

R-491702

MUD, MOUNTAINS AND ARMOR  
(THE 1st ARMORED DIVISION FROM  
ROME TO THE ALPS)

A RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED

BY

COMMITTEE 17, OFFICERS ADVANCED COURSE

THE ARMORED SCHOOL

1948 - 1949

MAJOR CURRY N. VAUGHAN

MAJOR ROBERT E. NEIMAN, JR.

MAJOR VASCO J. DENILI

MAJOR ELMER C. REAGOR

MAJOR JOHN M. MULLEN

CAPTAIN GORDON E. McQUAIN

CAPTAIN MELVIN M. JENSEN

45.1-17

FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY

JUNE 1949

## PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to present a reasonably detailed account of the employment of the 1st Armored Division as an integral part of the tank - infantry - artillery - engineer team which drove strong, determined German forces from ROME to the ALPS during the Italian Campaign of World War II.

The narrative covers the period 3 June 1944 to 2 May 1945, describing (1) the exploitation following the breakout from the ANZIO BEACHHEAD; (2) the pursuit beyond ROME; (3) the drive through hastily prepared enemy mountain positions south of the ARNO RIVER line; (4) the push from the ARNO through the formidable mountain defenses of the GOTHIC LINE; (5) the stalemated winter warfare in the high NORTHERN APENNINES; and (6) the rapid breakout into the PO VALLEY, drawing the campaign to a glorious conclusion.

The scope of this study is limited since it is based on unit after action reports and histories; a limited number of statements and writings of campaign participants, observers and historians; and the semi-annual reports of the Chief of Staff U. S. Army. The very important role of infantry and other ground units, supporting arms and services, and higher headquarters is not discussed in detail.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1
	World War II Build Up. . . . . 1
	Battle for the MEDITERRANEAN . . . . . 3
	Background, 1st Armored Division . . . . . 5
	Old Ironsides in Africa. . . . . 6
	Armor in Southern Italy. . . . . 7
II.	PURSUIT TO AND BEYOND ROME . . . . . 12
	Smashing Final German Defenses South of ROME . . 12
	The 1st Armored Division in the Liberation of ROME 13
	Pursuit North from ROME. . . . . 18
	The Enemy Situation. . . . . 18
	The VI Corps Zone. . . . . 19
	CCA and CCB Spearhead The VI Corps Drive . . . . 20
	Task Force Howze in II Corps Action. . . . . 25
	Phase I in Restrospect . . . . . 29
III.	PURSUIT THROUGH THE TUSCANS. . . . . 35
	The Terrible Terrain . . . . . 35
	The Big Picture. . . . . 36
	The 1st Armored Division Role. . . . . 38
	Resuming The Pursuit . . . . . 39
	The Double Ambush. . . . . 42
	The Torniella Defile . . . . . 46
	Fight for MASSA MARITTIMA. . . . . 48
	Approach to CHIUSDINO. . . . . 50
	Shift to the West. . . . . 54
	CCB Cuts Highway 68. . . . . 57
	Cecina River Crossed . . . . . 58
IV.	PUSH TO THE ARNO . . . . . 61
	Casole D' Elsa Fiasco. . . . . 63
	The Fall of Montecatini. . . . . 63
	Enemy Resistance Stiffens. . . . . 68
	Reorganization of 1st Armored Division . . . . . 71
V.	THE GOTHIC LINE. . . . . 77
	Regrouping Along The ARNO RIVER. . . . . 77
	Across the ARNO PLAIN. . . . . 83
	Into the Foothills . . . . . 89
	Through the GOTHIC LINE. . . . . 92
	Looking Back . . . . . 97
VI.	DRIVE ON BOLOGNA . . . . . 101
	Emphasis on the Center . . . . . 101
	CCA Plugs the Gaps . . . . . 104
	CCB, On the Left . . . . . 108

Chapter	Page
	The Final Push. . . . . 112
VII.	WINTER IN THE MOUNTAINS . . . . . 119
	Two Months as Infantry. . . . . 120
	Well Earned Rest. . . . . 122
	Tankers Turn Doughboys. . . . . 122
VIII.	THE PO VALLEY BREAKOUT. . . . . 127
	The Preparation . . . . . 127
	The Army Plan . . . . . 129
	1st Armored Division Action . . . . . 130
IX.	BEGINNING OF THE END. . . . . 143
	Pursuit in the Po Valley. . . . . 143
X.	SUMMARY, LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS. . . . . 156
	In Retrospect . . . . . 156
	Veterans Learn, Too . . . . . 157
	A Difficult Task Well Done. . . . . 161
	BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . . 165
	APPENDICES. . . . .
	I Topography of ITALY . . . . . i
	IA The GOTHIC LINE . . . . . xviii
	II Vehicle Recovery and Evacuation . . . . . xxi
	III German Order of Battle. . . . . xxviii
	IV Special Units of Fifth Army . . . . . xxxv
	V Statistical Summary . . . . . xli
	VI Personalities . . . . . xlvi
	VII Index of Italian Cities and Towns . . . . . li
	MAPS. . . . .
	1 1st Armored Division from ROME to ALPS. . . . . 9
	0 Capture of ROME . . . . . 33
	2 Exploitation ROME to GROSSETO . . . . . 34
	3 GROSSETO to ARNO . . . . . 76
	4 In the APENNINES. . . . . 118
	5 Breakout to the PO VALLEY . . . . . 155
	SKETCHES. . . . .
	1 1st Armored Division in AFRICA. . . . . 10
	2 1st Armored Division in ITALY . . . . . 11
	X Operations 5 - 10 June 1944 . . . . . 22
	0 Routes of Advance 20 June - 10 July 1944. . . . . 44

PICTURES. . . . .	
1	Tanks of 1st Tank Battalion ford the ARNO . . . . . 85
2	GOTHIC LINE position on Highway 66. . . . . 93
3	Infantry Troops move into BOMBIANA while tanks guard against counterattack . . . . . 110
4	Division Artillery scores direct hit on German strongpoint on MONTERAMICI . . . . . 113
5	Light snow in the APENNINE foothills, Jan- uary 1945 . . . . . 123
6	A 4th Tank Battalion crew prepares for the PO VALLEY Drive . . . . . 128
7	Tanks of the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron cross the PO at SAN BENEDETTO. . . . . 145
FIGURE	
1	1st Armored Division Reorganization 20 July 1944. . . . . 75

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Allied armies moved forward on 11 May 1944, after hard and bitter fighting during the winter months in the mountains of southern Italy. ANZIO forces, spearheaded by the U.S. 1st Armored Division, struck out 12 days later and reached ROME on 4 June. Just two days after the fall of the first axis Capital the greatest invasion force in history landed on the shores of NORMANDY to deliver the final blow to GERMANY. The march to BERLIN, the headquarters of Adolph Hitler, the man who came closer to conquering the globe than any other man in history, was on!

#### World War II Build Up.

Hitler's forces had occupied the RHINELAND, AUSTRIA and CZECHOSLOVAKIA without military opposition. In September 1939 armored spearheads rolled across the German border and sliced through POLAND; NORWAY and DENMARK were occupied later with little difficulty: HOLLAND, BELGIUM and LUXEMBOURG then fell to the Nazi invaders. In June of 1940 panzer divisions turned the MAGINOT LINE and raced across FRANCE: Benito Mussolini, who planned to expand his Italian empire under the cloak of German successes, "stabbed FRANCE in the back" by sending troops into the southern border area and joining hands with Hitler to form the European Axis. The "Battle of BRITAIN", ten long months of destructive aerial warfare, followed, LUFTWAFFE bombs accounted for 50,000 British lives, but the R.A.F. was victorious and smashed a huge German invasion fleet before it could leave port.

In the meantime, on another front, the Nazis had taken HUNGARY, RUMANIA and BULGARIA and had overrun YUGOSLAVIA, GREECE and CRETE by early summer of 1941, focusing world attention on the MEDITERRANEAN. Then, without warning, on 22 June of that year, Hitler launched his invasion of RUSSIA. FINLAND joined in and the axis boasted the greatest front in military history - 2,000 miles from the ARTIC to the BLACK SEA. The invaders advanced through Russian-annexed EASTERN POLAND, ESTONIA, LATVIA, and LITHUANIA across WHITE RUSSIA, and into the UKRAINE. Before the end of summer German forces had encircled LENINGRAD reached the outskirts of MOSCOW and captured KHARKOV. Aided by the worst winter in years, the Russians held in place and then launched a counter-offensive which initially rolled forward; but under the full fury of a more powerful Axis assault, the Red Army was forced slowly to fall back again.

The third big Axis partner, JAPAN, after inflicting considerable damage on the U.S. fleet at PEARL HARBOR, was running wild in the PACIFIC and FAR EAST at the same time the Russians faced this growing crisis. Within six months after PEARL HARBOR the Japanese empire had been extended thousands of miles.

Meanwhile, Axis victories in the battle for control of the MEDITERRANEAN, which swept across the rim of NORTH AFRICA six times, reached a peak when a surprise thrust captured TOBRUK, threatening EGYPT and the vital SUEZ CANAL. Hitler planned to break through STALINGRAD and EGYPT to trap the MIDDLE EAST in a huge double-pincer movement. Mid-1942 was indeed a black hour. Unable to

launch a successful offensive in WESTERN EUROPE at that time, Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt approved an early Allied operation in NORTH AFRICA to relieve pressure on RUSSIA and dislocate the southern arm of this gigantic pincer thrust.

At this point the tide of battle turned. RUSSIA'S heroic defense of STALINGRAD and BRITAIN'S crushing defeat of the Germans at EL ALEMMAIN were closely followed by Allied landings in MOROCCO and ALGERIA on 7 November 1942. The Russians then unleashed their great offensive, which was ultimately to lead them to BERLIN. Anglo-American Forces began driving Axis troops from NORTH AFRICA, while JAPAN lost ground in the PACIFIC. The Allies had gained the initiative, forcing the Axis on the strategic defensive.

#### Battle For The MEDITERRANEAN

While gaining time for the cross-channel invasion of WESTERN EUROPE, it was decided to extend Allied influence in the MEDITERRANEAN in order to force ITALY to withdraw from the war and, further, to relieve the pressure on RUSSIA. The greatest aerial assault in history pounded GERMANY and her satellites, and offensive operations continued in the PACIFIC as the invasion of SOUTHERN EUROPE was undertaken. Allied forces landed on SICILY 10 July 1943. The first serious break in the structure of the Axis came when Mussolini was ousted in ROME ten days later. SICILY fell in 38 days and soon thereafter the Allied Fifteenth Army Group invaded SOUTHERN ITALY. The



new Italian government signed an unconditional surrender on 3 September, the same day the British Eighth Army landed on the toe of ITALY. Hitler had foreseen this possibility, however, and had placed a considerable number of troops in SOUTHERN ITALY. In order to permit the Italian Army to stop fighting and to prevent the Germans from quickly seizing key coastal defenses the surrender was not announced until 8 September. One day later the U.S. Fifth Army landed farther up the peninsula at SALERNO against determined resistance. A costly battle was fought and the initiative was regained, but not until ten days later. Fifth Army captured the port of NAPLES and drove the Germans into the mountains beyond the VOLTURNO RIVER, and later into their prepared "WINTER LINE". A series of local attacks were carried on throughout the winter; some of the bitterest fighting in the entire war took place at CASSINO, key point at the head of the LIRI VALLEY and a large natural corridor leading to ROME. In order to disrupt German forces to the rear of the CASSINO area, on 22 January 1944 the U.S. VI Corps landed on the beaches near ANZIO, 25 miles south of ROME, but within a few days faced a strong ring of German defenders. Here, two bitter battles were fought.

The Italian campaign, although not the major Allied effort, played a vital role in the overall strategic plan by holding a large number of German troops which otherwise would have reinforced units defending GERMANY proper. In addition it bolstered Allied control of the MEDITERRANEAN and provided

bases essential for the continued aerial offensive against the heart of Nazi EUROPE.

"Mud, Mountains and Armor" is the story of the 1st Armored Division in its battle against a determined enemy, difficult weather and near-impossible terrain from ROME to the SWISS ALPS. (See Map 1, page 9 ).

#### Background, 1st Armored Division.

The 1st Armored Division was activated in July 1940, under the command of Major General Bruce Magruder; however, it may well trace its history back to World War I when military mechanization first began. The War Department began experimenting with mechanized forces in 1920. In 1940 the nucleus for the formation of the 1st Armored Division was supplied by the old 7th Cavalry Brigade (Mechanized), which included such seasoned regiments as the 1st Cavalry, the 13th Cavalry, the 6th Infantry, and the 68th Field Artillery.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately upon its activation the 1st Armored Division, "Old Ironsides", began its training under the Armored Force at FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY. In September 1941 the division took part in the Second Army Maneuvers in LOUISIANA. It again participated in maneuvers in the CAROLINA MANEUVER AREA, under the IV Corps, in November 1941. The division then trained under the Army Ground Forces from March to April 1942, at which time it was transferred to FORT DIX, NEW JERSEY, for more training. In May 1942 the Division, commanded by Major General Orlando Ward, left the UNITED STATES for NORTHERN IRELAND where it trained prior to entering combat in NORTHERN AFRICA.<sup>2</sup>

### Old Ironsides In Africa.

On 8 November 1942, armored columns of the 1st Armored Division landed on the ALGERIAN coast east and west of ORAN (See Sketch 1, page 10 ). Two days later ORAN was captured intact and became one of the vital supply points during the entire NORTH AFRICAN CAMPAIGN. The Division joined up with the British Eighth Army, on 7 April 1943, after moving across ALGERIA. Although some of the fierce engagements found the 1st Armored Division on the defensive, such as the historic KASSERINE PASS defense, the Division fought valiant offensive actions at MAKNASSY, EL GUETTAR and GAUSA. However, it was not until MATEUR, under the command of Major General E. N. Harmon, that the 1st Armored fought as a compact division; there, and in the subsequent offensive that smashed the GERMAN AFRICA Corps, the 1st Armored Division scaled the heights of victorious offensive battle.<sup>3</sup>

It was in the AFRICAN CAMPAIGN that 1st Armored Division was the "trial horse" for the other American armored divisions of World War II. When this Division entered combat at ORAN in November 1942, the division was a long way from being the hard hitting combat team that it later became. During the NORTH AFRICAN CAMPAIGN a great many innovations in tactics were experimented with. Tanks were used in every conceivable manner, mostly without success. The 1st Armored was learning the hard way; the fact that they did learn, improvise, and adapt themselves to each situation is a tribute to the men and officers

of this fine division. The experiences of this division pointed out deficiencies in organization and training which were later corrected; the importance of the tank infantry team was established; in short, from these lessons was derived the pattern for the new armored division that played such a great part in the final defeat of the Axis.

#### Armor In Southern Italy

After the TUNISIAN CAMPAIGN, the 1st Armored Division reorganized, reequipped, and trained in FRENCH MOROCCO before participating in the ITALIAN CAMPAIGN.

When the Division, commanded by Major General Harmon, embarked for ITALY, parts of the Division artillery and the engineer battalion landed with the invasion forces at SALERNO on 9 September 1943 (See Sketch 2, page 11 ). The remainder of the Divisions landed in ITALY in mid-November in the vicinity of CAPUA. After a brief appearance at CASSINO, the Division was pulled out and sent to the ANZIO Beachhead. For four months it became a highly mobile defense unit, girded constantly for the eventual breakthrough and drive up the ITALIAN PENINSULA. The jump-off came at 0630, 23 May 1944, with eight companies of medium tanks abreast, followed by four battalions of infantry interspersed with companies of light tanks which carried the infantry's heavy weapons. The 1st Armored Division broke through the crust the first day, cutting through and capturing most of the GERMAN artillery in their sector.<sup>4</sup>

Division elements claim to have been the first reconnaissance troops inside ROME. A scant five days later the division had streaked 60 miles past the fallen city.<sup>5</sup>

NOTES FOR CHAPTER I

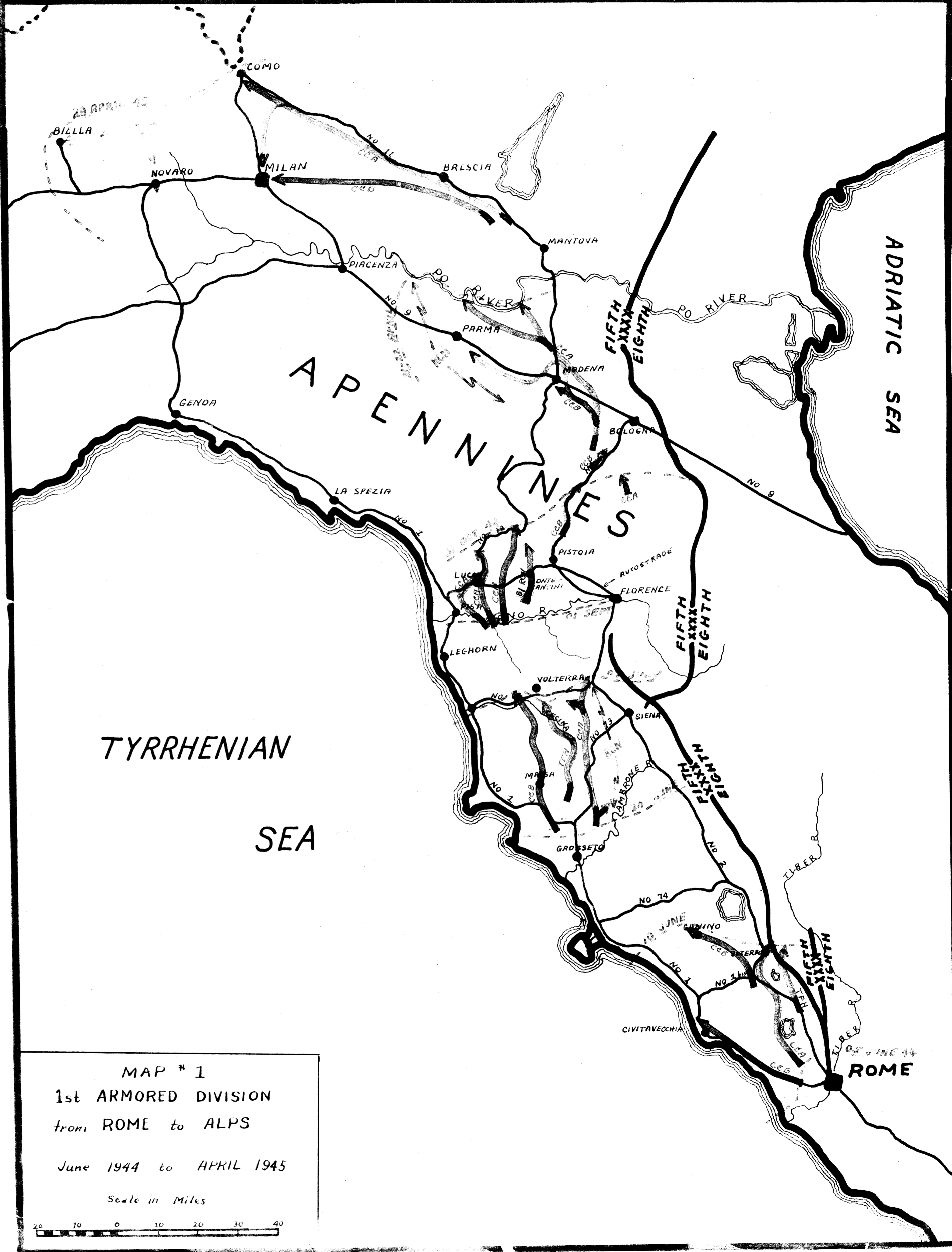
<sup>1</sup>Fact Sheet on the 1st Armored Division, prepared by Special Information Section, Office of Technical Information, Headquarters Army Ground Forces, Washington 25, D.C., 25 July 1945.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

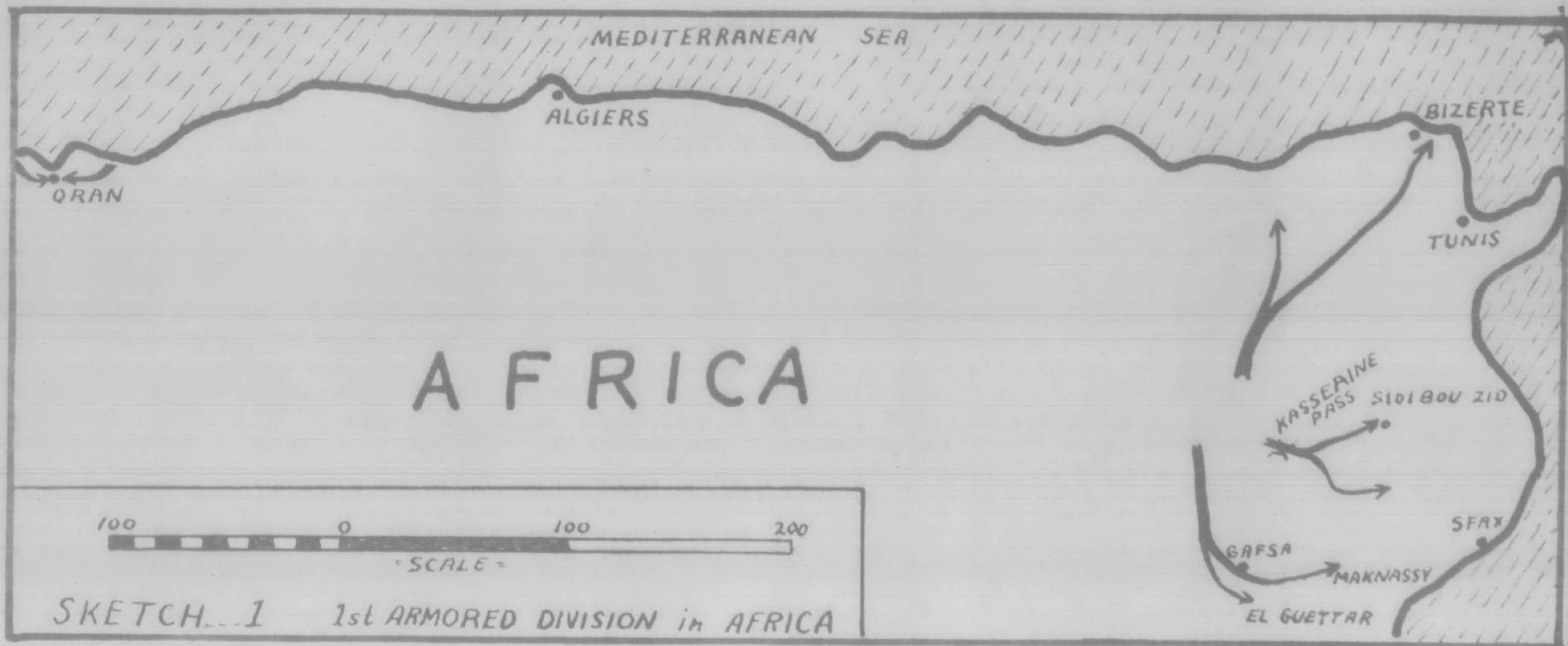
<sup>3</sup>Ibid

<sup>4</sup>Maj Gen E.N. Harmon and Milton MacKaye, "We Break out at Anzio", The Saturday Evening Post, 25 September 1948, p. 36.

<sup>5</sup>Op Cit., Fact Sheet on the 1st Armored Division.



MAP # 1  
 1st ARMORED DIVISION  
 from ROME to ALPS  
 June 1944 to APRIL 1945  
 Scale in Miles



SKETCH 1 - 1st ARMORED DIVISION in AFRICA



SKETCH 2 1st ARMORED DIV. in ITALY



## CHAPTER II

### PURSUIT TO AND BEYOND ROME

The pursuit action of the Fifth Army following the successful breakout from the ANZIO BEACHHEAD marked an entirely new phase of the Italian Campaign. Tactics of mobile warfare, fast moving armored forces, and swift changes in the situation marked the action for the first time since the fighting north of NAPLES. Pursuit above ROME was faster and on a greater scale than that from NAPLES to the Winter Line. Once the main German defenses south of ROME had been smashed, Fifth Army had the enemy on the run and kept him moving until forced to pause along the line of the ARNO RIVER for necessary resting, regrouping, and resupply.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout this successful campaign, the 1st Armored Division, the only armored division in Fifth Army, played a stellar role. Combat Commands of the Division spearheaded the Corps drives throughout, except for short periods spent in Army reserve for much needed maintenance, rest, and reorganization.

#### Smashing Final German Defenses South of ROME

The attack to free American troops from their ANZIO BEACHHEAD "prison" had begun on 23 May 1944 and was successful from the outset. Combat commands A and B of the 1st Armored Division led the VI Corps advance astride Highway 7. Task Force Howze, made up of the remainder of the 1st Armored Division's combat elements was among the leading elements of II Corps driving north along Highway 6.

By 31 May Fifth Army was ready for the last, all-out attack to free ROME. Accordingly General Mark Clark, the Fifth Army Commander, ordered new offensives to crush the German Fourteenth Army and to exploit by all possible means every opportunity to destroy the enemy.<sup>2</sup>

VI Corps was to attack on 1 June to secure that part of the COLLI LAZIALI hill mass in its zone of action. It was then to drive forward with the utmost speed to cut the routes of enemy withdrawal through ROME. On the north side of COLLI LAZIALI II Corps was to block all enemy traffic on Highway 6 by securing the high ground north of VALMONTONE. It was also to be prepared on Army order to pursue and annihilate German forces withdrawing across its front.

Proceeding generally on the basis of these instructions Fifth Army troops smashed the main German defenses south of ROME. By the evening of 3 June it was clear that all along the Army front the enemy was withdrawing in defeat.

#### The 1st Armored Division In The Liberation Of ROME

II Corps' final drive on ROME involved a great wheeling movement from north to west as its divisions entered the narrow corridor between COLLI LAZIALI and the hills at TIVOLI. The 85th and 88th Division delivered the main attack. To spearhead the drive up Highway 6 II Corps employed Task Force Howze, which for this operation consisted of:

3d Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment  
Company A, 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion

Attached:

1st Battalion, 7th Infantry  
1st Battalion, 349th Infantry  
756th Tank Battalion  
A battalion from 6th Field Artillery Group.

Task Force Howze was further attached to the 1st Special Service Force (See Annex No.4, p xxxviii). Corps order specified phase lines to coordinate the attack but units were not to halt until they reached the final phase line short of ROME, the north-south road passing through TOR SAPIENZA (See Map O, Page 33).

Company A, 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion led the way up Highway 6, followed by tanks of the task force at a pace of five to seven miles per hour. The accompanying infantry was hard pressed to keep up, and as a result the tanks were stopped beyond COLONNA by snipers and anti-tank guns. When the infantry came up, they moved through the tanks, located in partial defilade on each side of the road, and by combined action with the tank fires forced the enemy to withdraw.

The advance then continued until dark against stiff opposition, especially from the north where the Germans were guarding their escape route below TIVOLI. During the afternoon three tank battles took place on Highway 6 west of COLONNA but by dark Task Force Howze held the crossroads at OSTERIA FINOCCHIO. At 0200, 4 June, the 1st Special Service Force resumed the attack and in two hours pushed on to the final line near TOR SAPIENZA.

VI Corps' successful drive around the north side of COLLI LAZIALI forced stubborn enemy forces in front of VI Corps to beat a hasty retreat. VI Corps infantry immediately followed up the enemy withdrawal, but by evening, 3 June, contact was lost. The 1st Armored Division, with the 135th Infantry attached, followed the infantry advance preparatory to passing through the 45th Division along the ALBANO road near the CANUVIO railroad line. Late in the evening the Division crossed the railroad and went into temporary bivouac areas awaiting orders for the dash to ROME.

General Clark issued final instructions for the drive on ROME early on 4 June. His directive defined zones of action for Fifth Army units, prescribed a phase line north of ROME, and emphasized the vital necessity of seizing the TIBER bridges. The fall of ROME was a forgone conclusion. The important point now was to secure bridging sites over the TIBER in order that Fifth Army might continue the pursuit without interruption. All units were ordered to be ready to push armored reconnaissance columns forward rapidly to seize and secure crossings in their respective zones.<sup>4</sup>

In the VI Corps zone the drive which resulted in the capture of ROME was led by the 1st Armored Division which received road priority on Highway 7. Combat Command A on the right was composed of the 1st Armored Regiment and the 135th Infantry, 34th Division. CCB on the left was made up of the 1st Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment, the 3d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment; and the 6th Armored Infantry, moving in column of battalions

close behind the tanks. The 3d Battalion of the armored infantry was to proceed on foot and the 2d Battalion in half-track personnel carriers.

Just after midnight the night of 3-4 June, after having received several orders and counter-orders, the combat commands were directed to attack at 0345, 4 June. In CCA a "flying column" composed of one company each of tanks, armored infantry and engineers and a platoon of tank destroyers moved out at 0130 for ALBANO. No opposition was met as far as the town, for the infantry had cleared the road and pushed patrols into ALBANO itself early in the morning.

The advance guard therefore turned northwest from ALBANO on Highway 7, followed by a second force composed of the 2d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 135th Infantry. Below CASTEL GANDOLFO the advance guard was held up just before noon by three Mark VI tanks with snipers. This enemy force caused the column to halt temporarily three more times before reaching the outskirts of ROME. Here the 337th infantry, 85th Division, had already eliminated the major opposition. Hence, after one brief fire fight at the entrance to the city, CCA rolled through Porta San Giovanni into the city at about 1800. Making their way through the crowded, winding streets, the tanks secured the approaches to PONTE SANT ANGELO, PONTE UMBERTO I, and PONTE CAVOUR over the TIBER before midnight.

