally over the open flatland of the valley. The 142nd waited under cover on Maggiore's side ready to move on Mt. Lungo after dark.

All Fifth Army artillery within range was directed against San Pietro and the surrounding area. The 141st advanced 400 yards until halted under the weight of fierce enemy fire. For a third time the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 143rd, were stopped after gaining 100 yards. Of the tanks, three reached the outskirts of the town, two of these were destroyed and one was missing. Five others were lost behind enemy lines. Five hit enemy mines. Only four returned.

After dark Companies E and L, 143rd, finally succeeded in penetrating enemy positions before San Pietro, but were forced to retire. On Mt. Lungo, however, the Germans were surprised and routed by the night attack of the 142nd. When this kingpin fell the Germans throughout the San Pietro area made preparations to withdraw.

He counterattacked to cover his withdrawal. Our own artillery in defense was brought to within 100 yards of the front lines. When, after five hours, indications of the enemy intent were clear, patrols went out to make contact.

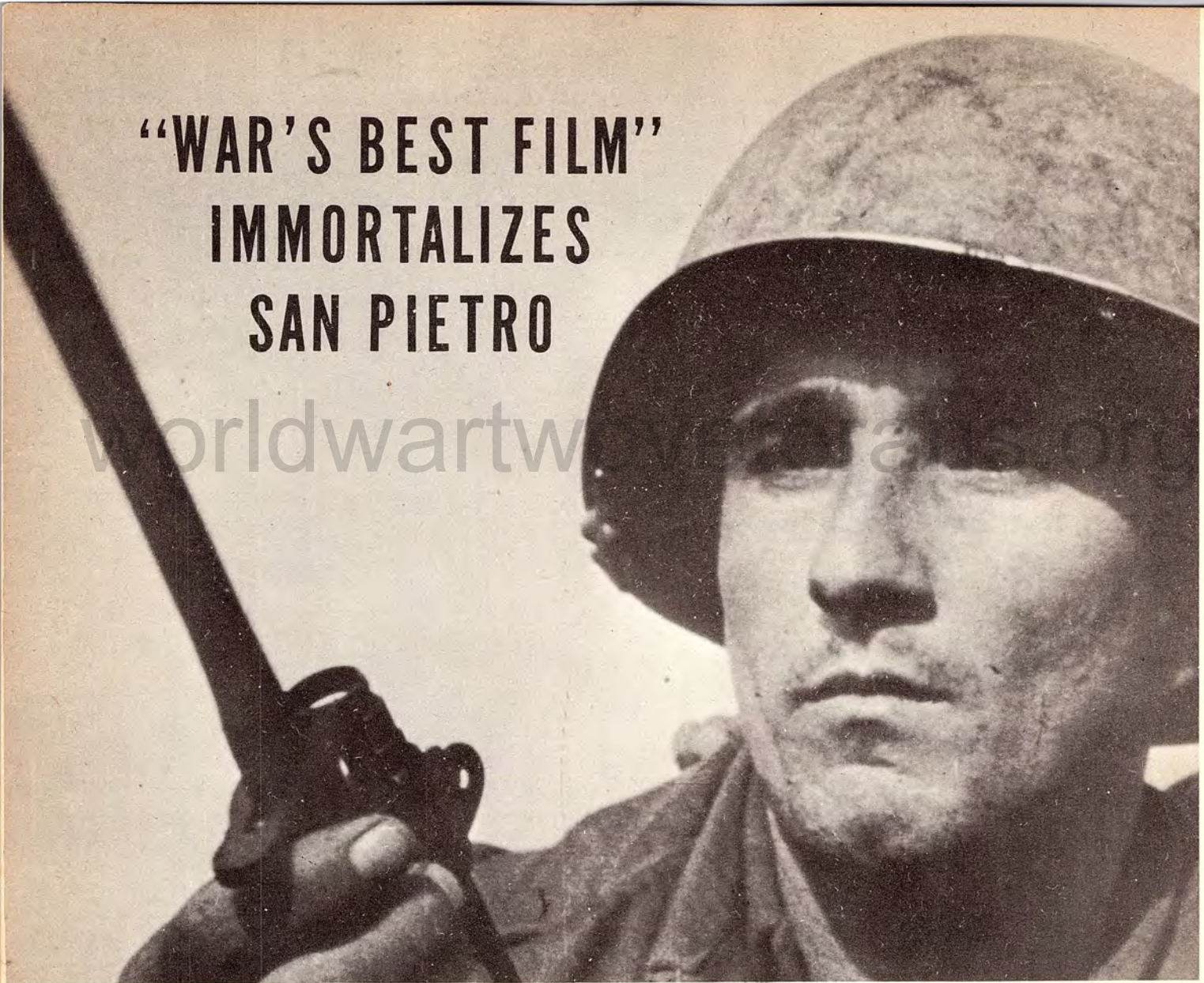
San Pietro was ours for the taking.

The 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 143rd, less than a rifle company in strength, trudged past San Pietro to consolidate gains and re-establish contact with the enemy, taking up positions five kilometers beyond.

After the battle, the 143rd alone required 1100 replacements.

On Christmas Eve the men of Lt. Col. J. Trimble Brown's 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry, attacked westward from the top of Sammucro, together with men of the Special Service Force, to clear the western slopes.

"WAR'S BEST FILM" IMMORTALIZES SAN PIETRO



"*San Pietro* (Maj. John Huston's APS film) is in every respect as good a war film as any that has been made; in some respects it is the best. A 30-minute record of one of the tense and bloody battles for the Liri Valley in Italy in late 1943, it is a story told chiefly in terms of the experiences of one infantry regiment—the 143rd of the 36th Division.

"*San Pietro's* record of combat, its eye for terrain and for weather, its recognition of war as a science both wonderful and tragically inexact, are at least equal to any seen in films so far.

"Its narration, delivered with quiet irony, is repeatedly given life and resonance by images which show what 'heavy

seasonal rains' look and feel like to get a truck through, what Texan 'elements' in a regiment are as people, something of what eleven hundred 'replacements' (in one regiment) mean in terms of death and survival.

"The huge close-ups of the helmeted heads of infantrymen as they move into battle, or rest after it while you are told that many of those you watch are soon to die, have the simple immediacy of good family snapshots—and the enduring majesty of a heroic frieze.

"*San Pietro* is a very fine film. History is likely to recognize it as a great one."

—*Time Magazine.*

"SAN PIETRO... AT THE BASE OF MT. SAMMUCRO."



THE CATHEDRAL... BECAME A WAR-TIME CASUALTY.





"NO AMOUNT OF ARTILLERY FIRE WOULD FORCE THE GERMANS TO WITHDRAW." SMOKE SHELLS COVER MOUNT LUNGO.



"IT WAS UP TO THE FOOT SOLDIER TO ATTACK A HIDDEN ENEMY." —UP TO THE ARTILLERYMAN TO SOFTEN HIS DETERMINATION.

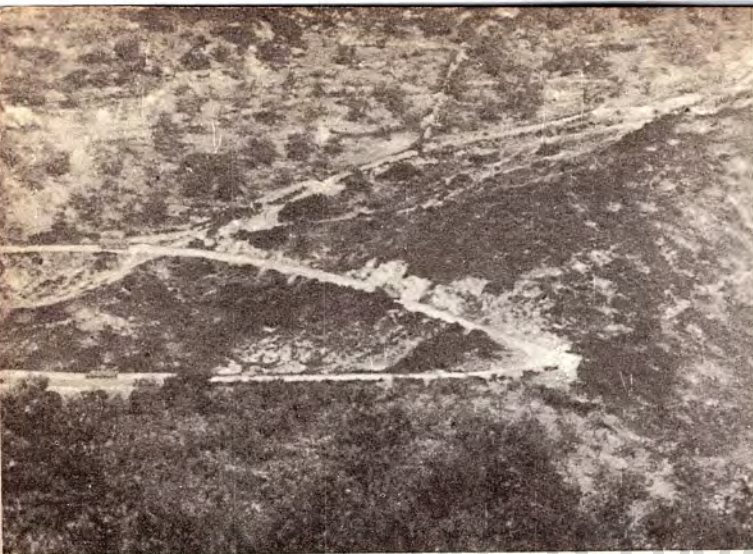
"IT WAS UP TO THE MAN WITH THE RIFLE..."

"THE MAN UNDER FIRE FROM ALL WEAPONS—

THE MAN WHOSE WAY ALL OUR WEAPONS—

LAND, SEA, AND AIR—SERVE ONLY TO PREPARE."





"SIXTEEN TANKS WENT DOWN THIS ROAD ... OF THESE—FOUR RETURNED."

"SAN PIETRO . . . BUT THE FIRST OF MANY BATTLES TO BE FOUGHT IN LIRI VALLEY"



"IT WAS THE INFANTRYMAN WHO DUG THEM OUT."



"TOWNSPEOPLE RETURNED FROM CAVES."



"THE CHILDREN FORGOT QUICKLY—"

"—THE LONG RUGGED CLIMB UP MT. SUMMUCRO."

THE 143rd PUSHED THROUGH THE OLIVE TERRACES BELOW.





**“... THE BATTLE PASSED OVER
AND BEYOND . . . WESTWARD”**

San Pietro (above) lay carnaged and broken—but the olives in her groves would grow once more, her houses would rise again. On Christmas Day (below) soldiers who fought for her liberation were carried down the jagged slopes of Mt. Samucro, lifeless.





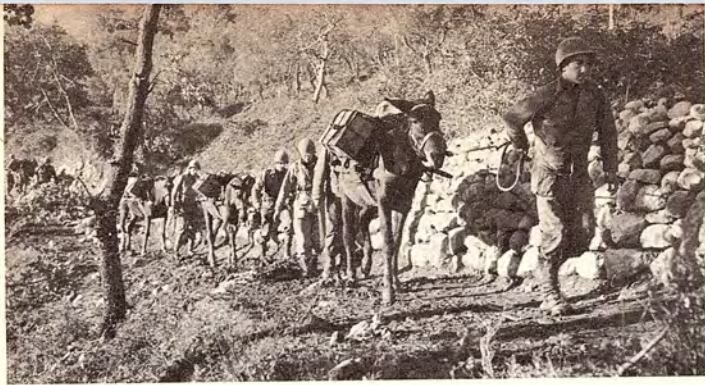
STEADY PACK HORSES AND MULES HAD TO BE USED WHEN JAGGED PEAKS MADE MECHANIZED TRAVEL IMPOSSIBLE.

SUPPLY & EVACUATION

Mountainous terrain confronted the Division in practically every phase of the Italian campaign. With it came the enormous task of getting supplies to the frontline forces and evacuating casualties. In the Mount Maggiore and Mount Samucro sectors, pack animals carried the food, water and ammunition as far up the steep muddy trails as possible, round trips requiring eight to ten hours. Hand-carry was common and laborious. In addition supply routes were frequently under enemy fire and observation.

DOUGHBOYS HELP AID MEN CARRY A WOUNDED COMRADE DOWN THE TREACHEROUS TRAIL ON MOUNT MAGGIORE.





START OF ANOTHER four-hour, five mile pack-train ordeal up the mountainside with supplies for men on top.



PACK ANIMALS could go only so far; strong-backed infantrymen bore the burden to forwardmost positions.

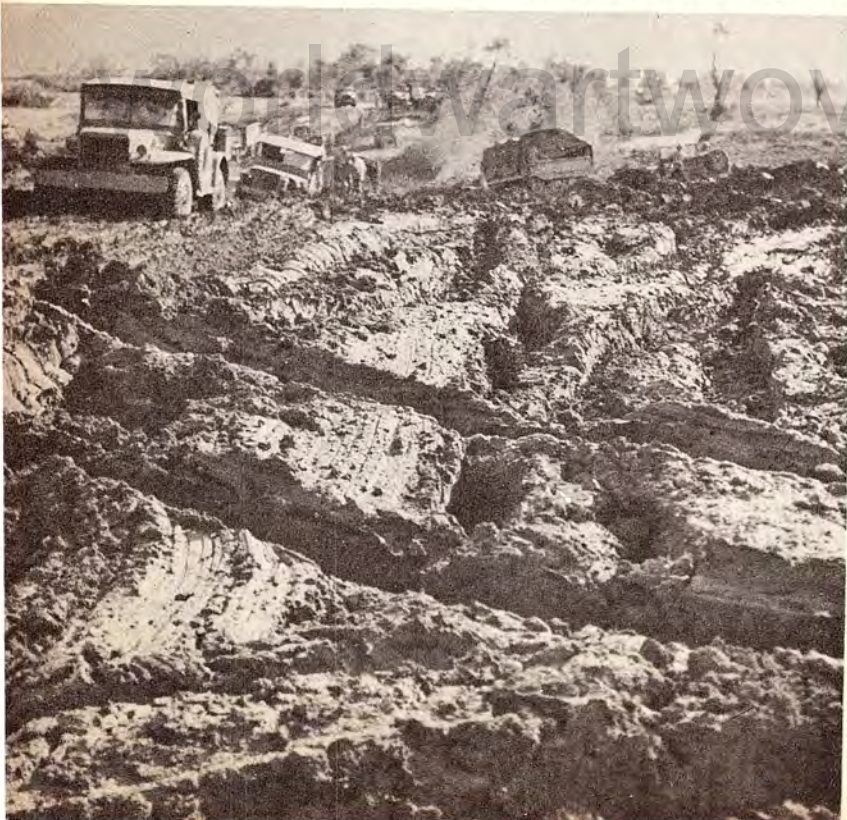
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PACK TRAIN WINDING ITS WAY UP THE STEEP SLOPES NEAR VENAFRO. SOMETIMES ITALIAN MULE SKINNERS WERE USED.





TRACKS OF VEHICLES ETCHED DEEP IN MUD PRESENT A DIZZYING PATTERN. THIS WAS A FIELD ARTILLERY BIVOUAC. QUAGMIRE SERVED AS A ROAD TO BYPASS BLOWN BRIDGE.



veterans.org

RAIN

When the "Texas" Infantry re-entered the line on November 15 in the Mignano-San Pietro sector, it rained daily for seventeen consecutive days. Cold winter rains brought maddening bodily discomfort. The earth turned to mud. Flooded bivouacs, slithery roads and trails, often under enemy observation, greatly slowed all operations. Truck convoys as at the left struggled over just such roads. The novel pattern of the olive orchard above was an artillery bivouac just back of the line near Venafro.

MUD

Long periods of rain turned the battlefield into an endless sea of mud. For the infantry it meant not only fighting up slippery trails, but also living in fox-holes which had been turned into ponds. Behind the front, truck convoys wallowed and stalled in axle-deep mud along secondary roads, or while bypassing enemy-blown installations along the main routes. Even the versatile jeep found itself helpless many times when it became embedded in the quagmire.



SLOG, SLOP, SLOG! ITALY WAS NO LAND OF SUNSHINE TO HAPLESS GIs.

A DIVISION RATION TRUCK BOGGED IN FLOODED BIVOUAC. PUP TENTS PROVIDED LITTLE PROTECTION WHEN IT RAINED.





ERNIE PYLE WRITES OF

Beloved Ernie Pyle, the GI's close friend and correspondent, gave the folks back home a vivid picture of the doughboy's war in Italy. The two stories below were written after a stay with 36th Division units near Mignano and Venafro. Of all the dispatches which Ernie Pyle has left, the touching story of Capt. Waskow is perhaps his best known. GI's were sorry, too, when Ernie Pyle was killed in the Pacific.

FRONTLINES IN ITALY—In this war I have known a lot of officers who were loved and respected by the soldiers under them. But never have I crossed the trail of any man as beloved as Capt. Henry T. Waskow, of Belton, Texas.

Captain Waskow was a company commander in the 36th Division. He had led his company since long before it left the States. He was very young, only in his middle 20's, but he carried in him a sincerity and a gentleness that made people want to be guided by him.

"After my own father, he came next," a sergeant told me.

"He always looked after us," a soldier said. "He'd go to bat for us every time."

"I've never known him to do anything unfair," another one said.

* * * *

I was at the foot of the mule trail the night they brought Capt. Waskow's body down the mountain. The moon was nearly full at the time, and you could see far up the trail, and even part way across the valley. Soldiers made shadows as they walked.

Dead men had been coming down the mountain all evening, lashed onto the backs of mules. They came lying belly-down across wooden pack saddles, their heads hanging down on the left side of the mule, their stiffened legs sticking out awkwardly from the other side, bobbing up and down as the mule walked.

The Italian mule-skinners were afraid to walk beside dead men, so Americans had to lead the mules down that night. Even the Americans were reluctant to unlash and lift off the bodies at the bottom, so an officer had to do it himself, and ask others to help.

The first one came early in the evening. They slid him down from the mule and stood him on his feet for a moment. In the half light he might have been merely a sick man standing there, leaning on the others. Then they

lay him on the ground in the shadow of the low stone wall alongside the road.

I don't know who that first one was. You feel small in the presence of the dead men, and ashamed at being alive, and you don't ask silly questions.

We left him there beside the road, that first one, and we all went back into the cowshed and sat on water cans or lay on the straw, waiting for the next batch of mules.

Somebody said the dead soldier had been dead for four days, and then nobody said anything more about it. We talked soldier talk for an hour or more. The dead man lay all alone outside, in the shadow of the stone wall.

Then a soldier came into the dark cowshed and said there were some more bodies outside. We went out into the road. Four mules stood there, in the moonlight, in the road where the trail came down off the mountain. The soldiers who led them stood there waiting. "This one is Capt. Waskow," one of them said quietly.

Two men unlash his body from the mule and lifted it off and lay it in the shadow beside the low stone wall. Other men took the other bodies off. Finally there were five, lying end to end in a long row alongside the road. You don't cover up dead men in the combat zone. They just lie there in the shadows until somebody else comes after them.

The unburdened mules moved off to their olive orchard. The men in the road seemed reluctant to leave. They stood around, and gradually one by one you could sense them moving close to Capt. Waskow's body. Not so much to look, I think, as to say something in finality, to him and to themselves. I stood close by and I could hear. One soldier came and looked down and he said out loud, "Goddammit." That's all he said, and then he walked away. Another one came. He said "Goddammit to hell anyway." He looked down for a few moments, and then he turned and left.

Another man came; I think he was an officer. It was hard to tell officers from men in the half-light, for all were bearded and grimy dirty. The man looked down into the dead captain's face, and then he spoke directly to him, as though he were alive. He said: "I'm sorry, old man."

Then a soldier came and stood beside the officer, and bent over, and he too spoke to his dead captain, not in a whisper but awfully tenderly, and he said:

"I sure am sorry, sir."

Then the first man squatted down, and he reached down and took the dead hand, and he sat there for five full minutes, holding the dead hand in his own and looking intently into the dead face, and he never uttered a sound all the time he sat there.

And then finally he put the hand down, and then reached up and gently straightened the points of the captain's shirt collar, and then he sort of rearranged the tattered edges of his uniform around the wound. And then he got up and walked away down the road in the moonlight, all alone.

FRONTLINES IN ITALY—The Italian mules which we've been using to pack supplies up to our troops fighting in the mountains, are smaller and weaker than the average American mule. Also they have been ridden around in trucks from one place to another until a lot of them are sick from it.

At first we misjudged them and put too heavy a load on their backs. In fact we put on more than an American mule could carry over such a trail. We lashed on four cans of water and two cases of rations, making a total load of around 240 pounds. The mules just couldn't take it. They'd all be sick the next day.

So now we load them with only two cans of water and one of rations, cutting the load to 120 pounds. They say the Italians are cruel to their mules on the trail but take good care of them when they're not working.

The Italian method of saying "gid-

A DEAD MAN AND OF MULES

dap" to a mule is to go "brrrr" like we do when we are cold. When I stand along the pack trail and listen to the skinners "brrr-ing" their mules upward, it sounds like the whole population is freezing to death.

At first there were some white mules in the pack trains, but they were too easy to see, even by moonlight, so they stopped using them. A few horses are used also in some outfits, and several were discovered with the brand of the Italian royal family.

When the mules arrived from Sardinia, the most pressing problem was to get them shod. It took days to scour the country and dig up shoes for them. Then horseshoe nails became the dilemma. They finally found enough racetrack nails to do the job.

In emergencies some pack trains were sent up the mountain in the daytime, but it is dangerous business for the Germans kept the trail pretty well plastered with shells.

Luckily there have been no casualties on the trail in my outfit, but seven Italians were wounded in the mule park in a dive-bombing.

The Italians are very nervous about

bombs and shells, and any night the heavy shells start dropping too close to the mule park, the Italians disappear into their foxholes quick like a magician. And you never can find them in the dark to rout them out again.

The men fared much better than the mules, for unfortunately a mule doesn't know about foxholes. My outfit alone has lost 50 mules from shell-fire and bombing, and another hundred are sick from overwork and too much riding around in trucks.

The Italian mule outfit is under two Italian lieutenants, who wear plumed Tyrolian hats and look sort of romantic. Neither speaks English, but in the American Army you only have to yell twice to find a soldier who speaks Italian, so the little group has an interpreter. Everybody has to depend upon him so that he practically runs the show.

He is Cpl. Anthony Savino, of 262 14th Avenue, Newark, N. J. His job would drive anybody crazy. The Italians are not quick and efficient like we are, and about the time Savino gets a pack train all arranged, everything

collapses and chaos takes place. Then he catches it from both sides.

The officer in charge of this mule pack is Lieut. Harmon W. Williams of Flint, Michigan. He was named after General Harmon who won fame in the last war. Some nights Lieutenant Williams is up till 3 A.M. seeing that all the skinners get back down the mountain. Other nights he gets to bed as early as 7 P.M. He sleeps whenever he can, for it's an unusual night when he isn't routed out to get some emergency supplies to the top.

He sleeps in a stone cowshed along with a dozen of his enlisted men. He was an undertaker in civil life, an anti-tank man in the Army, and a mule nurse just for the moment.

Cpl. Savino takes his interpreting job so seriously he even talks about it in his sleep. I slept in the same cowshed with the boys, and one night I happened to wake up about 3 A.M. and I heard Savino saying, "Well, if we can't use them as interpreters, let's make guides out of them."

He thought that was pretty funny when I told him, because he had never known that he talked in his sleep.





WIRESMEN GETTING COMMUNICATIONS INSTALLED. THE FARM YARD IS A GOOD PLACE. HAY INSURES COMFORTABLE BED.



DOUGHBOYS, digging fighting holes in an Italian vineyard, pause to watch intently as unidentified planes come into view.

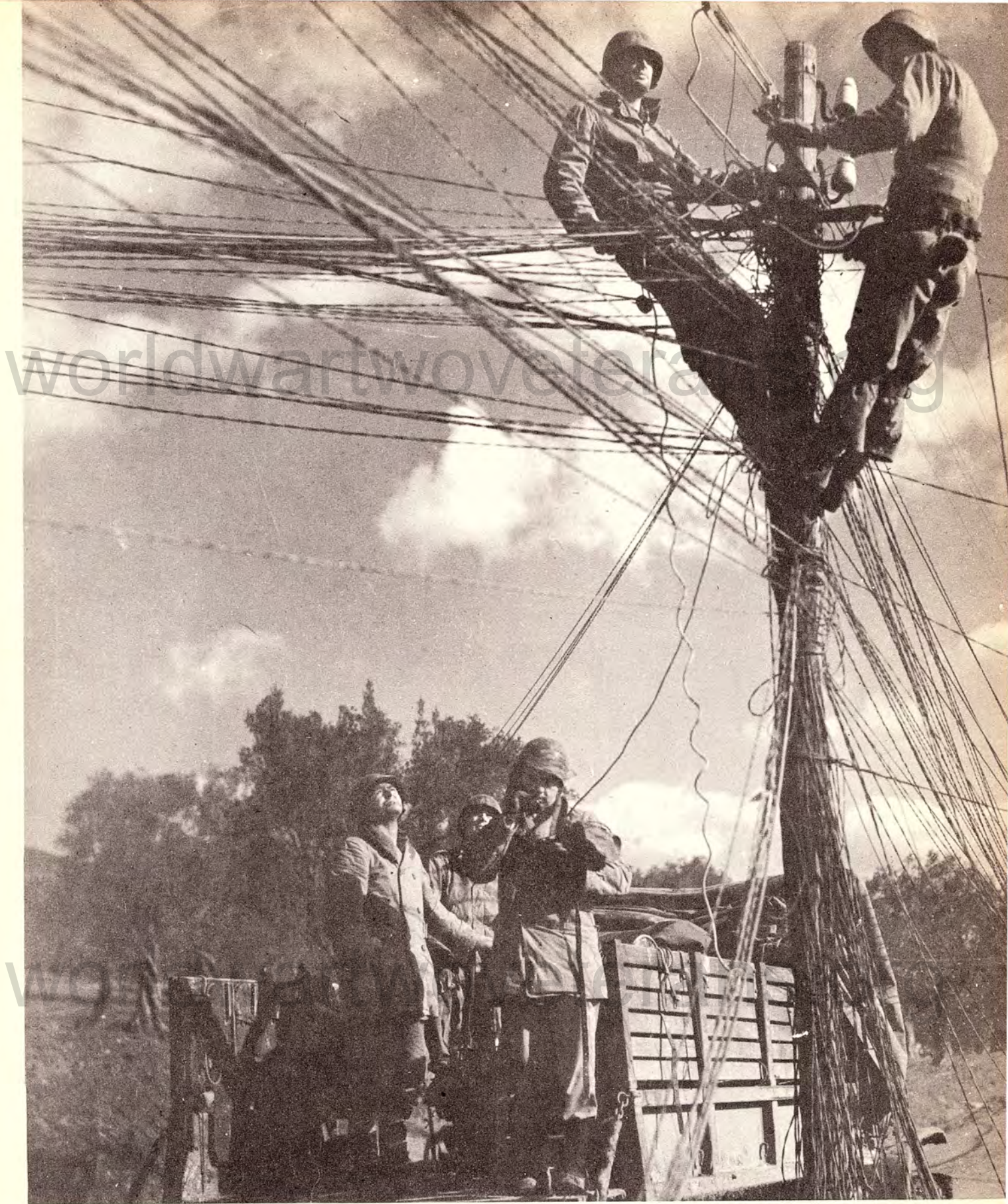
'IKE' VISITS



General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commanding the Allied Forces in the Mediterranean, came to look over the Liri Valley after the fall of San Pietro. From a vantage point, General Walker points toward Cassino and the hills the Germans are defending ahead. Shortly thereafter, General Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Allied Commander in preparation for the invasion of Northern France.



THINKING OF HOME, four 36th QM men figured out the mileage to Austin by way of Rome and Berlin. Left to right: Pvt. Clint G. Sedberry, Cpl. Melvin A. Cox, Cpl. Sam M. Douglas, and Cpl. Morris D. Wallis.



MESSAGE THROUGH

Wiremen from Battalion, Regiment, and Division shared with infantrymen the hardships of the bitter winter campaign. They worked untiringly over long periods to insure the best possible communication. Roadless mountains had to be crossed with wire, streams had to be forded and the elements endured. Lines that took hours to lay would suddenly be severed by enemy artillery. These had to be repaired in the pitch-black of night, or under observation during the day.



81MM MORTAR CREW IN ACTION DURING THE RAPIDO RIVER STRUGGLE. MEN WEAR POPULAR WINTER COMBAT TROUSERS.



PIG STY

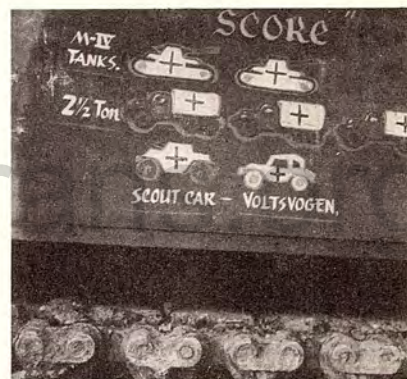
This thick-walled pig sty served as the 143rd's message center while the fight was being carried across the river. Drinking K-ration coffee is Pfc. Ralph G. Simpson, Cincinnati, Ohio, while Pvt. William Munves, Bronx, N. Y., answers the phone.

MEDICS

A group of litter bearers take cover from sniper fire 700 yards from the Rapido. With the casualty toll exceeding that of all other previous engagements, the medics had their toughest assignment here.

SCORE

One Cannon Company platoon kept score of the damage it was doing: two Mark IV tanks, three two and one-half ton trucks, one scout car and one volkswagon. Close-up right is painted on the rear of a self-propelled mount.



S/SGT. THOMAS E. McCALL, infantryman of the 143rd, won the Division's seventh Congressional Medal of Honor for gallantry during the Rapido River crossing. Leading his machine gun section across muddy, exposed terrain and through barbed wire entanglements, Sgt. McCall knocked out two enemy machine gun nests and was captured while assaulting a third.



JUST 100 YARDS FROM THE TREACHEROUS RAPIDO, INFANTRYMEN TAKE COVER BEHIND ROCK-CONSTRUCTED STABLE.

THE RAPIDO RIVER

On the dark nights of January 20 and 21, the Division, in an attack designed by the Corps and Army Commanders to gain control of the Liri Valley and outflank Cassino, crossed the swift-flowing Rapido River. The Germans anticipated the assault and they were ready.

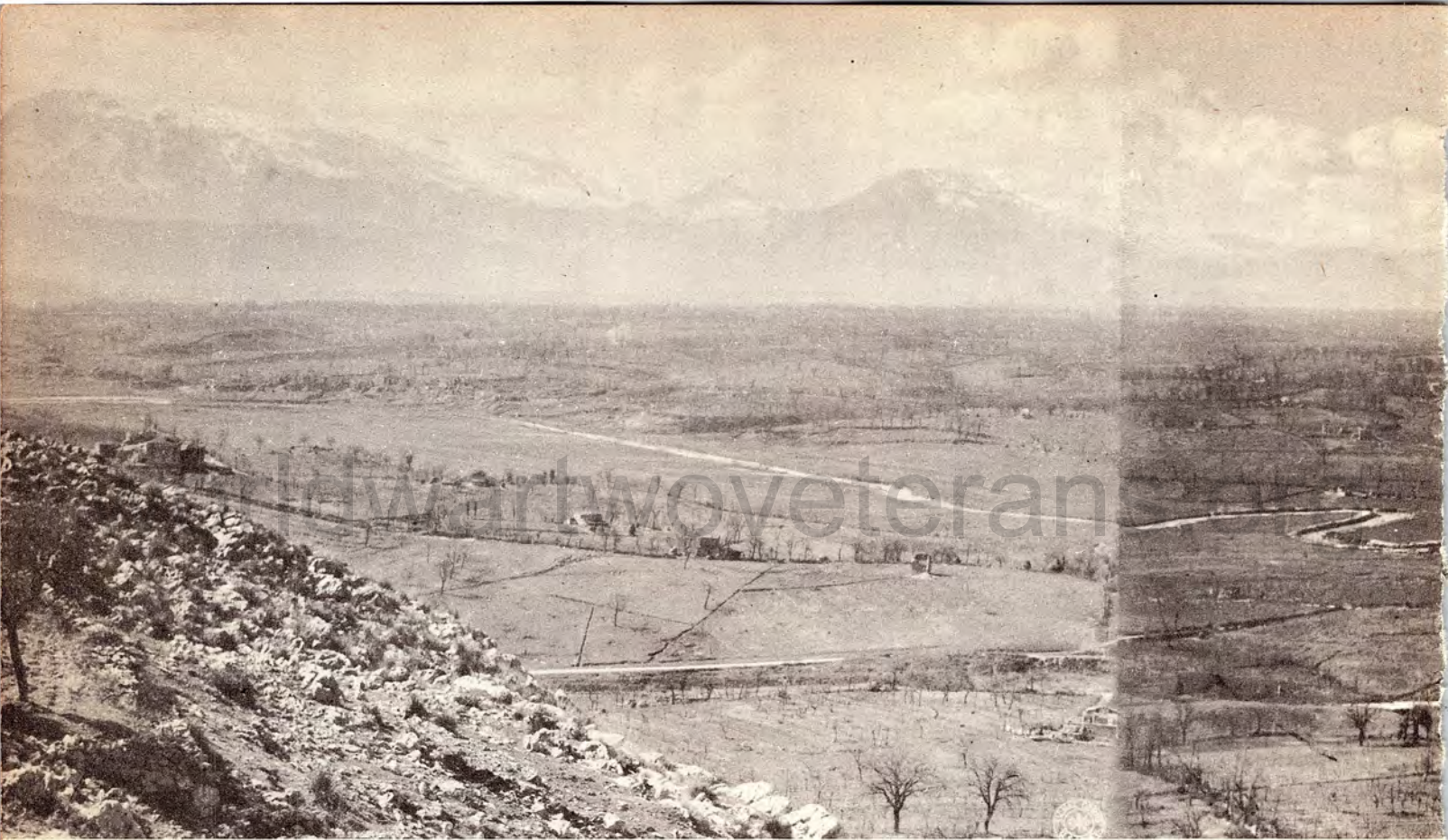
After a murderous struggle the initial bridgehead, slight holdings a few hundred yards inland on the flat western side, became untenable with supply and follow-up impossible. Weary, exhausted, with ammunition gone, men fought bravely until the weight of German counterattacks forced a decision. The Rapido had been a failure.

New York *Times* correspondent C. L. Sulzberger cabled this report:

“When the 36th Division sought valiantly and vainly to establish itself across the icy Rapido River, it suffered

losses that look heavy to American military history. It was the boys of the 36th who stumbled through night-screened minefields with assault boats on their shoulders and down to the Rapido—suffering immensely en route. It was the boys of the 36th who crawled across a thickly-iced rail-less bridge over a bloody little stream and fell under a hail of gun, mortar and automatic fire in the gallant but vain attempt to establish a bridgehead.

“They call the 36th a ‘hard luck’ division because it has never had an easy assignment. This writer saw one of its battalions when what was left of it clambered back across the Rapido. They were tired but they remained, in essence, fresh-faced boys from Texas. Their eyes mirrored no peace.”



THE RAPIDO RIVER WINDS ACROSS THE LIRI VALLEY

This panoramic view from Mt. Trocchio looks out onto the broad Liri Valley. The Rapido River running generally north-to-south from Cassino to the Garigliano River formed the German line of defense blocking entrance into the Liri Valley. It was across this open ground that the 36th Division stabbed vainly in an attempt to secure a bridgehead and capture San Angelo during the two-day period after nightfall of January 20 1944.



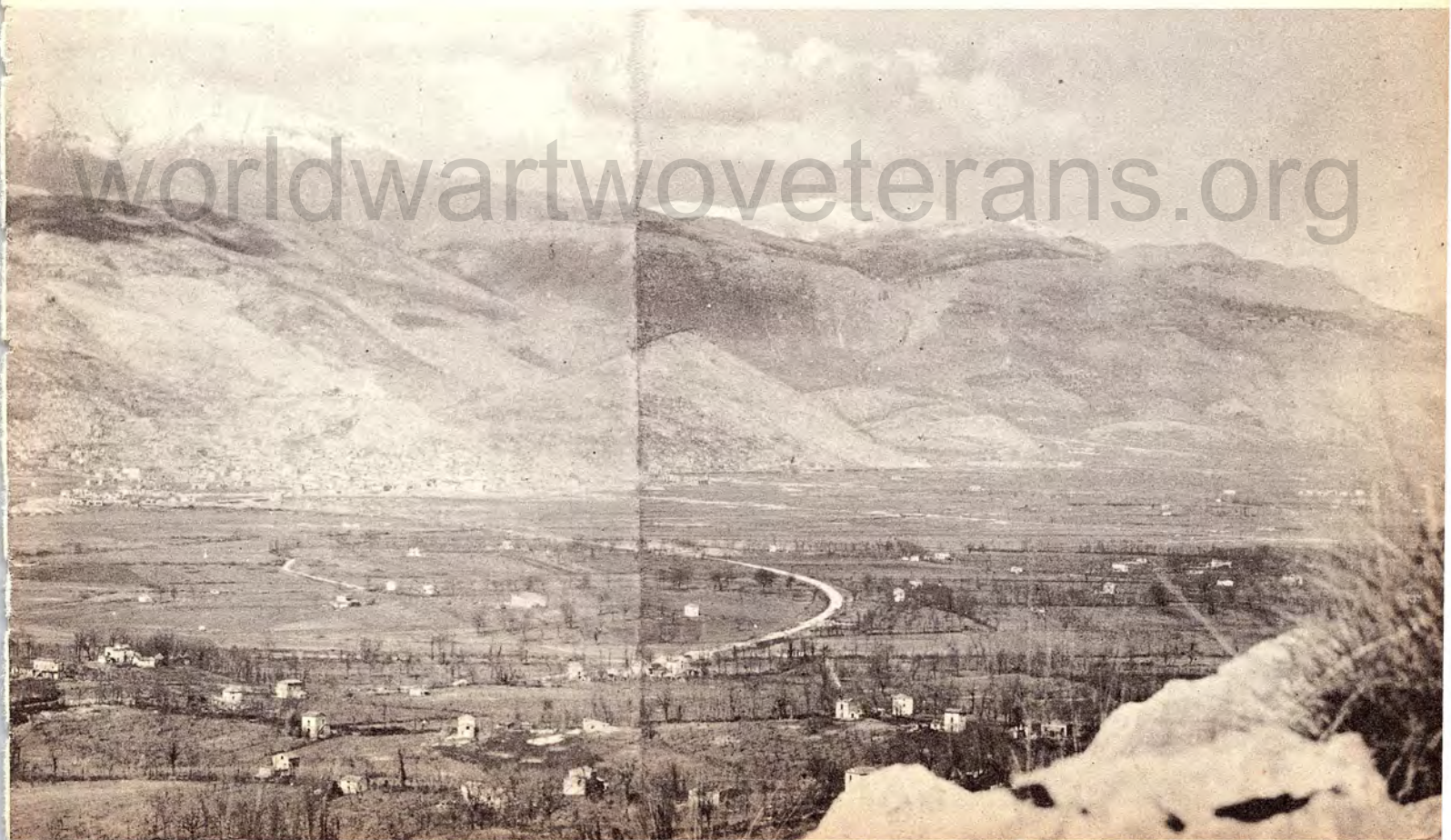


Although only about 15 yards wide, the Rapido River was a swift-running, mountain-fed gorge. Its steep banks drop off sharply, and in the center its depth is often 15 feet. A haze of chemical smoke hung over the valley during the operation.