CCB, which moved out at 0345, at first met only mines

on the road curving along the slopes southwest of ALBANO, but as it turned west toward the TIBER it began to meet small-arms opposition. At an enemy strongpoint five miles west of ALBANO the main forces of the spearhead were forced to deploy and fight a running battle until after noon. At 1330 Company A, 13th Armored Regiment, and a platoon of tank destroyers moved to the south outskirts of ROME, followed later by the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, in half-tracks. While these forces gained control of PONTE PALATINO and other bridges in the southern part of the city, the rest of CCB moved out at 1500 in three columns to secure the two major TIBER crossings south of ROME. Minor enemy resistance caused occasional delay, but the armor held its objectives by 1800.

For the II Corps drive into the Eternal City, Task Force Howze was divided and then married-up with other units. On Highway 6 two companies of the 1st Regiment, 1st Special Service Force, moved out at 0440, 4 June, riding on the tanks of two companies of Task Force Howze's 13th Armored Regiment and in eight armored cars of Company A, 31st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. This force made rapid progress until it reached the road junction west of CENTOCELLE at 0615. Here anti-tank fire knocked out the two leading tanks, and the infantry deployed under heavy small arms fire. CENTOCELLE proved to be strongly defended. Not until after 0930, when a special force of the 88th Division driving over from the

VIA PRENESTINA arrived, was any further progress made:

The two 1st Special Service Force companies and the Task Force Howze elements attacked west at 1100 and slowly drove through the enemy opposition. At 1530 the 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, launched a final attack to the west. Between them the two drives broke the last enemy resistance, and the 1st Regiment, 1st Special Service Force, passed through to the northwest to a road junction on VIA PRENESTINA at the edge of the city proper at 1700. Here it met the 2d and 3d Regiments with the infantry elements of Task Force Howze, which had secured a crossing over the ANIENE RIVER north of TOR SAPIENZA in the morning and in the afternoon had driven west.

By 1900 II Corps units were entering ROME all along the Corps front, and by 2300 held all the bridges over the TIBER in the Corps zone.

By midnight 4 June troops of Fifth Army stood at the TIBER from its mouth to the junction with the ANIENE RIVER.

#### Pursuit North From ROME

Few troops had gone far beyond the TIBER on 4 June, and all units were ordered to push out the following day to secure a bridgehead over the river to a minimum depth of 6 miles. (See Map NO. 2, page 34). On 6 June the chase was continued by all units in their respective zones until new instructions from General Clark late that day directed that faster, more mobile troops be employed in the pursuit.<sup>5</sup>

#### The Enemy Situation

As it fled north from ROME the Fourteenth German Army

could be considered an army in name only. From 11 May through 4 June 1944, the German Armies in Italy had lost more than 1500 vehicles, 110 field artillery pieces, 125 self-propelled artillery and anti-tank guns, 122 tanks, and over 15,000 prisoners of war. Casualties in killed and wounded were much greater.

The vast majority of these losses had occurred in the Fourteenth Army, and of its field divisions only the Herman Goering Panzer Parachute Division still remained an effective fighting unit. It was estimated that four German divisions could be written off as virtually destroyed with five others in serious condition from the poundings they had taken in the Allies' spring drive. On 6 June the German High Command relieved General Eberhard von Mackensen and placed Lt. General (General of the Armored Forces) Joachim Lemelsen in charge of what remained of the Fourteenth Army.<sup>6</sup>

#### The VI Corps Zone

The territory northwest of ROME on the left of the VI Corps zone consisted of flat coastal plain, traversed by Highway 1 leading to CIVITAVECCHIA and on up the TYRRHENIAN coast. Low rolling hills made up the right half, offering little natural assistance for delaying action and favoring the employment of armor. The main axis of advance inland was along a secondary road branching northwest off Highway 2 about seven miles beyond ROME and running through BRACCIANO and ORIOLO ROMANO, then back to Highway 2 about four miles below VETRALLA.



The 34th Division was given the coastal zone; and the 36th Division, the inland zone. The 1st Armored Division, under the command of Major General Ernest N. Harmon, had the mission of spearheading the pursuit beyond ROME. Combat Command A, under Colonel Maurice W. Daniel, consisting of the 1st Armored Regiment and supporting division troops, and the 135th Infantry, attached from the 34th Division, was assigned to lead the advance in the zone of the 36th Infantry Division on the Corps right flank. CCB, under Brigadier General Frank A. Allen Jr., made up of the 13th Armored Regiment, the 6th Armored Infantry and supporting units, was to operate in front of the 34th Division on the left. The two infantry divisions were to follow the armor in their respective zones as rapidly as possible. The 45th Division was in Corps reserve behind the 34th Division.

At this time the remaining combat elements of the 1st Armored Division were similarly involved as Task Force Howze, attached to II Corps to the east. Action of this Task Force is discussed later in this chapter.

#### CCA and CCL Spearhead The VI Corps Drive

On 5 June Fifth Army troops secured a bridgehead over the TIBER to a depth of six miles. VI Corps units encountered only light enemy resistance: a few towed 88mm and smaller anti-tank guns, an occasional self-propelled gun or tank, and scattered infantry and snipers. However, like a snake trying to strike a foe through the eye of a needle, the traffic bottleneck in ROME made it impossible to unleash the full striking

power of the divisions until well into the afternoon. But by 2130, 5 June, the initial line based on strategic road junctions about six miles northwest of ROME had been secured across the Corps front.

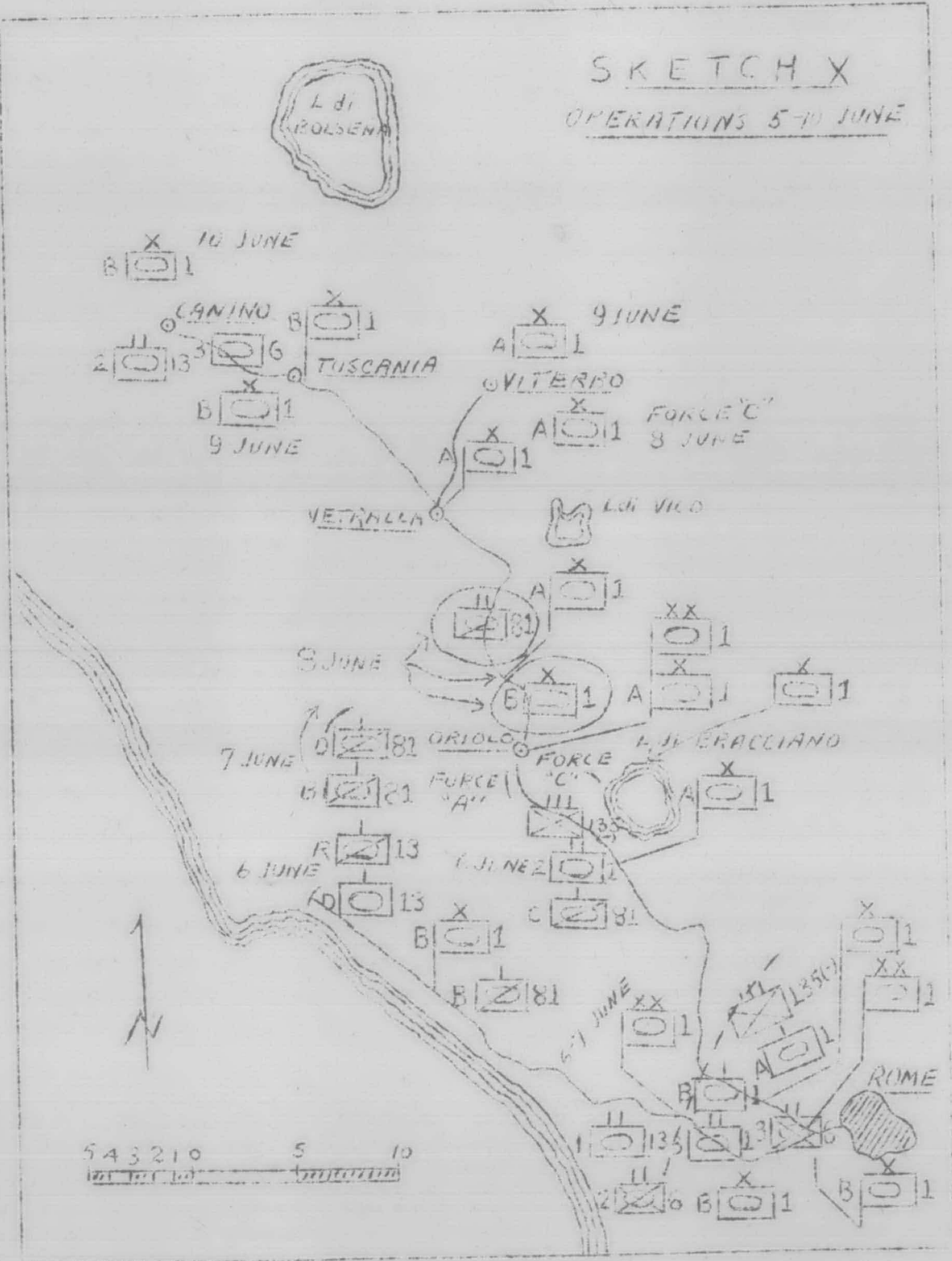
At 2100, 5 June, Fifth Army directed VI Corps to push aggressively as presently deployed and to capture CIVITAVECCHIA, the seaport city of ROME, as soon as possible. Corps immediately translated this prod into orders directing that tanks lead the attacks by day and that the infantry pass through the armor at dusk to press forward during the hours of darkness.<sup>8</sup>

At daybreak the next morning, 6 June 1944, CCB's armored and motorized units pushed rapidly up Highway 1 (See Sketch No X page 22). They made little contact with the enemy but were slowed considerably by blown bridges and other demolitions. In the interest of speed and reduction of traffic the 1st Armored Division limited each combat command to:

1 Medium Tank Battalion	1 Engineer Company
1 Infantry Battalion	1 Light Tank Company
1 Reconnaissance Company	1 Armored Field Artillery Battalion of 105mm self-propelled howitzers.

By nightfall 6 June 1944, both combat commands were nearly 25 miles north of ROME, CCB in the flat country along Highway 1, and CCA on the low rolling hills of the Via Claudia enroute to Highway 2. In accordance with the Corps plan, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 168th Infantry, motorized in trucks, passed through CCB at 2200 and moved up Highway 1. Advancing all night against very

SKETCH X  
OPERATIONS 5-10 JUNE



light resistance the infantry secured CIVITAVECCHIA by 1030, 7 June.

With the capture of CIVITAVECCHIA, Corps ordered CCE to relinquish the entire left zone to the 34th Division. CCB then crossed into the zone of the 36th Division via VACCINA and Mt. CUCCO to assemble behind CCA in the vicinity of BRACCIANO.

CCA and the 36th Division, on the right, had matched the progress of CCB and the 34th Division in spite of difficulties encountered moving cross-country. By darkness on 6 June 1944, CCA had cut the main ROME-BRACCIANO road and fought to the outskirts of BRACCIANO itself. Infantry of the 36th Division under Major General Fred L. Walker was to have advanced during the night to pass through the armor and continue the attack, but failed to arrive in time.

CCA consequently jumped off at daylight on 7 June in three task forces. These small combined arms teams, designated Task Forces A, B, and C, were composed identically of:

1 Medium Tank Company	1 Engineer Platoon
1 Infantry Company	1 Light Tank Platoon
1 Reconnaissance Platoon	1 Tank Destroyer Platoon (SP)

Task Force B passed through BRACCIANO, at 0600 followed by Task Force C, and headed for MANZIANA. Task Force A established a temporary road block on the road running north around LAKE BRACCIANO until relieved by elements of the 36th Division.

Task Force B captured and consolidated MANZIANA in mid-morning after a short action outside the town. Meanwhile, Task Force C continued on to ORIOLO ROMANO, occupying the town against slight opposition at 1600. Reconnaissance units pushed on to

VEIANO at dusk where progress was halted by large scale demolitions.

Moving against VETRALLA on the morning of 8 June, CCA encountered a fairly strong enemy rear guard near the junction of the road running north out of VEIANO and Highway 2. Tanks, infantry, and artillery of Task Force A subdued this force after a three-hour battle, but the delay enabled the bulk of the enemy force to retreat through VETRALLA.

As an early testimonial to the principle of fighting in column, only Task Force A had deployed in this action, and Task Force B, which followed close behind, immediately moved through in column at about 1300 and secured VETRALLA by 1600. Capture of VETRALLA opened the way to the key communication centers of CANINO and VITERBO. The latter city was included in the II Corps zone, but since it lay in the path of CCA, Task Force C continued on toward this important objective. The infantry of this task force continued to press forward until midnight, then halted upon coming up against a sizable tank and infantry force about a mile and one-half south of VITERBO. Following their usual tactics, the Germans withdrew during the latter part of the night. In the early morning 9 June, Task Force C passed through Task Force B and occupied VITERBO without resistance by 0650. This marked the foremost tactical advance of CCA during this phase of the drive north of ROME.

CCE, as directed, completed its shift and assembled behind CCA during the night of 8-9 June 1944. At 0700, 9 June,

CCB moved northwest from VETRALLA to seize TUSCANIA, using a rough, unfinished road cut by innumerable streams and defiles as an axis of advance. On the southern edge of TUSCANIA, a short, fierce fight ensued, but the town was captured by noon. By dark, reconnaissance had been pushed to the northwest within a mile of CANINO. Once again the Germans withdrew during the night, and by 0800, 10 June, CCB finished mopping up CANINO and vicinity.

Late on 9 June, CCA had begun to move back to an area near LAKE BRACCIANO into Army reserve. By the night of 11 June the remainder of the Division closed in this area.

At 1200, 11 June, IV Corps Headquarters took over command of the VI Corps zone, and VI Corps Headquarters shortly thereafter was assigned to Seventh Army for the invasion of Southern France. When VI Corps left the front, the Army line on the coastal side had been pushed nearly 65 miles north of ROME in less than a week. The Corps had secured the two vital objectives north of the city - the port of CIVITAVECCHIA and the airfields of VITERBO.<sup>9</sup>

#### Task Force Howze In II Corps Action

After II Corps captured the northeastern section of ROME late on 4 June, Task Force Howze, which had spearheaded the drive up Highway 6, assembled east of the city to reorganize. For the pursuit, II Corps picked the 86th and 38th Divisions to continue northward, with the general road line ORTE-SORIANO-VITERBO as the objective and Highway 2 as the principal axis of advance.<sup>10</sup>

The two divisions poured across the TIBER on 5 June and were hard pressed to keep up with the rapidly retreating foe. By nightfall, forward elements were five miles to the northwest. The following day the 85th Division, under Major General John B. Coulter, advanced in a column of regiments. The 338th and 337th Infantry followed the 339th Infantry, which sent its battalions forward in three columns generally astride the axis of Highway 2. Enemy resistance consisted only of rear guard action plus strong points at important road junctions. Thus by nightfall, 6 June, the 339th Infantry had taken ISOLA FARNESSE and pushed beyond.

On 7 June, the 337th Infantry, the Division reserve, was committed, passed through the 339th and 338th Infantry Regiments, and took up the main pursuit along Highway 2. The foot elements advanced six miles without meeting any opposition. It thus became evident that the Germans were rapidly moving out of contact and widening the gap between them and the pursuing troops,

Task Force Howze, by this time, had completed its re-organization. II Corps, seeking to increase its mobile striking power, attached Task Force Howze to the 85th Division at 1130, 7 June. The task force consisted of :

3d Battalion, 113th Armored Regiment  
13th Armored Regiment  
Detachment, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion  
Detachment, 47th Armored Medical Battalion

all under command of Colonel Hamilton W. Howze, Commanding Officer, 13th Armored Regiment.

The armor moved as rapidly as possible to an assembly area near the head of the division column. Meanwhile, the 2d

Battalion, 337th Infantry, motorized in trucks and supported by tanks, tank destroyers and a mechanized platoon from the 85th Reconnaissance Troop, had moved up Highway 2. This combat team met practically no resistance, and shortly after noon reached the east shore of LAKE BRACCIANO. After an uninterrupted drive, the motorized battalion finally regained enemy contact about two miles south of MONTEROSI, a highway junction town 5 miles north of LAKE BRACCIANO.

Five German tanks formed the nucleus of the enemy force, which caused the 2d Battalion to deploy. The 3d Battalion, 337th Infantry, promptly shuttled forward by 1600, and within an hour MONTEROSI fell before a coordinated attack by the two battalions. The enemy withdrew and the 337th Infantry occupied positions just beyond the town for the night.

Task Force Howze, further reinforced by attachment of the 117th Reconnaissance Squadron and the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, motorized, coiled behind the infantry positions beyond MONTEROSI during the night. At daybreak, 8 June, this force advanced well ahead of the infantry regiments. It ran into more mines and demolitions than on the preceding two days, slowing the pursuit considerably. However, the enemy rear guard did not turn and fight again until 1730 in the hills two miles north of RONCIGLIONE along the east edge of LAKE VICO, (See Map No. 2 page 34). The task force quickly disposed of this resistance and advanced about two miles north of LAKE VICO. Thus, by nightfall, Task



Force Howze was within six miles of VITERBO. The timing was good, because the next day, as Task Force Howze advanced some five miles farther to a point four miles due east of VITERBO, elements of CCA, 1st Armored Division, occupied the town without resistance as previously related.

On this same date, 9 June 1944, the mission of Task Force Howze was terminated when the French Expeditionary Corps relieved II Corps. The force returned to 1st Armored Division control on 10 June 1944.

In the four days II Corps fought north of ROME it had pushed more than 30 miles beyond the city, at comparatively small cost, and had rounded up close to 1500 prisoners. Most of the prisoners were stragglers who had been separated from their units, and the majority surrendered without opposition to armored reconnaissance troops. As an indication of the widespread demoralization in the German Fourteenth Army at that time, many prisoners were taken who had passes authorizing them to retreat as individuals until they reached the main battle line in the vicinity of FLORENCE. Prisoners were identified from nearly all units of Fourteenth Army.

By 10 June, when II Corps was entirely withdrawn, Fifth Army had reached the general line VITERBO - TUSCANIA - TARQUENIA, about 50 miles north of ROME.

Particularly notable in this phase of operations is the change in the employment of tanks. South of ROME medium tanks operated well ahead of the main body of the combat command to

provide maximum shock action. Then the infantry, closely supported by light tanks, followed in mopping-up operations, reducing any strong points by-passed by the initial waves of armor.

During the pursuit north of ROME, CCA first employed the small task organization which was to prove very effective and to become the accepted mode of proper employment of armor. These integrated teams of tanks, infantry, engineers and tank destroyers had the necessary flexibility to meet all situations. Since north of ROME most of the strong points and road blocks encountered had to be attacked frontally, the infantry was carried on medium tanks. By such organization the full strength of the force could be developed in minimum time. Further, and of prime importance, one team immediately moved through another as soon as the latter had reduced a strong point, thus speeding operation considerably.

#### Phase I In Restrospect

Fifth Army's drive to and beyond ROME was one of the most successful of the Italian Campaign. During this phase the 1st Armored Division made the greatest contribution to Fifth Army's success it was to make until the smashing final victory in the PO VALLEY. It had been employed in what must be considered a normal armored role for the Italian Theatre. However, had more armored units been available to Fifth Army, thereby freeing the 1st Armored Division for action as a unit, much greater success may well have been realized following the very successful break-out from ANZIO.

In considering the action north of ROME the following comments of Major General Wolfe Hauser, the Chief of Staff of the German Fourteenth Army are of interest: "From 6 to 10 June 1944 the chief problem confronting the Army Commander was what to do about our right flank. The 20 Luftwaffe Division had been moved to the front from FLORENCE but was quickly overrun near CIVITAVECCHIA. The 162 Turcoman Division and the 90 Panzer Grenadier Division were enroute to reinforce the front line units but had been delayed due to transportation difficulties. Faced with such a hopeless situation we were saved by unexpected Allied action. The 34th US Infantry Division and the 1st US Armored Division were withdrawn from the line. We did not and could not have stopped them. Fortunately for us, this pause in the pursuit permitted reinforcement of the west flank with fresh troops of the 162 Turcoman Division and the 90 Panzer Grenadier Division. I would like to see the history of the American Fifth Army to learn the reason for not pressing their advantage. From the German point of view this withdrawal of troops from the line at such a critical moment is not understandable." 11 .

If the enemy was in such dire straits why had the pursuit been interrupted, and, in particular, why had the armored spearheads been removed from in front of the infantry divisions? The first reason for this action of the Fifth Army commander was the fact that at this time units were being withdrawn from Italy and assigned to Seventh Army for the

invasion of Southern France. During the period 1 June - 1 August 1944 IV Corps Headquarters replaced VI Corps, and nine full infantry divisions and the equivalent of a tenth were assigned elsewhere. Hence, a cautious attitude was to be expected and was reflected in frequent regrouping to reorganize rather than relentless pursuit. Local expediency had to be sacrificed for the good of the overall Allied effort in Europe.

A second prime consideration was the physical condition of the troops. The units driving from the south to force a junction with the ANZIO BEACHHEAD had been involved in heavy fighting since early in May. BEACHHEAD units had had little rest for 72 hours prior to H - hour on 23 May. Concentrating for the attack at night and making diversionary movements during the day resulted in units which were fatigued before the attack jumped off. Fifth Army units welcomed the opportunity for maintenance, rest and rehabilitation following the dash beyond ROME.

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- 1 Fifth Army History, Vol VI, page 104.
- 2 Fifth Army History, Vol V, page 143.
- 3 Ibid, page 147.
- 4 Ibid, page 155.
- 5 Fifth Army History, Vol VI, page 21.
- 6 Ibid, page 6.

7 Ibid, Page 20.

8 Ibid, page 21.

9 Ibid, page 24.

10 Ibid, page 25.

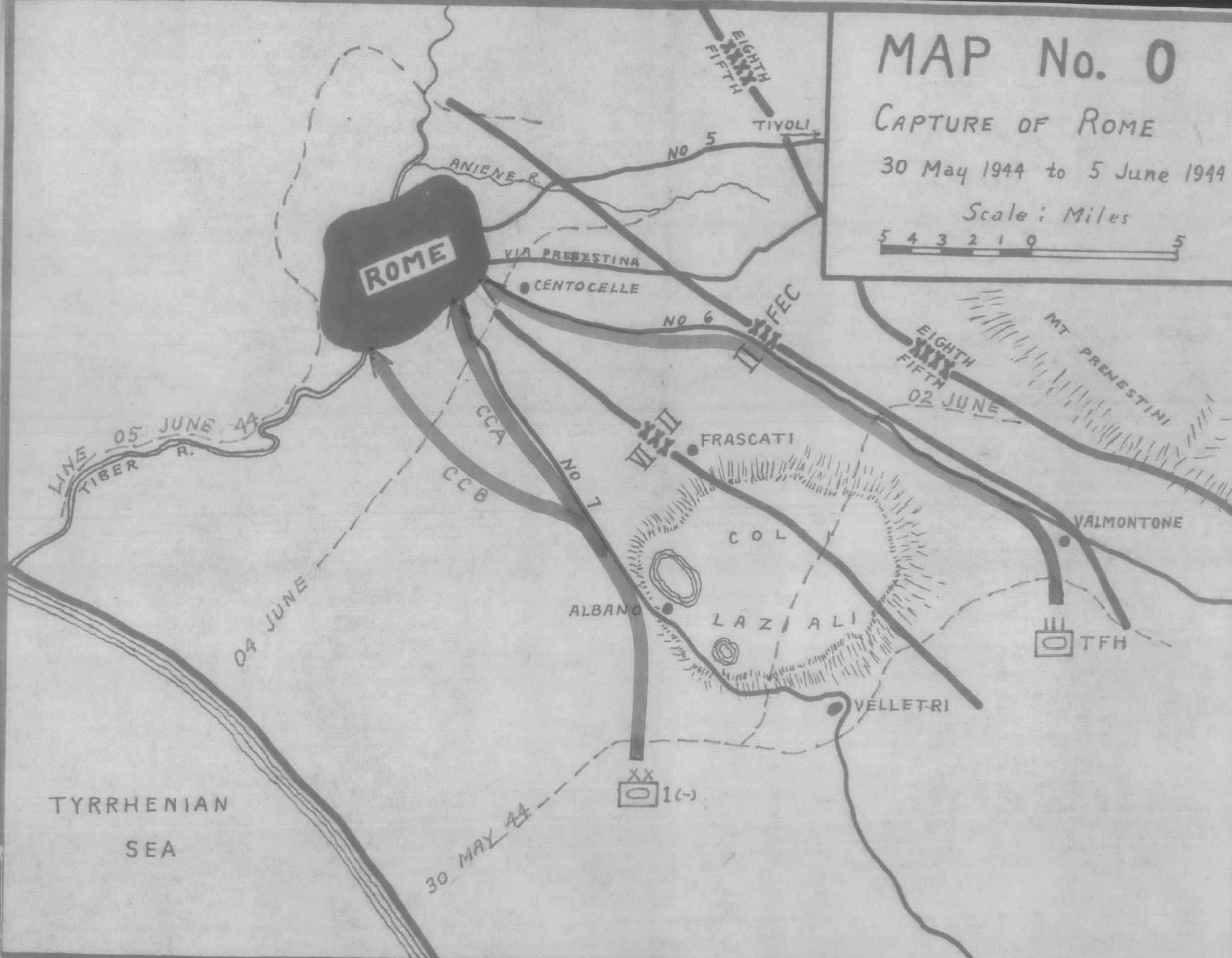
11 The Italian Campaign, by Major General Wolfe Hauser,  
written under supervision of USFET Historical Division, November  
1947, Chapter 2, Section A, (Translated from the German).

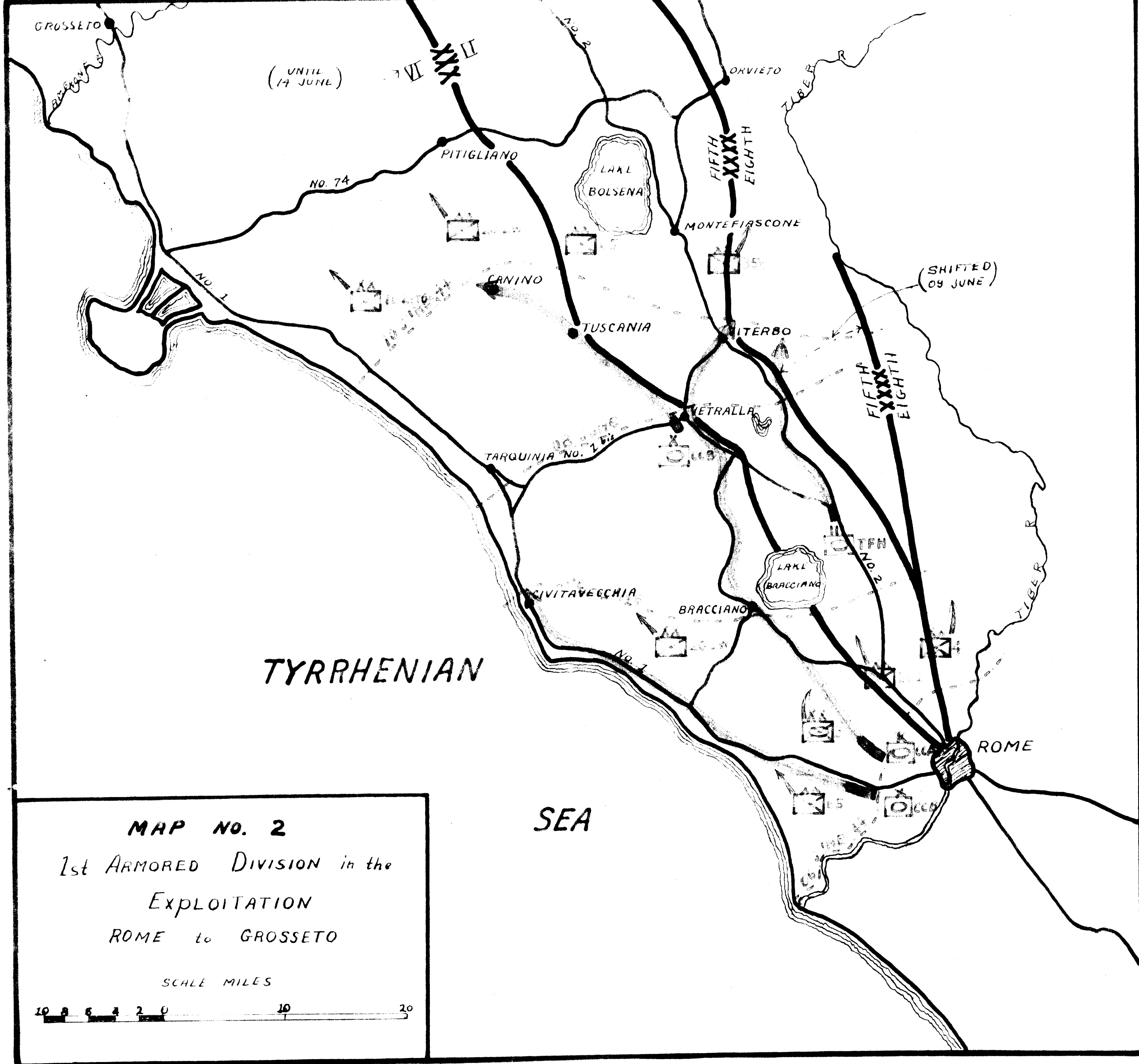
# MAP No. 0

## CAPTURE OF ROME

30 May 1944 to 5 June 1944

Scale: Miles





**MAP NO. 2**  
 1st ARMORED DIVISION in the  
 EXPLOITATION  
 ROME to GROSSETO  
 SCALE MILES

## CHAPTER III

### PURSUIT THROUGH THE TUSCANS

Three weeks of bridging hell, over a distance of 40 miles by airline, but over 100 miles by trail, characterize this most tortuous terrain battle ever experienced by an armored division.