The attack of the 141st Infantry crossed at the S bend, seen in both views top and bottom (bottom view is a continuation of the top). The ruins of San Angelo along the Rapido edge can be seen in the upper left. The 143rd Infantry attempted to cross farther south, out of the pic-

ture on the left. Those men who succeeded in crossing bore the brunt of the Germans' vicious mortar and artillery fire while trapped in the low flatland. German counterattacks in strength during afternoon of the second day were beaten off until ammunition ran out. The sound of American weapons gradually faded into the night. A few survivors swam the icy waters to return.

Cassino, German stronghold at the base of Mt. Cairo, which the Rapido attack purposed to outflank, is in the lower right view.



THE RAPIDO RIVER CROSSING

"Were you at the Rapido?" An affirmative answer draws a respectful hush, a reverent understanding. The name resounds with blood, that of the men known only to be "many," who became casualty in that fateful operation. Few seek to inquire what happened there, because the effort, however great, did not succeed. Why it did not is clear in the recount of the two-day nightmare.

The fall of Mount Trocchio, last height before Cassino, had pressed the Germans back onto a prepared defense line anchored at Cassino and blocking entrance to the Liri Valley along the Rapido River. Here the Germans were strong and alert, favored on the defense by the winter weather, by the terrain—flat, open soggy ground. Not only did they withstand the assault of the 36th but major bids by the British on the left, and the 34th on the right during this same period were likewise repulsed. They held that line for five months until the mighty May offensive was launched.

PHYSICAL ODDS GREAT

The two-pronged 36th Division assault aimed at the capture of San Angelo, across the Rapido, and the establishment of a bridgehead. The attack was carefully prepared in detail and preceded by reconnaissance patrolling, the spotting of bridging equipment, the clearing of lanes through known minefields to the crossing site, and a plan of strong artillery support.

But the physical odds were too great. This was apparent before the attack to all experienced soldiers.

Thirty minutes before 2000 hours of January 20, fourteen battalions of artillery signalled the opening preparation. But this did not hinder the enemy from sensing the attack and returning the fire in volume. Dense fog blacked out the night completely. As both 141st and 143rd infantrymen approached the crossing sites, the story was the same: Incoming artillery and mortar fire, men moving over reportedly cleared lanes stumbling upon German anti-personnel mines, many casualties, shell and mine fragments ripping and rendering useless the rubber boats being carried for the crossing, guides losing their way or taking the wrong turn in the pitch black, precious time consumed in repeated reorganization. In one company alone, the company commander was killed, the second-in-command wounded, and thirty men were casualties before reaching the river.

At the water's edge German machine guns and small arms close to the shore spattered into first elements attempting to cross. Boats overturned in the swift waters or were punctured when the mortars fell. A brigadier-general rooted out an attached bridge-building party from fox-holes one and one-half miles from the crossing site where they belonged.

Just prior to daylight small forces of both regiments got across on makeshift bridges. The 1st Battalion of the 143rd found itself pocketed in interlocking German machine gun

fire with the river to their backs. Then enemy tanks opened fire from San Angelo. To escape being wiped out completely, the battalion commander ordered his men back.

The bulk of A and B companies, 141st, dug in and stayed on the west bank throughout daylight of the 21st. But no communication could be had with them and no follow-up could occur over the exposed river site during the day.

The Corps commander ordered the attack for the Rapido bridgehead to be resumed by a daylight assault. There would be no surprise, now. Germans, too, were bringing up reinforcements, and calling down continuous fires upon the river areas.

First set for 1400, the late arrival of more boats delayed the time until 1600. The 143rd Infantry 1st and 3rd Battalions again jumped off at that time. Though the river was smoked heavily for the attack, the Germans again countered with strong defensive fires. Both battalions, with the exception of Company C, were over by 1830. Casualties were heavy: The 2nd Battalion moved across after midnight and reached the flank of the 3rd Battalion about 500 yards inland after daylight. Trapped in grazing German machine gun fire, a network of wired defensive positions, and under heavy concentrations of mortar and screaming meemies, the men were unable to make any headway. The 3rd Battalion reported running out of ammunition at 0900. Resupply from dumps along the river, established during the night, was made despite the blanket of enemy fire. The 1st Battalion, after the loss of its battalion commander and each rifle company leader, became badly disorganized. The gallantry of the 2nd and 3rd Battalion attempts to break through the German line was spent vainly. The attack was crippled and then driven back.

ALL BRIDGES DESTROYED

The second 141st Infantry attack had been delayed until after dark of the 21st. The extreme difficulties encountered the night before were identically repeated, but by daylight the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were over. Every possible effort to reorganize and continue the attack was made under the deadly curtain of German fire. Use of the river crossing was denied soon after daylight and gradually all foot bridges were destroyed. Supply and evacuation were impossible. Still, the men hung on.

Then at 1700 the Germans launched a heavy counter-blow, striking our forces simultaneously on three sides. Although ammunition supplies were already low—and there had been no resupply—the first German attack was repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy. Yet again, in half an hour, the attack was resumed. American fire, in constantly diminishing volume, was heard three hours longer. By then it was entirely German. But German machine pistols continued to speak against American resistance until midnight.

About fifty haggard 141st Infantrymen struggled back and swam the cold Rapido that evening.



FROM MOUNTAIN ROAD EN ROUTE TO SAN ELIA 142nd INFANTRYMEN SAW MT. CAIRO ACROSS THE RAPIDO VALLEY.

NORTH TO SAN ELIA SUDDEN SWITCH TO EXPLOIT FRENCH CROSSING OF RAPIDO

Throughout another long month the 36th encountered difficult, uphill fighting in the mountain masses north of Cassino. The enemy, his defensive positions anchored solidly in the hills as well as covering the valley approaches, resisted vigorously any offensive movement on our part. The weather, too, reached its coldest peak during February. Non-combat casualties exceeded those of battle.

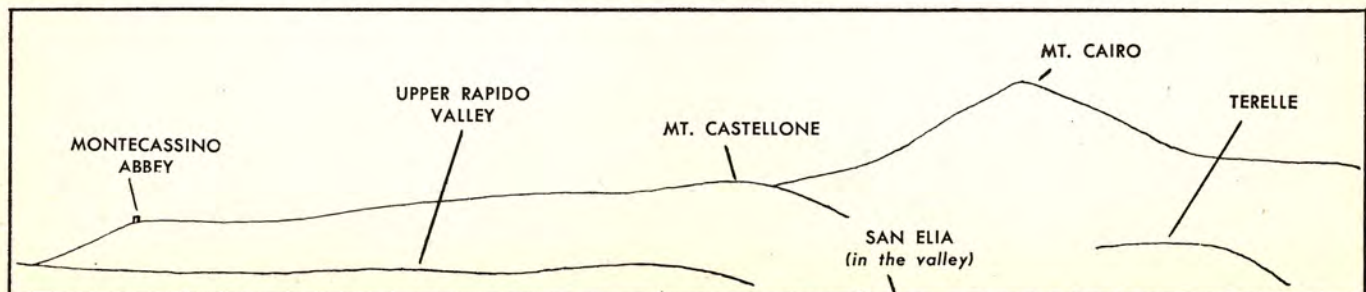
During the night of January 25, the 142nd Infantry, after being in reserve for the Rapido operation, was hurriedly switched to the San Elia sector north of Cassino. Here the French, after sweeping across rugged mountain country to the right of the Division and down into the San Elia Valley, had succeeded in making a limited crossing of the upper Rapido four miles north of Cassino. The mission of the 142nd was to widen this salient and bridgehead. At the same time elements of the 34th Division had gained a hold on a small knoll above the village of Cairo on the other side of the fordable part of the Rapido.

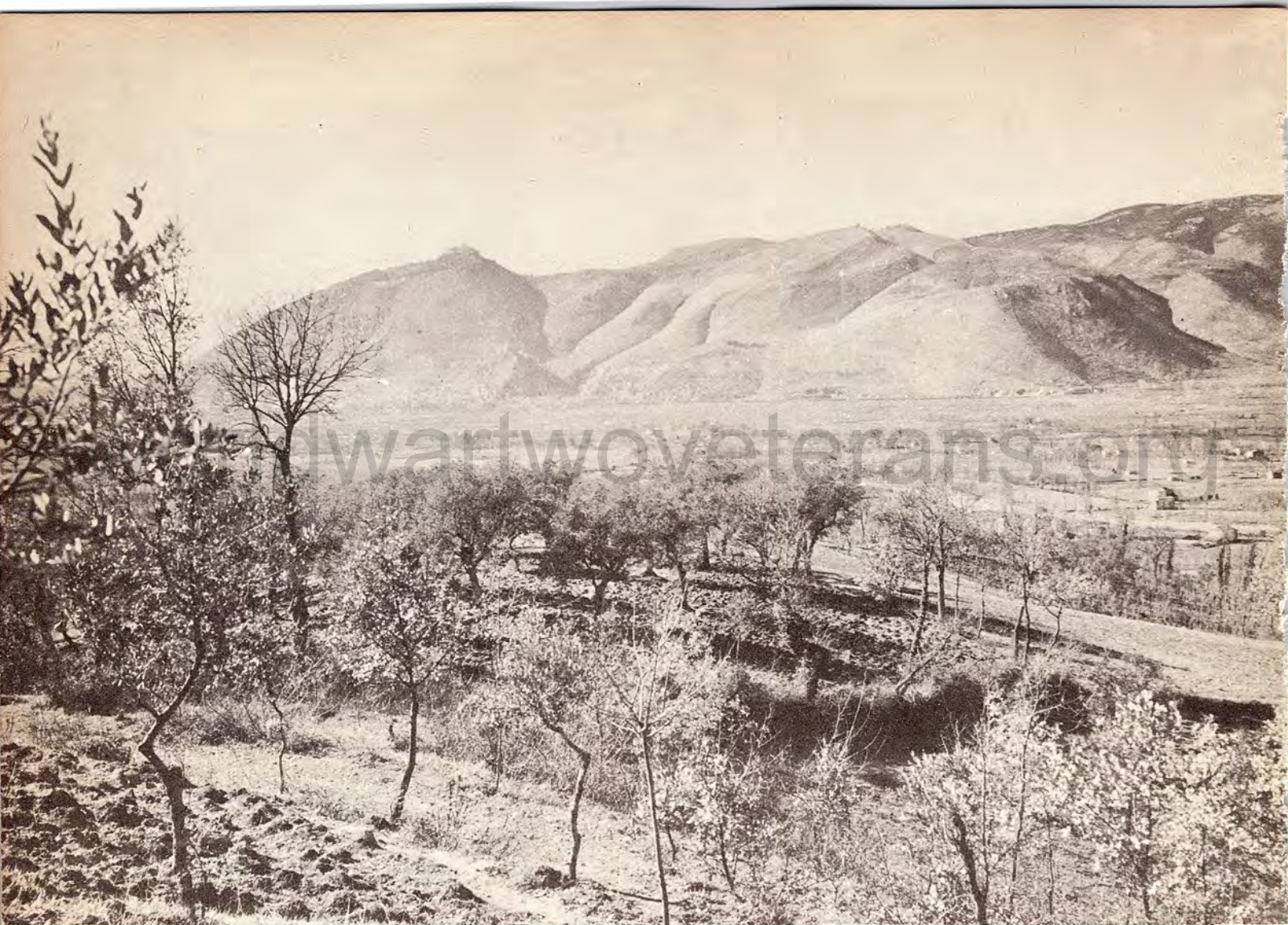
Enemy artillery enclosed this salient with devastating effect. From magnificent vantage points on Mt. Cairo and its lower slopes, and from white-topped heights on all

sides the Germans watched our every movement and followed through with fire.

The three battalions accomplished on successive nights the crossing of the Rapido at San Elia to reach assembly positions on the far side, after the first attempt by the 3rd Battalion was turned back by the intensity of enemy fire. The 3rd Battalion Commander, Major Rush S. Wells, was killed at the outset of the attack. Then the 2nd Battalion lashed out in an attack toward Terelle, a mountain town at the end of a single road winding up from the town of Cairo. German defenses were overrun in the uphill drive and an enemy aid station captured in its entirety before the advance was halted short of Terelle. Here a change in direction had been ordered. The 1st and 3rd Battalions then moved laterally across the slopes of Mt. Cairo, parallel to the main German defense line, preparatory to attacking Mt. Castellone. En route the troops learned that another unit had occupied the hill from the east without resistance. On orders to continue, the 142nd battalions moved up to take over and establish the defense of Mt. Castellone. Fresh optimism flared as a result of these real gains.

DIAGRAM TO EXPLAIN PHOTO ABOVE, SHOWING TERRAIN THAT FIGURED IN BATTLE FOR CASSINO AND LIRI VALLEY.





ACROSS THE RAPIDO VALLEY NORTH OF CASSINO RISES SNOW-CAPPED MT. CAIRO, WITH VILLAGE OF CAIRO AT BASE.

IN THE HILLS ABOVE CASSINO

Barren Mt. Castellone rises evenly from its base near the village of Cairo in the wide Rapido Valley. It is dominated by other heights, Mt. Corno and Mt. Cairo, yet it stood as the key commanding the bridgehead established by the Allies north of Cassino and centered in Cairo. Through Cairo, shelled with unceasing fury by the Germans, flowed practically all of our supplies, reinforcements, and the network of communications.

The 1st Battalion, 142nd Infantry, had set out to take Mt. Castellone, when it was learned by radio that a battalion of the 135th Infantry had occupied it. Orders followed to relieve the 135th, which had climbed the height from the east and had met little or no resistance in doing so. During a period of waiting, from February 4-10, the 3rd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, joined the 1st Battalion in the defense of Castellone while further offensive measures were planned. Elements of the 143rd and 141st also were switched to this general defense.

Enemy harassing fires were the chief threat to our posi-

tions. Time and again artillery crashed down into the valley and struck at the supply and CP installations in the Cairo vicinity. Four times in two days enemy aircraft darted in to drop their bombs.

After dark each night supplies were brought up by mule train from a dump near San Michele. It required 75 mules to supply one battalion each day.

In a blinding snowstorm on the morning of February 11, the 141st and 142nd Regiments attacked to the south to seize and hold Hill 468, a bowl-shaped plain on which stood another ancient abbey which the Germans had fortified. During the day fighting was intense but by nightfall friendly troops were reported within 50 yards of the abbey on 468. The weather throughout this operation was bitterly cold.

For the night the attackers were ordered to dig in and hold their close-in positions, though one of the lead battalions reported its strength a total of only 100 officers and men. Next day the Germans took the initiative on nearby



TERELLE IS IN HILLS TO RIGHT. MT. CASTELLONE IS PROMINENT ON LEFT OF MT. CAIRO. ABBEY (LEFT) STILL STANDS.

Castellone ridge, forestalling further attacks for the abbey.

On February 12, beginning at 0400 and lasting until 0610, the enemy laid down an artillery concentration which exceeded any the Division had ever experienced. Nebelwerfer fire from the Germans' six-barrelled rocket mortar came over in volleys of sixes, one after the other. The barrage was directed over a large front and was followed by a strong German attempt to retake Mt. Castellone. The 143rd Infantry with attached troops defended the Castellone Hill mass: 1st Battalion, 142nd on Mt. Castellone peak; 3rd Battalion, 143rd guarding Hill 706; 2nd Battalion, 141st defending the southern slopes of Hill 706 to Hill 465, and the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 143rd Infantry in reserve to the south.

On Castellone, two battalions of the enemy worked up the slope under cover of the concentration, coming in amongst our positions at daylight when the artillery lifted. A critical five-hour battle ensued, as, with hand grenades, machine guns and rifles—some of which were discovered frozen in the morning cold—men of the 1st Battalion, 142nd, drove off the German bid.

Had Mt. Castellone fallen, the entire Allied defensive

line in the hills across the Rapido would have been seriously threatened. Late in the afternoon reorganization was completed. No ground had been lost.

On February 13 a group of 15 German medics made request of a truce from 0900 to 1200 hours, February 14, in order to evacuate their dead. The request was approved and at the appointed time in the morning the Germans came forward.

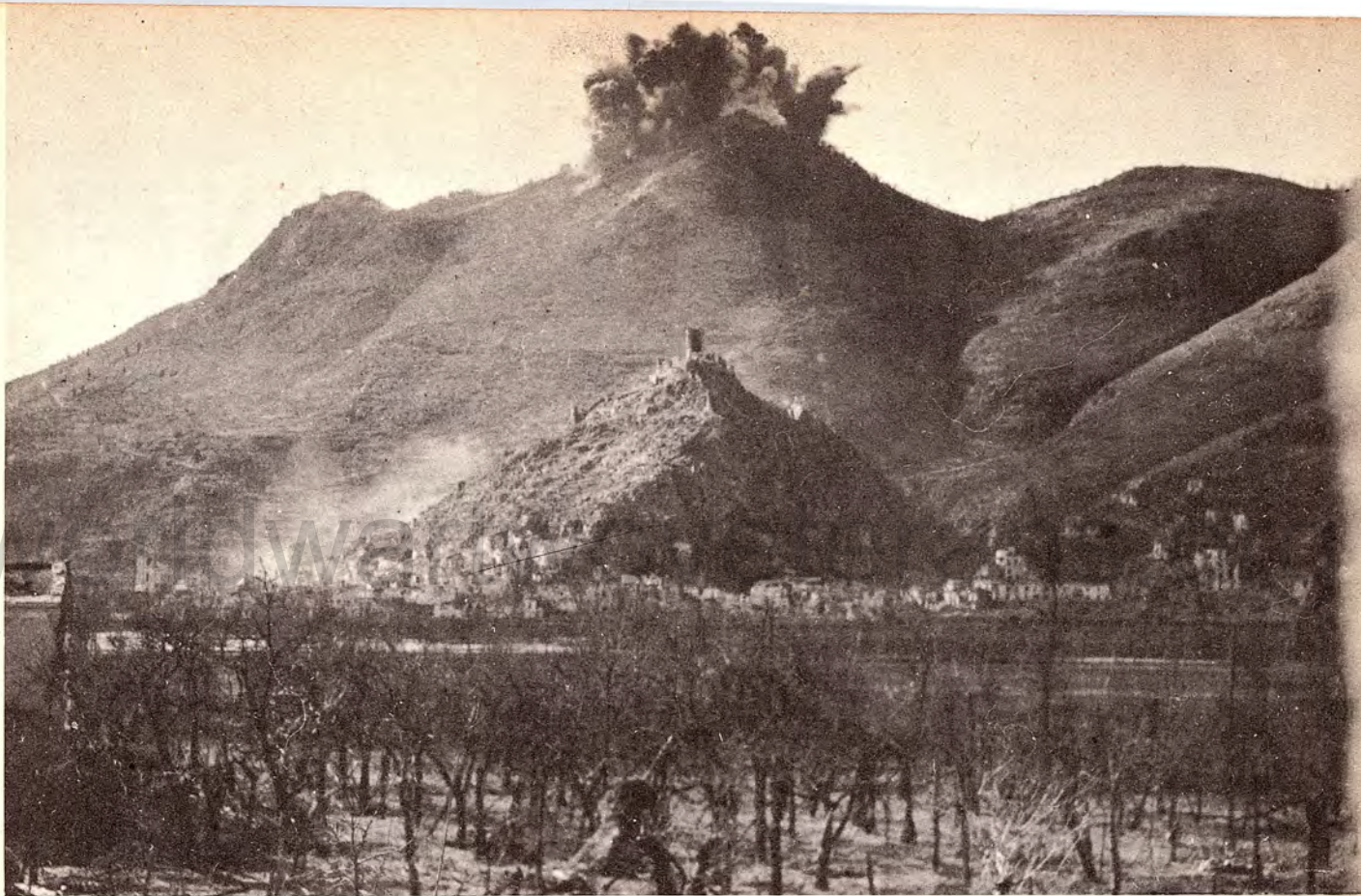
To keep them from walking into our positions our men carried down one hundred and forty-three German dead to the draw at the base of the hill. The Germans asked for a similar period the next day in order to complete the evacuation, which was taking longer than expected. The Commanding General, II Corps, refused this request but granted an extension of time to allow the truce to run until 1430.

Action in this sector continued with little incident until the Division was finally relieved on February 26 by French units and elements of the 88th Division, then new to the line. These "forty days and forty nights" along the Rapido River and on the hills above Cassino had nearly halved the Division's combat strength. It was a tired 36th that was leaving the line going into a rest area near Piedmonte.



WINTER OBSTACLE

Lofty Mt. Cairo was white-hooded throughout the winter months and for the greater part of the spring. At the base lies the town of Cairo, hub of communications for our troops in the mountains. You are looking across "Purple Heart Valley." Along Cairo's bordering ridges, 36th Division men sometimes reversed their parkas so that the white interior would blend with the snow.



THE FIRST OF THE HEAVY BOMBS BROUGHT BY THE FLYING FORTRESSES STRIKES THE ABBEY ON MONTECASSINO HILL.



MONTECASSINO BOMBED

The Allies had procrastinated too long. The fact remained that the Germans were using high ground in vicinity of the 1,400 year-old Benedictine Abbey on Montecassino as artillery observation posts. Because of them, American men died daily.

"If we have to choose between destroying a famous building and sacrificing our own men, then our men's lives count infinitely more, and the buildings must go," decreed General Eisenhower.

In mid-February 226 Fortresses, Liberators, Mitchells, the Marauders flew over the snow-capped mountains, and with terrifying precision dropped their bombs on the monastery. From neighboring Castellone Ridge men of the 36th watched excitedly as the great billows of smoke and flame consumed the abbey.

By the next day only one small section remained standing. But even after the bombing, Allied offensive attacks fared no better.

OUR ALLIES AT CASSINO

Soldiers of varied race and uniform fought side by side in the Cassino sector. Men of an Indian Punjab regiment (left) semi-circle around their fire. Several of the punjabi have removed their shoes and are warming their feet as a precaution against trench foot. On the right French Guoms (North Africans) bring their mules down the trail in a blinding snow storm. Turban and blanket-garbed Guoms—their costumes looked like bathrobes—were feared most by the Germans because of their dexterity with knives. On patrol action they frequently brought back warm German ears.

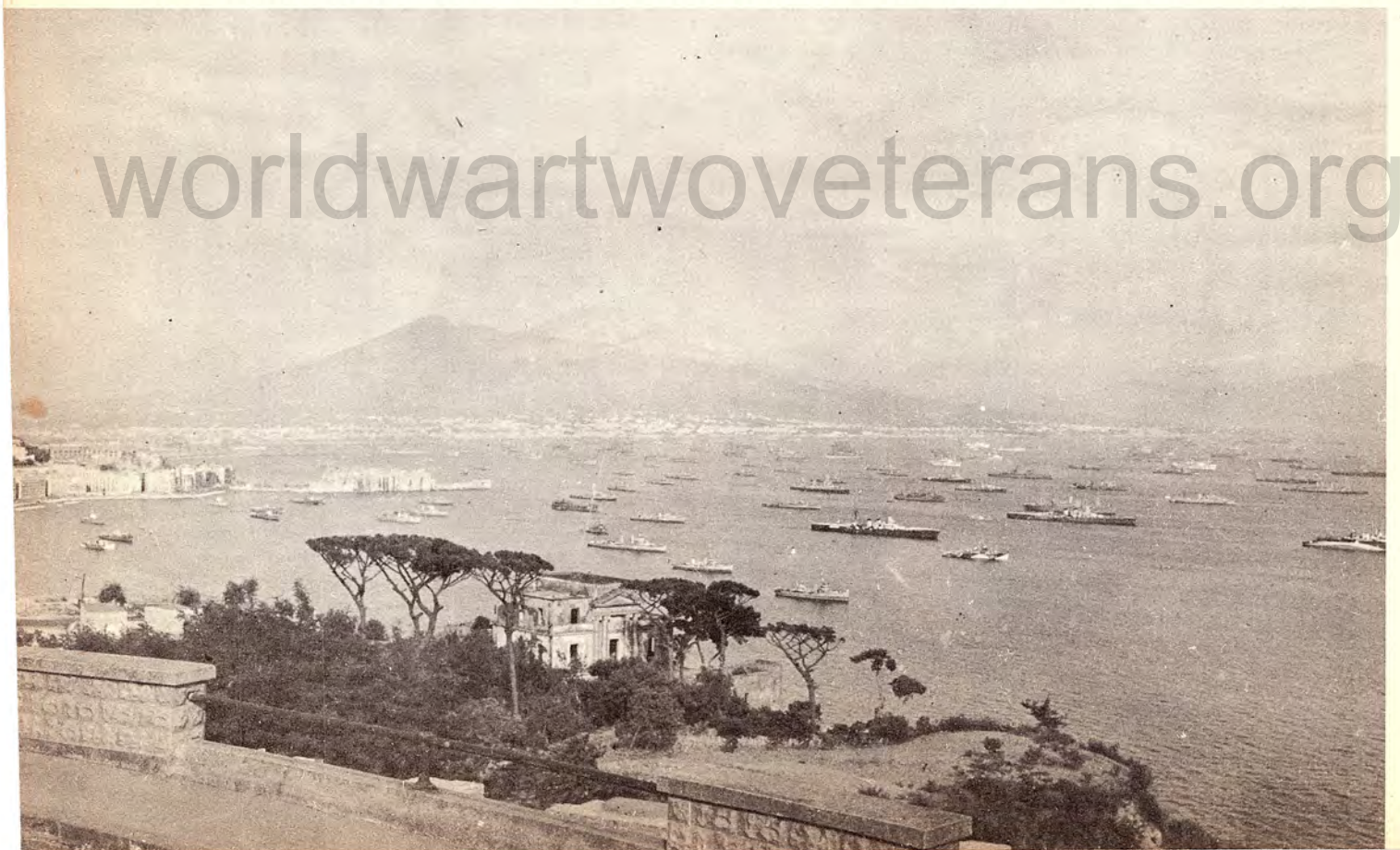




ONE OF THE MOST FREQUENTED spots on the Via Roma is the Galleria Umberto. In the interior are the more exclusive jewelry, painting, and wine shops. Bombing severely damaged the Galleria's glass dome. *above.* Naples street scene shows some modern shops.



HOW URGENTLY THIS FINE PORT WAS NEEDED CAN BE SEEN AS HUNDREDS OF VESSELS MASS FOR RIVIERA INVASION.



VIA ROMA

For eight months of the Italian campaign Naples, disfigured and dirty, remained the only major city in Italy to be liberated, the only playland for soldiers on combat recess. Here American troops came to sightsee, shop for gifts, drink wine, and meet Italian girls.

Using the leading thoroughfare of Naples for his title, Pfc. Jon Forte, 36th Division bandsman, wrote a song that became a favorite with the troops—"Somewhere on Via Roma."

"I was alone in Napoli
 And there it was, it had to be!
 She said her name was Angeline,
 She was indeed a lovely dream.
 She sang of love when hearts were free
 Softly she whispered words of love to me . . .
 Somewhere on Via Roma
 I left my heart that day
 She said 'My heart will go away.
 Doughboys never come to stay."

"I stole a kiss without delay,
 Somewhere on Via Roma.
 In Napoli, where songs are of stars above!
 Sweet Signorina, I'll come to you, my love
 Someday on Via Roma,
 When the world is free again,
 I pray that we will meet again,
 Somewhere on Via Roma."

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THOUSANDS OF PRE-WAR TOURISTS TRAVELLED TO ITALY TO SEE NAPLES' MAGNIFICENT HARBOR AND MT. VESUVIUS.

NAPOLI

Naples, Italy's principal port and third largest city, was the first important objective of the Allied invasion. After reconstruction, its harbor was necessary to an adequate flow of supplies to the men at the fighting front. Subjected to Allied bombing and shelling during the entire previous summer, Naples became vulnerable to the German Luft-

waffe shortly after its liberation. Enemy attacks on the harbor continued throughout the following year. The soldiers and uniforms of all the United Nations could be seen any day on a walk up Via Roma, for Naples was the main gateway to the Italian Theater. The Red Cross club and San Carlo opera were big attractions.

IN MORE SECLUDED SECTIONS of the city, white-baked Mediterranean villas escaped effects of intensive bombing and shelling.

NARROW STREETS, battered buildings, and ragged natives, however, were a much more common sight.





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BELCHING BILLOWS OF LAVA DUST AND SMOKE VIOLENTLY SURGED SKYWARD AS VESUVIUS ERUPTED IN MARCH, 1944.

VESUVIUS ERUPTS

While the Division was being rehabilitated in the Madaloni area, Mt. Vesuvius spurted forth its most violent eruption in 72 years. During windy March evenings GI's stood in awe, watching the volcano spout its flame-colored lava out into the night.

Sulphurous lava enveloped San Sebastiano at the foot

of Mt. Vesuvius and threatened the entire surrounding coast. Italian natives became panic-stricken. They had endured the ravages of war, the desperation of hunger. Now they stretched their hands to heaven in protest of the eruption. Allied troops and medical supplies were pressed into emergency service.

POMPEII, buried under molten lava from Mt. Vesuvius in 79 A.D., was a highlighted point of interest for all servicemen. Here a guide explains Pompeii history.

IN THIS AMPHITHEATRE many centuries ago, condemned prisoners were placed at the mercy of wild beasts to provide sport for the people of Pompeii. The city was unearthed during the 19th century.





ROYAL PALACE AT CASERTA WAS BEGUN DURING REIGN OF CHARLES III. ARC-LIKE WING ON LEFT WAS REST CENTER.

CASERTA REST CAMP

Weary and muddy GI's climbed on trucks. They were going back to rest, to be away from the continual nightmare which had been plaguing them during the long winter months of the Italian campaign—back to the town of Caserta, the "Versailles of Naples." Situated seventeen miles northeast of the great Italian port, Caserta was best known for its Royal Palace which dated back to the year 1752.

The Palace served as the hub of the Fifth Army rest center. The adjoining barracks, which lately housed Fascist airmen now provided quarters for the GI's. Operas were held in the Palace theatre, and other marble-col-

umed rooms became servicemen's clubs.

For five days the men lived in this haven. They slept as long as they wished, had hot showers and a clean set of clothes, ate hot meals three times a day, and were given the best entertainment available. PX rations were substantial. But what the men welcomed most was relief from the nervous tension synonymous with battle, the high-strung feeling that wears down morale.

During most of the winter months, with Naples "off-limits" because of epidemics, Caserta gained its place as the leading rest center.





A CASTLE STILL STANDS on its rocky ledge overlooking the centuries-old, walled town of Alife.



CHARACTERISTIC OF MADDALONI was the mud. Pfc. Joe T. Lamb finds the company street tough sledding. It snowed, too!

BEHIND-THE-LINES INTERVAL

Late in February, the Division was relieved in the Cassino sector. Other than a few days in January, this was the first rest for T-Patchers since November 15. Replacements and refitting were sorely needed. At Piedmonte and Maddaloni, the Division engaged in an extensive program to weld together another strong fighting team. Terrain near Forino provided excellent ground for mountain training, while Qualiano's dust-covered turf added another realistic phase. Days of drilling were broken frequently by reviews and award ceremonies. It was a fast-moving "Texas" Division that reentered the line in May.

130 DIVISION MEN WERE DECORATED IN MASS CEREMONY AT MADDALONI AREA. SGT. KELLY RECEIVED HIS CMH.





36th DIVISION ARTILLERY HELPED SOFTEN OBJECTIVES OF 85th DIVISION INFANTRY NEAR MINTURNO AS BIG PUSH BEGAN.

MAY OFFENSIVE

The night of May 11 marked the beginning of a full-scale Allied offensive in Italy, designed to tear down the last barriers before Rome. For the opening phase, an attack against the strong Gustav Line covering Cassino, all Allied artillery

BEING BRIEFED before taking off to spot artillery targets are pilots: *L. to R.*: S/Sgt. Raymond H. Porter, Lt. Artie T. Svoboda, Lt. Carl A. Bergman, Lt. Wallace T. Higgins.

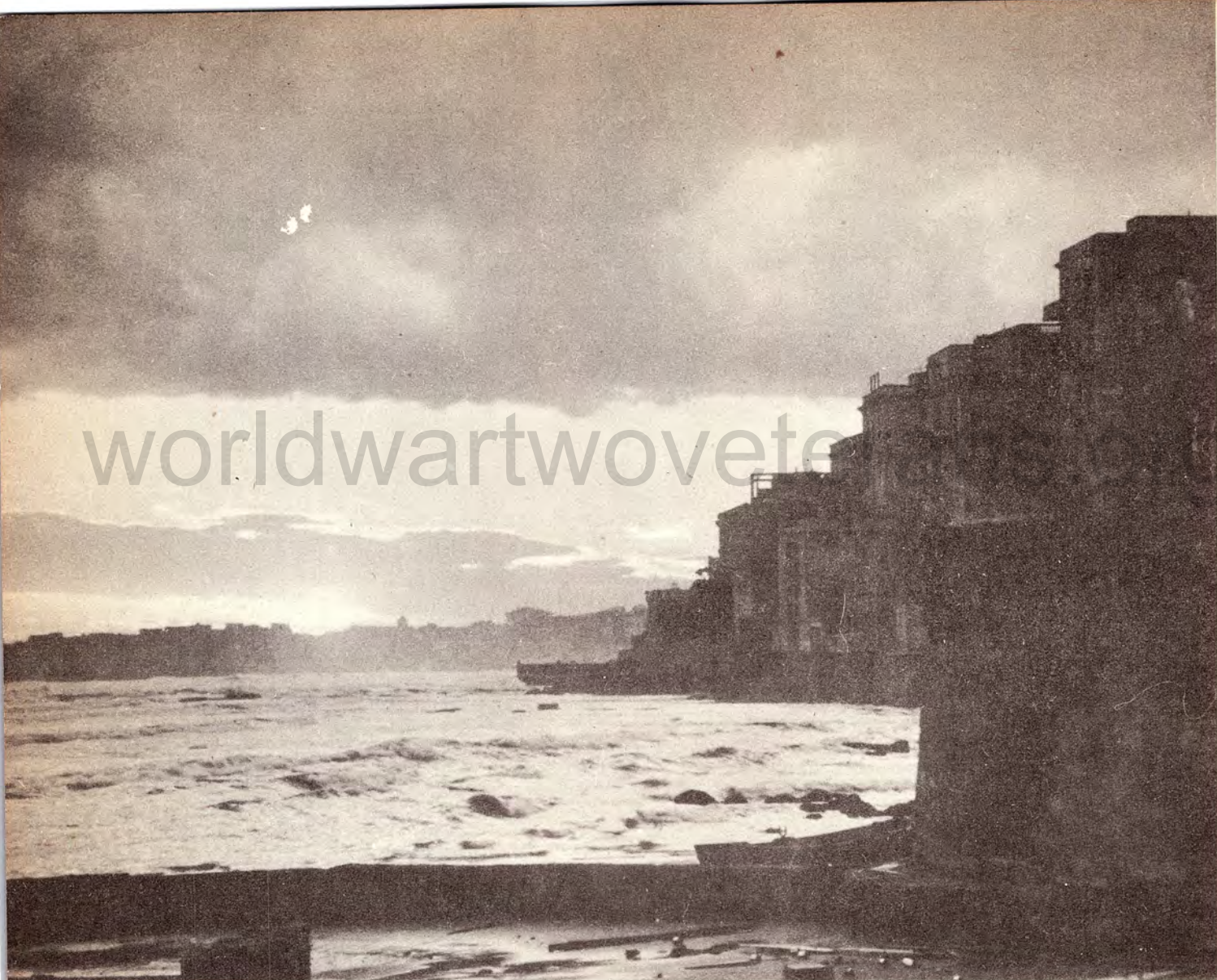


that could be spared was used. The four battalions of the 36th were sent into the Minturno sector to support the 85th Division, while dummy pieces were set up in the rear area at Qualiano to mislead the enemy.

At 2300 a heavy barrage signalled the opening of the attack; surprise was complete and initial advances were scored. Hard fighting ensued for several days but by the 17th, the left side of the enemy's defense line had been breached and the success of the attack assured. With its mission completed on this front, Division Artillery returned to Qualiano to await shipment to Anzio where the second phase was soon to get underway.

Upon arrival at the Beachhead, two battalions, the 131st and 155th, were immediately sent to the 1st Special Service Force attacking on the right flank of the beachhead. The 132nd and 133rd prepared to lay down their fires for the 3rd Division whose objective was Cisterna.

The Beachhead breakout was launched at 0730, May 23, with only slight progress reported the first day. Continued strong pressure on the Germans during the second day forced the fall of Cisterna. Beyond Cisterna, Cori, too, was taken. The enemy ring of steel which had enclosed the Allied forces was broken. The 36th, in reserve during the first days of the offensive, was committed May 27 before Velletri. Division artillery units then returned to their respective combat teams.



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NIGHT CRADLES A TYRRHENIAN SUNSET OVER ANZIO HARBOR. THE BEACHHEAD WAS QUIET WHEN THE 36th CAME IN.

ANZIO

When Fifth Army attacks in the south met with assured success, the 36th was promptly switched to the beachhead at Anzio. There, where a bitter stalemate had lasted from mid-January, preparations were underway for a powerful attack to break out and link up with the forces moving up from the south.

The Division sailed from Pozzuoli near Naples beginning on the 18th of May. Its first bivouac was in a wooded area east of Nettuno. Though traffic and army routine

TROOPS AT ANZIO pass a knocked out M4 tank and a spot where some of the heaviest fighting had taken place.

within the confining perimeter seemed normal, troops and headquarters were both living mole-like, underground. Enemy artillery was light and had been for the preceding two weeks. If notorious "Anzio Annie," the big German railroad gun, dropped in during this time it was not reported. The "Texas" Division, in reserve for the opening attack on May 23, followed up through Cisterna and entered the line at the approach to Rome astride the road to Velletri.

CISTERNA, once one of Italy's loveliest resorts, was badly battered in the struggle that ended the four-month-old Anzio beachhead.



VELLETRI

The last barrier to an Allied entry of Rome loomed ahead—a line pinned on Velletri and Valmontone. The 34th and 45th were attacking west of Velletri while the town itself was under siege by the 36th.

On May 27, the 36th was committed to form a line astride Highway 7 at a point three miles northwest of Cisterna. The original plan called for the 141st to swing around to the east and the 143rd to attack Velletri frontally. Meanwhile, the 142nd followed in Division reserve.