Indicative of the obstacles encountered are the following statistics: The 1st Armored Division's 16th Armored Engineer Battalion alone constructed 37 treadway bridges (almost 2 per day), restored 12 enemy bridges, surfaced 8 major fords, graded 150 miles of by-passes, bulldozed through the rubble of 11 major towns, and cleared over 500 road miles of mines -- all in the short space of 21 days.

#### The Terrible Terrain

The terrain from GROSSETTO to VOLTERRA was extremely mountainous, and was broken by seemingly endless numbers of streams, gorges, and abrupt shelves, which had been fashioned into narrow and constantly spiralling trails and roads. There was never a mile on any road without many curves, and each curve became an excellent site for a road block, which the Germans never failed to construct. According to many books that have been written, armor was never intended for operations in such terrain, but it can and did operate here.

The so-called "impassable terrain" very often worked to Allied advantage. Habitually the Germans would consider such terrain as sufficient flank protection, only to wake up with a company of American M4 tanks sitting astride the



"goat hills" and shooting up their positions. Or frequently, an enemy force, on a seemingly impregnable position, would halt an American armored column and submit it to heavy fire, then suddenly have to flee in haste and surprise from fire that seemed to come out of the sky from the enemy's rear or flank. <sup>1</sup>

### The Big Picture

As the relief of VI Corps and some combat units was accomplished to provide forces for the invasion of Southern France, the 1st Armored Division enjoyed a brief respite. This permitted rest, rehabilitation and refitting of the division's combat units for the coming weeks of "goat trail spearheads", vertical envelopments, and endless major obstacles.

In the interim, between 11 June 1944, when the 1st Armored Division began its well earned rest, and 20 June, when the Division returned to active contact, elements of the 36th Division (reinforced) in the west, and Task Force Ramey (See Appendix No. 4, page xxxv), in the east, had advanced to a line running generally from the west coast about 8 miles north of GROSSETTO, to the British 8th Army boundary in the vicinity of SARTEANO.

At 1330, 16 June 1944, the 1st Armored Division was attached to IV Corps. To build up the Division's man power, Corps attached to it on 20 June the 361st Infantry Regiment and the 69th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, and placed the 936th Field Artillery Battalion in general support.

The Corps plan called for the 1st Armored Division to pass through the inland positions of the 36th Infantry Division. The infantry elements thus released would join the remainder of the 36th Division in the western coastline zone along the general axis of Highway 1. This zone was about 12 miles wide, and the terrain was generally flat, with some low rolling hills. The 1st Armored Division columns were to advance abreast on the right of the infantry, over a multitude of roads and trails through progressively rugged mountains. This zone was 20 miles in width, had very few towns, and had many trails hardly negotiable by armor. The ARNO RIVER was the IV Corps objective, and Highway 68, including the key city of VOLTERRA was the intermediate objective for the 1st Armored Division. The Corps commander also set the time 0530, 22 June, as H-hour for the full scale attack.

The enemy disposed his tank and anti-tank strength in preparation for an expected armored thrust up the coastal plains. Along the coast, elements of the German 16 SS Panzer Grenadier Division were identified, while slightly inland were battered remnants of 19 GAF Field Division and the 162 Turcoman Grenadier Division. Further inland were remnants of 3 Panzer Grenadier Division and the 20 GAF Field Division, which straddled the IV Corps - French Expeditionary Corps boundary. In view of such enemy dispositions IV Corps hoped to deceive the enemy by committing the 1st Armored Division inland on the more rugged terrain where the armor would be

least expected.

The 1st Armored Division Role

Since 17 June 1944, tank transporters had been shuttling the tanks of the Division from Lake BRACCIANO to new forward assembly areas vicinity of MAGLIANO, a distance of about 50 miles. This operation and movement of the entire Division was completed by 20 June 1944. After regrouping in temporary assembly areas, main elements of the Division finally coiled behind positions of the 36th Infantry Division and Task Force Ramey in assembly areas as shown in Map No 3, page 36.

The broad objective from the armored point of view, as outlined by General Harmon, was, "Seizure of the road-net around PISA".

At this point the combat commands and Task Force Howze (Division Reserve) were grouped as follows:

CCA (Colonel Maurice W. Daniel)

1st Armored Regiment  
1st & 3d Battalions, 361st Infantry Regiment  
Co B, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion  
Co D, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion  
27th & 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalions.

CCB (Brigadier General Frank A. Allen)

6th Armored Infantry Regiment, (-1st Battalion)  
1st & 3d Battalions, 13th Armored Regiment  
Co C, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion  
Co A, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion  
68th & 69th Armored Field Artillery Battalions

Task Force Howze (Colonel Hamilton H. Howze,  
13th Armored Regiment)  
(Temporary Division Reserve)

13th Armored Regiment (-1st & 3d Battalions)  
1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry Regiment  
(Later 2d Battalion, 361st Infantry).  
Co A, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion  
Co C, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion  
93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
69th & 93d Field Artillery Battalions (6th  
Armored Field Artillery Gp).

Initially the two Combat Commands were to make the main effort. At 1500 on 21 June CCA and CCB moved through units of the 36th Infantry Division. By nightfall both Combat Commands contacted the enemy and made limited advances in preparation for the main attack the following morning.

With the dual mission of protecting the 1st Armored Division right flank and of maintaining contact with the French, the 81st Reconnaissance Battalion (with C Co, 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached) moved out at 0730 on 21 June. They contacted the enemy in the vicinity of PAGANICO at 1150, and at 2200 accomplished liaison with French units to the east. The flank mission was doubly difficult since the armored cars and tanks had to thread their way along small trails and cross country. While they did not face a major enemy force, all elements of the battalion were forced to fight their way forward.

#### Resuming The Pursuit

At 0530 on 22 June, both combat commands struck out anew in their zones. Roads were of prime importance, as the terrain prevented practically all cross country movement. Consequently, every small road and trail was utilized. The burden was almost entirely on the lead vehicles and seldom could more than 2 tanks in each column find room for "off-

the-road" deployment.

Colonel Daniel's CCA at first employed 2 columns, one striking north toward ROCCASTRADA, the other east toward CIVITELLA against increasing enemy opposition. By mid-morning it was necessary to commit a third column which thrust up smaller trails between the first two columns. Here again the terrain dictated the breakdown of armor into small task forces even more than in the pursuit immediately north of ROME.

The third column (middle) was held up by a blown bridge over the GHETANO RIVER about 3 miles northwest of PAGANICO until 1430, but then progressed to within two miles southeast of ROCCASTRADA. All CCA forces made a general advance of five miles by nightfall, against combined enemy opposition consisting of small groups of infantry, SP guns and light artillery.

CCB, commanded by Brigadier General Frank A. Allen, advanced very slowly in column against elements of the enemy 162 Turcoman Grenadier Division and tanks of 3 Panzer Grenadier Division until stopped at 1350 in the vicinity of ST di GAVORRANO. After a hard fight in which several enemy tanks were destroyed, this force advanced to CAST di PIETRA before dark.

Task Force Howze was committed in the center of the Division zone at 1300 on 22 June 1944. Its mission was to secure the junction on a secondary road one mile southeast of MONTEMASSI, and the main cross road in the village of MELETA. The attached Reconnaissance Company, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion moved out at 0700. This unit reached

the first objective by 1300, and pushed on through MONTEMASSI to within 2000 yards of MELETA. Here, at 1640, the Reconnaissance Company ran into a strong force of enemy tanks, armored cars and infantry and had to withdraw to MONTEMASSI. However, the Task Force Howze main body had jumped off at 1300. It proceeded partly cross country, meeting little interference, and reached the MONTEMASSI-ROCCASTRADA road.

At this point, it is interesting to note that while the Task Force Howze reconnaissance elements were falling back under enemy pressure, Company D, 13th Armored Regiment, under Captain Gleason, pushed north toward the town of SASSOFORTINO with the mission of cutting the main road east from MELETA to Highway 73. As this unit neared its objective it suddenly came upon a large group of German infantry assembled alongside the road, preparing, as was later found out, to launch an attack on another of our columns down the lateral road that the Gleason force was to cut. The enemy was taken by surprise, and the tank gunners had a heyday, bringing all weapons to bear on them. Not many of these Germans lived to tell about it. The Gleason unit cut the road and held fast for the night.

During the night 22-23 June 1944, the enemy opposing CCA fell back considerably from their defensive positions, leaving the matter of delay to scattered mines and demolitions. CCA's right column entered CIVITELLA without resistance early on 23 June and occupied it until troops of the French Exped-

itionary Corps arrived at 1000. The left column was stopped by a blown bridge over a stream in the vicinity of MONTE ALTO. Finding no by-pass, this unit counter-marched and joined the CCA main body on Highway 73.

On the contrary, CCA's middle column met with head-on resistance before the heavily mined hill town of ROCCASTRADA, the last obstacle to the opening of Highway 73 as an important MSR. This armored column quickly by-passed to the left of the town over a trail that would have worried a mule, and before the Germans knew what happened our tanks came in from the north and east, driving the main German elements out with heavy casualties. The 3rd Battalion (reinforced), 141st Infantry, then became the 4th column of CCA, forced the entrance to ROCCASTRADA from the southwest and completed the job of mopping up by 1630. At 1800, this infantry unit was relieved from attachment to the 1st Armored Division.

#### The Double Ambush

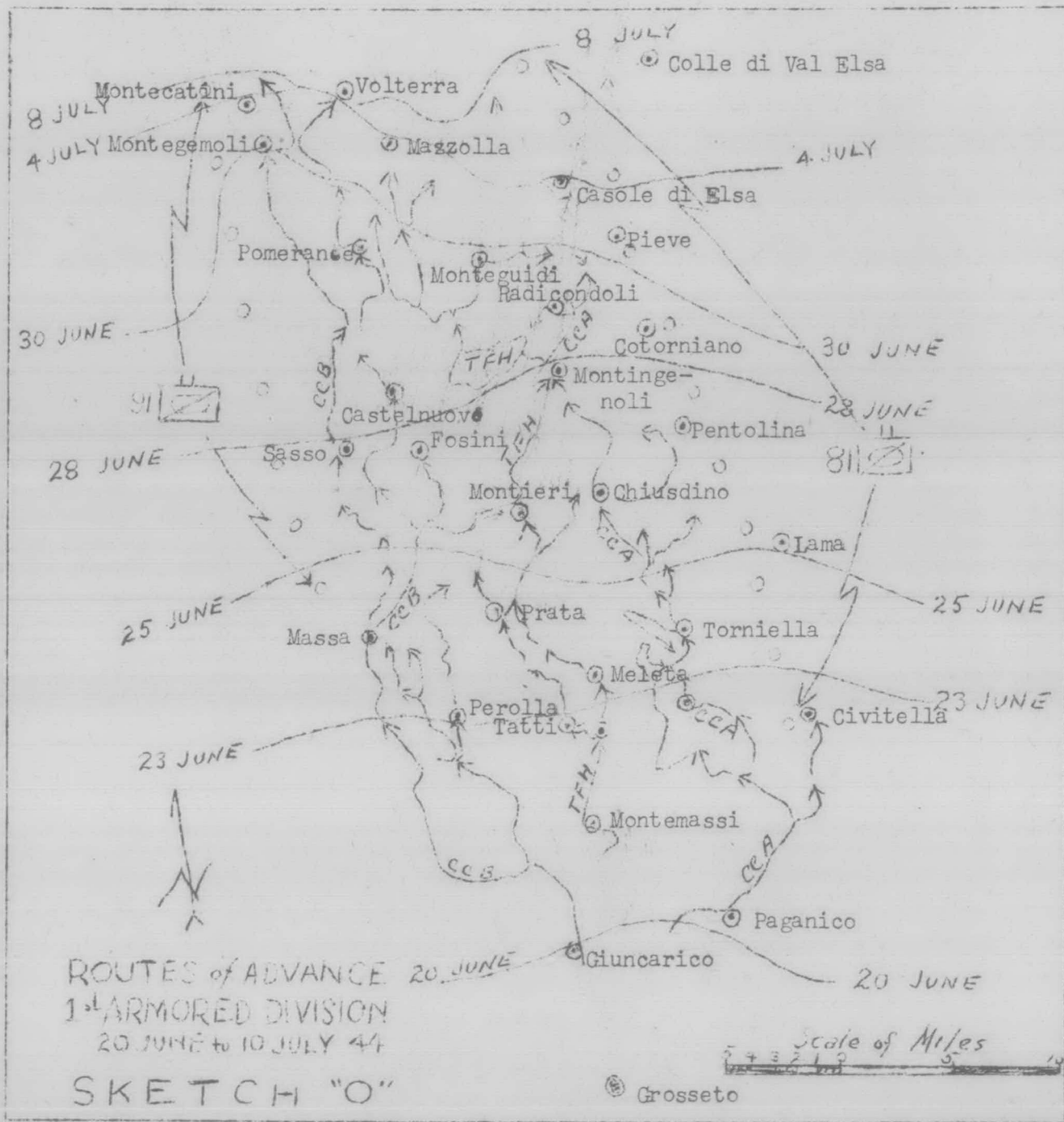
On the division west flank, CCB immediately encountered the bulk of the German armor in the division zone. On the day of the push, progress was slowed by stiff resistance of German tank elements protected by infantry.

When CCB left Highway 1 and turned north into the mountains on the road to MASSA MARITTIMA, it had to pass through a narrow saddle in the hills. Out of sight on the far side of this saddle, deployed and ready, waited nine Mark VI tanks. As CCB's column crossed the rise, the Tigers struck. In the

ensuing battle several of the Tigers were destroyed, but the Germans' tactics worked, and they held the position.

To relieve the pressure on the CCB main column at this point and to create a diversion, a separate force consisting of Co B, 13th Armored Regiment, with a platoon of tank destroyers attached, was sent 10 miles back over Route 1 and around to the right. These elements encountered few demolitions and mines and only slight resistance until their tanks were out in the open. This diversionary force was trapped along a small road 3 miles east of the CCB main body, where it was suddenly attacked from the flanks and rear by 4 Mark IV and 6 Mark VI tanks supported by infantry. Our light tanks were hopelessly outgunned. Before this unit could extricate itself, it lost 12 light tanks and 4 M-10 tank destroyers. During this attack, one engineer reconnaissance officer with the column crept close enough to disable one of the German tanks with a bazooka, and killed or wounded its crew with a carbine as they climbed out. He diverted the attention of another Mark VI until a tank destroyer moved in and smashed it by 3 direct hits with 3-inch shells. Artillery accounted for another Mark VI in this fiasco, which compensated in part for this greatest of losses to the diversionary force. During this battle, the main body of CCB was still occupied in a savage battle with the group of Mark VI tanks at the "saddle" about 6 miles south of MASSA MARITTIMA. A frontal attack was out of the question, so the CCB commander sent





another reinforced reconnaissance company around the left flank over a small trail. Again the Germans had relied on so called "impassable terrain" to protect their flank. But this force reached high ground overlooking the saddle. Concentrated direct fire, plus well directed artillery fire, cost the enemy 3 more Mark VI's. The Germans had to withdraw, and the CCB main body moved to within sight of MASSA MARITTIMA before darkness.

Early this same day, 23 June, Task Force Howze continued its northward advance in two columns. Stiff opposition from considerable tank, infantry, and anti-tank elements was steadily pushed back until 1600, when resistance stiffened in front of the left column commanded by 1st Lieutenant Frank Clay, 13th Armored Regiment, at TATTI.

After a coordinated attack, TATTI was secured and cleared by 2130. Debris littered the streets of TATTI, requiring another all night job by the attached engineers. By the same hour, the right column, under command of Major Harvey, 6th Armored Infantry Regiment, had driven to high ground just beyond MELETA. During the late afternoon, C company, 81st Reconnaissance Battalion, was attached to Task Force Howze.

In these two days of operations the Division pushed north about 10 miles by map, or at least 20 miles by road and trail, as shown on Sketch No 0, p 44. At this point there were at least ten separate columns operating generally abreast

but because of terrain, not mutually supporting:

A general tightening up of the German defense was apparent, showing that the earlier abandonment of the pursuit north of ROME materially helped the enemy to reorganize his scattered units.

After the lesson of "the saddle", which caused CCB the greatest single tank loss in this operation, no future move was ever made over such terrain without first investigating on foot. At SASSO FORTINO we saw a successful exploitation of "impassable terrain" by Task Force Howze, completely surprising German infantry assembling for another attack. According to intelligence reports, the German 162 Turcoman Grenadier Division advised subordinate units that "since the opposing armor was using trails generally considered impassable to tanks, bazooka teams should be placed along all trails, regardless of condition".<sup>1</sup>

#### The Torniella Defile

Continuing at 0600, 24 June, CCA made rapid progress over rugged terrain until mid-afternoon when the center column reached TORNIELLA, a little town in a defile formed by a long narrow valley. The Germans decided to make a stand beyond this town, and their choice gave them every defensive advantage. At the north edge of town the only two bridges had been blown, and these demolished crossing over two successive streams were hotly defended.

After the initial attempt to establish a bridgehead

was beaten back by intense small arms and artillery fire, the first stream was finally crossed before dark. The second stream was a much larger obstacle and progress stopped for the night. The main body in TORNIELLA was harrassed by mortar barrages until the obstacle was crossed the following night. CCA's left column met little resistance except the terrain, and at dusk it halted off the road two miles southwest of TORNIELLA, still looking for a trail to the north. The right column remained in CIVITELLA until relieved by the 81st Reconnaissance Battalion at 1200, 25 June, and then assembled in the vicinity of ROCCASTRADA.

Early this same day, 24 June, CCB's right column was stopped by heavy enemy resistance at PEROLLA, about 3 miles southeast of MASSA MARITTIMA. After a long search, this force found a by-pass by which the tanks could out flank the town. Under a fast coordinated attack, with our tanks moving from the east and infantry circling from the west, the German force of 10 tanks and a large number of infantry was forced from the position and retired. A short distance north of PEROLLA, the German infantry turned to fight and a six-hour battle followed. However, the German tanks had withdrawn from contact, so this battle was finally broken up at 1800 when our light tanks over-ran the German infantry positions. This force then continued north until stopped by darkness east of BELLA VISTA.

### Fight For MASSA MARITTIMA

Simultaneous with this action, CCB's center and left columns were fighting for MASSA MARITTIMA. They succeeded in spite of continuous small arms and anti-tank fire from their flanks and occupied that town by 1600. In this action, tanks of the left force pushed into the town and two miles beyond, where they were stopped by a blown bridge over the PECORA RIVER. The center force split into 2 columns and secured two strong points, one at MOL. RADII and the other a mile northwest of FONDERIA. CCB received attachment of C Troop, 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, at this time.

The debris clogging the streets of TATTI was cleared by hard working engineers during the night 23-24 June, and both armored columns of Task Force Howze were on the road by 0600. The left column advanced against light opposition at first, but was abruptly halted at a blown bridge over the MERSE RIVER one mile south of GABELLINO. This point was strongly defended by a well organized enemy tank-infantry - artillery force. The right column encountered increasingly strong resistance from enemy tanks and infantry until it, too, was stopped by a determined force one mile north of CERRO BALESTRO. Both forces were stymied for the night. Meantime, at 1630, 24 June, Task Force Howze received the timely attachment of 2nd Battalion, 361st Infantry.

Before dawn 25 June 1944, CCA's attached infantry

(3d Battalion, 361st Infantry), stubbornly attempted to cross the second stream beyond TORNIELLA but was again driven back with considerable loss. Then the bold frontal attack was abandoned in favor of a flanking movement to the right. At 1930 this attack paid off with the infantry capture of SCALVAIA, a small village on the crest of a high hill from which most of the small arms fire had been received. With this interference removed, the engineers quickly erected a by-pass crossing that was ready for traffic at dawn 26 June 1944.

CCB's successes of 24 June at PEROLLA and MASSA MARITTIMA knocked the center out of the Nazi defense line to their front. For the next 2 days CCB's columns fought mainly the terrain and demolished roads. On the 25th, well placed enemy artillery fire limited the combat command's advances to a blown bridge over a stream one mile west of PRATA, and another over the south branch of the MILIA RIVER four miles north of MASSA MARITTIMA. However, infantry elements with the right column pushed north to the vicinity of CASTAGNOLI, and A Troop, 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, secured their left flank.

In the center of the division front the enemy facing Task Force Howze withdrew during the night of 24 June. Task Force Howze's left column crossed the gap north of CERRO BALESTRO and by 0930 on 25 June had secured the town of PRATA three miles to the northwest with little interference. This column continued north and made contact with elements of CCB at 1330

west of PRATA. The right column was less fortunate, moving slowly against strong resistance all through the day.

The attached 2nd Battalion, 361st Infantry, in a surprise move, seized intact the bridge over the MERSE RIVER one mile south of BELVEDERE at 1250, and by dark its advance elements were in BELVEDERE. Strong reconnaissance elements were pushed northeast toward CHIUSDINO, and before night-fall had reached the crossing of the MERSE RIVER four miles southwest of CHIUSDINO.

During this two day advance of 7 miles along the 1st Armored Division front, which involved many more road miles, (See Sketch No. 0, page 44) CCA met well organized enemy resistance. CCB, while it did meet the bulk of the German armor, threw the reorganizing German defense completely off balance by its successes at PEROLLA and MASSA MARITTIMA. However, the terrain prevented CCB from any extended exploitation of its successes. Task Force Howze progressed very slowly against strengthening enemy resistance in the center zone. Its only notable success was when attached infantry captured intact the bridge at BELVEDERE, opening another route to CHIUSDINO.

#### Approach To CHIUSDINO

On the 26th CCA moved slowly ahead over rugged terrain, with attached infantry deployed along high ground on both sides of Highway 73, clearing enemy delaying elements overlooking the long valley all the way to CHIUSDINO. The terrain was ideal for defense and delay; at one point over 100 trees lay

across the valley road. Mines and blown culverts became normal obstacles. By nightfall, CCA's right column reached LUFIANO and the left column halted at the highway running east and west 3 miles south of CHIUSDINO. The column retired to a point on Highway 73 about one mile north of OSTERIA into CCA reserve.

All through this day, CCB merely pushed slowly north on its established axis, battling a stubborn rear guard of 2 Mark VI tanks and infantry. The right and left columns encountered very bad terrain, and the attached infantry had to proceed alone to secure their objective, the high ground 3 miles southwest of OSTERIA. The center column inched forward to a point just east of the main highway 2 miles directly north of OSTERIA.

In a move to increase the pressure on the retreating Germans, Task Force Howze's attached infantry battalion attacked MONTIELI shortly after midnight and secured it by 0430, 26 June, 1944. Passage of the armor through the town was delayed several hours by more debris. When the right armored column did move, it met resistance all the way, and by darkness advanced to a point two miles south of TRAVALE.

Reconnaissance elements sent toward CHIUSDINO made good progress against light opposition, until stopped by self-propelled guns and anti-tank fire in the vicinity of CICIANO, where they remained for the night.



The Task Force Howze left column, which contacted CCB north of PRATA, returned to the main axis and continued north in Task Force Howze reserve. Elements of the attached C Company, 81st Reconnaissance Battalion, were sent to contact CCB at the road junction two miles south of GERFALCO. On the way, two armored cars were knocked out by enemy anti-tank fire about one mile east of the road junction, and this reconnaissance force withdrew to the high ground one-half mile northwest of MONTIERI where they set up a road block.

Leading elements of CCA entered CHIUSDINO without opposition at 0730, 27 June, and pushed on 5 miles beyond the town before darkness. Meanwhile, the 81st Reconnaissance Battalion moved on to MONTICIANO on the right flank of the division zone. During this day the 1st Armored Division had enjoyed good hunting, destroying among other German vehicles 4 Mark VI and 2 Mark IV tanks.

While the rugged terrain hampered free movement of the armored columns, no opportunity was overlooked to employ the mobility of these columns to assist each other. Even our own forces were surprised at times when another friendly column would show up on a flank or behind an enemy position from a different direction at a crucial moment. Executing such a movement on 27 June, one CCA column moved down the small valley east of CHIUSDINO, cut Highway 73, and denied its use to the enemy in front of the French Expeditionary Corps until the following day.

Meanwhile, the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, commanded by Lt Colonel Charles A. Ellis, was attached to CCB during the night 26-27 June. On 27 June the 91st proceeded to fill the gap between CCB and the 34th Infantry Division on the left flank. The 34th Division had just relieved the 36th Infantry Division in the western coastal zone.

CCB pushed north against varying resistance on 27 June and by 1130 took GERFALGO, a village four miles east of MONTEROTONDO. CCB also had forward infantry elements within sight of MONTEROTONDO by nightfall. In the dash from MASSA MARITTIMA the attacking armored infantry surprised and captured a complete horse drawn artillery battery. The horses solved the supply transport problem until the infantry reached the MONTEROTONDO road net 8 miles to the north. This progress placed CCB roughly halfway between MASSA MARITTIMA and the next combat command objective, CASTELNUOVO. In the ensuing fight from MONTEROTONDO to SASSO the armored infantry battalion completely exhausted itself in this canalized sector ideal for the concentration of German defenses. The town of SASSO could be taken, but not held for long without tank support. Since no road, or even trails existed, a force of M-4 tanks again picked its way over "impassable terrain" and reached SASSO intact and on time.

During this day, Task Force Howze continued its advance in one main column, sending strong reconnaissance elements east and west from MONTIERI for contact with CCA and

CCB, respectively. C Company, 81st Reconnaissance Battalion, made contact with CCB as planned at the road junction two miles south of GERFALCO at 1100, 27 June, while elements of the 13th Armored Regiment moved east without opposition and contacted CCA at CHIUSDINO, at 0825. Both contact elements then rejoined the main column.

Progress of Task Force Howze during this day was slower due to mines, demolitions, and anti-tank fire, but the advance was continued during the night.

#### Shift To The West

On 28 June 1944, the division main effort shifted westward. CCA (now moving in two columns), quickly advanced five more miles until met by heavy opposition before MONTINGEGNOLI. There enemy anti-tank and small arms fire pinned down the infantry and halted the tanks of the first team of CCA. This situation continued until 1400. When Task Force Howze arrived unexpectedly from the southwest. This sudden arrival of another major force from a different direction completely demoralized the Germans, who picked up and hurriedly withdrew from the town and vicinity.

By noon this same day, CCB's left column drove enemy infantry out of MONTEROTONDO, but our tanks were unable to advance beyond the town due to poor road conditions. The right column faced the same problem. Its infantry cleared the village of FOSINI by 1735, but the road beyond leading to CASTELNUOVO was blocked with rubble.

By midnight 27 June elements of Task Force Howze were in vicinity of LAGONI. Dismounted patrols operating 1500 yards in front of the armored column made contact with infantry elements of CCA at 0215 just south of MONTINGEGNOLI. Shortly after dawn, a coordinated attack was made on the enemy strong points in this vicinity with great success. At 1400, MONTINGEGNOLI was taken by Task Force Howze, and by 1500 elements were in blocking positions on the main Highway two miles north of the town. These positions were maintained until CCA passed through to the north.

This three day period (June 26 to 28 Incl) was highlighted by a comparatively rapid advance of 12 miles in the CCA & Task Force Howze zones, and a much tougher advance of 7 miles for CCB in the west. CCA and Task Force Howze found it possible to converge their efforts fully in several important instances, including the key points, CHIUSDINO and MONTINGEGNOLI. It was a rare occasion when the terrain in these hills permitted such effective mutual support. In CCB's zone the increasingly difficult terrain cancelled much of the effectiveness of its armor on the way to MONTE-ROTONDO and SASSO. The mountains became steeper, and when even the trails gave out a 10 mile advance on foot followed. It was on such occasions that the big question arose: "Was it worth the extra trouble to take the tanks through too?" The answer was invariably yes, because when the tanks did arrive, the element of surprise worked wonders against the enemy.

The next day, 29 June, CCA bore the brunt of enemy reaction during its advance on RADICONDOLI, after negotiating a long and difficult by-pass around CASONE. As elements of CCA reached RADICONDOLI, heavy fire came from high ground in vicinity of MENSANO, across the small valley to the east. Five vehicles of the forward team were knocked out and all progress stopped. It was at this point that the enemy injected elements of the 26th Panzer Division into the fight. The attached 1st Battalion, 361st Infantry, took up the attack at nightfall and secured the road junction two miles southeast of MENSANO.

During the morning 29 June, CCB's armor was still stymied by debris on the road beyond FOSINI, thus the advance was temporarily halted for all of CCB. Hardworking engineers of the 16th Armored Engineer Battalion broke the paths through the rubble during the night and all the next day, 29 June. CCB's units rolled on into CASTELNUOVO without opposition. The enemy had dropped back as usual, but left demolitions which again prevented immediate mounted pursuit. The nature of this terrain made many simple road blocks and demolitions completely effective. By-passing was out of the question in these natural defiles.

In the middle zone Task Force Howze moved west from MONTINGEGNOLI, at 0530 on this date. Upon reaching the road junction two miles northwest of this town, the right column moved north and the left column turned southwest. Neither force met enemy troops, but mines and demolitions

were the worst so far experienced. By-passes up to 3 miles long had to be used. The north (right) column reached the road junction one half mile north of SAN LORENZO. The purpose of these moves was to clear out pockets of enemy resistance believed to have been on the high ground in this vicinity that over looked the main route of advance of CCA.

When CCA's attached infantry (1st Battalion, 361st Infantry) continued its attack toward MENSANO during the night 29-30 June, progress was exceedingly slow. Enemy opposition was estimated to be about an infantry company supported by artillery. By dark, a bridge over a stream two miles southeast of MENSANO was seized and secured by 2400. At 0430 on the 30th, CCA's center column continued its cross-country move from RADICONDOLI. Heavy mortar and artillery fire were received 1000 yards south of MENSANO. Nevertheless MENSANO was entered and secured by 1600. The CCA reserve (now including its right column) followed the center column in this push to MENSANO. Meanwhile, the left column pushed quickly to MONTECASTELLI, and then northeast to MONTEGUIDI, taking that town by 1600. After securing the town, this column pushed on to contact the other CCA forces in MENSANO before dark.

#### CCB Cuts Highway 68

In the CCB zone, the engineers spent another night, 29-30 June, clearing the streets of CASTELNUOVO. Large gains were made again on June 30th. One "flying column", spear-

headed by Company C, 13th Armored Regiment, with infantry aboard its tanks, by-passed the town of POMARANACE to the west and dashed ahead more than 8 miles to secure high ground just south of and dominating Highway 68. The remainder of the command advanced on POMARANACE, which was captured with little trouble by 1230.

#### Cecina River Crossed

Pressure to the north was continued all afternoon, and right after dark infantry elements of CCB made an assault crossing of the CECINA RIVER, 3 miles north of the city.

On the morning of 30 June Task Force Howze continued to push north in spite of endless enemy mines and prepared demolitions. The town of SAN DALMAZIO was entered and secured by 1115. From this town, the left column proceeded directly north, and by dark had secured a bridgehead over the CECINA RIVER one mile north of POD. LAMA. The right column moved northwest into the CCA zone, then north to reach the CECINA RIVER four miles north of POMERANCE, by nightfall. Thus by nightfall elements of CCB and Task Force Howze were established across the CECINA RIVER ready to continue this tortuous operation to the north.

The power of enemy resistance shifted sharply from the west to CCA in the eastern most part of the division zone in this two day period ending 30 June 1944. (See sketch No. O; page 44 ).

In contrast with the preceding two days, CCB made

an aggressive 15 mile advance over-running both the CECINA RIVER and Highway 68 without a pause. Advance elements of Task Force Howze also pushed well across the CECINA. The advance to the CECINA was "down hill" and both forces exploited every road, mule trail, and any bit of terrain that might support a tank to keep up their momentum.

CCA had tough going, due mainly to the appearance of the German 26 Panzer Division in its zone. But CCA's reduction of RADICONOLI and MENSANO opened its most desirable route to the north.

The entrance of CCB into CASTELNUOVO on 29 June without opposition was typical of German tactics in these hills. As at FOSINI, (on the route to CASTELNUOVO) the Germans would put up a battle at an outlying approach to a key town, leaving every possible obstacle to slow the armor, and then evacuate the key town before our forces came into range.

The most important accomplishment here was CCB's thrust to the high ground controlling and straddling Highway 68, the key lateral route connecting the city of VOLTERRA and Route 2 (CCA axis) with the coast. The "Pursuit through the Tuscans" was highlighted by extreme "marginal" employment of an armored division in the armored role. It is generally indicated from the records that this employment would be impractical in these mountains in months of thaw or extreme cold. The entire operation was one continuous series of major obstacles on all possible



routes. This required constant employment of engineer units, day and night. The divisions infantry units, already tired from extended operations, had to work at all times clearing obstacles before engineer elements could get in to clear or build the way for tanks. This terrain battle was hard on both men and vehicles. The engineer's tank dozer earned the praise of every man during these operations. It would be impossible to measure its value, but it is clear that this entire operation could not have moved a mile without the engineer battalion's extraordinary performance. This demonstrated ability to beat the terrain placed the 1st Armored Division in excellent positions on 30 June 1944 from which to cut the all important Highway 68, and to secure the key center of VOLTERRA, now only six miles away.

#### NOTE FOR CHAPTER III

- <sup>1</sup> 1st Lt. R. K. Gottschall, MOUNTAIN GOAT, M-4, 1st Armored Division from Grossetto to Volterra, Italy, June 21 to July 10, 1944, The Cavalry Journal, January-February 1944, pages 29-33.

## CHAPTER IV

### PUSH TO THE ARNO

This phase of operations was in reality a continuation of the missions outlined in the preceding chapter. The main purpose was to seize the fortress town of VOLTERRA and gain control of the important lateral road, Highway 68. At this point, the hills became steeper and prepared obstacles even more frequent. The defiles were longer and movement more completely canalized. The enemy held the advantage, and now picked the ground on which to fight.

On 1 July 1944, combat elements of the 1st Armored Division were located generally as indicated on Sketch map No. 0 page 44, continuing their pursuit and all possible pressure on the retreating enemy. The Germans were fighting for time as they hampered progress of all elements, making the best use of the naturally defensive terrain. The advantage was theirs. Fifth Army's earlier pause in the pursuit north of ROME had helped them considerably.

CCA, again using 3 columns organized as small task forces, pushed north at 1530 on 1 July. The right column pushed east out of MENSANO. Progress was slowed by heavier than usual enemy automatic weapons, mortar and artillery fire. By dark, this force advanced to the high ground one mile west of the ELSA RIVER, and covered the road junction on the main highway one mile west of PIEVE. CCA's center column moved out on the main highway north of MENSANO and continued north until stopped at 1100 by enemy artillery

and anti-tank fire three miles south of CASOLE D' ELSA.

The left column was more fortunate. It moved rapidly east from MONTEGUIDI, meeting no resistance, and finally stopped east of the road junction one mile west of MENSANO, waiting to follow the center column through.

CCB was engaged at once as it moved out at 0530.

Its right column made several unsuccessful attempts to seize the high ground 1000 yards east of the CECINA RIVER 3 miles north of POMARANCO during the morning. The left column's reconnaissance elements reached the high ground just north of Highway 68, 3 miles west of SALINE by 1130, but this column's main body had to remain in position, awaiting clearance of resistance encountered by the right column. Since the resistance had stiffened, a coordinated attack by both forces was launched at 1800. While this enabled the left column to advance considerably, the right force was stymied by heavy and well directed enemy artillery fire.

CCB's left column, 1000 yards to the east, combined with the attached 91st Reconnaissance Squadron to cut Highway 68 and establish a road block two miles east of PONTIGINORI. This completed, the reconnaissance force contacted 34th Infantry Division elements at the crossroad two miles southeast of CASINO D' TERRA at 1530. At 1100, on 1 July, Company F, 1st Armored Regiment, was attached to increase the tank strength of CCB. Enemy resistance was stiffening.

Task Force Howze elements ran into increasingly

difficult terrain. About 1500 yards north of the FOSCI RIVER, many of the trails ended, making it impossible to proceed with vehicles. However, Task Force Howze's infantry elements advanced to vicinity of MAZZOLA, where massed enemy tank, machine gun and artillery fire forced them to withdraw.

#### Casole D' Elsa Fiasco

During the night July 1-2, CCA attacked CASOLE D' ELSA, and its infantry elements reported patrols successfully inside the town by 0200 July. CCA's armor moved forward, and until daybreak, engaged in a fire fight near the edge of town. At first light, our tanks were caught in the open, unprotected by infantry. Six American medium tanks, three light tanks, and two tank destroyers fell as easy prey to three well located Mark VI's and at least 5 enemy anti-tank guns. Only quick action by CCA's reserve elements saved the remainder of the attacking tanks, covering their withdrawal to a draw two miles north of MENSANO. CCA's right column then attacked, secured high ground four miles southeast of CASOLE D' ELSA at 0930, and continued the attack to capture other high ground vicinity of FATT.QUERCETO at 2255. CCA's tank strength was supplemented at 1300 by attachment of Company "E", 1st Armored Regiment.

#### The Fall Of Montecatini

CCB jumped off at 0600 this date, 2 July. Its left column encountered no opposition in reaching high ground

objectives at MONTECATINI and a high point 2000 yards west of SALINE. At these points the column was engaged by direct and indirect fire from 1600 until dark. CCB's right column was delayed initially by fog, and then at 1100 was again delayed by a difficult wadi crossing, which was finally by-passed at 1430. This column pushed on and secured the high ground overlooking Highway 68 one mile north of MONTEGEMOLI by 2025. The 91st Reconnaissance Squadron maintained left flank contact with the 34th Infantry Division, advancing its B troop without opposition to a point one mile south of MONTECATINI. C Troop captured the town of MONTECATINI at 2000 after a heavy fire fight.

In the center zone, Task Force Howze made very little progress this day. Its right column fought slowly forward to a point two miles southeast of MAZZOLA by nightfall, and the left column pushed elements into MAZZOLA at 1840.

During the night 2-3 July 1944, the already costly attack of CASOLE D' ELSA was resumed by CCA. Companies "K" and "L" of the attached 361st Infantry attacked following a heavy artillery preparation, but by midnight were stopped at the outskirts of the town. This time the infantry had a definite foothold in the approaches to the town. Then CCA's right column attacked at 0530 and secured the commanding high ground southeast of the town. This was accomplished by 1000, but further action to secure CASOLE D' ELSA was put off for the day. At 2130, the 361st Infantry Regiment (2nd

and 3rd Battalions) joined CCA and closed in an assembly area.

CCB merely continued to hold their positions and to push out patrols to the north. The attached 91st Reconnaissance Squadron improved its blocking positions on Highway 68, and again made physical contact with the 34th Infantry Division vicinity of CASINO D' TERRA.

Task Force Howze continued in place and reinforced its elements in MAZZOLA. Its patrols pushed north of Highway 68 with no major incident during the day.

By daybreak on the 4th of July, CCA's attached infantry (of the 361st Infantry Regiment) secured the town of CASOLE D' ELSA. The final attack made during the night 3-4 July 1944 required the forcing of the northeast entrance of the town by one company as another succeeded in scaling a fifteen foot wall surrounding the town. Attached elements of the 16th Armored Engineer Battalion cleared the roads, and as tank elements entered the town at 0830, patrols were pushed to the north and northeast.

At this point, the 81st Reconnaissance Battalion (minus Company C) was attached to CCA, still retaining the mission of contact with the French. In addition, A Company, 81st Reconnaissance Battalion, moved northwest to maintain contact with Task Force Howze in the center of the 1st Armored Division zone. Elements of the attached 361st Infantry Regiment cleared the MONTEGUIDI area at 0950, and then were

relieved from attachment to 1st Armored Division. In exchange, CCA received attachment of 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry Regiment, at 2000. The latter relieved the 3d Battalion, 361st Infantry Regiment.

On the west flank, CCB remained in its defensive positions, continuing to employ the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron to maintain contact with the 34th Infantry Division. Reconnaissance Company, 13th Armored Regiment, was relieved from attachment to CCB, and reverted to control of Task Force Howze at 1700.

In the center zone, Task Force Howze began withdrawal of some of its units, the first being the 2nd battalion, 361st Infantry Regiment, which assembled south of MAZZOLA at 0915. D Company, 1st Armored Regiment, and A Company, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, were released to division reserve at the same time, while the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion maintained patrols and operations in the Task Force Howze area. The only other notable activity on this date was the firing of 48 rounds per battalion by the Division Artillery on known enemy gun positions in observance of Independence Day!

The slowing progress during these four days (1-4 July) marked the beginning of the end of forward movement for all elements of the Division. (See sketch No. 0, p 44 ). Task Force Howze, in the center zone was first to lose its momentum, partly because the northward trails suddenly ended north of the FOSCI RIVER. However, CCB was also stopped cold by the

strong German defensive ring around VOLTERRA, immediately after cutting Highway 68 on July 1st.

The fiasco of CASOLE D' ELSA hoodied the nose of CCA in the 3 day battle for the town. It was another lesson learned the hard way, and a demonstration of the consequences involved when coordination is lost at a crucial time between infantry and supporting tanks. In general, it became evident during this period that the moving battle would soon give way to a stubborn defense.

At 0430, 5 July 1944, 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry completed relief of the 3d Battalion, 361st Infantry, in its defensive positions in and around CASOLE D' ELSA in the CCA zone. One CCA column passed through a friendly road block on the northwest outskirts of CASOLE D' ELSA at 1000, and continued the advance northwest until halted by enemy small arms artillery and anti-tank fire at C.al VENTO. The two other CCA forces were held in reserve, in the vicinity of CASOLE D' ELSA.

In the west zone, CCB resumed its attack at 0530, 5 July. The left force had moved during the night to attack positions south and southwest of MONTECATINI. Moving out at 0530, this force pushed armored elements to the north and northwest until 1700. The northern most advance was to a point 3 miles northwest of MONTECATINI, but enemy infantry infiltration made it necessary for the tanks to withdraw slightly for the night. CCB's center force, the 91st



Reconnaissance Squadron, worked its way northward to about 1000 yards south of MONTECATINI, where it was halted by a blown bridge covered by small arms fire. Forward elements of the right force pushed 2000 yards northeast of the town by 0930, but later withdrew because its main body was held up about a mile to the southeast by enemy infantry and anti-tank fire.

In the center zone, Task Force Howze continued its patrols throughout the day, contacting the enemy north of GATTERA.

#### Enemy Resistance Stiffens

Progress the 6th of July was the least that the combat commands were able to make since committed in this operation. Operations for the last five days indicated a general stiffening of enemy resistance all along the line of advance.

At 0530, 6 July, CCA attacked with the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, supported by tanks and artillery. This effort continued all morning with no appreciable success because of heavy caliber enemy artillery fire and stubbornly defended enemy strong points. CCA's forward elements reached a point 1000 yards south of Highway 68 vicinity of CASTEL SAN GIMIGNANO, but this show of heavy caliber artillery was a definite indication the enemy main body was turning to stand off further advances. The 3rd Battalion, 361st Infantry, moved from MENSANO and was relieved from attachment

to 1st Armored Division upon clearing the town.

CCB's activities and progress paralleled those of CCA during this day. At 0800, its left column attacked to seize limited objectives including hills to the north and west of MONTECATINI. These all were seized by 1045, and positions were consolidated by establishing road blocks by 1200. CCB's center column held MONTECATINI until the left force had seized its objectives, then moved west and contacted Task Force Ramey, an independent Corps Task Force on the Corps' west flank (See Appendix No. 4, page xxxv). Strong reconnaissance patrols were pushed out in the direction of MIEMO.

To the east, the right column moved very slowly because of fog, heavy enemy artillery fire, and a minefield vicinity of LA BACCHETTINCINA. Forward elements reached the road junction two miles west of the town by 1100, and at 1900, after the right column secured the road junction, the CCB main body assembled for the night, about one mile east of MONTECATINI.

Task Force Howze in the division center zone was confined to patrol and OP activities, reporting enemy contact and a short fire fight by one of its patrols. The defensive attitude assumed by Task Force Howze during the preceding four days was maintained, with greater stress on improvement of the defensive positions. This was continued by Task Force Howze until relieved in its zone by elements

of 88th Infantry Division at 0430 8 July 1944.

All forward movement of the 1st Armored Division ceased on 7 July, as it became obvious from a decided stiffening of German resistance all along the front that the enemy intended to stand there and take full advantage of the commanding terrain that he now held.

On this date, in order to improve its positions, CCA attacked with "B" and "C" Companies, 6th Armored Infantry, at 0200 and secured high ground overlooking the road junction two miles west of CASTEL SAN GIMIGNANO. This objective was consolidated and then occupied by "A" Company, 6th Armored Infantry, at 0345, at which time B and C Companies assembled in a draw behind A Company. A counterattack by the enemy at 0610 was promptly broken up by our artillery. Attached engineers then cleared the road junction without incident.

CCB held its defensive positions and made plans for passing the 88th Infantry Division through its sector, which then was accomplished at 0430, 8 July 1944.

1st Armored Division's responsibility in the Corps zone ended at 0430, 8 July 1944. The details of relief by elements of 88th Infantry Division and the Corps' Task Force Ramey continued however, until 1800 on 10 July at which time 1st Armored Division, less certain detachments left to Task Force Ramey and the 88th Infantry Division, reverted to Army control.

In this period 5-10 July, 1st Armored Division units made no appreciable gains. The reception of heavy caliber artillery from the enemy on July 6th, the first during this operation, gave definite indication that the main enemy forces were turning to halt further advances. Operations of all division elements were strictly confined to limited objective attacks, designed only to improve the positions already held, in preparation for the effort to reduce the final objective, VOLTEIRA. With the general stiffening of resistance it became obvious that this key to the German defense system could not be taken by armor alone. Since the 1st Armored Division did not have enough infantry to launch a full scale attack, IV Corps turned this job over to the 88th Infantry Division. The 1st Armored Division was relieved of responsibility in the zone at 0430, on 8 July, but relief of division elements in detail continued until 10 July, when the Division less detachments reverted to Fifth Army control.

#### Reorganization of 1st Armored Division

The exodus of remaining elements of the 1st Armored Division from the combat area continued with all possible speed on 11 July 1944 under control of II Corps, which at this time was in Fifth Army reserve. After a brief pause, for the unscrambling of the maze of attachments and detachments, the Division closed in a new assembly area near BOLGHERI by 2200 on 12 July.

Generally, the period 13-19 July was devoted to much needed rest, rehabilitation, inventory, and maintenance of all division units. There also were plans for reorganization under the new T/O & E for the armored division. Since a stay of several weeks was planned, recreation facilities were set up. At the same time, range training areas were readied for small unit training, which began on 17 July 1944.

On this same date, Major General Vernon E. Prichard assumed command of 1st Armored Division, relieving Major General Ernest N. Harmon, who had guided the Division since April 11, 1943.

For three days after the change of command, rest, rehabilitation and limited training continued under guidance of a provisional training and rehabilitation center. Then, at 0001 on 20 July 1944, the 1st Armored Division officially reorganized under the new War Department tables of organization for armored divisions.

"OLD IRONSIDES", already well seasoned and thoroughly battle scarred, came out of the reorganization a streamlined unit, about two thirds its former size and with many favorable changes in all of its components. The new organization had been worked out for greater flexibility by armored force experts in the United States over a year previously, but this was the first armored division to be reorganized in the field.

Chief among the changes was the elimination of the regiments, the 1st and 13th Armored and the 6th Armored Infantry, and the substitution of battalions in their place. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the old 6th Armored Infantry became the 6th, 11th and 14th Armored Infantry Battalions, respectively. Three tank battalions replaced the two armored regiments. The 1st and 13th Armored Regiments shrank to the 1st and 13th Tank Battalions, respectively. Surplus armored personnel formed the 4th Tank Battalion.

Increased by two troops, the 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion became the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Mechanized. The 16th Armored Engineer Battalion was reduced by two companies. Also redesignated was the Maintenance Battalion which became the 123rd Ordnance Maintenance Battalion. The Supply Battalion was disbanded, and most of its personnel and vehicles were incorporated into quartermaster truck companies. Activated to comply with the new tables of organization were the Reserve Command and a Military Police Platoon.

Armored strength of the Division was sharply reduced by the changes. In the old armored regiments there were 2 battalions of medium tanks and 1 battalion of light tanks, each battalion having 3 line companies of 17 tanks each. The new tank battalions consisted of 3 medium and 1 light tank company each, thus reducing by 3 medium and 3 light tank companies the total division tank strength.

These reductions were somewhat offset by new and improved equipment. First shipments of the latest model medium tank (M4A3E8), armed with a high velocity 76MM gun in place of the 75 MM, were received soon after reorganization. For assault guns the battalion headquarters companies were equipped with 105 MM howitzers mounted on medium tank chassis, in place of the turretless 105 MM howitzer, self-propelled, M-7. The later weapon was retained in the field artillery battalions, which were not altered in number of guns although their total personnel was reduced.

Complete details of the old division components, with their corresponding new element designations, or elimination, is shown in figure No. 1 page 75.

During the period 20-31 July 1944, following the official reorganization of the Division, a stiff program of maintenance, rehabilitation, and re-orientation of personnel was the primary mission. However, this timely pause was not to last for several weeks as originally anticipated, for by 23 July 1944, the next phase of this tankers nightmare began.

FIGURE No. 1

1st Armored Division  
(Reorganization 20 July 1944)

Old Units and Designations

Hq & Hq Co., 1st Armored Division  
Service Company, 1st Armored Division  
Hq & Hq Company, CCA  
Hq & Hq Company, CCB  
  
1st Armored Regiment  
13th Armored Regiment  
    Headquarters Company  
    Reconnaissance Company  
    Maintenance Company  
    1st Armored Battalion  
    2nd Armored Battalion  
    3rd Armored Battalion  
6th Armored Infantry Regiment  
    1st Battalion  
    2nd Battalion  
    3rd Battalion  
    Headquarters Company  
    Service Company  
81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion  
16th Armored Engineer Battalion  
141st Armored Signal Company  
Hq & Hq Battery, Division Artillery  
    27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
    68th Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
    91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
Hq & Hq Company, Division Trains  
    Maintenance Battalion  
    Supply Battalion  
    47th Armored Medical Battalion  
    Military Police Company  
    Division Band

New Units and Designations

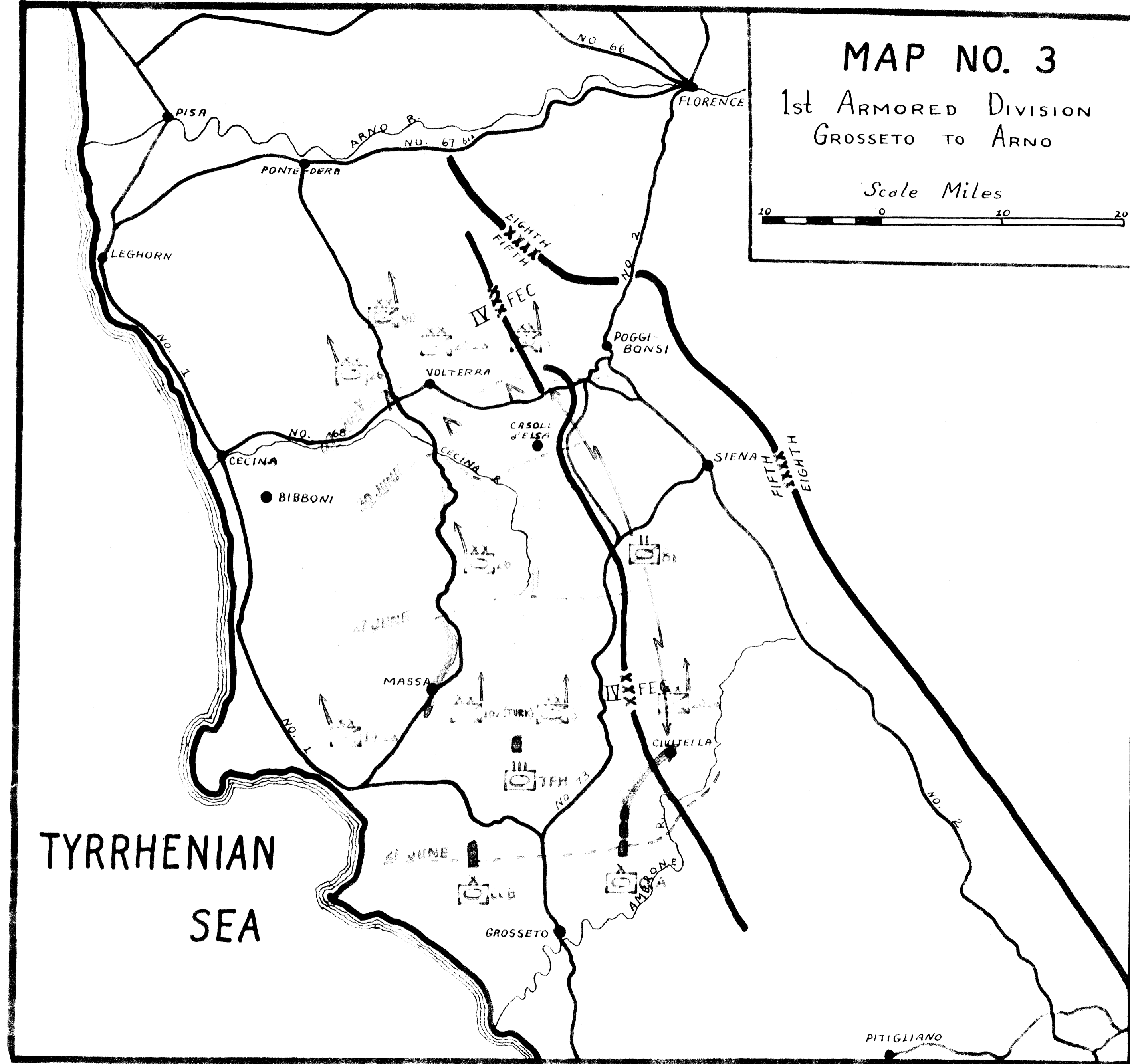
Hq & Hq Company, 1st Armored Div.  
  
Hq & Hq Company, CCA  
Hq & Hq Company, CCB  
Reserve Command (new)  
1st Tank Battalion  
13th Tank Battalion  
4th Tank Battalion (new)  
  
6th Armored Infantry Battalion  
11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
14th Armored Infantry Battalion  
  
81st Cav Reconnaissance Sq Mecz.  
16th Armored Engineer Battalion  
141st Armored Signal Company  
Hq & Hq Btry, Division Artillery  
    27th Armd Field Artillery Bn  
    68th Armd Field Artillery Bn  
    91st Armd Field Artillery Bn  
Hq & Hq Co, Division Trains  
    123rd Ordnance Maint Bn  
  
    47th Armd Medical Battalion  
Military Police Platoon  
Division Band



# MAP NO. 3

1st ARMORED DIVISION  
GROSSETO TO ARNO

Scale Miles



## CHAPTER V

### THE GOTHIC LINE

By 23 July 1944, Fifth Army troops had cleared nearly all enemy strong points and centers of resistance in their zone, which now extended for 35 miles along the south bank of the ARNO RIVER from the LIGURIAN COAST to a point about 20 miles west of FLORENCE. Beyond the river lay the broad ARNO PLAIN, the rugged northern APENNINE MOUNTAINS, and the well-prepared and heavily defended positions of the GOTHIC LINE. This line barred the way to the PO VALLEY and was the German's last natural defensive barrier in ITALY (See Appendix No. IA, page xviii).

The 1st Armored Division then completing its reorganization, was to play an important, but not spectacular, role in the approach to and breaching of the GOTHIC LINE. Since the main attack was made by units to the east, and only limited troops were available for this secondary effort, the Division was employed on a broad front to maintain pressure on the enemy. Unexpected German withdrawals hastened its advance across the ARNO PLAIN and into the foothills of the APENNINES. Rugged mountain terrain and extensive demolitions, rather than strong enemy action, became the main delaying factors as the Division drove up against, and through, the main GOTHIC LINE positions.

#### Regrouping Along The ARNO RIVER

The 150-mile pursuit from ROME had come to an end. A general halt along the front was necessary for tactical

and administrative reorganization, for the Allies had learned during the past winter that only a carefully planned, coordinated and sustained attack could drive the Germans from their prepared mountain defenses.<sup>1</sup> Extensive planning and stockpiling of supplies for smashing the formidable obstacles ahead dictated that a temporary defense be assumed. Light screening forces were deployed along the river; staffs planned; and the bulk of the troops regrouped, trained and rested.

Final long-range Allied plans for assault of the GOTHIC LINE called for the British Eighth Army to make the main drive along the ADRIATIC (east) COAST. Fifth Army was to launch a secondary attack towards BOLOGNA in the right portion of its widening zone to divert German reserves, while maintaining an aggressive defense and following up any enemy withdrawals in front of the remainder of its zone. In preparation, front line infantry divisions were pulled back and attached to II Corps, which held a narrow sector on the right, where they trained and rested during most of August for the planned push towards BOLOGNA and the PO VALLEY. The IV Corps sector was held by Task Force Ramey and the newly formed Task Force 45 (See Appendix No. IV, p xxxv & xxxvi), and, later, the 1st Armored Division.

Marshal Kesselring was also busy regrouping his disorganized German forces, forming mobile reserves and strengthening defensive positions for the critical last-ditch stand.

Forward observation posts and defensive positions and strong points were established south of the river, and most

troops were bivouaced to the rear beyond range of nearly all German artillery. The main outpost line was first located about one mile south of the river bank, but was later pushed forward about one half mile and, in certain scattered places, reached the bank. Opposing forces exchanged artillery fire and sent aggressive night patrols to probe across the river, which was only waist deep in many places. Superior American artillery was sometimes augmented by all available tanks and tank destroyers. It provided effective harrassing and destructive fire, neutralizing enemy observation posts, strong points, and artillery immediately north of the river and destroying small boats and footbridges on the river. Tanks and other vehicles carried out large scale demonstrations as part of a plan to hide the real offensive intentions to the east. Other deceptive measures included the use of smoke and camouflaged dummy installations. Meanwhile, troops and supplies were moved at night with great secrecy into the area south of FLORENCE.

On 25 July the 1st Armored Division was attached to IV Corps but remained in its assembly area at BOLGHERI, south-east of CECINA. Two days later CCB was further attached to Task Force Ramey and entered the line when the task force took over the center of the Army front on 30 July.

CCB (Colonel Dewey)

6th Armored Infantry Battalion  
11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
14th Armored Infantry Battalion  
Company B, 47th Armored Medical Battalion  
Normal service attachments.

Division Artillery also joined Task Force Ramey on 5 August. The Division, with the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion attached, returned to the line on 13 August, relieving Task Force Ramey along the right sector of the IV Corps front. CCB reverted to division control. Task Force 45 was on the division's left, and a regimental combat-team of II Corp's 91st Division on the right. Infantry elements, backed up by mortars, tanks and artillery, held the line; other units engaged in gunnery and small unit tactical training. Some tanks and assault guns were used in indirect fire roles to reinforce the artillery battalions.