For several days the enemy held fast to his positions against repeatedly strong attacks. West of Velletri, neither the 34th nor the 45th had been able to make any decisive gains while the 143rd had accomplished very little in its assault. However, the 141st on the east succeeded in severing the Velletri-Valmontone road and had swung around to the north. Here were grounds for a new plan, submitted by General Walker twice to higher headquarters before it was accepted.

When it was, only a minimum of time remained in which to carry it out. Attack orders were issued at 1630. The Regiment selected for the mission, the 142nd, had to move twenty miles by motor in order to get into position for the jump-off that same evening.

The night of the 30th was to break the lock before Rome, Col. G. E. Lynch's 142nd delivering the first blow, the most important phase. Under cover of darkness it was to pass through the 141st and infiltrate deep into enemy territory getting up on Mt. Artemisio behind Velletri.

At 2255, under the pale light of a new moon, the 2nd Battalion led off and by 0130 had crossed the Velletri-Valmontone highway. On their left, men heard the steady exchange of machine gun fire where the 141st was keeping the enemy engaged. Just as the first streaks of gray dawn broke through, the head of the column made its way up the slopes of the objective. There had been no opposition, not a shot fired.

It wasn't until 0800 that the enemy was awakened to what had occurred, and even then, he underestimated the strength of the infiltrating force. The 143rd, coming in behind, secured the east end of the Artemisio ridge while the 142nd, continuing on, hurriedly pushed to complete the hold on the entire hill. German counterattacks were fierce but without avail. The 141st, in the flatland, went on to attack Velletri. Velletri fell the following day. Hundreds of prisoners were rounded up. German dead lay among the ruins and loss of materiel to the enemy was extreme.

The German line before Rome now folded but there was further fighting over the Alban Hills and around Lake Albano. On Mt. Cavo, last resistance was offered by a group holed-up in a walled castle. The gateway to Rome was open.

ON THE STANDARDS OF THE 36TH PROUDLY INSCRIBE "VELLETRI"

(*STORY BY ERIC SEVAREID, CBS CORRESPONDENT)

The City of Velletri lay white and lovely, like a brooch of old gold, strung along the highway which held the town netstled in the breast of the Alban Hills. Velletri faces to the south; it is an ancient town, and Nero once sent his favorite mistress into exile there, but the tired and dirty men of the American 36th Division didn't know about that and they wouldn't have cared. They had been dug in the vineyards before the town for several days, harassed by snipers and machine guns around them and eighty-eights from the German batteries above Velletri. They had to take the town somehow, they had to break the highway-railway defense belt here because these slopes formed the last German breastworks defending Rome.

They were getting nowhere very fast; nor was the 34th, faced with the same problem just on their left. Further to the left, the 1st Armored was being badly shot up trying to get around the hills, and over to the right the 3rd and the Special Service "Commando" force were moving very slowly upon Valmontone in their attempt to skirt the hills on that side. Somehow we HAD to take the heights dominating this semi-circle of futility.

Early on May 31, we learned back at Anzio that a totally unexpected thing had occurred, that two regiments of the 36th had silently pulled back from their frontal assault, had circled around to the right by side roads and had climbed the two-thousand-foot height behind Velletri before the Germans were aware of it. It was a gamble. If the Germans could close their lines again, these men might be lost. If not, we had surely turned the key in the lock

of the great door barring us from the Roman plains and the capital. By noon, Carl Mydans of LIFE and I had tracked down the advance CP of the 36th, which consisted of several bearded officers squatting under a railroad trestle studying a map.

Major General Fred Walker, the Ohioan commanding these Texans, strode back and forth, speaking to no one. He had twice submitted this plan to Fifth Army before it was accepted. Hitherto the Italian summer campaign had been a straight-away, bludgeoning business of hammering frontally with our overwhelming superiority in guns, bombs and men. Nothing really subtle had ever been tried and this, like most subtleties, was risky.

I remember my friend Lt. Col. Hal Reese, Philadelphia businessman and Inspector General for the Division, smiling at us as he drew a map with his cane in the dirt to illustrate the route we must follow to mount the hill—"if you get by the snipers." Reese was a cultured, charming gentleman, who had served closely with Walker in the last war. He was one of so many Americans of advancing middle age who bore the physical hardships without murmur, who had nothing to gain and everything to lose by going back into uniform—one of those non-professional, civilian reservists who provide an indispensable balance wheel of experience, humanity and common sense to every combat unit. He waved his cane at us as we pulled away. It was the last time I saw him alive.

A husky young major with a full pack hitch-hiked a ride with us. He was John Collings of Detroit, who didn't know



TWO REGIMENTS INFILTRATED AT NIGHT UP ONTO MOUNT ARTEMISIO RIDGE TO BREAK GERMAN LINE AT VELLETRI.

the route either, but who had to find his new outfit. He had just come from the Pacific. We left the highway, bumped across the rail tracks and thumped our tortuous way up a newly cut trail among cornstalks and vineyards. Only a jeep could have done this, but there were sharp descents and sudden upthrusts where we thought the jeep would go over on its back.

It was very silent. The sun filtered down through the thick brush and trees. Then a lone sentry stepped out, "Watch for the snipers, sir," he said casually to Collings. Freddie, our driver, looked back at us, a question on his face. He had orders from his colonel to drive only as far as he considered it safe for himself.

"SNIPERS AREN'T SO BAD"

With a careless gesture I cannot forget, Collings flipped out his forty-five, held it cocked in his hand, kept his eyes steadily upon the trees and said, "Go ahead driver; snipers aren't so bad." A machine gun began to sound nearby, like corn popping in a deep kettle. We could see nothing. The jeep trudged over ruts and roots and a part of approaching peasant women carrying great bundles on their heads, squeezed against the trees to let us pass, the inevitable sign of fighting ahead.

We emerged again upon the highway. Three soldiers rested in the ditch. "You're visible to the enemy the next couple hundred yards," they said. Implied was: "We are alive by the grace of God; you may pass away in the next few minutes." The tone was the tone of men saying it looked like rain. It is thus, nearly always, among Americans in the face of death. The jeep darted the next stretch and was halted by a soldier who looked like a boy in his teens—the artless, helpless type who should never be taken into the Army.

His eyes were unnaturally large and his hands were twisting a towel, rapidly, senselessly. "Do you know where the aid station is, sir?" he said through trembling lips. We thought it was just ahead. "Are you hit?" "No, sir, it's my nerves, I think."

Another quarter-mile and we could go no farther on the highway. Velletri lay only another thousand yards or so to the west. Machine guns were sounding again and it was sure death to proceed. Here now was the cut-off, a narrow "Jeepable" trail, mounting sharply between high banks. We left Freddie here, for his safety, which was

a mistake. We began the upward hike, rounded a bend and found tanks chugging up, their massive breadth plugging the whole cut, scraping down dirt and stones from the banks.

Here you had it; this was much of the explanation why the great natural barriers of Italy could never stop the Americans. I think few but Americans would dream of attempting this and none but American army engineers could ever make it possible. For, scrambling around the tanks, we found the ubiquitous bulldozer, simply carving the trail into a road, roaring and rearing its ponderous way at a forty-degree angle upwards.

The men themselves, bearded, silent with exhaustion, swung their shovels through the loose dirt and pitched it over the banks. Carl Mydans snapped his camera and, tired as they were, they would grin and adopt a comic pose for the pictures. A rifle snapped, very close at hand, and we heard the sigh of the bullet this time.

The party of shovelers stood upright. "Oh-oh," said one, and mechanically, as though they had done it a thousand times, two of them let their shovels fall, slipped their carbines from their backs and crawled over the bank, to disappear in the brush in the direction of the sniper.

We plodded on. Now a jeep with the Red Cross marking tilted precariously down the trail. Strapped across the hood was a stretcher with a man upon it. His head was almost covered with bandages, only the eyes, his nose and lips were showing. The lips held a cigaret at a rakish angle. When Mydans pointed his camera, the boy turned his head toward the lens and in a steady voice, just tinged with irony, he said, "Do you want me to smile?"

LONG MARCH COMPLETED

We pulled away from the engineers and found ourselves now with a rifle company of a regiment which I had last visited in the fields before Velletri. They were completing the marvelous feat, their comrades ahead having already reached the crest. They had been pulled out from their old position at nightfall, gone a short way by truck, then had made a ten-mile hike around Velletri and gone straight up the mountain, carrying their heavy mortar shells in their bare hands, clutching them to their stomachs.

The weighty metal boxes of rifle ammunition they strapped to their backs and they had climbed all night, silently, like Indians, forbidden by their general to have

a cartridge in the chamber of their guns. He would permit no firing, to avoid alerting the Germans. Only a grenade could be used, if absolutely necessary, for the Germans would easily mistake that for a mortar shell and remain ignorant of its origin. Later, we learned the Germans believed two companies had made the infiltration, not two regiments.

ONE WAY OUT

Now, in a sun-speckled grove the men lay sprawled on their backs, oblivious to the traffic's dust or the spasmodic machine gun fire so close at hand, catching as the veteran knows how, any moment's fortune provided for precious sleep. A soldier walked past, going down. He held up his hand to show bandages covering what remained of his thumb. "How's that for a cheap purple heart?" he commented cheerfully. "Lucky," one muttered; "he's got the war made," said another. A bare-headed Texas lieutenant no more than twenty-five was saying to us, "My major, he fined me twenty-five dollars for not wearing my helmet; now I've lost the damn thing." The lieutenant wore the Purple Heart. "I'm trying to break my record of going twenty-five days without getting hurt," he said. "Those Germans are figuring on a counterattack tonight. They're going to get surprised."

Battalion headquarters was a farmhouse, and nearby lay a dead German sniper, wearing American GI boots. The lieutenant jerked his thumb toward the body. "That guy shot two of our medics. He made me sore." Inside the house, three young officers sat at ease around the kitchen table while the farm wife, quite unperturbed, served them wine.

Everything was most obviously under control. We descended, found Freddie crouched in the highway ditch, clutching his rifle. When we had left him for the climb, six machine gun bullets had whispered past his ears, and he was thinking he should have come along with us.

GERMANS COUNTERATTACK

In the night, the counterattack came and failed. Our boys clung to the heights and fired down upon the desperate Germans inside Velletri. In the morning General Walker, his tanks and men rushed the town, entering upon the highway. Lt. Col. Reese insisted upon walking ahead of the tanks and it was a shell that killed him. When he heard the news, the General averted his face for a moment. "I asked him not to go ahead like that; I asked him not to," he said. Hal Reese, I think, died content. He had felt that it was coming. In his notebook he had written, "I got through the last war all right, but I will not survive this one." And a

THERE WAS MORE FIGHTING AROUND LAKE ALBANO.



TROOPS HURRY TO SECURE WOODED MOUNT ARTEMISIO.

note instructed his comrades to send his personal papers to his brother.

A German came out of the brush and walked with his hands up toward Walker. The General didn't even bother to pull out his forty-five. He was an angry man. "Go back in there and bring out the rest of them," he ordered. "I know there's more of you in there." The German nodded and turned back. Then Walker shouted to him to stop while he sent an American soldier along. They returned in a moment with a dozen more prisoners.

VELLETRI CAPTURED

These episodes did not halt the push, and our men were into Velletri so fast they captured several hundred Germans. It was a wild and weird affair, with signal corps men and engineers taking part in the conquest. There was the single MP in a jeep to whom twelve fully-armed Germans surrendered. There was Pvt. Bernard Miller of the Bronx, a medic, who walked into seven Germans. They raised their rifles to shoot. He tore off the netting on his helmet and pointed to the Red Cross. So they surrendered to him. One Italian entered a house, immediately ran out in panic and shouted, "Tedeschi!" meaning there were Germans inside. Americans burst in and found, in the dim lit room, a large mirror and nothing more. The excited Italian had been confronting himself. The conquest was over in a few minutes. Reporters walked through the streets, prickly with shrapnel, to a house on the outer edge. Inside were four GIs, their rifles hardly cool, playing poker in their shirtsleeves while two Italian girls heated their C rations on the stove. A few hours earlier they had been cooking at the same stove for the Germans.

THE KEY TO ROME

With Velletri gone, the Alban Hill defense line was irreparably penetrated and our Divisions smashed into the disorganized Germans around to the left, down Highway Six and to the right—Rome lay shimmering and undefendable straight ahead. Many outfits deserve the credit for the whole operation, but those of us who were present will always remember the men of the 36th, climbing silently in the night behind the enemy, armed with little but their American competence and a personal faith in their quiet, retiring general who had never let them down. If Generals Alexander and Clark received the key to the city of Rome, it was General Walker who turned the key and handed it to them.

*Reprinted from "The American Legion Magazine" for October 1944.

WICK FOWLER'S DISPATCH in the Dallas Morning News

Velletri, Italy, June 2—Texas' 36th Division, led by Major General Fred L. Walker, socked this Nazi stronghold Friday in one of the most brilliantly executed maneuvers of the entire Italian campaign, sweeping in to take the town and then continuing on the march to Rome.

Infantrymen, backed by tanks, tank destroyers, artillery, engineers and supply trains swept into Velletri from the east, north and northwest while other Fifth Army troops held the jaws on a trap set for retreating Germans and while Allied artillery cut the Nazi escape route on Highway Seven.

There still remained half an hour of daylight when the troops entered the town but the men made good use of the time to mop up German snipers and other defenders caught in the squeeze play.

Two British correspondents and I followed General Walker while he led the attack. We did not know when we left a regimental command post high up in the Alban Hills that we would be spearheading the drive. We walked along a macadamized highway lined with tall trees and villas, each seeming to hold German snipers. Many were bypassed but there were 200 bodies scattered here and there. Our riflemen worked the area in long skirmish lines far to our left and right and fired blindly into possible enemy hiding places, a new tactic the division developed and used in this attack for the first time. There were hidden machine gun nests and we could hear the burp of the mean German machine pistol. Because so many of the enemy had been passed up, the danger in moving forward didn't appear to be much greater than going back.

The infantry tactics reminded me of a Texas jackrabbit drive, only this time the rabbits fought back. The Italian houses offered good protection for last-stand Germans. Rifle fire made a continuous crackle.

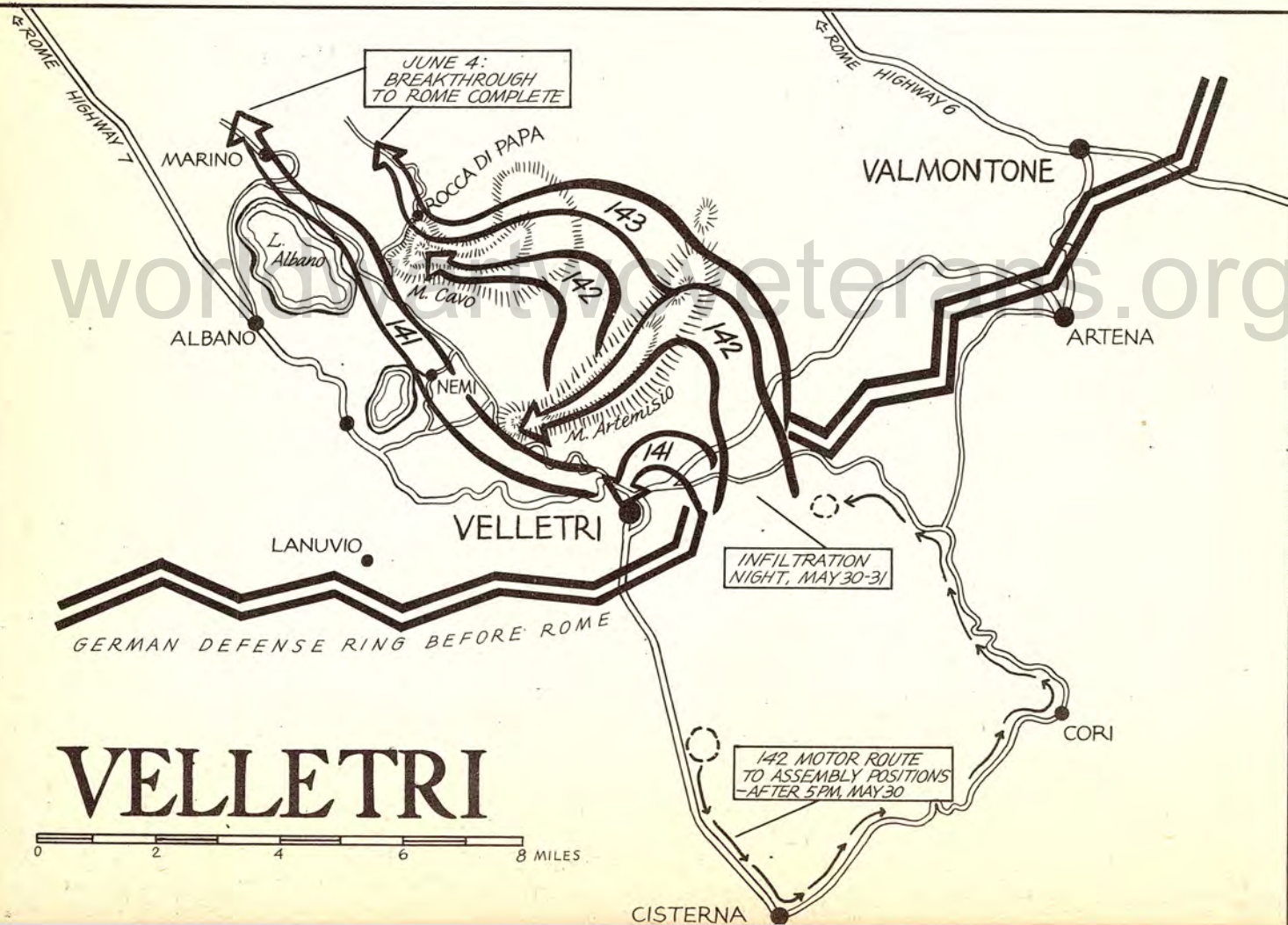
General Walker—this was his show—was apparently oblivious of the special dangers accorded a two-star general with insignia plain to any hidden sniper. He moved among the men, his pistol holstered, and directed them as though he were playing chess back at division headquarters. He knew where every unit was and he knew just how he would play the game to take the long-stubborn fortifications. Occasionally, a lone machine gunner or rifleman would come up and the general would say to him:

"Get over there, now. Hurry up," he said pointing, "they need you there." He never raised his voice.

Lt. Col. Hal Reese, of Philadelphia, the general's executive officer in the last war and his inspector general in this one, was with us. Reese occasionally moved ahead of the first infantry and TDs. Walker cautioned him several times.

TANK FIRE AND PRISONERS

Within site of Velletri snuggled on a low hill, we got under German tank fire. Four Tigers were zeroing in the road junction where we stopped to pick up prisoners. Our tank destroyers moved upon a low bank by the road and a duel, continuous and heavy, went on for fifteen minutes. The TDs had to cut down a house to get at the hidden Tigers which stuck their noses out, fired and withdrew. The Tiger 88 shells came in close. We hit the ditches, ig-



noring possible anti-personnel mines. The German prisoners likewise hit the dirt.

General Walker ordered us into a small culvert that ran under the road. It had about six inches of surface over it. One of our own artillery smoke shells exploded a hundred feet away..

"If my message to lift our artillery didn't get through," the general said quietly, but not comfortingly, "we are in for a barrage from our own guns in about four minutes."