PONTEDERA, the main town in the division sector, bordered the ARNO RIVER and marked the most forward positions. Cluttered with extensive mines and booby traps, and with German machine guns less than 200 yards away, PONTEDERA was a hot spot. It drew several artillery concentrations of over 300 rounds. The Ambulance Platoon of Co B, 47th Armored Medical Battalion, labored three days and nights evacuating 300 aged and invalid Italian patients from PONTEDERA's main hospital. Although frequently shelled enroute, only one ambulance was hit and no one was hurt.<sup>2</sup>

The Germans used the ARNO RIVER levees as their first line of defense, having established a series of strong points and machine gun positions along the river-line. Likely crossing sights were mined and these forward positions were backed up with mortars, light anti-aircraft guns, and light and medium artillery. Enemy air activity was almost nonexistent. Observ-

ation indicated that the Germans planned a slow, orderly retreat in face of the inevitable Allied attack. This, then, was the forward outpost of the GOTHIC LINE, so placed to delay to a maximum, and thus gain time for continued preparation of the main GOTHIC LINE positions.

Throughout the month of August activity along the front was limited mainly to active combat patrolling, mortar and artillery exchanges, and fire fights with enemy patrols. Opposing troops swam or waded the river, exchanged shots and returned. Casualties were light.

In mid-August Allied plans shifted the future Fifth Army attack farther to the east. IV Corps was required to assume a wide front, while the US II Corps and British XIII Corps regrouped to attack north of FLORENCE. The 370th Infantry Regimental Combat Team, 92nd Division, reached ITALY in August and was attached to the 1st Armored Division on the 20th, taking over part of its left front beginning on the night of 24 August. The 11th and 14th Armored Infantry Battalions were shifted to the right. In the reshuffling of troops XIII (British) Corps, which then held most of FLORENCE, was attached to Fifth Army; its 6th South African Armored Division (reinforced) was attached to IV Corps and began taking over the newly assigned right flank on 26 August. The procession of units moving behind light screening forces revealed to the enemy that an attack was shaping up, but he was unable to

determine exactly where it would take place. Therefore, German outposts became increasingly sensitive to any move made by Allied artillery or patrols.

Despite the loss of a large number of units to Seventh US Army for the invasion of Southern FRANCE, Fifth Army was rested and ready to attack; but the overall plan required that its action be coordinated with that of the British Eighth Army, which was the larger force and was to make the main effort on the right.

Far to the east Eighth Army forces launched the main Allied attack up the ADRIATIC COAST on 25 August. By 6 September they had advanced 30 miles, had cracked the eastern anchor of the GOTHIC LINE and were poised on the last ridge-line south of RIMINI, the strategic center of communications which controlled important highways running northwest behind the GOTHIC LINE to BOLOGNA and the PO VALLEY. Now, with enemy reserves shifting to the threatened east flank, was the time for Fifth Army to apply pressure on the center of the line. But to prevent his weakened western forces from being cut off by a Fifth Army attack, the enemy began an unexpected withdrawal 31 August towards the main GOTHIC LINE. General Clark immediately directed IV Corps to follow up these withdrawals and execute a reconnaissance in force of MOUNTS ALBANO and PISANO, the dominating hill masses in that area of the wide ARNO PLAIN.

### Across The ARNO PLAIN

Task Force 45 on the left, the 1st Armored Division in the center, and the 6th South African Armored Division on the right each sent reinforced patrols across the ARNO at several points on the night of 31 August. (It is suggested that the reader unfold Map No. 4, page 118, and trace on it the actions discussed in this and the following chapter). Extensive minefields caused some casualties, but only scattered contact was made with enemy snipers and rear guard elements. Enemy withdrawal thus confirmed, the large scale crossing was pushed up to 0100, 1 September. Previous weeks of patrolling and planning aided the selection of favorable fording sites, and troops crossed the river smoothly and rapidly.

CCA of the 1st Armored Division was assigned the mission of taking MOUNT PISANO, in the left portion of the Division zone.

#### CCA (Colonel Howze)

370th Infantry Regimental Combat Team (Minus Co C)  
1st Tank Battalion  
Troop B, 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron  
Company C, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion  
Normal service attachments.

The attached 370th Infantry, 92nd Division, commanded by Colonel Raymond G. Sherman, crossed the river near FONTE-DEIRA on the morning of 1 September, with two battalions on the right (east) of MOUNT PISANO and one to the west. The only casualties along the river were caused by sniper fire and mines; troops pushing inland met no opposition. <sup>3</sup> Engineers



cleared the mines, improved tank fords, and by 0300, 2 September, were operating a Class 30 armored force treadway bridge near PONTEDERA. On 2 September the 3rd Battalion advanced around the west side of MOUNT PISANO and reached the SERCHIO RIVER 5 miles north of PISA. The 1st Battalion with one infantry company riding 1st Tank Battalion tanks, skirted around the east side of the mountain for 6 miles and reached positions on the northeast slopes. The 2nd Battalion discarded much of its equipment and followed mule trails directly into the hill mass. The regiment advanced so rapidly that the 4th Tank Battalion, which had moved its tanks into positions south of the river to provide indirect fire support, found that by the time the guns were registered in it was not safe to fire. By the end of 2 September control of MOUNT PISANO was assured.

At the same time, east of MOUNT PISANO, CCB crossed the ARNO between CASTELFRANCO and SANTA CROCE.

CCB (Colonel Dewey)

11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
14th Armored Infantry Battalion  
Company C, 370th Infantry Regiment  
13th Tank Battalion  
701st Tank Destroyer Battalion (Minus Co's A & C)  
Normal service attachments.

Four armored infantry companies, plus some tanks and tank destroyers were across the river by early afternoon of 1 September. Later, armor and other vehicles were held up by demolitions and blown bridges at a canal two miles beyond the river line, but crossed at 0500 the next morning and aided



Tanks of 1st Tank Battalion ford the ARNO.

194946

infantry troops by neutralizing enemy tank and small-arms fire. Advancing on a broad front across the open plain against only scattered resistance, CCB moved to within 5 miles of ALTOPASCIO.

On the division right flank the bulk of the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and an attached company of the 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion advanced along the west edge of the PADULE DI FUCECCHIO swamp area to positions less than 3 miles southeast of ALTOPASCIO. Very little resistance was encountered. Farther east, the 6th South African Armored Division matched the 1st Armored Division's progress, as did Task Force 45 on CCA's left. By the end of 2 September, leading elements of the entire IV Corps had advanced up to 7 miles against little resistance and, in some places, had outrun their artillery support. Extensive obstacles, including minefields, road blocks, canals and ditches, were the chief delaying factors.

The 1st Armored Division spearheaded the unchecked advance for the next three days. In CCA's zone the 370th Infantry continued on beyond MOUNT PISANO, encountering artillery and small arms fire, and reached the ancient walled city of LUCCA on 4 September. (See Map No. 4, page 118). The doughboys entered LUCCA without opposition on the 5th, cleared the road from PISA and reached positions north of the Autostrada  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of the city. Rear guard action of the German 65 Grenadier Division included heavy artillery fire and some machine gun and sniper fire, but failed to do more

than slow the advancing troops. Although hampered by extensive minefields, Task Force 45 on the left succeeded in clearing the area south of the SERCHIO RIVER by 5 September.

On the right, CCB pushed forward to establish positions astride and north of the Autostrada, its tanks working closely with infantry. The Reconnaissance Company, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, entered ALTOPASCIO, the key road center in the area, on the afternoon of 4 September. Stiff resistance forced a withdrawal until late afternoon, when the enemy followed his customary harassing tactics and in turn pulled back. The 14th Armored Infantry Battalion, with tank support, occupied the town and sent outposts out 1 mile beyond the Autostrada. To the northeast two assault forces, each made up of a company from the 11th Armored Infantry Battalion, a section of medium tanks and a section of tank destroyers, also reached the Autostrada. Enemy shelling and mortar fire increased on 4 September. Cub planes were used to assist observers in effectively adjusting Allied artillery fire. A few tanks were spotted, and at isolated points antitank guns emplaced in pillboxes resisted stubbornly until knocked out. The enemy did not attempt to hold positions for more than a few hours, however, Allied casualties were light, but Colonel Dewey, commander of CCB, was wounded on the afternoon of 4 September while leading a task force. Brigadier General Daniel, assistant division commander, assumed command that night.

The 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, on the division right flank, matched CCB's progress; the 6th South African Armored Division also was abreast and within five miles of PISTOLIA.

In four days the division had crossed the ARNO RIVER and most of the broad ARNO PLAIN. Its three task forces, advancing on a wide front; had cleared MOUNT PISANO, LUCCA and ALTOPASCIO, and now held the Autostrada, the key lateral highway (See Map No. 4). Action had been limited mainly to patrol clashes, but German rear guard action was now increasing.

On the 5th of September General Crittenberger, IV Corps commander, issued instructions under Army orders for a general regrouping along the present Corps front line, directing that the front be held by a minimum of troops. Patrols were to maintain contact with the enemy, and troops were to be prepared to follow up any withdrawals. As much as possible of the 1st Armored Division was to be withdrawn for Corps reserve. It was planned that the Division would be switched to the east to exploit north of BOLOGNA in the event that the momentum of the II Corps attack carried it through the mountains and into the PO VALLEY. There overall Allied plans called for an encircling movement coordinated with the British Eighth Army to trap the German forces south of the PO RIVER. The newly arrived Brazilian Expeditionary Force, (BEF) would then replace the 1st Armored Division in the IV Corps zone. Therefore, General Frichard withdrew CCB's 11th and 16th Armored Infantry Battalions to division reserve during the evening of 6 September and re-

placed them with the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (minus Troops A and B) and the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, northeast and northwest of ALTOPASCIO, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

Swelled by heavy rains, the ARNO reached flood stage on 7 September. All fords were impassable and most of the floating bridges as far west as PONTEDERA were washed out, but engineers salvaged the damaged equipment and rapidly replaced key bridges. In the meantime most Fifth Army supply trucks were routed over the 1st Armored Division bridge at PONTEDERA, or through FLORENCE. However, the opening of the large port at LEGHORN, on 26 August, and Highway 67, which paralleled the south bank of the ARNO, had greatly improved Army supply and evacuation lines to the rear.

#### Into The Foothills

Fifth Army orders directed the IV Corps push active patrols well forward to maintain contact and to create the impression that an attack was developing on the 1st Armored and 6th South African Armored Division fronts. This resulted in minor gains until 9 September, when orders for the main Fifth Army attack by II Corps lifted restrictions on the advance of IV Corps. On the morning of the 10th, the 2nd Battalion, 370th Infantry, crossed the SERCHIO RIVER in CCA's zone on a broad front and began clearing the hills on the west side of the river. The 1st Battalion pressed forward over the last few miles of the ARNO PLAIN on the east side of the river, and on 13 September Company A, riding on tanks,

fought its way into PONTE A MORIANA, 4 miles upstream from LUCCA. The same day the entire regiment reached the foothills of the Northern APENNINES on a line from PONTE SAN PIETRO to SEGROMINGNO, a small village 3 miles east of the SERCHIO RIVER.

Northeast of SEGROMINGNO CCB's 6th Armored Infantry Battalion entered the mountain village of VILLA BASILICA on 10 September, and the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron worked its way up a narrow gorge north of FESCIA. It was necessary for combat patrols to operate far ahead of the leading units, which were handicapped by extensive and skillfully executed demolitions and by the lack of roads.

Even with two infantry battalions completely out of action, the 1st Armored Division was required to operate on a 20-mile front. Its armor could be used only to a limited extent in the mountains. The 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron became, in effect, a mountain infantry unit. Only the enemy's willingness to give up ground permitted the steady advance to continue.

The rate of the 65 Grenadier Division's withdrawal was measured by daily explosions, marking destruction of bridges or creation of road blocks, which multiplied work of the already hard-pressed engineers. Small enemy groups continued the practice of defending a town for a few hours and then withdrawing. The enemy made no real effort to hold the ARNO PLAIN or the forward slopes of the Northern APENNINES on the IV Corps front. Offering only occasional harrasing

resistance, he withdrew on an apparently predetermined schedule, frequently giving up good defensive positions without a fight. Artillery fire increased, but contact was limited almost entirely to patrol clashes. The 16 SS Panzer Grenadier Division, however, did not withdraw along the LIGURIAN COAST until the 1st Armored Division's advance beyond MOUNT PISANO threatened to outflank its position from the east. By the 11th armored patrols from Task Force 45 reached the outskirts of VIAREGGIO on the coast. On the right, the 6th South African Armored Division also pressed forward on the 11th and 12th to the forward defenses of the GOTHIC LINE, the enemy withdrawing directly into his prepared positions.

II Corps and XIII Corps, too, followed up unexpected enemy withdrawals from 31 August to 9 September. Jumping off on 10 September, troops of these two corps then advanced into rugged mountain terrain against increasing enemy resistance and reached the outer defenses of the GOTHIC LINE by the night of the 12th.

During the first 12 days of September substantial gains had been made. Forward troops now held the first line of hills 15 miles north of the river. Objectives had been taken with comparative ease and at a low cost in lives. The delays encountered were due almost entirely to the mountainous terrain, ARNO floods, and enemy-made obstacles and demolitions. Active opposition was generally limited to harrasing artillery fire and patrol clashes until the GOTHIC LINE positions were



reached, when resistance stiffened considerably. The surprise of Eighth Army's attack on the ADRIATIC COAST caused the enemy to shift reserves quickly from the center of the front of the east. His thinned western forces were then forced to withdraw to more easily defended GOTHIC LINE positions in face of Fifth Army's well-timed threat. The enemy was off balance and the Allies did not intend to give him an opportunity to consolidate his weakened forces. Fifth Army was now in position to assault the GOTHIC LINE.

#### Through The GOTHIC LINE

On the right the main attack by II Corps to penetrate the GOTHIC LINE north of FLORENCE met heavy enemy resistance. Although outnumbered three to one, the enemy skillfully defended the area for four days and nights and inflicted considerable casualties. Continuous curtains of Allied artillery and effective air support seriously disrupted enemy rear areas; and German units shifted to the threatened area, in most cases, arrived too late. Attacking day and night. II Corps troops finally smashed through to seize dominant terrain surrounding the important IL GIOGO PASS on 17 September. By the next day, II Corps held a 7-mile stretch of the GOTHIC LINE on each side of the pass. Three days later forward elements gained control of the SANTERNO RIVER VALLEY, just west of FIRENZUOLA, outflanking the key FUTA PASS from the east. This position had been made the strongest point in the GOTHIC LINE, but the enemy was forced to abandon it the following day. Highway 65, a badly needed



GOTHIC LINE position on Highway 66.

30 198678

Fortifications of the G. this were in the Apennines used against the Fifth Army. Position No. 28 includes living quarters underground and a trench system leading to a machine gun nest and observation post almost directly over hairpin curve on Highway 65-27. 11/2/44. (II Corps Area, Italy.)

FIELD  
REPORT

The Department of the Army  
SECTION OF THE  
WASHINGTON

are submitted to the  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON

Vertical text on the right side of the page, possibly bleed-through or a separate column of text.

main supply route, was thus opened for support of forward troops.

While Fifth Army's main effort was directed towards smashing the GOTHIC LINE at IL GIOGO and FUTA PASSES, IV Corps, in the role of a holding force, was to keep as many enemy troops as possible immobilized and to continue probing forward to the main GOTHIC LINE defenses. With its limited strength and wide zone, the Corps was not capable of launching a sustained offensive.<sup>5</sup> Its 6th South African Armored Division, on the right, was responsible for maintaining contact with and protecting the left flank of II Corps. It was hard pressed to cover a 20-mile zone, capture a line of 3,000 foot mountains by dismounted action and keep up with the II Corps advance.

In the IV Corps center zone, the 1st Armored Division was ordered to maintain pressure on the enemy in the SERCHIO VALLEY and at the same time hold out part of its force for possible employment by II Corps. Then on 13 September, IV Corps was instructed to employ the 1st Armored Division in such a manner that the Division minus one combat command could be moved on 48-hour notice to an assembly area near FLORENCE for use by II Corps in an exploitation role as soon as leading divisions reached the PO VALLEY. With much of its force in reserve and the remainder covering a 12-mile wide zone, the Division could do little more than aggressive patrolling to the front. No real effort was made to push forward until it became evident on higher levels that II Corps, on the right was meeting increasingly heavier resistance.

Then on 16 September, IV Corps directed the Division to initiate a reconnaissance in force of not less than one infantry battalion west of the SERCHIO RIVER, one armored infantry battalion north of LUCCA and another toward MOUNT LIGUANA, north of PESCIA, as part of a general Corps effort to prevent the enemy from withdrawing troops from the front. This order in effect released the 11th and 14th Armored Infantry Battalions for active use. The 1st Armored Division was further aided when the 6th Regimental Combat Team, Brazilian Expeditionary Force, assumed responsibility for part of the division left front held by the attached 370th Infantry's 2nd Battalion. Thus strengthened, the Division was able to adopt more aggressive tactics.

To create an impression of greater strength in its zone, IV Corps carried out an extensive program of harrassing artillery fire. In one small triangular-shaped area northwest of PISTOLIA, for example, 158 missions were fired by the 1st Armored Division, 6th South African Armored Division, and IV Corps artillery during the 3-day period 15-17 September. Normal artillery weapons were reinforced by the indirect fire of tank and tank destroyer guns.

The 1st Armored pushed forward on the morning of the 17th. The 2nd and 3rd Battalion of CCA's attached 370th Infantry, attacked thru the hills on the west side of the SERCHIO RIVER, while its 14th Armored Infantry Battalion attacked on the east side of the river.

CCA (Colonel Howze)

370th Infantry Regimental Combat Team  
14th Armored Infantry Battalion  
1st Tank Battalion  
Co B, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion  
Troop B, 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron  
91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
598th Field Artillery Battalion  
Normal service attachments

During the next 2 days CCA moved forward about 2 miles against comparatively light resistance until strong GOTHIC LINE main defenses forced a halt in the narrow gorge where the SERCHIO flows east before turning south of PONTE A MORIANA.

North of PESCIA CCB's 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and 11th Armored Infantry Battalion, meeting slight resistance but encountering extensive and effective demolitions, advanced through the GOTHIC LINE to the village of CASTELVECCHIO and MOUNT LIGUANA, the Corps objective.

CCB (Colonel Dewey)

6th Armored Infantry Battalion  
11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron  
(Minus Troop B)  
13th Tank Battalion  
68th Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
Normal service attachments

As division troops drove deeper into the mountains supply difficulties increased steadily; pack mule teams were attached. The 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, which had no mules until the 18th, was forced to convert Troop A into pack troops to keep its forward elements supplied from 17 to 21 September, while roads were being repaired.<sup>6</sup>

The breakthrough by II Corps at IL GIOGO PASS on 18 September raised the possibility of a swift drive to the PO VALLEY, and further plans were made for the use of the 1st Armored Division by II Corps. Orders issued on 20 September directed that an armored task force, consisting essentially of one tank battalion and one armored infantry battalion, with necessary supporting troops, be prepared to move on 4-hours notice any time after 1900, 21 September, to an area to be designated by II Corps. General Prichard immediately prepared to release CCA. The 1st Battalion, 370th Infantry, relieved the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion on 20 September, and the 370th Infantry took over the former CCA zone. On the morning of 21 September, CCA, consisting of the 1st Tank Battalion; the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion; Co C, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion; Co B, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion; Troop B, 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and Company A, 47th Armored Medical Battalion, began moving to an assembly area just northwest of FLORENCE between PRATO and SESTO, where maintenance was stressed. The loss of these troops forced the Division to regroup and again brought a temporary halt to further advances.

On the left, the Brazilian Expeditionary Force's 6th Regimental Combat Team reinforced was introduced in a 5-mile mountainous zone between Task Force 45 and the 1st Armored Division, and matched their advances.

#### Looking Back

The enemy had constantly shifted his units on the IV

Corps front, introducing reserve units while moving experienced troops to the east to meet the critical II Corps threat. IV Corps efforts to hold enemy units on the line were only partially successful. One first-class German division and a portion of another were shifted to the II Corps front, while a second-class division was drawn into the line.

Air bombardment played an important part in the breaching of the GOTHIC LINE by Fifth Army. Although limited in preliminary bombing missions by the necessity of concealing the point of the main attack, during the first 12 days of September 777 fighter-bomber and 410 medium bomber sorties were flown. (All of the medium bomber sorties were flown during the last two days of this period, after II Corps had been committed and the need for secrecy had passed). IL GIOGO and FUTA PASSES were plastered and rail and road traffic in rear of the GOTHIC LINE were strafed and disrupted. 1,333 fighter-bomber and 552 medium bomber sorties were flown in the 7 day period, 13-19 September, providing excellent support of the II Corps drive. "Rover Joe", a system of forward observation posts connected by radio with fighter-bombers in the air which had been effectively used by the British in AFRICA, was introduced on the Fifth Army front on 13 September, coincident with the II Corps jumpoff. This system greatly facilitated air-ground coordination, permitted bombing and strafing of key or fleeing targets well within the bomb safety line, and in some cases, produced destruction or neutralization of these targets with-



in 20 minutes.<sup>7</sup>

Five days after the initial breaching of IL GIOGO PASS, II and XIII British Corps units had passed through the GOTHIC LINE on a 30 mile front extending from VERNIO to SAN GODENZO PASS. IV Corps, the "holding" force, was partially through at several points. Its 1st Armored Division had maintained almost constant pressure on the withdrawing Germans throughout the month, chasing them across the ARNO PLAIN and driving them into their main defensive positions. Battling difficult terrain, highly unsuitable for employment of armor, 1st Armored troops pressed forward and punched their way through the mountains and the GOTHIC LINE. Tanks were used in close support of infantry, where possible, and in both direct and indirect fire roles. Advanced elements of II Corps were 10 miles past IL GIOGO PASS and 30 miles beyond the ARNO RIVER.

The speed with which the breach had been made, in the face of torturous mountain terrain and stubborn enemy resistance, represented a brilliant achievement. The careful timing of the Eighth and Fifth Army attacks, the concentration of power in narrow zones and the relentless pressure applied along the entire front afforded the enemy no opportunity to regain his balance after the surprise Allied attacks and necessary shifting of his troops. The Germans fought a skillful and determined battle, inflicting 2,731 casualties on the three assault infantry divisions of II Corps during the period 13-18 September alone. Considering the strength of the enemy and the importance of the GOTHIC LINE, however, the price of victory was not great.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER V

- 1 FROM SALERNO TO THE ALPS; A History of the Fifth Army, Edited by Lt. Col. Chester G. Starr, Infantry Journal Press, . Washington 1948.
- 2 STORY OF THE FIRST ARMORED DIVISION, a 1st Armored Division publication, page 48.
- 3 FIFTH ARMY HISTORY, Vol. VII, page 32.
- 4 REPORT OF OPERATIONS, 1ST ARMORED DIVISION, 1 SEPTEMBER THRU 30 SEPTEMBER, 1944, Page 3.
- 5 FIFTH ARMY HISTORY, Vol. VII, page 78.
- 6 HISTORY OF 81ST CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON FOR OCTOBER, 1944, page 3-4.
- 7 FIFTH ARMY HISTORY, Vol. VII, page 84.

## CHAPTER VI

### DRIVE ON BOLOGNA

Allied armies had cracked through the GOTHIC LINE on the extreme right and now held a large (II Corps) salient extending through the center of the line north toward BOLOGNA. They were determined to push on through the remaining mountains and break out into the broad, industrial PO VALLEY before winter set in. The German defenders were just as determined to prevent this collapse of their final defensive position in ITALY.

Since the 1st Armored Division was of little value as a major offensive unit in the alp-like mountainous terrain, it again played a less colorful role in this drive on BOLOGNA. CCA infantry was employed in the II Corps salient, first on the right flank, then on the left; while CCB continued to drive down Highway 64 and the SETTA VALLEY in the right portion of the IV Corps zone. The Division, minus CCB, then joined CCA in the left of the II Corps salient in mid-November. After unsuccessful attacks on the formidable MONTERAMICI hill mass, defensive positions were developed and maintained. Action was almost completely limited to that characteristic of dismounted infantry. Units of the armored division were thus employed by the Army commander to relieve infantry division elements for the main drive on BOLOGNA.

#### Emphasis On The Center

On the ADRIATIC (east) front the British Eighth Army, which had made the first breach of the GOTHIC LINE, was fight-

ing flooded streams, village strongpoints and a determined enemy. The German Tenth Army, reinforced by units from the center of the overall line, was able to hold the British until 21 September, when it became necessary to abandon RIMINI, the eastern gateway to the PO VALLEY. Had the British reached the plain three weeks earlier, it would have been possible to employ armor there on a large scale, but late rains now made the marshy flats even more difficult than the mountains. In the meantime, the initiative had passed to Fifth Army's II Corps, whose advance had then become the major threat; and many German troops were shifted back to the center of the line.

On the left, opposing forces were busy shifting troops: IV Corps to compensate for loss of the bulk of the 1st Armored Division; and the enemy to meet the II Corps drive in the center. Three days after CCA had begun its move to the II Corps area, General Crittenberger had issued orders releasing the remainder of the 1st Armored Division, less CCB. Task Force 92, under Brigadier General John S. Wood, assistant commander of the 92nd Infantry Division, took over the division's zone on 25 September. He had under his command the 370th Infantry RCT and CCB.

CCB (Colonel Dewey)

11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
13th Tank Battalion  
68th Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
Troop D, 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron  
Company B, 47th Medical Battalion (Armored)  
Company A, 123rd Ordnance Maintenance Battalion  
Company A, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion

The First Armored Division (minus CCA and CCB) reverted to Fifth Army control 25 September and moved to an assembly area near CALENZANO, seven miles northwest of FLORENCE, where CCA was located.

Only the necessary reliefs had been completed on the night of 25-26 September when General Wood prepared to renew the advance up the SERCHIO VALLEY and into the mountains north of PESCIA. Beginning slowly on the 26th, the attack gained momentum the next day. By the 28th, CCB had advanced about 5 miles against scattered, light resistance to the village of LUCCHIO, in the LIMA VALLEY. To the left, this advance was matched by the 370th Infantry and Task Force 92, which had passed through the GOTHIC LINE positions and sealed off the east-west portion of Highway 12. This highway had formerly served as the main lateral route of communication for enemy troops opposing the center of the IV Corps front. The Germans were forced to give up this ground facing IV Corps to avoid being outflanked by II Corps. Thus, although no general offensive was launched, IV Corps troops continued to move forward. By the end of the month all but the coastal stretch of the GOTHIC LINE defenses had been left behind.

The continued advance of II Corps in the center, led General Crittenberger to concentrate more and more strength along the IV Corps right boundary, which was shifted to the right (east) on 28 September. The entire 6th South African Armored Division moved east to the new zone, and the fronts

of other IV Corps units were widened accordingly. CCB was detached from Task Force 92 on the 29th and was also shifted to the east with the mission of advancing down Highway 64. Task Force 92, which now consisted of only the 370th Regimental Combat Team, was on its left, and the 6th South African Armored Division on the right. The latter's 74th Light Anti-aircraft Regiment, which had just taken over a portion of the line astride Highway 64 at COLLINA (over the APENNINES divide), was temporarily placed under operational control of CCB. IV Corps troops were thinly spread and only the weakness of opposing forces permitted them to push on.

In the center of the Army line, General Clark ordered II Corps to continue the main attack directly north towards RADICOSA PASS and northeast down the SANTERNO VALLEY towards IMOLA (20 miles southeast of BOLOGNA), while XIII Corps pushed on toward FAENZA. All Army units were directed to be prepared to exploit fully any collapse of enemy resistance; CCA of the 1st Armored was available to II Corps as a mobile exploiting force.

#### CCA Plugs The Gaps

On the Corps right the 88th Division drove 10 miles down the SANTERNO VALLEY towards IMOLA, through extremely difficult terrain and weather and against increasing enemy opposition. This advance increased the gap between II Corps and XIII Corps, so that it was necessary to draw CCA from Army reserve to protect the threatened supply lines.<sup>1</sup> The 14th Armored

Infantry Battalion was attached to the 88th Infantry Division on the 24th and went into position to its right rear beginning on the 26th. Two days later CCA's 6th Armored Infantry Battalion was also placed in the line. Control of the 14th Armored Infantry then reverted to CCA, which had been attached to II Corps on 28 September. With two armored infantry battalions in line, General Daniel was responsible for protecting the over-extended right flank. CCA saw little action here other than patrol clashes and artillery exchanges.

The 88th Infantry Division was stopped atop the last commanding peaks 12 miles from IMOLA on 30 September by strong enemy forces which inflicted heavy casualties. Ten miles west other Corps troops captured the 4,000 foot mountains beyond RADICOSA PASS. By the end of the month Fifth Army's II Corps had advanced nearly two-thirds of the way from FLORENCE to BOLOGNA. On its east flank, troops on MOUNT. BATTAGLIA were within visual range of the PO PLAIN; heavy artillery located in the SANTERNO VALLEY could place interdiction fire on Highway 9, the enemy's principal lateral route of communication. These were substantial successes, and the momentum of the advance had not been reduced appreciably. There was reason to anticipate an early end to fighting in the mountains.

The success of the Fifth Army offensive depended in large part upon the ability of II Corps to reach the PO VALLEY before bad weather and arrival of enemy reinforcements nullified its temporary advantage. Having been attacking generally

northeast, the Corps was turned to the north during the first week of October. In the event that the attack met with success, General Clark anticipated that Fifth Army troops would break-out into the PO VALLEY on a broad 30-mile front, prepared to drive north to cut off enemy forces facing Eighth Army and to block to the west to prevent withdrawals along the IV Corps front. IV Corps would drive up the coast to capture the great port of GENOA and open a supply road to the western plain.

North of the RADICOSA PASS area, the enemy had utilized Italian civilians to build up a series of well selected delaying positions spaced through 15 miles of extremely rugged mountains. The 1st Armored Division (less CCB), which was available to II Corps, would be of little offensive value in these mountains, but it was hoped that armor could be employed in an exploitation role once the open plain was reached.

II Corps jumped off on 1 October. After the morning mist lifted the day cleared and "Rover Joe" went back into action. Twenty-four hours later a cold wind whipped through the mountains; the low-clouds, fog and rain continued for a week. The enemy fought a stubborn delaying action, finally falling back to his next position during the 3rd and 4th days, but only after being outflanked or overrun. CCA's 14th Armored Infantry Battalion relieved part of the 88th Infantry Division along the II Corps right (east) flank on the night of 3 October and assisted in defending this comparatively quiet



sector until relieved by XIII Corps units on the 6th. The 1st Armored Division's 27th and 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalions were attached to the 34th Infantry Division, on the left, 7 October.

The main attack continued against increasing enemy resistance, steady rains and heavy fog. Casualties were high on both sides. Although some enemy units were in a critical condition and others had been badly mauled, German leaders displayed amazing resourcefulness in putting together odds and ends to build up forces in this area. The terrain was probably the worst encountered in the campaign, rope ladders were required to scale certain rocky crests. At one point, the 91st Infantry Division faced a sheer rock wall three miles long and, in places, nearly 1500 feet high. Good roads were almost non-existent; supply and evacuation problems were multiplied.

As the enemy's second delaying position was pierced, XIII Corps took over part of the II Corps right flank, CCA, consisting of the 6th and 14th Armored Infantry Battalions, was detached from the 88th Infantry Division on 8 October and shifted to the left. Attached to the 34th Infantry Division, the combat command entered the line southwest of the MONTER-AMICI hill mass during early morning hours of 11 October, (See Map No. 4, p 118), permitting the 34th to begin concentration of its forces to the east for a new attack. Adverse weather and impassable roads required that supplies be carried to

some units by pack-board. Troops patrolling forward to improve their positions met enemy grenade, rifle, machine gun, tank, mortar and artillery fire, and counterattacks. Effective artillery fire broke up this resistance, in most cases, but did not permit substantial gains.

At 1200, 14 October, control of CCA and the adjacent 35th Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division, passed to the 1st Armored Division, which had been attached to II Corps on 7 October and had moved up to take over the 34th Division zone. A number of other units were temporarily attached to the division at this time, including the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, two tank platoons, one tank destroyer platoon, one medical company and one chemical platoon. Division tanks were used to support front line infantry units, where possible, and to reinforce Division Artillery. The weather and terrain were so bad that forward tanks were left in place and relief crews were rotated through them. The 16th Armored Engineer Battalion, augmented by 100 men from tank, reconnaissance and artillery battalions, spent most of the month maintaining roads and bridges.

In the meantime other Corps units pressed forward, aided by four days of favorable weather, and by the 15th cracked the third (and strongest) delaying line. The slow, bitter fighting was the heaviest since IL GIOGO PASS, and indicated that a swift breakthrough to the PO VALLEY was now unlikely.

#### CCB, On The Left

To prevent a gap from developing between II and IV

Corps, General Clark had strengthened the 6th South African Armored Division and made it a self-contained unit. Placed under direct control of Fifth Army on 5 October, it had the mission of attacking down the SETTA VALLEY to keep pace with II Corps and maintain contact with IV Corps on the left. CCB of the 1st Armored Division and numerous artillery units were attached. Engineers, assisted by Italian partisans, followed closely behind the leading company of CCB's 11th Armored Infantry Battalion to repair roads, bridges and by-passes for tanks and the rest of the column. Extensive demolitions were encountered and, in places, roads were blown right off the sides of mountains. Heavy rains and swollen mountain streams added to supply difficulties, which had become a major problem. It was necessary to hand-carry supplies across streams, load them onto peeps which crossed before the water had risen and then repeat the process at the next obstacle.<sup>2</sup>

PORRETTA was taken on 5 October, (See Map No.4,p 118) Here CCB was fighting above the cloud line.<sup>3</sup> Two days later patrols in SILIA drew enemy machine gun fire, the first active resistance in this zone. Then scattered enemy artillery fire fell on PORRETTA for several days. The 11th Armored Infantry Battalion occupied SILIA on 11 October against only light artillery fire.

On the 13th a coordinated infantry-tank attack by CCB took the enemy by surprise and by noon had secured the key ground at BOMBIANA, 5000 yards to the left (west) of

Highway 64 north of SILIA. Heavy enemy artillery barrages pounded SILIA and the by-pass around its blown bridge, inflicting a few casualties. An enemy counterattack on BOMB- IANA, supported by strong mortar and artillery fire, was repulsed by 1800 hours. During the attack on BOMBIANA a private of the 1st Platoon, Company A, 11th Armored Infantry Battalion, threw a grenade into a house window killing two Germans and wounding three others; his squad took 12 more prisoners. When the counterattack came, the same soldier charged a group of attacking Germans when they got within 50 yards of his position, and chased them away.

Although it had not matched the advance of II Corps, by 15 October the reinforced 6th South African Armored Division had advanced to GRIZZANA and was securely tied in with the 1st Armored Division on its right, thus protecting the left flank of II Corps. This area was characterized by extensive demolitions, obstacles and the same difficult terrain which II Corps was experiencing.

Weather permitting, fighter-bombers attacked enemy communications with considerable success. In- cendiary bombs, made from one-hundred-ten gallon gasoline fuel tanks and containing a jelly-like mixture of gasoline and "Napalm", were used for the first time on the Italian front. They proved particularly effective against enemy bivouacs and troop installations in wooded areas where the burning fuel started fires over wide areas. A large air

assault was launched on 12 October directly in front of the II Corps bulge and also against the BOLOGNA area. 1661 tons of bombs were dropped on 74 targets by 750 heavy bombers, 300 medium bombers and 277 fighter-bombers.

#### The Final Push

At many points Allied troops were within visual range of the PO VALLEY, but BOLOGNA was still 13 long airline miles away. Time was running short. Troops were nearing exhaustion; while German troops opposing II Corps were being reinforced and would soon equal its strength. The ammunition supply was approaching a critical level: it was estimated that the current expenditure rate would require the Army to adopt a defensive role by early November.<sup>4</sup> Battle casualties and lack of adequate replacements added to the factors which forced an immediate decision. The decisive push would have to be made now, or wait until after Winter.

The final effort to break through to the PO VALLEY southeast of BOLOGNA was launched on 16 October. The 34th Infantry Division, in the nose of the II Corps bulge, attempted to push directly north but ran into very strong resistance from the 29 Panzer Grenadier Division, one of the finest German divisions in ITALY. In addition to other attacks along the front, CCA and the 135th Infantry launched a coordinated attack against the MONTERAMICI hill mass on 17 October, but hardly dented strong enemy defenses. On the left CCA's 14th Armored Infantry Battalion, with tank support, jumped off at

0700 against stiff resistance and was initially successful, securing hills 403 and 427 within six hours. However, a strong counterattack, supported by heavy fire, forced a withdrawal to the ravines south of these objectives that afternoon, and troops spent that night in their former positions.

Attacking the next day at 0630, both the 6th and 11th Battalions were also held in place. Enemy artillery pounded the area, cutting telephone lines and causing casualties. The 135th Infantry attempted to advance but failed. The front was strongly outposted that night. On the 19th, the 1st Armored Division and the adjacent 91st Infantry Division assumed an "aggressive defense", with troops constantly patrolling to the front to maintain contact with the enemy.

The failure of the 34th Division and other II Corps units to make appreciable gains, and the possibility of a large counter-attack against the II Corps left (west) flank caused a change in Corps plans. In order to force General Lemelsen to spread his troops over a wider front, General Clark ordered attacks on both flanks of the nose of the II Corps salient. Air and artillery support aided the 85th and 88th Divisions, on the right, in capturing designated hill masses on the 19th and in preparing to meet possible counterattacks. But other Corps units barely budged. The emphasis was then again shifted to the northeast and the attack continued. Mud, mountains, rain and fog assisted the enemy in inflicting considerable casualties and in stopping



113

201694

Division Artillery scores a direct hit on German strongpoint on MONTERAMICI.

201694

A 1st Armored Division gun crew shows excellent marksmanship, scoring a hit on an important German stronghold on Monterusio, which is on the route to the Bologna plains. American Infantrymen are only a few hundred below the smoke bursts. 12/3/44, Italy.

PLEASE CREDIT

U. S. ARMY PHOTOGRAPH

The Department of the Army has no objection to the use of this photograph in commercial advertisements, provided copy and layout are submitted to the REVIEW SECTION, PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, WASHINGTON, D. C., and written permission is obtained.



this final effort, which bogged down by evening of the 26th, just four miles short of Highway 9. The same day another torrential rain washed out bridges. Several footbridges were put in, and even a breeches buoy was installed at one point, but transport was tied up. Ammunition and rations had to be mule-packed and hand carried to forward troops.

Many other factors, however, dictated a general halt. Units were greatly understrength and worn down from six weeks of bitter, rugged fighting. Ammunition was short. Personnel replacements could not be obtained in time to influence the final push. Only the hope that one more attack would carry them through had kept Allied troops from halting earlier. Heavy rain, mud, the bitterly cold nights of approaching winter weather, and the near complete exhaustion of troops were other determining factors. The balance of statistics leaned more and more heavily in favor of the enemy. German troops opposing II Corps had increased from one full division, plus elements of two others, to seven divisions plus elements of three others. Facing Fifth Army, overall, German forces had increased from seven to sixteen divisions.

On the 28th of October II Corps directed its units to develop defensive positions in place to prepare to meet counter-attacks and to relieve as many troops as possible for rest and rehabilitation. The offensive had ended - nine miles from BOLOGNA and only four miles from the vital PO VALLEY Highway!

On the left the 6th South African Armored Division had slugged its way forward slowly, and CCB of the 1st Armored (attached) pushed north along Highway 64 beyond SILIA. But these units too, had virtually ground to a halt by the 26th. CCB's 11th Armored Infantry Battalion, reinforced with reconnaissance and tank elements, did take PALAZZO and CASTELACCIO on the 29th, however. Company B, defending the latter village, received a strong, aggressive enemy counterattack at 0900 the next morning. The company commander later reported by radio that his command post was surrounded and requested reinforcements. When asked how far the enemy was from him, he replied, "There's one two yards from me now", and signed off. Nothing was heard from the company for the next fifteen minutes. Then the company commander again called battalion. His outfit had held, in close combat, and by 1100 hours the attack had been repulsed. The Germans counterattacked in battalion strength five times in the next four days and plastered the area with heavy fire, but failed to regain the lost ground. Company B held.<sup>5</sup>

IV Corps, reduced to the strength of no more than a reinforced division and thinly spread along the Army left flank, faced jagged peaks and twisting valleys more rugged than those in the II Corps zone. Enemy forces, too, were thin and now consisted of only second-class units. Switched to the coastal zone, Task Force 92 was hampered by swollen creeks, steep cliffs and heavy enemy fire. It was halted

on 23 October. Although the Brazilian 6th Regimental Combat Team had pushed forward nearly 6 miles, Corps orders limited further action to only local attacks, since it was feared that a salient might develop and thus encourage a counter-attack which could not be met because reserves were not available.

Fifth Army troops had fought a heartbreaking battle against weather, terrain and the enemy; although commendable advances were made in the center of the II Corps salient, they had been stopped. Some of them could see the PO VALLEY from their positions. All of them grimly faced another bitter winter in the mountains.

---

NOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

- 1 FIFTH ARMY HISTORY, Vol VII, pg 96.
- 2 HISTORY OF ELEVENTH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION FOR OCTOBER, 1944, pg 1.
- 3 Statement of Major R. C. Moran, Communications Department, The Armored School, Fort Knox, Kentucky, 1948.
- 4 FROM SALERNO TO THE ALPS, A History of the Fifth Army, Edited by Lt. Col. Chester G. Starr, Infantry Journal Press, Washington, 1948.
- 5 STORY OF THE FIRST ARMORED DIVISION, a First Armored Division publication, pg 53; HISTORY OF THE ELEVENTH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION FOR OCTOBER, 1944, pgs 5-6; and HISTORY OF THE ELEVENTH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION FOR NOVEMBER, 1944, pg 1.

## CHAPTER VII

### WINTER IN THE MOUNTAINS

As the unsuccessful drive on BOLOGNA bogged down during the last few days of October, 1st Armored Division troops dug in for the Winter. They were to spend over four months defending the left portion of the II Corps salient south of the MONTE-RAMICI hill mass. Except for a six-week rest and training period in army reserve, the Division was employed in an infantry role from the middle of October until the first week in April. While the bulk of front line duty fell to armored infantry units and the reconnaissance battalion, it later became necessary for tankers, too, to enter the line as doughboys.

Cold winds swept the jagged APENNINES; heavy rains continued; and in mid-November the first snow fell, soon blanketing the ground. Sleet, fog and mud made fighting even more difficult. Although some Fifth Army units continued to exert pressure in order to improve their positions, the majority were directed to defend in place with a minimum number of troops. Rest, rehabilitation, reinforcement and training were given high priority during the cold winter months.

On the right, the British Eighth Army pushed forward with difficulty and by 15 December was nearly abreast of Fifth Army, with its more successful right flank securely anchored on the ADRIATIC COAST about 36 miles east of BOLOGNA. Several



high-level personnel changes occurred when General Clark assumed command of Allied forces in ITALY (15th Army Group) on 16 December. He was replaced as Commanding General, Fifth Army, by Lt. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott. The new army commander, whom General Harmon has described as "a fine fighting soldier; a man of willpower, decision and drive",<sup>1</sup> had commanded the 3rd Infantry Division in SICILY and ANZIO, and VI Corps in the ANZIO breakout and invasion of SOUTHERN FRANCE. Although it had been planned that Fifth Army would launch another offensive drive in December, this did not materialize. Probably the main reasons were the pressure maintained by enemy forces along the Army front and their threatened major counter-offensive in the TYRRHENIAN (west) coastal sector. Another important contributing factor was the necessity of building up ammunition stocks and other supplies for the planned breakthrough to the PO VALLEY the following Spring.

#### Two Months As Infantry

The 1st Armored Division continued to defend along the main line of resistance just south of MONTEPAMICI throughout the month of November and most of December. By the end of November all CCB troops except the 13th Tank Battalion, 68th Armored Field Artillery Battalion and Company A, 123rd Ordnance Maintenance Battalion, had returned from the IV Corps zone to division control. Most of this small task force remained with IV Corps in support of Brazilian and South African troops until the end of January. The three

armored infantry battalions, organic reconnaissance squadron and attached 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, backed up by mortars and a few tanks, held the division front. Patrols were sent out by each front line unit day and night to test enemy reaction and dispositions and to obtain identifications. Small fire fights developed, artillery fire was exchanged and casualties resulted on both sides. Although troops were issued new winter clothing, it was necessary to rotate units frequently between front line duty and the rear areas. During the winter emphasis was on the rear area near PRATO, where supplies were being built up, troops rested and trained and roads were repaired. The latter project became a major problem. Heavy rains and swollen streams continued to hamper supply operations and to ruin roads. Large details of men, furnished by combat units, assisted the engineers in maintaining the road network.

On 24 November the 1st Armored Division extended its front to the right (east) and took over the 91st Infantry Division sector. Two days later two enemy groups, closely following a heavy rolling artillery barrage, attacked the forward positions of the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion and 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron in strength. Defensive fires were laid down and broke up this effort to recapture the village of LA PIANA. A total of 1,000 rounds of artillery and mortar fire were received during the day.

Throughout November and most of December the Division

faced three battalions of the German 35 and 36 Panzer Grenadier Regiments (16 SS Panzer Grenadier Division) and a parachute-infantry battalion. Late in December the 4 Parachute Division extended its front to the west, relieving the 16 SS Panzer Grenadier Division. The Germans utilized caves and tunnels, improved their positions, maintained aggressive patrols and continued to lay down harrassing direct and indirect fire.

#### Well Earned Rest

On 27 December the Division was withdrawn from front line duty and moved to an assembly area near LUCCA in Fifth Army Reserve, prepared to meet a German attack in the TYRRENIAN COAST sector aimed at the port of LEGHORN.<sup>2</sup> Although the enemy succeeded in penetrating and rolling back some IV Corps forward positions, his attack did not gain momentum. The 1st Armored was not committed and remained in reserve near LUCCA until 15 February. Rest, rehabilitation, training and maintenance occupied this six-week period. Of particular interest was the training of tankers to fight as doughboys in order to provide greater infantry strength in the next contemplated operation.<sup>3</sup>

#### Tankers Turn Doughboys

Then, in mid-February, when the snow was beginning to melt and an early Spring began to appear, the Division returned to the PRATO area, north of FLORENCE. On the 17th, units were introduced into the 6th South African Division line in preparation for relief of that unit. This was the



general area in which CCB had fought in October when attached to the South African division. The 1st Armored Division assumed command of this new sector and various miscellaneous units in place on 23 February. The line was held by the attached 135th Infantry Regimental Combat Team (34th Infantry Division) on the left, CCA in the center and CCB on the right. It was the same story again: aggressive patrols, fire fights and artillery exchanges. The Division remained in the line until 5 April, when it was relieved by the 6th South African Armored Division. Opposing forces of the German 94 Infantry Division continued to improve their positions and launched two unsuccessful raids in strength. Only two enemy reconnaissance aircraft appeared and no fighters or bombers were sighted over the division sector.

Early in March the 1st and 4th Tank Battalions, which had received infantry training during the previous month, entered the line. These tankers fought as dough-boys and performed their new task well. Numerous non-divisional units were attached and detached during the month, and the organic 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron departed on 6 March for IV Corps front line duty, where it remained throughout the month. Positions on the left of the division front were improved when minor gains were made in the VERGATO area. To the rear, training was conducted in special bridging operations and obstacle crossing methods in preparation for the PO VALLEY campaign which would soon follow. Italian Pioneer Labor Comp-

anies and hundreds of Italian civilians assisted the engineers in maintaining the division road net. Throughout the month aggressive patrols continued to operate. Thirty-one fire-fights ensued.

During these bitterly cold winter months the 1st Armored Division had fought strictly in an infantry role. Tanks and assault guns were used to support infantry front line troops and reinforce the fires of Division Artillery. Tankers dismounted and gained a true appreciation of the doughboy's role. Action was limited mainly to aggressive patrolling.

Allied forces in ITALY had held a large number of German divisions in place **here**, playing a major role in the overall strategic plan for the defeat of GERMANY. Had these German troops been available to reinforce German troops making the breakthrough in the ARDENNES the effect of that important all-out effort might have been considerably improved. The value of NORTHERN ITALY to the German war effort is indicated by the fact that the enemy retained so many first class divisions in this area when they were so sorely needed at this time on both the eastern and western fronts of Fortress EUROPE. Despite heavy bombing, the industrial PO VALLEY continued to produce great quantities of supplies and equipment and provided a reservoir of manpower which contributed to the German defense. A captured order of the 19 G.A.F. Field Division points out that the mission of German troops in ITALY was much the same as that of the Allies: "This war

will not be decided in this theater. To relieve forces in the west, the mission of our armies in ITALY is to keep strong forces of the enemy occupied, to weaken his armies, and to inflict heavy losses in men and equipment."

---

• NOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

- 1 We Break Out At ANZIO, Maj. Gen. E. N. Harmon and Milton MacKaye, The Saturday Evening Post, 25 September 1948.
- 2 Fifth Army History, Vol VIII, pg 181.
- 3 After Action Report, 1st Armored Division, 1 February thru 28 February, 1945, pg 2.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PO VALLEY BREAKOUT

The 1st Armored Division once again was employed in its primary role in the colorful breakout onto the broad flatlands of the fertile PO VALLEY. Spearheading a 230 mile exploitation, the Division, in just over a weeks time, blocked the German's only exit from northwest ITALY by driving beyond COMO and MILAN to the SWISS ALPS.

#### The Preparation

Throughout the previous winter months the Fifth Army rested, trained, and built up its combat equipment for the eventual knockout. Replacements and reinforcements flowed in; worn-out vehicles were repaired or exchanged; reserves of ammunition were piled up and new and improved weapons were added. However, for the men there was no let up. They plunged wearily through waist-deep snowdrifts; they endured the bone-chilling cold and dampness and the slick mud of the APENNINES while constantly probing and patrolling the front in preparation for the day when the attack would jump off and end the Italian campaign.<sup>1</sup>

The equivalent of ten divisions was spread out over some 90 miles of the toughest type of terrain for military operations; on the west a narrow strip of coastal plain, the rest a formidable maze of tortuous mountains. The IV Corps, commanded by Major General Crittenberger, was on the left flank from the LIGURIAN SEA to the RENO RIVER, a span of 70 miles, while the



A 4th Tank Battalion crew prepares for the PO VALLEY drive.

SC 199736

Members of the 1st Armored Division repair their tank,  
Sommie IV, as they prepare for the drive into Bologna,  
Italy. 10/19/44.

--Saint Lucia Area, Italy, 4th Bn.

SECRET

PHOTOGRAPH

The Department of the Army forbids the use of this photograph in  
commercial publications, press, radio and TV, and is submitted to the REVIEW  
SECTION, HEADQUARTERS, INSIGNIA DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C., and no reproduction is allowed.

199736

II Corps, under the command of Major General (later Lieutenant General) Geoffrey Keyes, was concentrated on a 25 mile front from the RENO to the IDICE RIVER and on the low mass of MONTE GRANDE (See Map 5, p. 15). Approximately 270,000 troops of all branches and services made up the Fifth Army.<sup>2</sup>

The disposition of the IV Corps at the beginning of April, 1945, as it prepared to assist the Fifth Army in the push that was to culminate in complete victory in ITALY, was as follows:

On the left was the 92nd Division, commanded by Major General Edward M. Almond, under Army control. Next came the Brazilian Expeditionary Force, commanded by Major General Icao Batista Mascarenhas de Moraes, with the 10th Mountain Division under the command of Major General George P. Hays on its right. On the right of the 10th Mountain Division, and extending the IV Corps line to the RENO was the 1st Armored Division, commanded by Major General Vernon E. Prichard.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Army Plan

On 1 April, 1945, the Fifth Army plan was complete. There were to be three phase lines, Green, Brown, and Black, for purpose of control. The main attack was to be delivered by the IV Corps, spearheaded by the 10th Mountain Division on the left (west) of Highway 64 and generally parallel to it, while the 1st Armored Division advanced on the right, along and slightly to the left of the highway. Green phase would be completed

when the 10th Mountain Division cleared the ridge which dominated Highway 64 and the 1st Armored Division captured MONTE PERO and the town of VERGATO. At the completion of Green phase, II Corps would join the attack and Brown phase would begin.

During the Brown phase both Corps would continue the attack to the northeast and generally parallel to Highway 64 to capture MONTE SOLE, MONTERAMICI, MONTEADONE and PIANORO. Black phase involved continuous advance by both Corps after the completion of Brown phase. During this phase, II Corps was to capture PRADURO and continue the attack. The 85th Division was to follow close behind in reserve during the first two phases and then on Corps order pass through the 1st Armored Division.

During the Black phase, the 1st Armored Division and the 6th South African Armored Division were to be organized into a mobile reserve of armored units for the purpose of striking into the PO VALLEY at the right moment and encircling BOLOGNA. This armored thrust was to be followed by rapidly advancing task forces of infantry and armor whose mission was to seize PO RIVER crossings and to cut the enemy escape routes.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1st Armored Division Action

During the period 1 to 5 April the 1st Armored Division conducted aggressive patrolling and maintained contact with the enemy. From 6-13 April the Division, concentrating in the vicinity of RIVOLA, conducted a training program and prepared plans



for the spring offensive; it also assumed command of a sector along the IV Corps MLR. The division not only maintained contact with the enemy by vigorous patrolling but protected the Corps right flank.

Precisely at 0830 on the 14th of April, the day of the attack, wave after wave of bombers came over the mountains from the south. For 40 minutes the sky was filled with planes. At 0910 the artillery opened up, laying down an intense 35 minute barrage, driving the enemy into his dugouts. During this barrage the men of the 10th Mountain Division and the 1st Armored Division got set; the show was ready to begin. At 0935 the 10th jumped off with two regiments abreast. The enemy resisted inch by inch, foot by foot, and made the going extremely difficult for the Mountain Division, leaving many casualties.

At 1645 with its left flank secured, CCB of the 1st Armored moved off in the attack with the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion passing through elements of the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion to attack toward SUZZANO (See Map 5 page 155). The 6th Armored Infantry Battalion remained in their defensive positions along FINOCCHIO RIDGE throughout the day. At 1750 the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, dismounted, supported by the 27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, moved into the attack and by 2000 approached the southern part of VERGATO. For a long time the Germans had held and fiercely defended this road junction. Now they fought back so tenaciously with small

arms and mortars that Troop A was held up and had to await the arrival of reinforcements. By the end of the day VERGATO was entered and building-to-building fighting prevailed.

The 14th Armored Infantry Battalion met no opposition in its advance toward SUZZANO but halted approximately one mile southwest of town to prepare to attack the following morning. The 11th Armored Infantry Battalion had initially moved into an assembly area in the vicinity of RIOLA. The Battalion followed in column behind the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion after the jump off.

Early on the morning of the 15th of April, C Company, 14th Armored Infantry Battalion, with a platoon of tanks from the 13th Tank Battalion, launched a successful attack on SUZZANO. At the close of the day the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion was moving east toward Mount PERO followed by the 11th Armored Infantry and the 13th Tank Battalion. Later, the 11th Armored Infantry passed through the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion to take the hilltop objective one mile east of SUZZANO. The 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron continued to clean out VERGATO. Troop C took up positions and reinforced Troop A by 0230. At the end of the day they were still clearing snipers from the town.

On the 16th, the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, dismounted, continued to mop up in VERGATO; they cleared the town before the end of the day and prepared to continue their

advance. At 0630 the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion attacked in a column of companies, by-passing enemy demolitions, struggling up the steep, rocky sides of Mount PERO in the face of blistering small arms, artillery and mortar fire. By 0900 MT PERO was occupied. At 0615 the 11th Armored Infantry Battalion moved off from positions immediately south of SUZZANO, continued 2 miles northeast, passed through elements of the 10th Mountain Division on MOUNT MOSCA, which had just fallen, and at 1635 attacked toward high ground one mile to the east. Initially the enemy opposition was determined, but by the end of the day the battalion objective was taken. The 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, which had assembled at SUZZANO during the morning, followed the 11th Armored Infantry Battalion to Mt MOSCA and occupied positions on that ridge from which to launch an attack the next day on the left of the 11th Armored Infantry Battalion drive. The 14th Armored Infantry Battalion, which held Mt PERO since morning, moved northwest during the evening in order to support the attack of the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, if necessary.

At 0730, 17 April, the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion began moving from MT MOSCA toward the next objective, MOUNT d' AVIGO, 3 miles to the northeast across a valley. The approach march covered ground previously taken by the 10th Mountain Division, so the actual attack started in the early afternoon. The first attempts were repulsed, but after a 30 minuteartil-

lery barrage Company B took the hill and 250 prisoners. Company C continued eastward to seize the hills overlooking the RENO which were one mile north of positions reached by the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron in the valley below. At dawn the 11th Armored Infantry Battalion, pushing eastward about one mile south of the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, continued its drive and advanced two miles against no opposition to occupy MOUNT MILANO, overlooking the RENO, by 0930. By the end of the 17th, the infantry and the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron of the 1st Armored Division had advanced eight miles from their original front-line positions and held objectives astride the Brown Phase Line. Two infantry battalions occupied the high ground of MOUNTS d' AVIGO and MILANO, dominating the RENO VALLEY from the west, and the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron advanced up Highway 64 to a point east of MT MILANO.

As the enemy defenses crumbled between the RENO and SAMOGGIA, the enemy, forced from the comparative safety of his prepared positions, sought to fall back in an orderly retreat to other lines, but General Truscott, the Fifth Army Commander, decided to commit the Army reserves upon their arrival on the Brown Phase Line, to strengthen the penetration and press home the attack before the enemy could get set again. Accordingly, the 85th Infantry relieved the 1st Armored Division on the right of the IV Corps sector and continued the mission of clearing Highway 64.<sup>4</sup>

Also on the 17th, CCA was assembling near TOLE, and the 14th Armored Infantry Battalion and the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (minus Troops B, C, and E, which were attached to CCB) were attached to CCA and moved to assembly positions near TOLE. Here the 1st Armored Division found terrain more suitable for the use of armor than that along Highway 64. Road nets were good and most of the streams in the PANORO-SAMOGGIA area were fordable. However, the shifting of the Division to the new attack zone to take advantage of this tankable terrain was not made without considerable difficulty. The one and only road leading west between TOLE and Highway 64 at VERGATO was overloaded with traffic of the 1st Armored Division and 85th Infantry Division and the continuous pounding made it deep with dust. To further complicate the already tremendous problems of the 1st Armored Division, the enemy bombarded the assembly areas south of TOLE with steady artillery fire all afternoon of the 17th.

In preparation for the attack on the 18th. General Prichard ordered the following task organizations:

CCA

14th Armored Infantry Battalion  
1st Tank Battalion  
91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (less B, C, & E Troops)  
Co A, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion

CCB

4th Tank Battalion  
11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
27th Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
Troop B, 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron

Troop C, 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron

The remainder of the combat battalions were with the Reserve Command or, like the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, were awaiting relief by the 85th Division.