This correspondent prayed. Prayed for the messenger to get through. I know there were others along that road and in that culvert talking to the Lord, too.

WAITING AND WONDERING

We watched our wrist watches. The minutes ticked off slowly. We could hear big shells but they weren't close. Four minutes passed, then five, then six. General Walker crawled out. "Looks like he got through in time," he said. I shall always want to meet that messenger and shake his hand.

We moved up a little. Three Germans stepped out and surrendered to General Walker. He began gesturing to them to find out where others were hiding. They pointed to a villa few hundred yards to the north. He said, pointing, "Go get them." The German went off. The general sent a soldier with him so the captive wouldn't be shot by our own troops or recaptured. They soon returned with twelve more Nazis. They were youngsters. We had 130 by this time.

General Walker loaded a German litter case on his jeep, piled four prisoners on it and sent his driver, Sgt. John Clay, of Austin, Texas, back to the rear with them.

Then an officer stepped up to the general, saluted and whispered for a moment. General Walker shook his head as though shocked. He had got word that a German tank shell had killed Col. Reese just ahead of us. "I told him not to get too far out there," he kept saying.

We later learned that Reese must have had a premonition that he wouldn't live through this operation. His notebook carried a freshly written notation to notify his brother if anything happened to him and advised disposition of his personal effects.

DOG-TIRED DOUGHS

For three nights our troops had only snatches of sleep stretched out on the ground. They were weary and dog-tired—infantry style. But they had the Germans on the run and that alone gave them the energy they needed. If they had to fight they would rather have the odds in their favor for a change, or at least a 50-50 chance.

For the past forty-eight hours the 36th had been infiltrating in great strength through the Alban Hills that crossed the plains before Rome. They sneak-marched at night, occasionally under flares dropped by German planes seeking them out. They lay quietly at these times, unseen by the Luftwaffe. Making certain there would be no noise the rifle chambers were emptied of shells during the march. Snipers played their deceitful game but did little damage.

It was the same sort of flanking move that General Walker advised the higher command to let him make at Cassino before the ill-fated Rapido River crossing. After the Rapido fiasco failed, Fifth Army troops did flank

Cassino to the North but a high cost had been paid. Even as the Fifth Army fought stalemated before Velletri with Rome only twenty miles away, General Walker was developing the encirclement plan. It was fantastic—except to a few.

ENGINEERS COUNTED ON

The higher echelons said he couldn't get roads built through the steep, heavily-wooded Alban Hills to get big guns, tanks and supplies in support of the foot soldiers. General Walker insisted that his engineers could do the job. They did when the signal to go ahead finally came down. If it failed we would lose thousands of men. Walker said it would not fail. We believed him.

Within two hours the brilliant tactical operation was put into effect. While combat engineers of the 111th Engineer Battalion and other fighting men held the stopgap before Velletri the main bodies pulled back, loaded onto trucks and moved into an assembly area. Then by foot they began the all-night march to high points up in the hills held by a few small German units as outposts. The Nazis never dreamed that the Americans could or would try such a thing as infiltration. Our previous tactics may have given them some fuel for that line of thinking. By daylight Velletri was surrounded on three sides.

General Walker the next morning established his forward command post under a railroad overpass. There was some protection from German artillery there but snipers became bothersome, so much so that the next morning an hour or more before daylight the usually mild mannered Ohio general got mad.

He roused his sleeping staff from their blankets and bedrolls, and organized a sniper hunt with himself at the head of the column. But the hunt brought no results, although there was respite from any more of the Nazi var-mints.

THE CORPS COMMANDER

As Velletri fell that sunny late afternoon and there was only a scattering of shots, Lt. Gen. Lucien B. Truscott drove up in his jeep to where General Walker was standing at the edge of the town.

"You can go in now, General," Walker said to Truscott, the Corps commander. "The town is yours." Truscott complimented him on the operation, gave credit where it was due.

General Walker's job for that day was done. He was ready to return to his forward CP and plan the next day's run toward Rome. The Germans were retreating in full force, leaving delaying forces behind to cover their race for better protection north of the Tiber River. We piled into his jeep and the driver decided to return to the CP by a shorter route.

The general was living with luck that day. We learned later that engineers stopped the jeeps following us. The road was heavily planted with mines. Our wheel tracks, they said, were over one of them.

And just to show how badly fooled the Germans were, we learned from prisoners that outposts had reported two companies of Americans up in the Alban Hills. They had sent a battalion up there to wipe them out. The battalion ran into one of our regiments.

You can imagine what happened then.



MEN REST AND GIVE RIFLES FINAL CHECK BEFORE VELLETRI INFILTRATION. THEY DID NOT KNOW NATURE OF MISSION. TANK ROARS INTO DEBRIS-STREWN VELLETRI IN BATTLE THAT SMASHED THE ENEMY'S DETERMINED BID TO HOLD ROME.





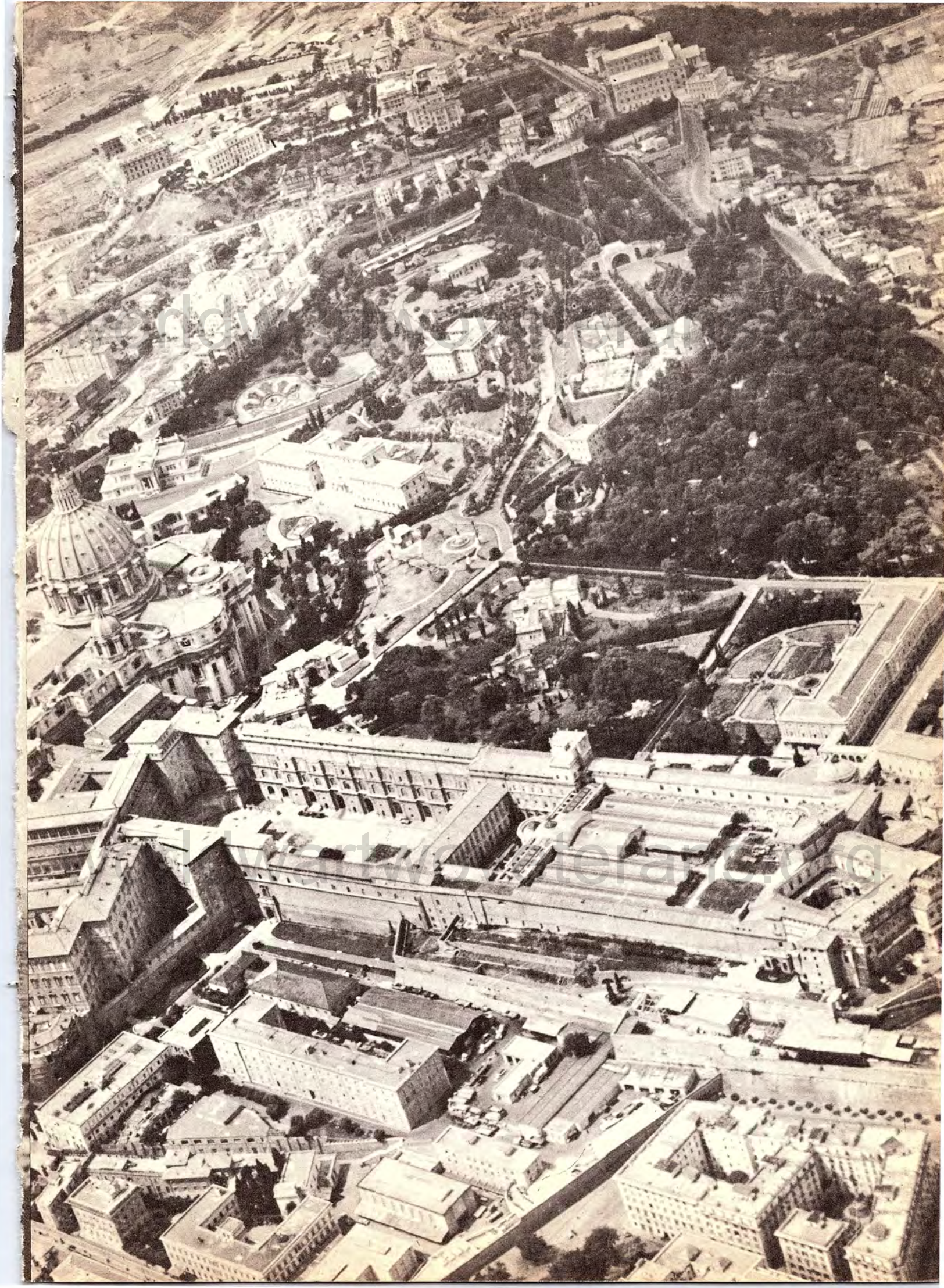
WEARY INFANTRYMEN, RIDING TANK DESTROYERS, SURGE INTO THE ETERNAL CITY PAST THE ANCIENT COLISEUM.

ROME FALLS

Fieldmarshal Kesselring's Tenth and Fourteenth Armies had been whipped on the southern approaches to Rome. To defend the city itself would have been anti-climactic. And so, when the Germans pulled out of the Italian capital, it was not only in the interests of the Pope and the survival of time-worn Roman monuments, but more for the establishment of a hurried defense line to the north.

The Eternal City burst forth in a blaze of glory Sunday, June 5, 1944, just one day before another mighty army sailed against Normandy. Groggy infantrymen, uplifted by the cheers of the hysterical Roman mob, marched in from the Alban Hills, or rode tanks like ancient gladiators on chariots, past the Coliseum and the Forum and on down the Corso Umberto.







THIS PHOTOGRAPH, TAKEN FROM CAPTURED ENEMY FILM, SHOWS THE GERMAN GARRISON PULLING OUT OF ROME.

AFTERNOON OF JUNE 4, 36th Division men fought their way into the suburbs. Sherman tank, in center, has just fired.

GERMANS MOVE OUT, ALLIES IN

During the night Division troops mounted armor and trucks, formed in a column and moved boldly through the silent, moonlit streets through the heart of the city. At daybreak, the Tiber was crossed and the column headed out past the Vatican into the open country to the north. Germans were in waiting five miles beyond. While Rome cheered its liberation from dawn till dark of June 5th, 142nd infantrymen fought to reduce the strong German delaying effort outside Rome. Wide-eyed veterans poured through the prized objective all day. The enemy was on the run.





CROWD GATHERS IN PIAZZA VENEZIA WHERE STANDS ITALY'S OSTENTATIOUS MONUMENT TO KING VICTOR EMMANUEL.

ROMANS REJOICE

If Rome was still bound by Fascist ties on June 5, hurriedly those ties were tossed into the Tiber River. For on that day the Romans were a mob, exultant and passionate, humble and reverently thankful.

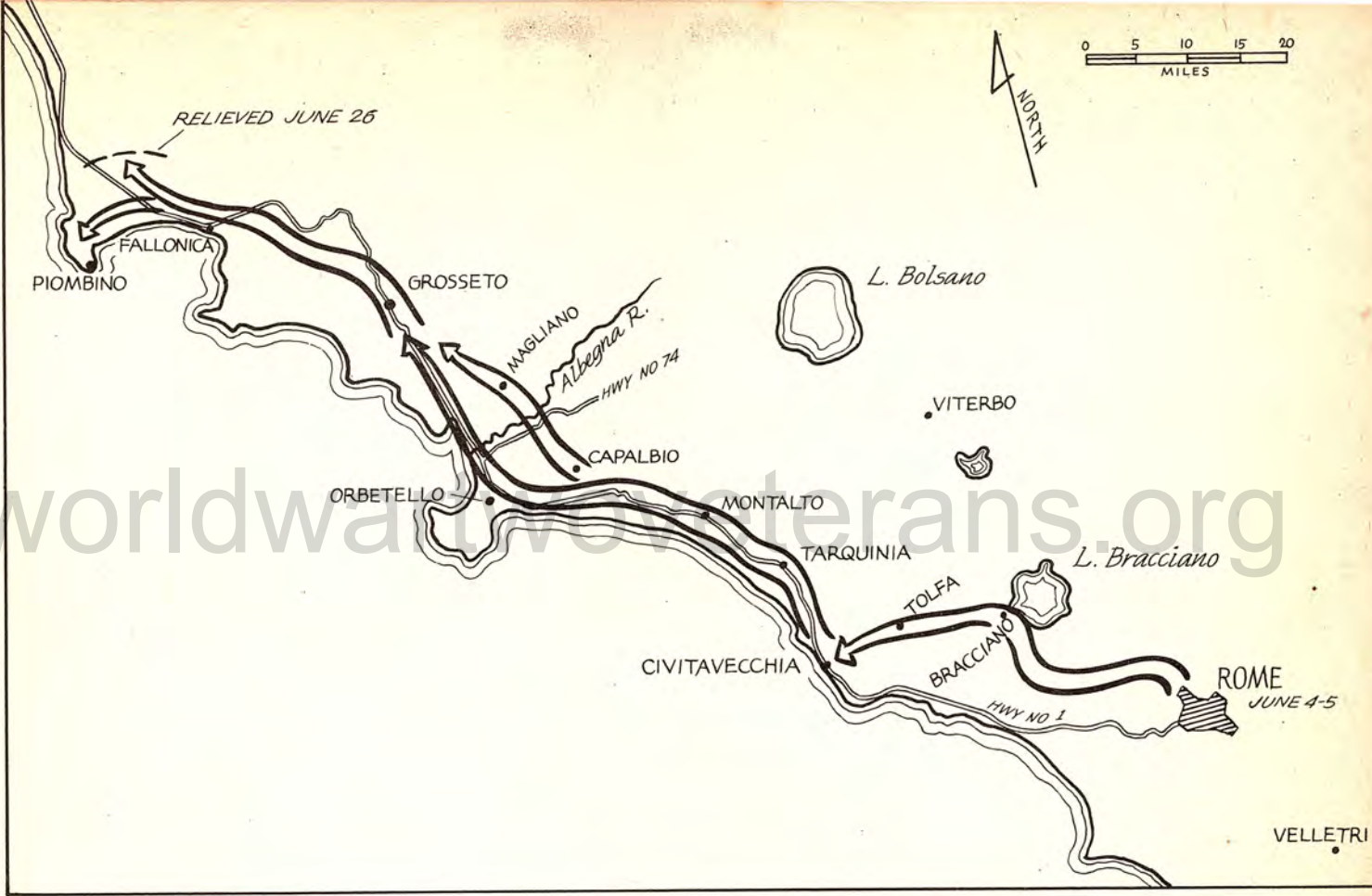
THEY LAUGHED AND CRIED. SEVERAL GENERATIONS OF ITALIAN CITIZENRY REGISTER APPROVAL OF THE AMERICAN ENTRY.





BRIDGE INTACT! LONG CONVOYS OF TROOP TRANSPORTS CROSS THE TIBER RIVER IN PURSUIT OF THE FLEEING GERMANS. SOME OF THE TROOPS MARCHED INTO ROME, OTHERS RODE JEEPS, HALF-TRACKS AND TANKS. THE CROWD CHEERS.





NORTH FROM ROME

Rome was free! The 36th drove through the city and headed northward as enemy rear guards fell back to hastily prepared positions. Early on the morning of June 5, the 142nd Infantry was fired upon at a turn in the road five miles outside the Italian capital. The enemy delaying force, with several anti-tank weapons and supported by strong mortar and artillery fires, presented a formidable obstacle. The Germans quickly forced a struggle. The 3rd Battalion was brought up hurriedly from the rear and deployed for the attack. Companies K and L, with I and M laying down a base of fire, fought until late afternoon before the block was wiped out. Immediately following, the 141st and 143rd, along with elements of the 1st Armored Division, passed through the 142nd to follow up the rout.

Through the Lake Bracciano-Manziana sector, the Division plodded on, coping with sporadic resistance as Ger-

mans vainly attempted to delay our troops. Swinging west toward the coast, the "Texas" Division mopped up German remnants in its path to Civitavecchia, important Italian port which had fallen the same day to the 34th Division. Continuing north to Tarquinia, the 361st Infantry, attached to the 36th, met and overcame bitter German opposition. By June 12 the 142nd and 143rd had established a bridgehead over the Albegna River before Grosseto, following hard fighting that had centered around the hills overlooking Magliano. Three days later the large town of Grosseto fell.

In the days that followed, more towns and villages were liberated and the enemy was driven backward another 55 miles. Piombino marked the goal of the 29-day advance which had covered a road distance of 240 miles and had netted 5,000 enemy prisoners.

AT A TURN IN THE ROAD just outside Rome the Germans hastily set up this block with many A-T guns. A day-long battle wiped it out.

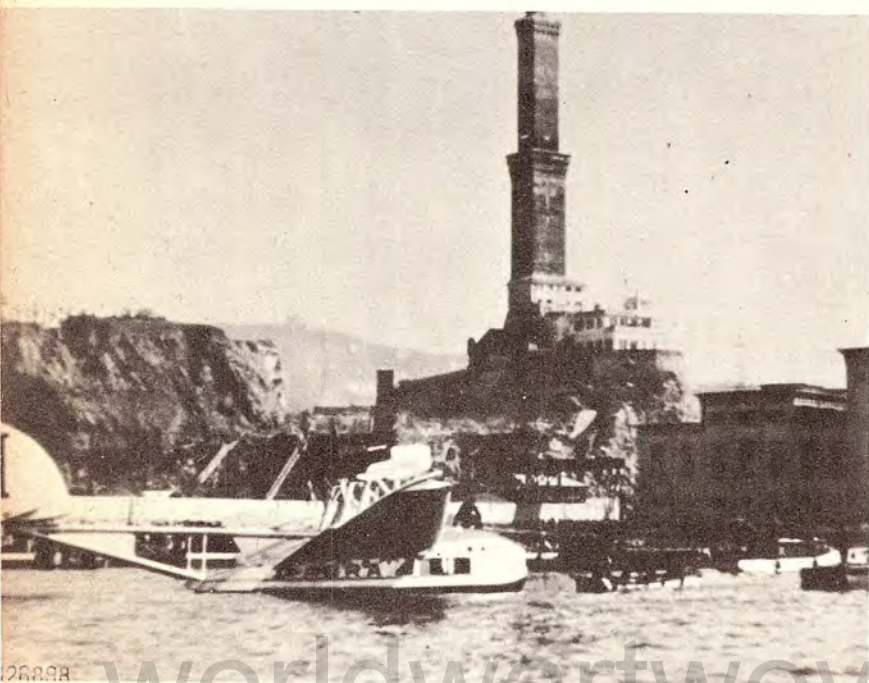


THE PRISONER TOLL MOUNTED again and dust became thicker. Germans also slaughtered thousands of horses.





THE 36th REACHED CIVITAVECCHIA, THE PORT OF ROME, ON A 25-MILE MOTORIZED DASH FROM LAKE BRACCIANO.



A COMMAND PARTY PAUSES IN TOWN SQUARE OF ALLUMIERE.

L. BRACCIANO, CIVITAVECCHIA

The enemy was completely confused. His battered divisions were scurrying north to avoid annihilation while fresh units were brought in to try to stave off the inevitable. A company of bicyclists, some 200 men recently hurried from Denmark, were thrown into the line in time to meet the full weight of the 36th's assault battalion near Lake Bracciano. This unique organization was crushed before it tasted battle. For the enemy, the move had been futile—practically all the troops were captured, along with their bicycles. Nothing remained to hamper the progress of the 36th as it rolled twenty-five miles into the port of Civitavecchia.



IN THE RAILROAD YARDS at Civitavecchia American troops found "Anzio Annie," huge German railway gun that had shelled the beachhead throughout the winter.





INFANTRY STEP LIVELY to keep on the retreating enemy's heel. Building (right) served as division CP for several days.



TRAIN OF 141st JEEPS holds up while advancing infantry destroys enemy opposition.

HILLS OF TUSCANY

The race was hitting its stride. Troops were motorized, walking only when small, straggling groups of German rear-guards interfered. Even the fiercest of these battles lasted only a short time. To the men of the 36th this type of war was new, quite in contrast to previous snail-like, painstaking mountain operations.

TROOPS OF THE 143rd INFANTRY MOVE THROUGH TARQUINIA TO THE FRONT. FOR THE ENEMY THERE WAS NO REST.





BRIDGEHEAD WAS ESTABLISHED OVER ALBEGNA RIVER AND DIVISION MEN PUSHED FORWARD INTO GROSSETO.

GROSSETO-PIOMBINO

The enemy tried to make a stand before the Albegna stream and the lateral Highway No. 83, but even his best efforts could not avoid a rout as the Division overpowered his positions at Orbetello, Capalbio and Magliano. At Magliano, Lt. Charles Garnham, 142nd Infantry platoon leader, climbed a ladder to gain an entrance into the walled town.

After a short period of hard fighting the backbone of the enemy defense was broken as the 36th bridged the river, crossed the highway and moved into Grosseto, important Italian trading center on the coast. Still farther north, the Division repeatedly encountered strong pockets of resistance but these were quickly overcome. The port

city of Piombino succumbed after being flanked by one regiment. On 26 June the Division was withdrawn and after a brief stay in Rome returned to Salerno in preparation for an important mission.



S/SGT. HOMER L. WISE

At Magliano, S/Sgt. Homer L. Wise of L Company, 142nd, climaxed his series of daring episodes by boarding a tank, remedying a machine gun stoppage, and spraying the German positions with the weapon. He won the CMH.

TROOPS MOUNTED UP, waiting to move out for Rome and Salerno. Hill behind was last Italian objective.

A FIVE-DAY STOPOVER at Rome gave the men a chance to see Italy's most famous city. Most visited was St. Peter's Cathedral.



ITALY: SUMMARY



IN ITALY'S RAIN AND COLD...



JOE COULD STILL SMILE

The Italian sun, crisp and not too warm on Invasion Day, had given way to cooler breezes, grayer days, rain, more rain, and snow. The firm ground had mired into deep mud, turned again to raw dust that freely swirled at the slightest stir. Great mountains and pleasant valleys had played intimate host to many a dispassionate soldier from the far-off Better Land during the eight-and-one-half months campaigning just concluded. Of the Italian fighting, Texans would remember mostly, the weather and terrain.

Though the Germans were the real enemy, they had been whipped on the beaches, bettered in the merciless wintry months at San Pietro and Cassino, outsmarted at Velletri and flailed northward in the running, open-field drive above Rome. In weather, terrain, and fighting, the 36th had experienced a poignant variety, fitting it well for the job next to come.

On the Salerno plains where the Division readied itself for another invasion, a ceremony took place described thusly by Ken Dixon of the Associated Press:

WITH THE AEF IN ITALY (AP).—With bayonets fixed, eyes right and two flags flying, tired soldiers of this veteran outfit said farewell to their general this week—passing before him in voluntary review.

They are the men of the Thirty-sixth Division. He is Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker.

The 57-year-old general was being called home after three years to command Fort Benning, Georgia. He didn't want to go and his men didn't want to lose him.

This division hadn't staged a review in more than two years. Besides, the men are worn, thin and haggard from more than a month's constant fighting and a 250-mile chase of Field Marshall Albert Kesselring's troops.

But they wanted to do something. So they polished up the brass and each battalion unfurled the Stars and Stripes and the red flag of Texas, with its one white star, and they stood in rigid lines before him—stretching thousands strong in the sunlight across the dusty fields.

The general's voice was husky when he stepped up to the field public address system and thanked them.

The bugle shrilled sharp and cold and the drums rattled a brisk and throbbing beat and the troops of the Thirty-sixth

Division—all of Texas and veterans all—marched smartly by.

It wasn't down Broadway or Main Street, but across a battlefield they'd won with their own buddies and their own blood. They were not parade soldiers but tired fighting men. Here and there a shoulder pad or piece of equipment was missing and weariness stared starkly out of almost every face.

But there was a high-priced pride in their stride, in their sharp salute, in their "eyes right" for a leader they loved, for whom they were saying with the highest tribute they had:

"Good-bye and good luck, sir—and we are sorry."

GEN. WALKER BIDS FAREWELL





CAVALCADE

It required a task force of some 1,000 ships to transport the Seventh Army's mighty armada of men and materiel (*above*) to the coast of Southern France. Veterans of the 36th waited, as they had waited before their transfer to the Anzio beachhead, on the dirty sands of Pozzuoli, Italy (*below*). Then they lined up in columns, climbed the gangways of the LST'S, LCI'S, and the larger troop transports, carried their loads across the decks, and went down into stuffy holds.





ON THE WAY

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Soldiers and sailors met and compared rumors. GI's sunned themselves and read or performed their shipboard duties. They slept in the shadows of the small landing craft, between complicated gear, and in the stacked, cramped beds that filled the hot holds. Maps and charts and aerial photos were studied; scale models of the approaches and beaches were examined. The months of planning and the weeks of filling in every detail were brought down to the final phase, with every squad learning its mission, every man discovering the smallest part of his participation in the most precise of all military operations. All the way there was tension. (Left) Leathery S/Sgt. Forrest C. Kimbrell declined to invade simply as an American. He was a Texan wearing the Lone Star flag on his right arm. Kimbrell was wounded second day.



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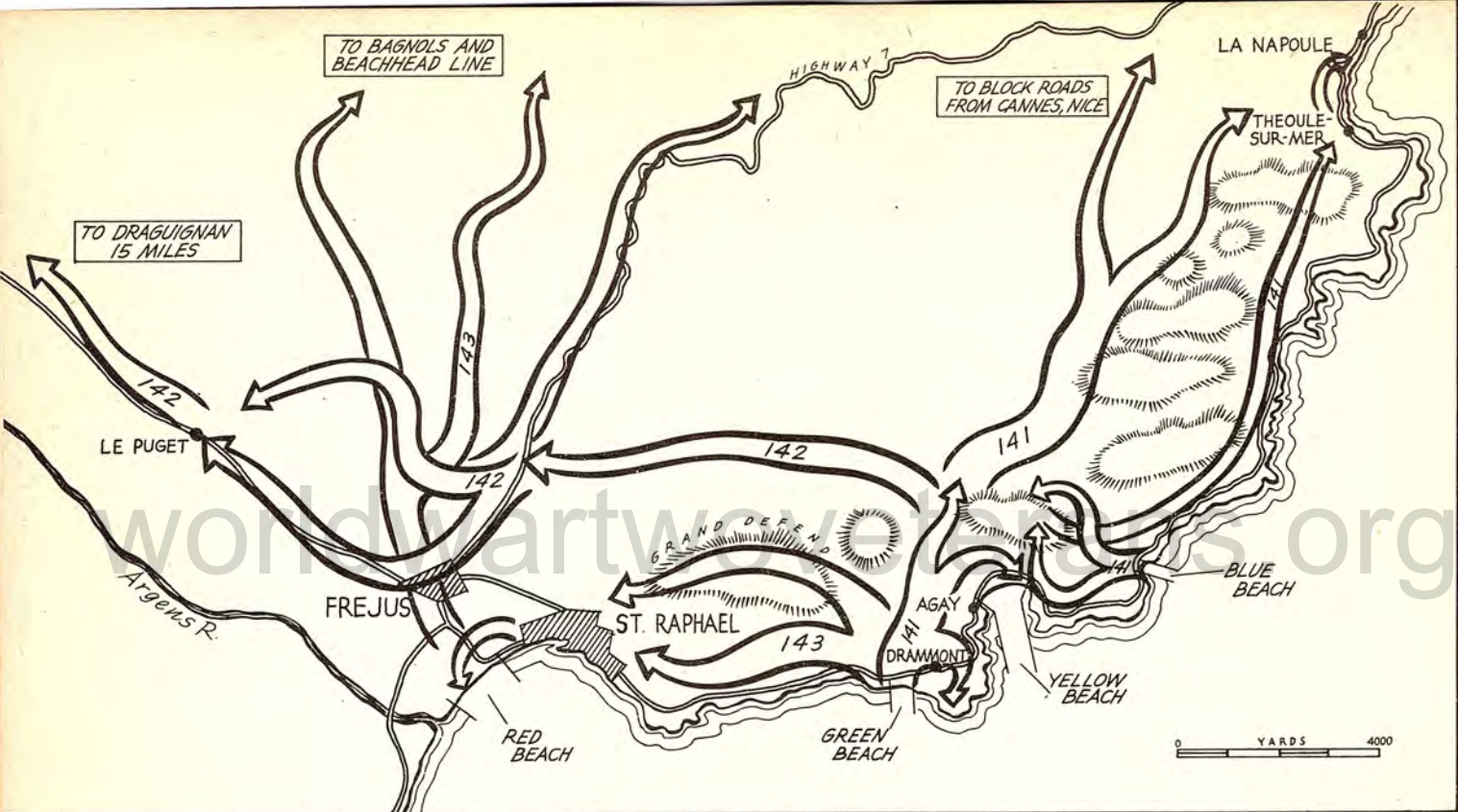
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THE INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE

At 0800, August 14, 1944, the chateau-studded Riviera, its pastelled hotels and white-bleached beaches, its oleander and terraces, its coastal drives that drop like cornices over the cliffs, lay invitingly ahead. But if this was the season, it was not the year for an influx of smart Parisian loungers. It was the day for plebeian GI Joe from Tahoka, Texas, and all U. S. points east and west to crash in on an Allied invasion that was to succeed in tactical perfection.

The under-belly blow to Nazi-dominated Europe, long contemplated in the minds of the Allied Command, was first proposed in December, 1943. The plan, a coordinated double jab at both Northern and Southern France during May of 1944, had to be modified when the gruelling Italian campaign lingered. Postponement of the attack in the south became necessary.

DECISION MADE LATE

During the early summer, when an August date for the Riviera invasion was proposed, 36th Division troops were pushing up Italy's coast nearing the Germans' Pisa-Rimini defense line. Not until June 24 was the 36th finally nominated for participation in the Southern France project. Withdrawal from the line followed a few days later to allow a rushed-up program of invasion training for the Division on the beaches near Salerno.

By late July in Normandy the breakout at St. Lo was developing and the onrushing drive toward Paris would follow. In Southern France, German

forces in defense of the coastal areas were being reduced to meet the serious breaches in the north. Our intelligence determined that the German Nineteenth Army, soon to oppose the Allied invasion, had been streamlined from 13 to 9 divisions—still, however, an effective force if it could be concentrated. With the Luftwaffe weakened and the German Navy, never top-notch, practically eliminated, our forces, strong in these departments, entered the operation with confidence.

ANYONE COULD SEE

As Lieutenant General (then Major General) Alexander M. Patch's Seventh Army and the VI Corps assault team—the veteran 3rd, 36th, and 45th Infantry Divisions—prepared for D-Day, concentrations of Allied might lay daringly in Mediterranean ports, principally Naples. That this was the prelude to an invasion obviously was implied to the Germans. Furthermore, Southern France was a very logical target. But if the enemy sensed what was coming, he did not know at what specific points our troops would strike.

In the 36th Division sector four beaches were designated: Red, Yellow, Green, and Blue. Red Beach was located at the resort town of San Raphael. It was the most important in the entire Seventh Army sector because not only was it necessary for supply but also near it was located an airfield. It was heavily defended by underwater obstacles, by concrete pill-boxes and gun emplacements. In addition, immedi-

ately in front of the beach was a stone sea wall about five feet high. Inland from the beach and flanking it on the eastern side was the town of San Raphael and just beyond that the old stone city of Frejus. This beach was essential, once the invasion was launched, for the necessary rapid build-up of supply. Enemy casements protected Green Beach, a mere 250-yard rocky strip backed by a sharp incline near Cape

Drammont. It was thought to be too small for the landing of a large force, but here a surprise might be possible and a foothold gained. Yellow Beach, in front of the town of Agay, was a small horse-shoe-shaped inlet, protected by submarine mine netting and flanked by extensive fires. Considered more carefully defended than it was worth, planned direct attack on this beach was dropped. Blue, a few miles

ANOTHER WAVE OF INFANTRYMEN AND MEDICS HIT GREEN BEACH. MEN STANDING IN FRONT WERE WELL-DRENCHED.





BATTLESHIP (IN DISTANCE) BOMBARDED THE BEACHES AT H-HOUR MINUS 15 MINUTES IN SOFTENING-UP PROCESS.

from Green, could accommodate only two small boats at a time.

The plan finally adopted was to have the 141st Infantry assault Green Beach with two battalions and Blue with one at H-Hour, 0800, to secure these beaches, capture Agay and protect the Division right. The 143rd Infantry was to follow immediately behind the 141st and then drive to the west to seize the heights overlooking San Raphael and Red Beach, thus assisting the 142nd. This regiment was to land six hours later, assault Red Beach, and, together with the 143rd, capture San Raphael, the airfield and Frejus. From the beaches troops were to press inland to a depth of 12 miles, block any enemy attacks from the Cannes area on the right, and push up the Argens River Valley on the left to contact a paratroop force dropped near Le Muy. The capture of Frejus and the small port of San Raphael were "must" jobs that had to be accomplished immediately.

CONVOY SAILS

The invasion convoy sailed from Naples August 13 at noon, passed through the Sardinia-Corsica Straits and arrived offshore of the Riviera beaches at dawn of the 15th. While landing craft lowered and the first waves of tight-lipped infantrymen edged toward the beaches, huge naval guns and bombers pounded the coastline.

At 0800 as a crisp sun melted the haziness of the morning, Colonel John W. Harmony's 141st began its assault. On Green Beach the 2nd Battalion struck to the right, the 3rd to the left. Taken by surprise, the Germans did not bring their machineguns into ac-

tion until the fourth wave had landed and then it was too late. By 1000 hours Drammont and Cape Drammont, surrounding Green Beach, were reported clear. Casualties had been extremely light. Pushing north through Agay, the 2nd Battalion encountered resistance round-about the defenses of Yellow Beach. The 3rd Battalion seized the high ground directly north of Green Beach.

The enemy offered heavier resistance on Blue Beach where several anti-tank guns opened up on incoming landing craft of the 1st Battalion, 141st. This resistance was rapidly overcome and the battalion pushed in to drive the Germans from craggy dominating heights, 1,200 Germans surrendering to the invaders. The 1st Battalion won a Presidential Unit Citation for this action.

Immediately following the 141st, Colonel Paul Adams' 143rd Infantry landed in a column of battalions on Green Beach; the 1st at 0945, the 2nd at 1000, the 3rd at 1035. "Grand Defend," the high ground to the northwest, was immediately seized by the 1st Battalion. The 143rd then began to drive west, paralleling the shoreline, for San Raphael.

GRAVE DECISION

Meanwhile, at 1100 hours the 142nd Infantry loaded into assault boats and headed for Red Beach which it was to strike at 1400. From early morning enemy defenses here defiantly rebuked all efforts to soften them up. Naval craft nearing the beach for mine-detection were fired upon and sunk, and from San Raphael and the hills beyond Frejus, the beaches remained covered by flanking enemy fires.

Another air and naval bombardment preceded the

assault on Red Beach. Then specially-designed robot demolition boats, sent in just prior to the first wave, fouled on the beaches. The Naval Commander, with Green Beach open, ordered the 142nd Infantry turned to Green Beach. Here a delicate situation prevailed: The Division Commander had gone ashore at 1000 and the Assistant Division Commander was on his way in. Communication between the Admiral and the Division Commander was not working. Rear Admiral Spencer Lewis, in command of the Task Force carrying the 36th Division, made the decision to change the point of assault of the 142nd Infantry on his own responsibility. His courageous and timely action probably saved hundreds of men from death. Landing of the 142nd began on Green Beach at 1530 in accordance with an alternate plan which had been previously prepared. Colonel G. E. Lynch's regiment swung in an arc north and west over the mountains between the 143rd and the 141st to attack Frejus from the rear. The 143rd was ordered to clear Red Beach from the rear after it had seized San Raphael.

There was no let-up during the night as plodding infantrymen strained inland to broaden the beachhead and win assigned objectives. Both Frejus and San Raphael were cleared in a flurry of fighting in the early morning by the 142nd and the 143rd. Red Beach was secured. On the right in the more frequented resort country of the Riviera the 141st surprised Germans six miles inland driving with glaring headlights along the Cannes-Frejus highway and placed blocks on all roads to Cannes near La Napoule. The only serious setback was the sinking of an ammunition and artillery-laden LST by a single low-flying plane in the channel off Green Beach at dusk of D-Day.

PARATROOPERS CONTACTED

On the night of the 16th the 142nd broke the last German block before Le Muy in the Argens valley. Next day the paratroopers, who had jumped nearby, were contacted and Draguignan was entered. In the town the Commanding General of the German 62nd Corps, completely befuddled by the sharpness of the Allied attack, was nabbed along with his entire staff.

With landings consolidated along the entire Sev-

enth Army front, the 36th began a blitzkrieg that nullified German plans for defense or even an orderly withdrawal. Early on the morning of the 18th a specially created Task Force, consisting of Lt. Col. Charles Denholm's 2nd Battalion, 143rd Infantry, elements of the 636th TD Battalion, 753rd Tank Battalion, and 111th Medical Battalion, along with engineer, ordnance, and reconnaissance units, and commanded by Brigadier General Frederick Butler, at that time Deputy Corps Commander, speeded northward into the Alpine country. On August 20th a force consisting of the remainder of the 143rd RCT, 636th TD's, 36th Cavalry Recon Troop, under Brigadier General Robert I. Stack, Assistant Division Commander, followed Task Force Butler contacting it that night at Sisteron.

100 MILES IN ONE DAY

The 36th extended its lines 100 miles in a single day while racing to outrun the German Nineteenth Army still in the Marseilles-Toulon area. Grenoble, famed French mountain resort 200 miles from the beaches, fell to the 143rd on August 22, one week after the landing. French Forces of the Interior, well-organized patriots harassing the enemy from the rear and controlling vast stretches of territory, greatly contributed to the success of the Allied invasion of Southern France.

After the operation Allied Headquarters boasted of the Riviera Invasion: "A model of effective organization, cooperation of all services, and vigor of action—one of the best coordinated efforts in all military history." Its beachhead was the largest to be created in three days during the war.

The entire 36th, less one battalion, had landed on one narrow beach. Its casualties had been exceedingly light and the aggressive assault had completely disrupted the enemy's defenses and communications.

After his weak defense had been shattered, the enemy was never given an opportunity to recover. The drive north to Grenoble paralleling the Rhone Valley succeeded magnificently. Forced to fall back, the Germans were also prevented from making any thrust over the mountain passes from Italy.

Not in any preceding operation had the mobility of an infantry division been so tested and utilized.

INVASION FORCES watched scores of our bombers go in to attack the enemy's fortifications. Weather was partly cloudy in morning.