On the 18th, Colonel Howze ordered CCA to attack up ~~the~~ SAMOGGIA VALLEY operating in three columns abreast. At 1220, CCA moved forward into the attack; movement, however, was slow due to the heavy traffic and enemy artillery fire. The 1st Tank Battalion lost one tank in TOLE to artillery fire. One force, the right column, consisting of a platoon of medium tanks, a platoon of armored infantry, and a squad of engineers, was opposed chiefly by artillery and small groups of infantry. The two columns on the left, one going down the valley and one west thereof, struck much harder going. The center force, with the same compositions as the right column, reached the valley town of SAVIGNO, five miles north of TOLE. They took the town by 1830, and secured a crossing of the SAMOGGIA RIVER before the enemy could mine the approaches or perform demolitions. During the night the enemy launched three counter-attacks, knocking out five tanks with armor-piercing shells and bazooka fire and forcing the center column to withdraw two miles. The left column, composed of a company of medium tanks and a company of armored infantry, pushed north two miles along the SAMOGGIA where it wheeled and struck west. Although it was somewhat delayed by demolitions and mines, the force continued northwest until stopped by an enemy strongpoint about 1000 yards east of MT OMBRARA. The force continued to attack

during the night, but was unable to dislodge the fanatical enemy force consisting of 80 men supported by a few tanks and anti-tank weapons. During the 18th, CCB, under Brigadier General Maurice W. Daniel, was still moving into position at TOLE. The 6th Armored Infantry Battalion was relieved in position by the 2nd Battalion, 338th Infantry, at 1350, and at the close of the day was enroute to the division assembly area at TOLE.

Substantial progress had been made during the day; the 1st Armored Division's thrust down the left was bearing the brunt of enemy efforts to strike into the flank of the 10th Mountain Division spearhead probing for the PO VALLEY. On the 18th the chief source of opposition had been artillery and anti-tank weapons. Late in the day the Germans brought up the armor of the 90 Panzer Grenadier Division; and on the 19th tank fought tank as the enemy made desperate efforts to stop or slow the breakthrough, which was assuming disastrous proportions by then.<sup>5</sup> However, there were still rivers to cross and hills to be taken, and the Germans were still fighting. Some had surrendered, but only when forced to do so by lack of ammunition or when overwhelmed by the weight and speed of the advance.<sup>6</sup>

At 0630, 19 April, the 1st Armored Division continued the attack in five columns of armor and armored infantry. CCB freshly committed on the new front, was using two columns on the left of CCA, which concentrated nearer the SAMOGGIA.

Each column consisted of a company each of tanks and armored infantry, and a platoon each of light tanks, engineers and 105 mm assault guns. Also included in the column were the column command vehicles, the armored infantry half-tracks and the service trains, if practicable.<sup>7</sup> The initial mission of the task forces was to strike north and west to cut Highway 9 and to protect the left flank of the 1st Armored Division. A partial breakthrough had been accomplished by CCA on the right, and their forces were well out in front of CCB initially. They found that they could readily advance due north, but whenever they tried to turn west they hit strong enemy resistance.

Task Force Ripley, (commanded by Lt Colonel Ernest L. Ripley, CO, 11th Armored Infantry Battalion), the left column, ran into a strong point at MT OMBRARA which consisted of strong infantry positions supported by tanks and SP guns. They were unable to break the strong point, because their armored infantry force was too small and the nature of the terrain prohibited proper use of the tanks in the column. During the same day Task Force Carr (commanded by Lt Colonel Frank F. Carr, CO, 4th Tank Battalion), the right column, was able to move to PALAZZA against only heavy artillery resistance. As a result of the situation and terrain, the third task force, which was in reserve, was split up. The armored infantry was sent to Task Force Ripley and the armor to Task Force Carr for the next day's attack northward.<sup>8</sup>



On the division right, during the 19th, CCA continued its three column push on a narrower front astride the SAMOGGIA VALLEY. Heavy resistance from enemy tanks and self-propelled artillery fell chiefly on the central column, which regained only about half the ground lost to the German counterattacks of the night before. While it reached a point in the valley nearly three miles north of SAVIGNO, the flanking columns made much smaller gains to attain positions about two miles to the rear and flanks of the leading elements in the center.

On the 20th the Division encountered stubborn resistance all day. A surprise attack against MT OMERARA in the morning made no headway, but the point finally fell to the armored infantry of CCB in the evening. Task Force Carr moved out from PALAZZA to attack northwest. The attack initially met with only small arms and light artillery fire, but when the column reached CASTELLETA it ran into another strong-point as it attempted to turn west. When the column first approached the strong-point and met with small arms fire and some SP and artillery fire, it deployed immediately and began the attack. The supporting fire of artillery and tanks was inadequate, and the armored infantry was stopped by mortar and small arms fire which caused quite a few casualties. The attack was called off and a full scale attack employing all the forces at hand was planned.<sup>9</sup>

While plans were being made and tanks were getting into positions, it was requested that the air corps dive-bomb and

strafe the town. Artillery was registered on important points, tanks were assigned certain sectors to cover with fire, and the infantry were given their objectives but were told to stand pat until ordered forward. The air corps bombed the town with excellent results. The artillery covered the town and its flanks with a very effective barrage, and two companies of tanks fired every gun they had at likely targets. After a few minutes the tanks were given the cease fire order. There was not a single enemy round fired as the infantry jumped off into the attack; the town was taken without a casualty and approximately 150 prisoners were captured. Later that night the armored infantry was ordered to send out a strong patrol supported by tanks to gain contact with the enemy. They made contact at CASTELLO about a mile and half to the west and established a roadblock.

At 1300 on the 20th, the 13th Tank Battalion, the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, and Company C, 16th Armored Engineer Battalion, were added to CCA, which was still moving in three columns down the valley. At dusk the 13th Tank Battalion, supported by infantry, the 14th and 6th Armored Infantry Battalions, attacked along the axis of the SAMOGGIA RIVER VALLEY, with the mission of reaching 50 Northing, at the southern edge of the PO RIVER VALLEY, by morning. During the attack the force lost three tanks to enemy SP fire. They continued on and secured OLIVETTO, then pushed on slowly the rest of the night. By morning the 1st Armored Division entered the PO PLAIN, due south of PONTE SAMOGGIA.

At dark on the 20th, IV Corps emerged from the hills onto the plains of the PO VALLEY with these divisions abreast, the 85th Division just west of BOLOGNA, the 10th Mountain Division in the vicinity of PONTE SAMOGGIA, and the 1st Armored Division south thereof. The advance so far had been speedy for mountain fighting; ahead lay possibilities of even swifter maneuver. The fact that II Corps had smashed through the defenses south of BOLOGNA meant that the pursuit of the retreating enemy would take place on a large scale, with all the major forces of Fifth Army involved in the coordinated but flexible push.<sup>10</sup>

The 1st Armored Division effectively secured the flank of the IV Corps and assisted in the penetration of the enemy defenses. During the period 14-17 April, because of the tortuous terrain, this was done almost entirely by armored infantry supported, when possible, by a few tanks. However, from the 18th through the 20th of April, the Division reassembled and struck out over more favorable terrain. In the actions that followed the Division used the great mobility and shock action of the tanks to succeed in penetrating the German defenses, finally debouching into the PO VALLEY.

---

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER VIII

- 1 19 DAYS FROM THE APENNINES TO THE ALPS, A Fifth Army Publication, page 7.
- 2 Ibid p 8.
- 3 Captain R. W. Sorrell, THE PO VALLEY CAMPAIGN, ed 5 April - 2 May 1945, Advanced Officers Course, 1946-47, T.I.S.

- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Fifth Army History, Volume IX, p 60.
- 6 Op. Cit., 19 DAYS FROM APENNINES TO THE ALPS, A Fifth  
7 Army Publication, page 50.  
Letter (Hq 4th Tank Battalion - 15 May 1945)
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Fifth Army History, Volume IX, p 61.

## CHAPTER IX

### "BEGINNING OF THE END"

During the remainder of the Italian Campaign the 1st Armored Division was employed in the normal exploiting role of armor. It spearheaded the IV Corps' slashing drive in the PO VALLEY and succeeded in cutting and blocking the remaining enemy escape routes through the SWISS ALPS. These few days were an armored commander's dream. Since speed was of the essence the armored columns plunged on, darting and wheeling, and by-passing enemy strong points thereby rendering them untenable. Such tactics caused chaos and confusion to reign among the German forces. (See Map 5 page 155).

#### Pursuit In The Po Valley

On the 21st, CCA continued to attack to the northeast with the mission of cutting highway 9 and securing CASTELFRANCO. The 13th Tank Battalion pushed off in the attack and upon reaching the valley split into two columns. One column cut Highway 9, finding friendly forces already there. The other column ran into small arms, bazooka, and SP fire at a canal crossing on the way to CASTELFRANCO. They forced a crossing, cleared up the resistance, took over 100 prisoners, and secured the town by dusk. The battalion reassembled and was ordered to continue on CCA's axis of advance to secure the bridge across the PANARO RIVER at NAVICELLO. It accomplished the mission without a fight.

CCB continued its attack on the 21st with the 4th

Tank Battalion leading. Task Force Ripley, followed by Task Force Carr, headed for BAZANNO. Only long range small arms fire and very heavy artillery fire hindered the columns that day. Because of the extremely rough terrain, progress was slow. Dusk had fallen before CCB reached BAZANNO and the beginning of the PO VALLEY. Due to the heavy artillery fire it was necessary for the thin skinned vehicles at the rear of the column to sideslip to the right and rejoin the column at BAZANNO. Enemy resistance was again encountered at BAZANNO, and the 4th Tank Battalion lost one tank to SP fire. However, the column took off across country, skirted the point of resistance and kept moving until dark.

On the 22nd, CCA resumed the attack in the early hours of the morning. One column, part of the 13th Tank Battalion, ran into a stiff direct fire and artillery while trying to cross a canal about three miles northwest of NAVICELLO. Some prisoners were taken and minor casualties sustained. The column was delayed for several hours while new routes were reconnoitered. Later CCA continued and crossed the SECCHIA RIVER without incident. However, as they moved south of CARPI enemy resistance was again encountered and several enemy vehicles were destroyed, including one tank. CCA took about 200 prisoners and sustained minor casualties.

At 2300 on the 21st, CCB prepared to push on; the 4th Tank Battalion organized task forces of a company of tanks and

a company of armored infantry with accompanying artillery forward observer. The missions of these task forces were to reach the PO RIVER. The first objective was to cross the PANARO RIVER and cut Highway 9 west of MODENA. The column moved out in pitch dark and was unable to find a crossing of the river. Therefore, at dawn on the 22nd it cut Highway 9 just east of the PANARO. Here at SAN AMBROGGIA the first resistance was met in the form of small arms fire and artillery. The advance continued, however, and the column crossed the river a couple miles north of Highway 9 and moved on to MODENA.<sup>1</sup>

CCB approached MODENA in two columns, one column moving directly on the town, the other by-passing to the south. Other forces on their right had already by-passed the town on the north. MODENA was strongly held, and the column which moved on the town was stopped by anti-tank guns, SP guns, and enemy infantry. In this encounter, three of the tanks were hit, and they in turn had knocked out an enemy SP gun. An SP gun moved down the road totally unaware that the Americans were anywhere around, and groups of infantry moving westward were surprised into surrender. Here also CCB captured an enemy fuel and ammunition dump. The commander of CCB estimated that it would be too costly in time and personnel to try to take MODENA so he ordered the town by-passed to the south and movement westward in two columns on parallel roads. Meanwhile, a small task force from CCA consisting of two tank platoons and attached armored infantry, was sent to clear MODENA. Completing this mission, after destroying

one and capturing four SP guns, in addition to taking several prisoners, the force moved on to PARMA and then north to the PO RIVER. A large enemy force was destroyed while attempting to cross the PO RIVER in rubber boats; several convoys were destroyed, and many prisoners were sent to the rear. <sup>2</sup>

About dusk on the 22nd, the column of CCB which took the northern route moved out and advanced so rapidly under cover of darkness that they received only a few stray shots from utterly surprised Germans along the way. By dawn, on the 23rd of April, they had reached the SECCHIA RIVER in the vicinity of RUBIERA and cut Highway 9. The opposite bank of the river was held by the enemy. The bridge across the river was bombed out, so the tanks had moved into the river bed in defiladed firing positions from which to support them.

The gas and ammunition trains which were to tie on to the end of the north column were delayed at the dumps. As a consequence they did not start until an hour after the column which they were to supply. Four 105mm assault tanks had been left behind as protection for the trains. This was a very wise move because three miles south of MODENA, where the column's route connected with Highway 12, the trains column pulled up behind a horse drawn German column. While trains personnel investigated the latter, a column of German motor vehicles tried to by-pass the trains column. This was indeed a mistake because in the ensuing fight the Germans lost about 35 killed; an uncounted number of men wounded; 15 prisoners and several trucks



taken; and four trucks, three towed guns, and a motorcycle destroyed. The trains losses were two men killed and two men wounded with no vehicular losses. <sup>3</sup>

The southern column, had a very difficult time reaching its objective; the Germans had evidently been alerted by the movement of the column on the northern route, and had set up a road block to protect their evacuation from MODENA. This road block consisted of two SP guns, one in the middle of the road and the other in position off the flank. The column had been moving so rapidly that the first tank rammed the SP placed in the road, but the one on the flank knocked out three tanks before the column could halt and take cover. By the time re-organization was effected it was near dawn, so the column took off on the northern route and proceeded without further incident, joining the remainder of the force at the SECCHIA RIVER.

On the 23rd, as the river crossing of the IV Corps proceeded, the 1st Armored Division discharged a dual mission: CCA, less the 13th Tank Battalion which was attached to the 10th Mountain Division, assembled across the FO to block the enemy escape routes to the ALPS west of LAKE GARDA. Task Force Howze continued the job of blocking escape routes south of the FO as far as the TARO RIVER northwest of PARMA. CCB, after being relieved by the 34th Division at the SECCHIA RIVER south of Highway 9, assembled north of REGGIO to replace CCA in that area. <sup>4</sup>

Task Force Howze took part in numerous clashes on the 24th, but the state of enemy organization had so deteriorated

that the frequent fights which developed resulted almost invariably in disproportionate losses to the enemy. The task force moved as far south as PARMA but did not enter the city in the face of strong opposition. Later in the day, elements went as far west as the TARO RIVER, but in view of their extended position they were pulled back to the towns of BRESCELLO and COLORNO, north and northeast of PARMA, to form road blocks during the night. <sup>5</sup>

On the 25th of April, a portion of CCB moved out in task force formation without armored infantry and that night crossed the PO RIVER at a previously established bridgehead at SAN BENEDETTO DI PO. The next morning the task forces were joined by the armored infantry of the 6th Armored Infantry Battalion; the infantry all mounted the decks of the tanks. The situation was the dream of all armored commanders, that is, strong armored columns completely in rear of the enemy main combat elements.

The next day, while CCA crossed the PO, activities south of the river continued. The 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, moving along the south bank of the PO, seized two bridges over the TARO intact and made a small penetration west of that river. Elsewhere, several fierce engagements ensued as enemy columns, desperately attempting to force their way out of the trap, were caught and destroyed by our forces. Patrolling and mopping up continued north of PARMA and even slightly beyond the TARO until the 26th. Then the 1st Armored Division

forces south of the river were assembled to follow CCA, which had started that morning toward Highway 11 and northwest ITALY. <sup>6</sup>

The Task Forces of CCB under the command of Lt Colonel Linville, Lt Colonel Carr, and Major Wood moved out in that order. Their mission was to advance north of BRESCIA, dropping off Task Force Wood to secure BERGAMO. The first resistance in the form of small arms fire was encountered at SACCA. The resistance quickly folded up when the first column by-passed the town, and Task Force Carr moved through SACCA and cleared it. The next point of resistance was at CASTEDOLO, where the SS garrison of the town made a strong point of one of the houses. The armored infantry dismounted and cleared the town. But so much time had been wasted that it was decided the enemy would be ready and waiting on this road, so that night under the cover of darkness the column swung east to Highway 11, then turned northwest to approach BRESCIA from the east.

Before dawn on 27 April, while Task Force Linville was halted on Highway 11 east of BRESCIA, a German column attempting to escape to the east started to pass the column. The advanced guard of the Task Force wisely held its fire and warned the remainder of the column. When the entire German column had moved abreast of the task force, the command of fire was given and all hell broke loose. Everyone of the thirty enemy vehicles was either destroyed or captured, and an undetermined number of Germans were killed. The bag of prisoners

totalled 300 and casualties in Task Force Linville were negligible.<sup>7</sup>

At dawn on the 27th, Task Force Linville was assigned the task of securing BRESCIA. Task Force Carr and Task Force Wood were ordered to by-pass BRESCIA to the south. They were to push aside or by-pass any resistance until they reached COMO, ITALY, and then block all roads in the area. For this move, all the armored infantry was mounted in half-tracks except one platoon which rode on the tanks of the advance guard. The column proceeded along the main road and met no resistance until it approached BERGAMO. The airfield there was still manned by ground personnel with AA guns so the column shifted to the south, by-passed the city and continued on the advance. All along the way, isolated German elements were surprised and quickly surrendered.<sup>8</sup>

A German General captured during this period paid tribute to the employment of the Fifth Army units with the following statement. "Perhaps the greatest triumph of the period was the tribute paid by many German officers to the masterful employment of your armor and infantry in their wide sweeping drives to the north and northwest, which resulted in the complete isolation of our forces and which we felt was a complete departure from past Allied strategy in this theater".<sup>9</sup>

On the IV Corp's left, the 1st Armored Division moved across the PO. On the 26th, CCA started north and, meeting only scattered opposition en-route, rolled through BRESCIA and BERGAMO

to reach the town of COMO by the 28th of April. CCB followed across the PO on the 27th, drove to the GHEDI AIRPORT south of BRESCIA, and then swung west on an axis south of and parallel to that of CCA. On the 29th, the same day that Troop B, 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, found MILAN in the hands of the partisans, the 1st Armored Division consolidated positions north and east of MILAN. CCA was on the right, CCB on the left, Task Force Howze in the center, and the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron patrolling on the left flank. By the 29th, the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron had pushed to the TICINO RIVER. The next day the IV Corps formally occupied MILAN.

In three days the 1st Armored Division, roaring across country day and night against only scattered opposition, had driven a wedge between enemy forces in the mountains and in the plain. In order to strengthen the long, thin line the 1st Armored Division had drawn across the top of the valley and to assist mopping up large enemy forces west of MILAN, the 34th Division and the Legnano Group were moved to the vicinity of BRESCIA on the 28th. It doubled back to the east to cross the PO, and by the night of the 29th had closed in BRESCIA - BERGAMO area to block the escape routes west of LAKE GARDA. It then proceeded west. On 1 May it relieved the 81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron of the 1st Armored Division on the TICINO RIVER northwest of MILAN and then took NOVARA the next day against no opposition. Elements were also sent northwest 30 miles to BIELLA at the foot of the ALPS. Drawing the noose

across the top of the valley left surrender as the only alternative to the enemy forces south of the mountains and west of the ADIGE.

On 2 May, as a culmination of negotiations begun on 29 April, hostilities in ITALY ceased when representatives of Lt General Heinrich von Vietinghoff, Commander in Chief of Army Group Southwest, signed terms of unconditional surrender in CASERTA.<sup>20</sup> Even then some soldiers of the Fifth Army encountered fire from fanatic Nazi bands which refused to accept the dictum of their commander.

But it was not long before all knew that further resistance was futile. The reaction was curious but characteristic. The campaign in the MEDITERRANEAN THEATER was over; the first theater wide surrender of the Germans had occurred. But the war was not finished, not even in Europe, and there was little jubilation - only a sensation of profound relief. This was aptly expressed by a private from CHICAGO, "This is too big a thing. What can you say that makes any sense except maybe a "Thank God". He's the only one that can really understand how a guy feels right now".<sup>11</sup>

---

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER IX

- 1 Letter (Hq 4th Tank Battalion - 15 May 1945)
- 2 Letter (Hq 13th Tank Battalion - 13 May 1945)
- 3 Letter (Hq 4th Tank Battalion - 15 May 1945)
- 4 Vol IX, Fifth Army History, p 113
- 5 Ibid.

- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Letter (Hq 4th Tank Battalion - 15 May 1945)
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Extract from IV Corps Report - April 1945 -  
(Microfilm Item 525).
- 10 Vol IX, Fifth Army History, p 120-121.
- 11 19 'DAYS FROM THE APENNINES TO THE ALPS, A Fifth Army  
Publication, p 85-86.





## CHAPTER X

### SUMMARY, LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

During the eleven-month campaign from ROME to the SWISS ALPS the 1st Armored Division encountered greater extremes in weather, terrain and combat employment than were experienced by any other U.S. armored division in World War II. Fighting first as a unit, then in somewhat independent task forces, later in an infantry role and finally in full exploitation, the veteran division played an important part in the Allied drive up the Italian peninsula.

#### In Retrospect

The hot, sultry Summer of 1944 found 1st Armored Division troops spearheading Fifth Army's pursuit beyond ROME. They advanced rapidly, driving disorganized German forces into the hills, where resistance gradually increased and difficult mountainous warfare ensued. Often forced to operate over a broad front, the Division employed task forces comprised of combined arms teams. As troops pushed on into more difficult terrain, control was decentralized and infantry elements assumed the leading role. Tanks, of course, rendered valuable close support and exploited local successes, where possible.

After its reorganization in late July the Division occupied a defensive line along the ARNO RIVER. Later, it again struck out across the plain beyond, pursuing the enemy as he withdrew into his vaunted GOTHIC LINE, high in the APENNINE MOUNTAINS. Although greatly restricted and reduced in efficiency, units continued to press forward through the

rugged terrain. Before BOLOGNA division troops fought as infantry and remained in that role during the bitterly cold winter months. Then, with the arrival of Spring, the 1st Armored broke out of the mountains and, fighting in armor's characteristic role, swept across the broad, fertile PO VALLEY to play a dominant part in the colorful conclusion of the Italian campaign.

The Division fought both offensive and defensive battles. Its units conducted breakthrough, exploitation and pursuit operations and executed river crossings. Tanks were used as artillery; tankers fought as doughboys and troops were supplied by pack mules in the fight against a determined enemy, torturous terrain and abrupt, extreme weather conditions.

#### Veterans Learn, Too

Varying terrain and weather conditions do not alter basic principles of combat, but definitely influence the technique of applying these principles. This fact was imbued in the minds of 1st Armored Division troops. These veterans of NORTH AFRICA, SOUTHERN ITALY and ANZIO learned that even under the difficult and extreme conditions encountered in this campaign basic combat tactics are sound. Ingenious improvisations in the use of their weapons and equipment often enabled them to overcome these adverse factors and favorably influence the conduct of battle. They often achieved surprise by making apparently unfavorable terrain and weather work to

their advantage.

The terrain of ITALY did not favor the ideal employment of armor in mass. Although restricted in mobility, and thus somewhat reduced in efficiency, properly employed tanks proved to be potent weapons in mountain warfare. When roadbound, armor's vulnerability to anti-tank weapons increased; fighting then was slow and bitter. However, even in extremely difficult terrain, where armor lost most of its ability to shift its weight rapidly, tanks were advantageously employed in close support of infantry and, where necessary, performed important indirect artillery fire missions. Armor also provided anti-tank defense in depth, thus bolstering the infantry.

Combined arms teams, consisting of tank, infantry, artillery and engineer units, were essential to successful combat under such conditions. Necessary attached supply and evacuation elements assisted in making these teams nearly self-sustaining. Tactical groupings were keyed by flexibility of organization, permitting frequent and rapid changes to meet each succeeding situation. Mountainous terrain, which is highly compartmentalized, tended to divide the battlefield into isolated conflicts which were difficult to coordinate. Therefore, it was frequently necessary to decentralize control, particularly when these teams were deployed in parallel columns, for they were seldom mutually supporting. This required a high degree of leadership, initiative and determination on the part of all subordinate commanders.

The desirability of armor fighting in column, where possible, proved sound. Greater freedom of movement in favorable terrain was thus afforded, allowing higher commanders to influence more decisively the action of their units. Since such influence through maneuvering of reserves and shifting of fires in mountainous terrain was difficult, it was necessary that reserves be kept well forward in the expected area of their employment and that supporting fires be more carefully planned.

In mountain warfare tanks closely supported infantry elements, furnishing low-trajectory fire and providing anti-tank defense in depth. Tank guns were used to deliver indirect fire and, in some situations, crews were forced to dismount and fight as infantry. When the opportunity arose armor struck out to seize limited objectives in order to exploit local successes.

Training for night attacks was essential in this type of combat, for frontal attacks against strongly defended terrain features often had little chance of success in daylight hours. When flanking action became impossible the night attack was preferred and was usually launched without initial supporting fires. The pace of operations retarded as the altitude increased, thus surprise sometimes could be gained only through carefully planned use of difficult terrain and seemingly unfavorable weather conditions.

The importance of engineers under such conditions cannot be overemphasized. They advanced with the leading

elements to breach obstacles which impeded operations, and they were often required to repair roads which had been blown off the sides of mountains before combat units could continue. Accurate and dependable engineer reconnaissance became a necessity. Heavy equipment was needed to force major obstacles, and hundreds of laborers were required to assist in the maintenance of roads.

Artillery, too, was placed well forward in the advancing column. In the mountains it was usually located immediately behind the leading tank company in order to render close support for any action. The forward observer was located in about the fifth tank in column. T.O.T. artillery fire was devastatingly obliterating previously selected areas when properly massed.

Of primary importance in mountain warfare was the physical condition of troops, who were required to withstand rugged terrain and abrupt changes in altitude and weather conditions. The soldier learned to carry with him only the bare necessities, otherwise his efficiency was greatly reduced. When sent into battle with full allowances of individual equipment troops discarded many items, necessitating a program of collection and storage.

The burdens of logistical support were greatly multiplied in the mountains and often restricted continued advance of combat elements. The physical well-being, comfort and morale of troops also assumed added significance.

Employment of armor in mass was rare in the Italian campaign, but important tactical lessons were learned. During

a breakthrough armor should effect tactical surprise, feint aggressively, make contact, then wheel and strike out again. Contact should be broken at night. Then, advancing on unexpected routes, troops should press forward day and night to reach the objective. Contact should be avoided, utilizing secondary routes to by-pass enemy concentrations. Even the smallest towns should be by-passed, if possible. Movement must be rapid. Exploiting units strive to get behind the enemy and cut lines of communications in rear of his by-passed troops. Speed is essential.

#### A Difficult Task Well Done

Any appraisal of World War II operations in ITALY must first give full recognition to the fact that the terrain was not suitable for normal employment of tanks. The opportunity to mass armor was rare and fleeting. However, when the opportunity did present itself, the Fifth Army commander took advantage of it, as in the rapid pursuit to ROME and into the foothills beyond, and in the PO VALLEY, where armor was able to perform its characteristic role of exploitation in favorable terrain.

A casual study of the manner in which the 1st Armored Division was employed would seem to indicate a lack of boldness on the part of higher commanders and a tendency to commit armor in a piece-meal fashion. However, after more careful study, it is evident that the best possible use was generally made of the 1st Armored Division. When the situation, terrain and roadnet might have permitted its employment as a unit

for rapid movement, Fifth Army was not always in a position to do so. In all probability, the infantry divisions would not have been able to move fast enough to secure the flanks of an armored spearhead. The only recourse left to corps commanders in such situations was to direct the employment by combat commands over a wide front, with infantry units following close behind. Had more armored units been available to Fifth Army, thereby freeing the 1st Armored Division for action as a unit, greater success might have been realized following the historic breakout at ANZIO.

Testimony of German high commanders after the end of the war indicated that a more bold pursuit north of ROME might have resulted in the capture and breaching of the GOTHIC LINE before the Germans would have been able to complete its preparation and man it. However, it must be remembered that the Fifth Army had been slugging its way up the rugged Italian peninsula for many months, against German resistance which had been very stiff and, in some cases, nearly fanatical. Moreover, large numbers of units were being diverted from the Fifth Army to help mount the invasion of SOUTHERN FRANCE. Therefore, it appears that the Fifth Army commander was justified in exercising caution through frequent regrouping and reorganization.

What can be said for the performance of the 1st Armored Division? Did the commanders possess the necessary imagination and resourcefulness to cope with the unusual situations which confronted them? Did the junior officers and non-commissioned

officers make the most of their armored weapons under these unusual circumstances?

Examination of the records available reveals that the veteran soldiers of the 1st Armored Division are no less deserving of glory than the members of armored divisions which roamed far and wide in FRANCE and GERMANY. The performance of commanders and men alike was commendable. They fought a long, bitter campaign over rugged terrain, against a determined enemy and under most unfavorable weather conditions. Their accomplishments were definitely overshadowed by the glittering achievements of armor on the Western Front, but only because the Italian campaign lacked color until the final PO VALLEY breakout.

The importance of the combined tank-infantry-artillery team developed in NORTH AFRICA was proven in ITALY. Here, because of the nature of the terrain and weather, engineers played an extremely important role and took their place as an integral part of this team. These combined arms teams were the rule. They were flexibly adjusted to meet each situation as it arose. Control was decentralized to the company level in many instances. In these somewhat independent operations junior officers and men improvised and outfoxed the Germans, particularly when the enemy thought his positions was inviolable. The ingenuity and resourcefulness of armored commanders is vividly described by the Chief of Staff of the German Fourteenth Army in a postwar report:



"The Allied offensive was well planned and artfully executed; troops fought well. In particular, armored formations repeatedly bypassed our strong points in the mountains. We never knew on which trail or road they would appear. Often they came over terrain which we considered impassable to armor, and would suddenly be at our flanks<sup>1</sup>."

Little can be added to this fine tribute paid armored troops by such a high enemy authority. The 1st Armored Division performed a difficult task in a commendable manner.

---

NOTE FOR CHAPTER X

<sup>1</sup> The Italian Campaign, by Major General Wolfe Hauser, written under supervision of USFET Historical Division, November 1947, Chapter 5, Section II. (Translated from the German):.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### After Action Reports:

1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

IV Corps, January 1945 to March 1945.