ARTILLERY observation planes were transported to Southern France on LST 525, "Baby Flattop."





OVER ROCK-ENCRUSTED GREEN BEACH, LESS THAN 250 YARDS WIDE, NEARLY ALL OF THE DIVISION LANDED ON D-DAY.

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GREEN BEACH



Green beach was a potential trap, yet all but a single assault battalion landed on it between the cliff wall to the left and a barren rock formation to the right. In nine hours 20,000 troops scrambled ashore there—the entire strength of an infantry division, reinforced by heavy artillery and shore engineers, tank and tank destroyer battalions, signal and quartermaster attachments—all were landed in an area less than 250 yards long and fifty yards deep. On this one beach

rested the success of the Division's invasion, and across it was put every vehicle, every gun, all the tons of supplies.

One year later, August 15, 1945, men of the Division gathered on this same Green Beach with French and American officials in a ceremony to mark the inauguration of a monument memorializing the D-Day landings in Southern France. Simultaneously, the 36th dedicated its own temporary memorial, a small bronze plaque.



BARRAGE BALLOONS WERE QUICKLY ELEVATED AND ONPOURING TRAFFIC WAS RUSHED OVER GREEN'S SINGLE ROAD.

ONE ROCKY STRIP

Pebbles, rocks and boulders of all sizes were strewn over the shores of Green Beach. In conjunction with debarking infantrymen, burly bulldozers chugged out onto the beach to plow under the larger rock formations and to prepare an exit to the main coastal road. Tanks and tank destroyers followed closely behind, clambering over Green Beach's

back-dropping irregular slope and granite quarry. The cumbersome tanks were unloaded with astonishing facility. Supporting armor grumbled loudly as it rolled off the beaches to pave the way for an offensive. Ambulances came in early, ready to pick up casualties and return them to the waiting vessels.

TANKS AND TANK DESTROYERS JARRED ASHORE. THEY CAME IN EARLY AND LOST NO TIME GOING INTO ACTION.





SHORE DEFENSES HAD BEEN PUMMELED UNMERCIFULLY AT RED BEACH. FREJUS AND SAN RAPHAEL ARE IN BACKGROUND.

RED BEACH

On D-Day no one landed on Red Beach. When special demolition boats went out of control and were unable to force a passage through the extensive mines and underwater obstacles that lined the bay, the Navy Commander responsible for getting the troops in decided against trying to land the 142nd there. The original plan ordered an assault across the strip in the foreground to the near side of the hotel (upper left center). Early the second day the 143rd, attacking from San Raphael, captured the beach from the rear. After the anti-invasion defenses were cleared from the shallow water, a division of follow-up French troops immediately entered France across Red Beach.

THE FIRST WAVE POISED IMPATIENTLY, READY TO GO IN FOR THE KILL. NAVAL COMMANDER DECIDED AGAINST ASSAULT.





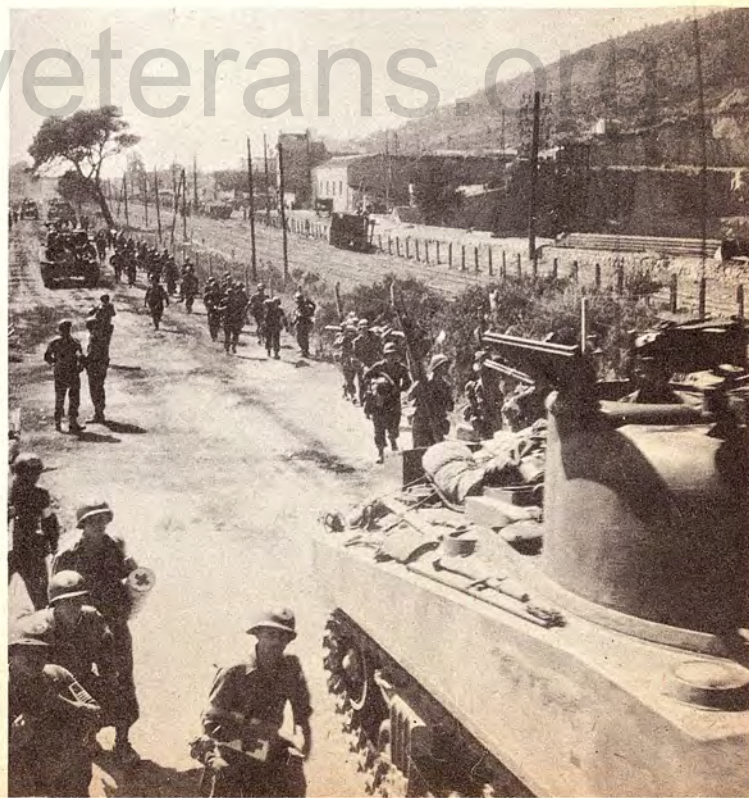
THE 36th MOVED OFF THE BEACHES AND INTO THE TOWNS. ARTILLERY PIECE WAS OVERTURNED BY AN ANXIOUS DRIVER.

FOOTHOLD IN FRANCE

TANKS AND INFANTRY pushed inland. Initial objectives were quickly seized as Germans were taken by surprise.

Success at the beaches was complete. Men and supplies were pouring over them. Now to avoid a repetition of fateful Anzio, troops pushed hard to exploit their initial victory with lightning speed, refusing the Germans a moment in which to regroup and strike back. San Raphael and Frejus were immediate objectives. After they were taken a phase of highly-mobilized warfare began.

FROM A HILL before San Raphael, garish fishing port, shells could still be observed falling on Red Beach.





FRENCH WELCOME LIBERATION

The French, an imaginative and vivacious race, seemed more sincere in their appreciation for having been liberated than had the Italians. All along the way they tossed flowers and fruit at passing jeeps. Many of them, English-speaking, repeated their gratitude over and over again (above). And now that the German occupation had ended, the French patriots would tolerate no one who had consorted with the Germans. (Below) : A partisan and a Nazi sympathizer are about to slap it out. The blonde's hair was clipped.





GERMANS DON'T

When the first batch of German prisoners were about-faced and returned to the beaches, the French ran out onto the roads to curse them for stealing their food. (Right) 143rd Infantry officers confer on a patrol mission in the ruins of San Raphael. (Below) Having previously fired its gun at this San Raphael road block, a TD attempts to plow through the rubble it had not succeeded in downing.





INVASION STARTS TO ROLL

Opportunity fired the gun that started the race, a race to seal off the German Nineteenth Army and make good the bid for Southern France. The enemy's defense was broken. To press on every minute was of utmost importance. In gaining maximum mobility every vehicle was taxed in day and night duty, and transportation improvised. Units in reserve walked.



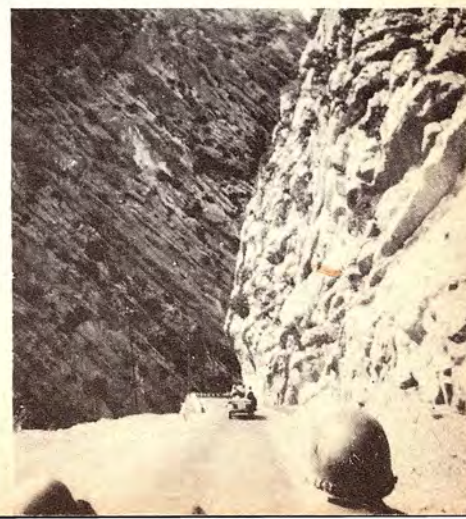


A LIGHT, SPEEDY TASK FORCE RACED THROUGH SOARING MOUNTAINS THAT REMINDED THE MEN OF SOUTHERN ITALY.

ROUTE NAPOLEON

Motorized task forces of the 36th, breaking out from Draguignan, made phenomenal progress by dashing northward over the mountain road Napoleon Bonaparte had taken on his return from Elba. Task Force Butler led off early on the morning of August 18. Reiz, Digne and Sisteron were reached. From there TFB turned west toward

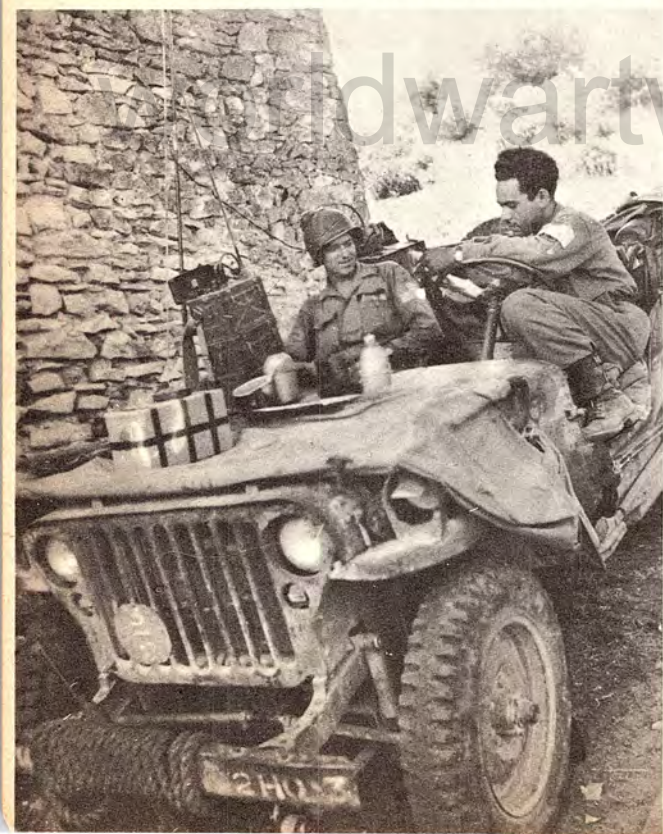
the Rhone Valley. Other Division troops, under Gen. Stack, thrust due northward by way of Castellane, Digne, Sisteron, through Gap and pressed on to take Grenoble, pacing as much as 90 miles in one 14-hour period. A third element raced eastward from Gap to block passes at the Italian border near Briancon.





THE MADEMOISELLES OF GAP REWARDED THEIR LIBERATORS SMILINGLY. MONSIEUR L'AMERICAIN GI WAS DELIGHTED.

RADIO TEAM STOPS ALONG THE WAY.



ON TO GRENOBLE

On 22 August elements of the 143rd Infantry entered Grenoble, lovely university city nestled beneath the French Alps.

"Welcome!" shouted the town's newspaper on the first page.

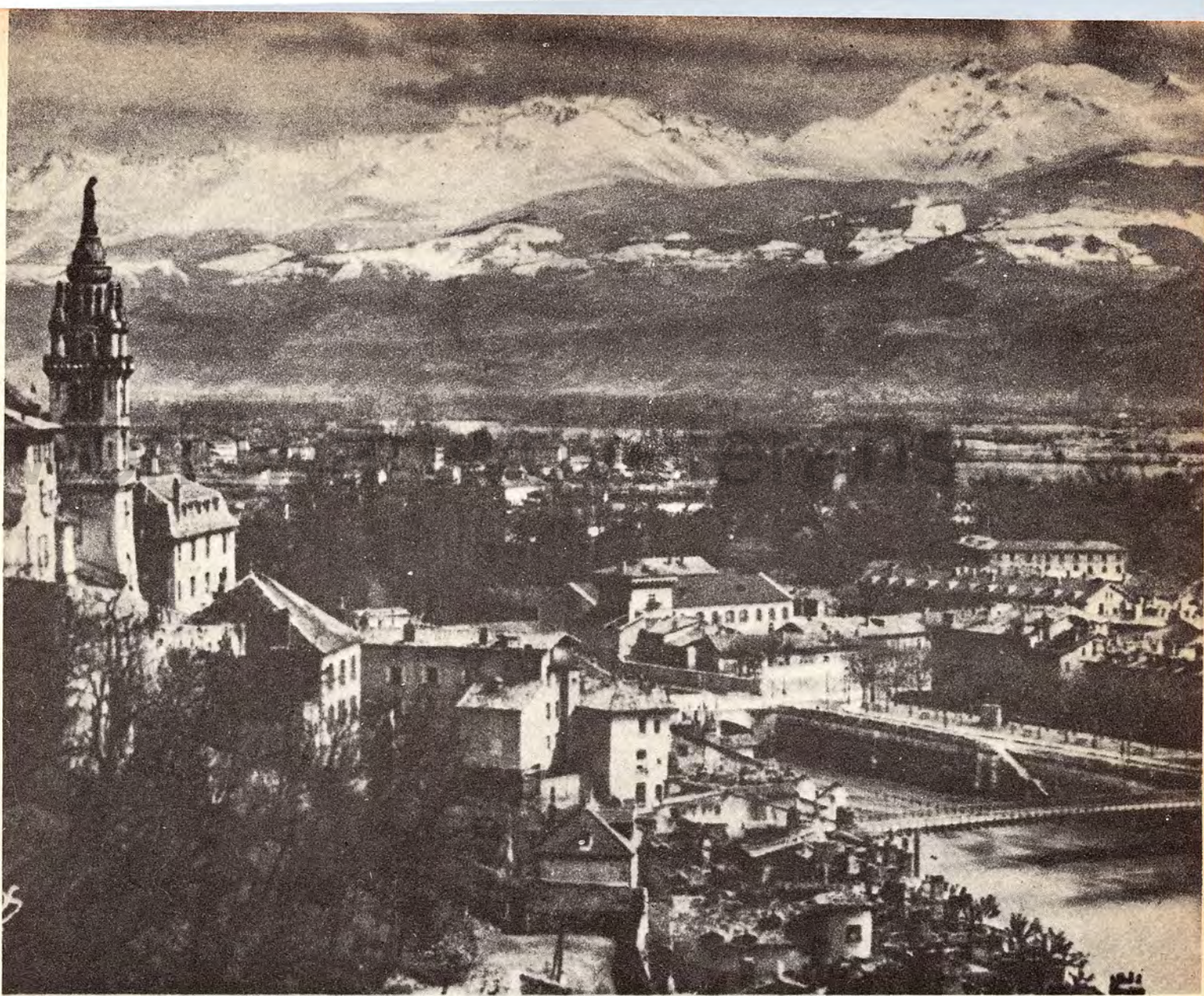
"Yesterday, without warning, we saw them suddenly rising up at the far end of the Cours Jean-Jaures . . . those well-built boys in khaki, those strong, calm fellows who in 1918 had shared with the Poilus in horizon blue all the sufferings of battle, all the joys of victory.

"At first no one dared to believe it. The Americans? They are here? Already? At last, astride their funny little jeeps, perched high on their heels, reminding one of the far west, piloting their General Sherman tanks, henceforth so well-known along the Route Napoleon.

"The crowd massed all along this fine avenue, just as it used to do in the good old days of the Tour de France. What a glorious Tour de France is this—the wildly enthusiastic crowd, which shouted its welcome to the liberating troops of the FFI, triumphant with its tri-colors waving in all the streets of the town, found fresh vibrant voices to shout an enthusiastic welcome to the big attractive giants.

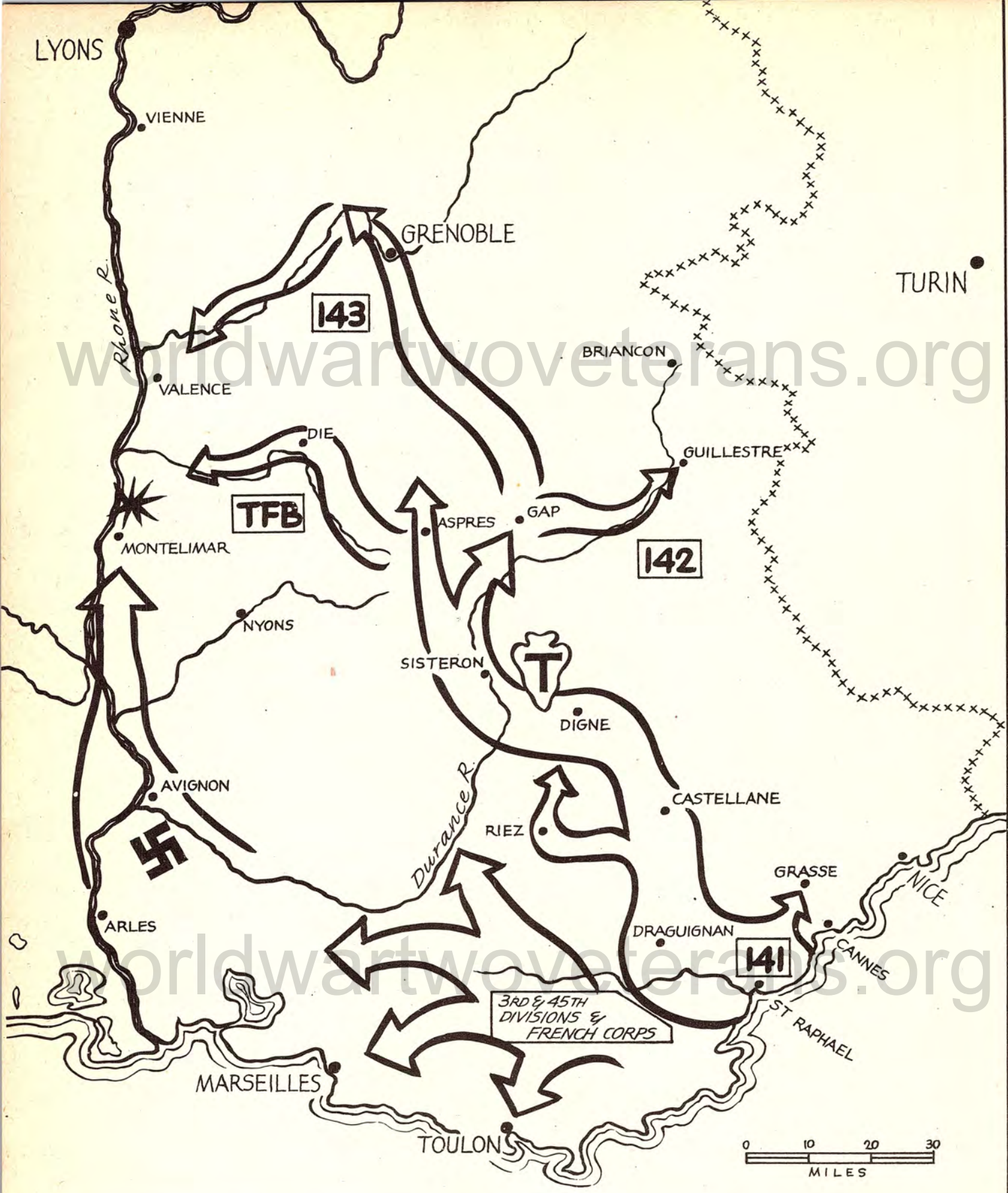
"Welcome to you all! You who have come from the distant provinces of Illinois, Ohio, Alabama, or Texas. . . Welcome to the citizens of New York and San Francisco, you all who have come after a stage in our North Africa to help France get rid of a nightmare which has lasted four interminable years, and to aid her to rediscover her true soul.

"Welcome to Grenoble, our town. Welcome to the Dauphiné, our province!"



GRENOBLE GREETS—Grenoble, only fifty miles from Geneva, was gay in her hour of liberation. Throughout the Alpine valley the bells of the university tolled and reverberated. GI's were fascinated by the Swiss influence on the city's architecture.





GALLOP TO GRENOBLE