1st Tank Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

4th Tank Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

13th Tank Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

6th Armored Infantry Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

14th Armored Infantry Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to July 1945.

11th Armored Infantry Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

First Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to July 1944.

81st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Mecz, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

Supply Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to July 1944.

47th Armored Medical Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

123rd Armored Ordnance Maintenance Battalion, 1st Armored Division, June 1944 to May 1945.

### Unit Histories:

Fifth Army History, parts IV to IX.

The First Armored Division.

### Other Volumes:

FROM SALERNO TO THE ALPS, A History of the Fifth Army 1943-1945, edited by Lt. Col. Chester G. Starr. The Infantry Journal Press, 1948.

19 DAYS FROM THE ALPINES TO THE ALPS, A Fifth Army Publication.

THE FINAL CAMPAIGN ACROSS NORTHWEST ITALY, Headquarters, IV Corps, US Army, Italy, 14 April to 2 May 1945.

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN, by Major General Wolfe Hauser, written under supervision of USFET Historical Division.

Periodicals.

THE "BUFFALO" PLAN, The 1st Armored Division on road to Rome, by 1st Lt. R.K. Gottschall, The Cavalry Journal, November-December, 1944, pages 20-23.

MOUNTAIN GOAT, M-4, 1st Armored Division from Grosseto to Volterra, Italy, June 21 to July 10, 1944, by 1st Lt. R. K. Gottschall, The Cavalry Journal, January-February 1944, pages 29-33.

WE BREAKOUT AT ANZIO, by Major General E. N. Harmon and Milton Mac Kaye, The Saturday Evening Post.

Observer Reports.

1st Armored Division in a Defensive Situation, by Col. C. H. Calais, Army Ground Forces Board, AFHQ, NATO, dated 16 September, 1944.

Combat Lessons from Units of 1st Armored Division, by Col. T. Q. Donaldson, Jr., AGF Board, MTOUSA, 9 May 1945.

Interim Report on Lessons Learned, prepared by Armored Section, Fifth Army, reported by Col. T. Q. Donaldson, Jr., dated 27 July 1945.

Employment of 13th Tank Battalion in the Po Valley, by Col. T. Q. Donaldson, Jr., AGF Board, MTCUSA, dated 27 June 1945.

Report of Action and Lessons Learned of 4th Tank Battalion During Bologna-Po Valley Offensive. by Col., T. Q. Donaldson, Jr., dated 27 June 1945.

Comments and remarks of Unit Commanders of 1st Armored Division relative to employment of their units in the Italian Campaign, reported by Col. Devore, AGF Board AF Hq, NATO, dated 9 July 1944.

Fact Sheets.

Fact Sheet on the 1st Armored Division. Office of Technical Information, Special Information Section, Headquarters, Army Ground Forces Washington 25, D.C., dated 25 July 1945.

Military Monographs.

THE PO VALLEY CAMPAIGN.

5 April - 2 May 1945, by Capt. R. W. Sorrell, Infantry. Advanced Officers Course 1946-47, T.I.S.

BATTLEFIELD RECOVERY OF VEHICLES IN THE FIRST ARMORED DIVISION, by Capt. Arthur B. Rolph, Armored Advanced Officers Class, 1946-47, MAS.

Special Reports.

Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of The United States Army To The Secretary of War, ( 1 July 1943 to 30 June 1945). George C. Marshall.

Strategic Engineering Study  
No. 59, Intelligence Branch  
Office, Chief of Engineers,  
March 1943.

Survey of Italy (830-722),  
Volumes I and III, prepared under the direction of the Chief of Staff, by Military Intelligence Service, War Department General Staff, April 1943.

Operations In Sicily And Italy,  
(July 43 to May 45)  
Department of Military Art and Engineering, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, 1945.

The World Almanac - 1948.  
NEW YORK WORLD - TELEGRAM

Letters.

Letter from Brigadier General Vernon E. Prichard to the Committee, dated 2 December 1948.

Letter from Colonel Maurice W. Daniel to the Committee, dated 14 March 1949.

Special Map.

Map History of 1st Armored Division, a 1st Armored Division Publication.

## APPENDIX NO. 1

### TOPOGRAPHY OF ITALY

#### 1. ITALY

##### a. General. (See Sketch 3 and 4, pages xiv and xv).

Italy is the size of NEW MEXICO, but long and narrow in shape. Approximately 600 of the 708 miles of Italy's length are in the peninsula that projects into the MEDITERRANEAN SEA from the fertile basin of the PO RIVER. The APENNINES, branching from the ALPS in northern ITALY between NICE and GENOA, form the peninsula's backbone and rise to a maximum height of 9,560 feet at GRAN SASSO D'ITALIA. ITALY has hundreds of streams and rivers. The PO, the principal river, rises in the ALPS on the western border of ITALY and flows across the LOMBARD PLAIN into the ADRIATIC SEA. The ARNO and TIBER RIVERS, rising in the APENNINES, flow generally westward. Italy's climate is variable. The ITALIAN RIVIERA along the GULF of GENOA is subtropical. The winters in the high APENNINES are very cold and bitter. The western slope of peninsular ITALY is warmer than the eastern side; however, the PO BASIN has extremely cold winters and exceptionally hot summers.

b. Strategic Importance. Geographic. Italy's strategic importance resulted from: (1) Its dominant position in the MEDITERRANEAN SEA; (2) its proximity to the BALKAN countries; (3) its position with respect to the ADRIATIC SEA; and (4) the fact that it offered a route of entry into the European continent.

c. Political Importance. The government of ITALY was legally a constitutional monarchy, although in practice it was a Fascist Cooperative State. It was actually a military dictatorship controlled by the Fascist Party and its leader, Benito Mussolini. The monarchical form of the constitution, however, was retained. ITALY's alliance with GERMANY was a matter of necessity rather than choice, being primarily the result of Mussolini's desire to build a Mediterranean empire.

d. Combat Value. ITALY was able to maintain a large army in the field and provide ample reserves; however, the Army was handicapped by:

- (1) Political control of appointments.
- (2) The necessity of employing the political Fascist Blackshirt Militia.
- (3) The lack of oil and other raw materials.
- (4) The policy forced upon it by the government.
- (5) Poor morale during the war.

All these conditions served to make the Italian Armed Forces mere auxiliaries of the German Army.

e. Health Conditions. The diseases of greatest importance to military personnel operating in ITALY were malaria, enteric diseases, venereal diseases, dengue fever, sandfly fever, and the acute infectious diseases. In addition to the normal health and sanitation measures ordinarily carried out, the

following extra precautions were taken:

- (1) All water considered non-potable.
- (2) Careful attention paid to sewage disposal.
- (3) Because of the prevalence of malaria and the possibility of epidemics of dengue fever, extra precautions in mosquito control.
- (4) Sandfly, louse, tick, and rodent control measures were emphasized because all were carriers of various fevers.

## 2. FIFTH ARMY AREA OF OPERATIONS.

a. ROME to the ARNO. The ARNO RIVER line is about 170 miles north of ROME. The major portion of the area between ROME and the ARNO RIVER is mountainous; however, there are no strong defensive lines such as characterize the country between NAPLES and ROME.

(1) Drainage Systems. (See Sketch 4, page xv).

(a) General. The primary drainage systems within the area are the TIBER, the OMBRONE, and the ARNO RIVERS into which the majority of smaller streams drain. The primary systems drain in a westerly direction into either the TYRRHENIAN or the LIGURIAN SEA.

(b) Effect of Drainage Systems on Troop Movements.

1. All streams within the area north of the TIBER are fordable.
2. The ARNO may be forded in some places in late summer; however, the rest of the year it is unfordable.
3. Only two sizeable rivers, other than the ARNO, cut across the line of the FIFTH ARMY advance. These are the OMBRONE, which runs into the sea just southwest of GROSSETO, and the CECINA, which enters the TYRRHENIAN near the town of CECINA. The crossing of neither was a problem.
4. Heavy rains cause sudden floods, usually of short duration. The ARNO RIVER is noted for its great floods and damage caused by overflow in the lower valley; the maximum high water is during the months of November through January.

(2) Ridge Systems: (See Sketches 3 & 4, pages xiv and xv).

- (a) When ROME and the valley of the TIBER are left behind the country is one mass of undulating high ground to the ARNO, the mountains varying only in height and slope. The country in the eastern part of the Army zone



is slightly higher than in the west, the average altitude not exceeding 1500 feet, through numerous peaks stand out above that elevation.

(b) There is no east-west ridge line of any consequence. The backbones of the mountains run more or less in a northeast-southwesterly direction; lesser ridges are jumbled together. Except for a hill mass near the coast around CIVITAVECCHIA, the country for 50 miles north of ROME is featured by gentle hills.

(c) North of GROSSETTO the mountainous country is split lengthwise by a ridge running northwest-southeast at a height averaging from 1200 to 1500 feet. About 20 miles north of GROSSETTO the steepest mountains begin. There is rough country for another 20 miles, culminating in a general summit on an east-west line through VOLTERRA, marked roughly by Highway 68; from this line northward the hills are less steep and slope toward the valley of the ARNO.

(3) Routes of Communications. (See Maps: 2 and 3, pages 34 and 76).

(a) Primary Roads. Two main highways run north from ROME through the FIFTH ARMY zone:

1. Highway 1 along the coast through CIVITAVECCHIA, GROSSETO, CECINA, and LEGHORN to PISA.
2. Highway 2 inland through VITERBO and SIENA to FLORENCE.
3. Five main roads--Highways 1 Bis, 74, 73, 68, and 67--furnish lateral communications.

(b) Secondary Roads. In addition to the roads mentioned in (a) above, there is an extensive network of smaller roads. Some of the latter are paved and all are wide enough for unimpeded two-way traffic, which meets the needs of the fairly dense population and is extensive even in the mountains, where hilltop villages, terraced vineyards, and olive groves mark the landscape.

(c) Possible Cross Country Routes. The land is rough and in many places hard to negotiate with vehicles, but in mid-summer, without the handicap of bad weather, it could not be said to be tremendously difficult. The FIFTH ARMY zone north of ROME was naturally divided into two sections, the plain along the TYRREHENIAN SEA and the more mountainous part inland to the

ARMY boundary. The coastal plain never exceeds 10 miles in width and is generally narrower. The narrow corridor along the coast forms one continuous lane of advance, but other natural avenues of northward approach are not found until within 20 miles of the ARNO, where the valleys of the ELSA and ERA RIVERS begin.

(4) Military Aspects of the Terrain.

- (a) Cover and Concealment: Cover and concealment show wide variation: Virtually non-existent in broad valleys and barren hills; excellent concealment on the wooded slopes of the APENNINES.
- (b) Fields of Fire: Fields of fire for small arms and tanks are good.
- (c) Observation: Observation is adequate in hilly country and excellent across valleys from larger hills. The sea is visible from coastal mountains.
- (d) Obstacles. These are discussed in paragraph 2a, subparagraphs (1), (2) and (3).
- (e) Communications: These are discussed in paragraph 2a, subparagraphs (1) and (3).

(f) Critical Terrain Features. The critical terrain features are located on all routes of communications north and on the main streams and drainage systems.

(g) Weather: The climate is equable in the northern part from LAKE BOLSENA to the ARNO, and is strongly MEDITERRANEAN, cool in winter and often sultry in the summer in the southern part. Rain fall for this area is from 1.5 to 5 inches yearly. (See Sketch 5, page xvi).

(h) Health Conditions: See paragraph 1e.

b. ARNO to the PO VALLEY. The APENNINE MOUNTAINS reach across ITALY separating the PO VALLEY from the comparatively narrow peninsula up which the FIFTH ARMY had battled from the south. This mountain barrier from the LIGURIAN SEA on the west to the ADRIATIC SEA on the east, with only very narrow coastal plains on each extremity, extends in an almost unbroken line of ridges and peaks, some of which reach well over 6000 feet in elevation. At its narrowest point, between FLORENCE and BOLOGNA, the range is 50 miles wide.

(1) Drainage Systems: (See Sketch 4, page xv).

(a) General. Numerous small rivers and streams course down the northern side of the APENNINES toward the PO RIVER and the ADRIATIC

SEA, and virtually every road through the mountains follows a small valley or canyon cut by these streams. Similarly, numerous unimportant creeks and rivers tumble down the southern slopes toward the ARNO VALLEY.

(b) Effects of Drainage Systems on Troop Movements.

1. The streams on the north side of the APENNINES are too deep and swift to be forded and bridges are few. In the plains area, railway and highway bridges are numerous and there are also some ferries and fords.
2. On the south side of the APENNINES, coastal railways and highways cross on comparatively short bridges; many secondary roads also cross the streams on substantial stone-work bridges. Upper courses are fordable during moderate and low water stages.
3. Late in September the fall rains begin. Mountain streams which virtually dry up during the summer months become raging torrents in a few hours time.

(2) Ridge System: (See Sketches 3 and 4, pages xiv and xv), .

(a) Terrain in General: In contrast to the rolling, extensively cultivated hill country, with its hilltop villages, terraced vineyards, and olive groves of central ITALY, the mountains of the NORTHERN APENNINES are so rugged that movement off the roads is exceedingly difficult and seldom possible. Villages are small and are generally located along the main roads. The valleys, low hills, and the lower slopes of the mountains are cultivated with grain fields, vineyards, and olive groves. The upper slopes of the mountains are covered with chestnut trees, scrub oak, and pine forests where there is soil; but many of the mountains have precipitous, bare rock slopes, razorbacked ridges, and occasional sheer cliffs.

(b) There is one east-west ridge line of consequence. It runs from the LIGURIAN SEA vicinity of PISA between the ARNO and SERCHIO RIVERS to the NORTHERN APENNINES and is a formidable barrier to northern progress.

(c) The NORTHERN APENNINES help form the back-

bone of the Italian Peninsula and are a formidable barrier to communications between the two coasts. Trends of principle ridges are approximately parallel to the trend of the peninsula.

(3) Routes of Communications. (See Maps 4 and 5 pages 118 and 155).

- (a) Primary Roads. The mountain mass of the NORTHERN APENNINES is pierced by only a few roads sufficiently improved to provide passages for modern armored and mechanized forces. All roads following along these mountains are marked by twisting curves and sharp and narrow gradients; blown bridges over the mountain streams were hard to by-pass. Landslides were frequent. The FIFTH ARMY battles to enter the PO VALLEY were fought largely on Highways 1, 12, 64, 65, and 67 with a very few connecting highways. (See Sketch 6 page xvii for information on passes).
- (b) Secondary roads. There are very few secondary roads, and movement is highly restricted.
- (c) Possible Cross Country Routes. The terrain

is so rough that vehicular cross country movement is for all practical purposes impossible.

(4) Military Aspects of the Terrain.

- (a) Cover and Concealment: Forests are most extensive on the northern side of the APENNINES; they provide excellent cover and concealment. Maquis scrub forests are on the seaward slopes. Terraced olive groves and vineyards provide concealment to small units. Large concentrations and supply dumps were difficult to conceal. Valley floors are largely barren, as are the summits of higher mountains.
- (b) Fields of Fire: Fields of fire were usually good for small arms fire, but there were some restrictions on tank fire. Shells started many landslides in the thin bedded limestone.
- (c) Observation: Observation is good from the higher peaks but is limited to immediately adjacent valleys. Visibility is excellent, the atmosphere being clear most of the year. However, during the fall rains, which begin



in late September, visibility is practically nil on cloudy days accompanied by fog and mist.

- (d) Obstacles: These are discussed in paragraph 2b, subparagraphs (1), (2), and (3). For discussion on the GOTHIC LINE see Appendix IA, page xviii.
- (e) Communications: These are discussed in paragraph 2b, subparagraphs (1) and (3).
- (f) Critical Terrain Features: The critical terrain features are located on all routes of communications and on the main streams and drainage systems.
- (g) Weather: Mild winters prevail in the western half of the APENNINES, and the climate is generally moderate. On the eastern slope, winters are severe and the summers hot and sultry. Rainfall is from 30 to 60 inches a year. (See Sketch 5, page xvi).
- (h) Health Conditions: See paragraph 1e.

SKETCH 3

PHYSIOGRAPHIC  
DIAGRAM

ITALY

Miles 0 50 100



LIGURIAN  
SEA

CORSICA

SARDINIA

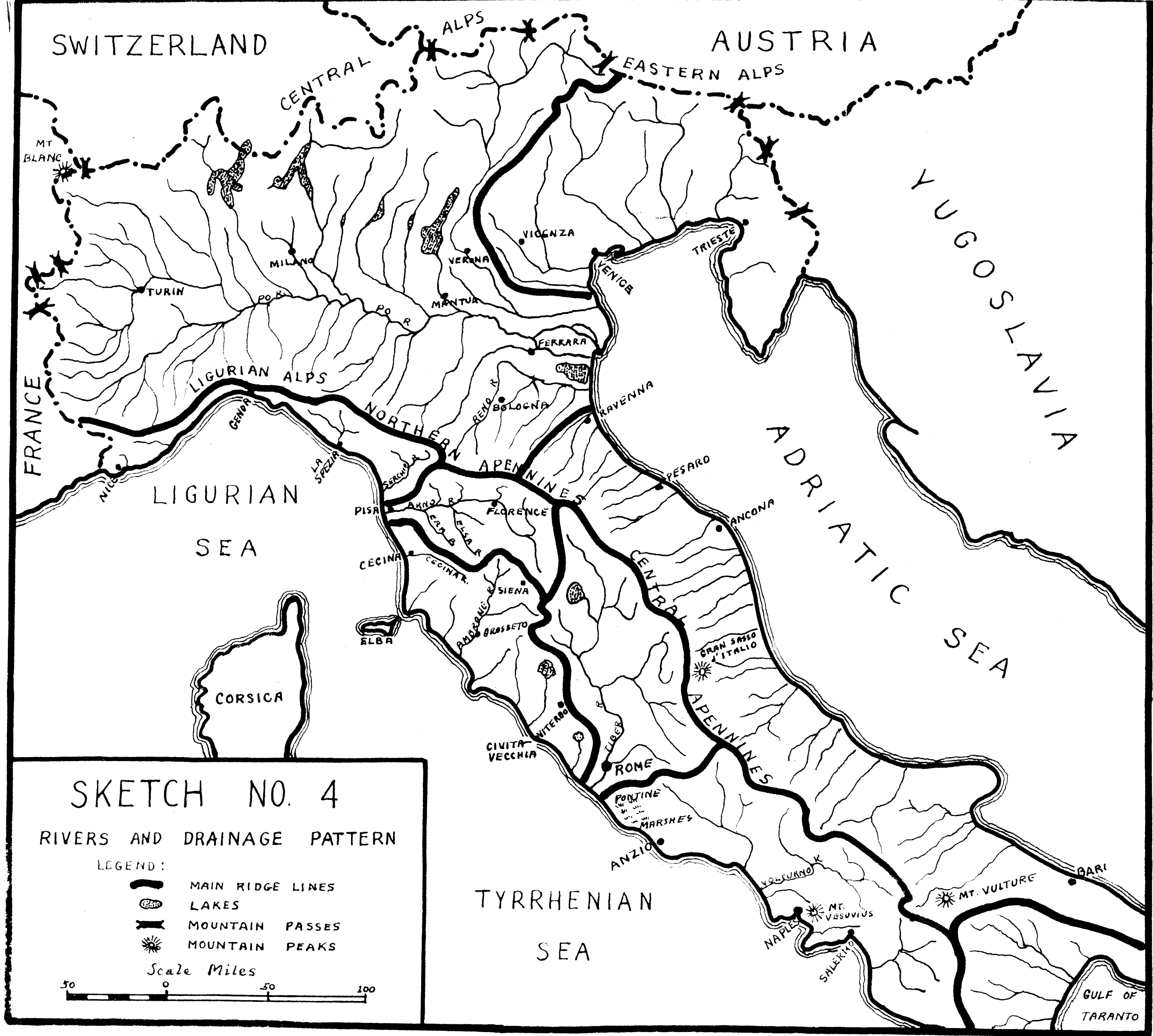
ALPES  
APENNINES  
TYRRHENIAN  
SEA

SICILY

TUNISIA

ADRIATIC  
SEA





IONIAN  
SEA



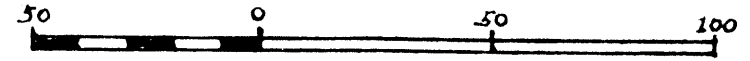
### SKETCH NO. 4

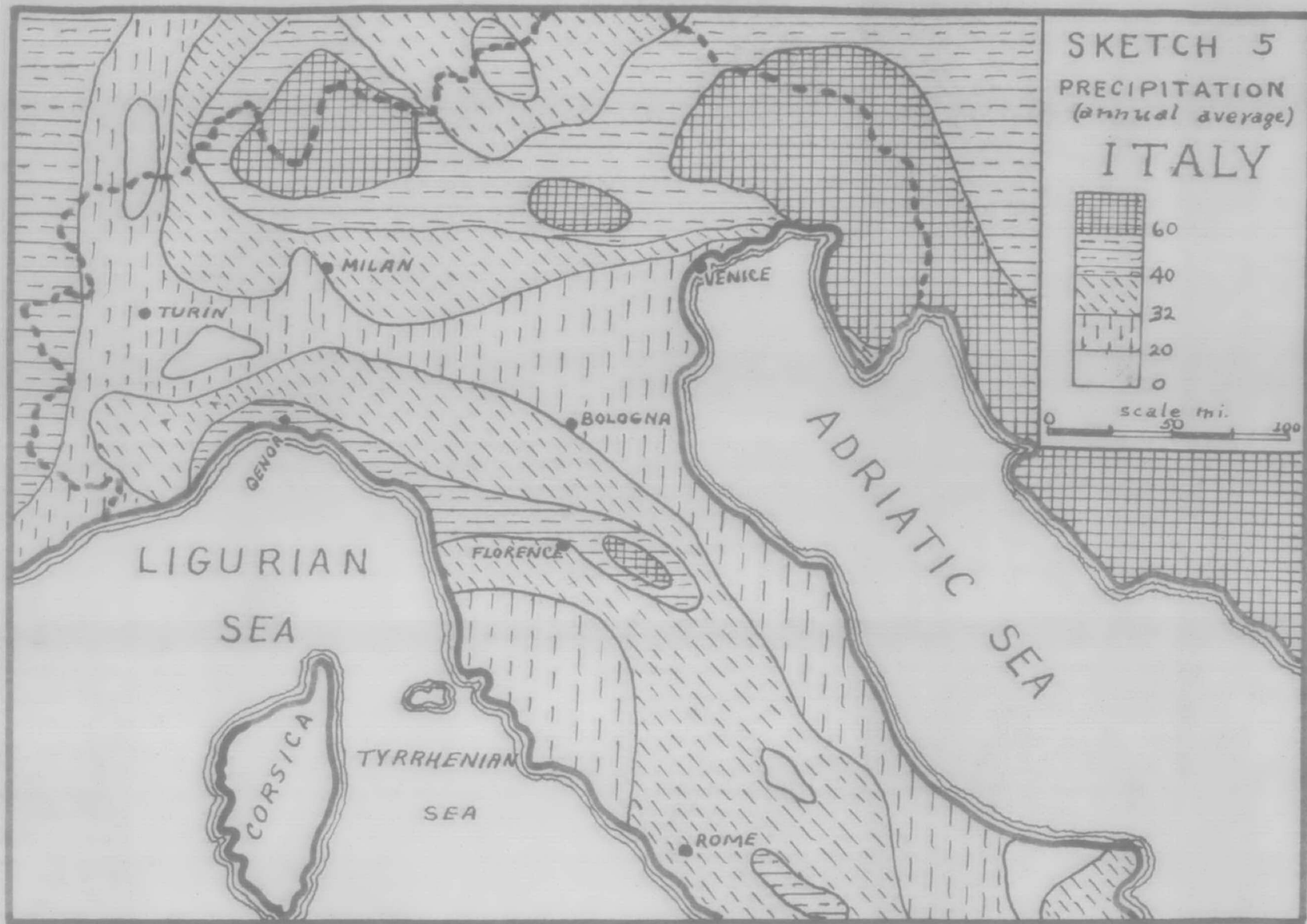
#### RIVERS AND DRAINAGE PATTERN

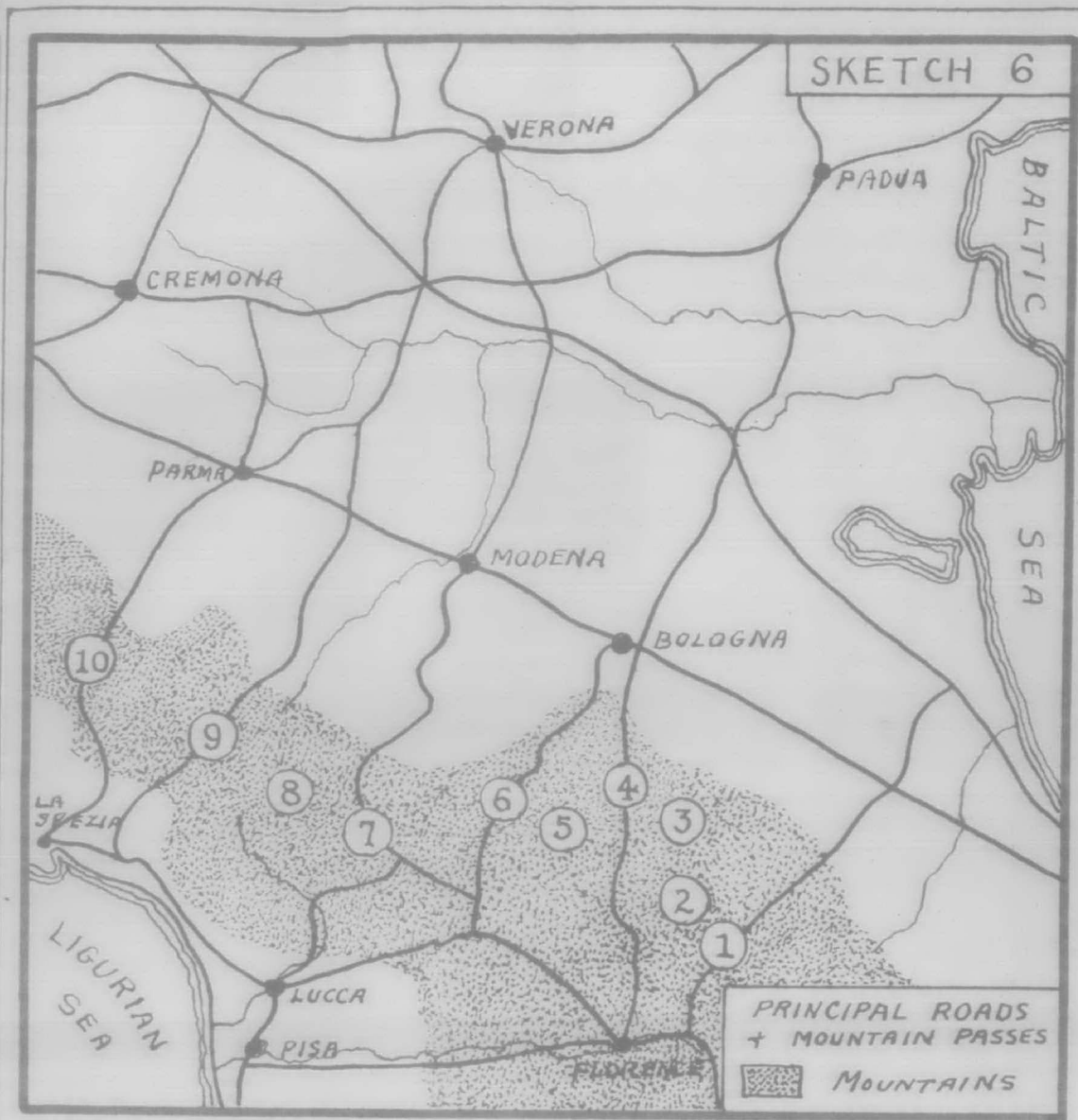
##### LEGEND:

-  MAIN RIDGE LINES
-  LAKES
-  MOUNTAIN PASSES
-  MOUNTAIN PEAKS

Scale Miles







### LEGEND

PASSES or ROUTE	SUMMIT in FEET	CONDITION in WINTER	APPROACHES and % GRADE
① Muraglione	2905	Rarely Blocked	4-7%
② Via Marradi	3000	" "	Winding 4-8%
③ Il Giorgio	2900	Dangerous Dec-Jan.	" "
④ Futa	2850	Rarely Blocked	4-7%
⑤ Via Castiglione	2650	" "	Sharp turns
⑥ Pistoia-Bologna	1050	Always Passable	5% or less
⑦ Abetone	4550	Dangerous Dec-Jan.	Winding 6-8%
⑧ Foca di Radici	4300	" " "	" 4-8%
⑨ Cerreto	4100	" " "	" "
⑩ Cisa	3425	" " "	Sharp turns 8%

THE GOTHIC LINE<sup>1</sup>

On 6 July 1944 Hitler sent a personal order to the Army Group Southwest to stabilize the middle Italian line as far south as possible. This was to permit the German forces time to construct and prepare the Green Line (GOTHIC LINE as we knew it). An all out effort was to be made to hold a line at least from LEGHORN to ANCONA.

As a result of Hitler's order, Field Marshall Kesselring personally toured the front and enjoined all commanders to exert all possible energy in the actual preparation of the GOTHIC LINE.

The Rommel Plan

The GOTHIC LINE (Green Line) had its beginning in 1943, when Field Marshall Rommel was the commander of the Italian Theater. However, little work was done in the actual preparation due to the great demands on defensive materials and engineers by the fighting in the south.

The plans called for a series of lines beginning with outposts in the foothills of the APENNINES, just north of the ARNO, followed by successive lines through the APENNINES proper. The first line was to be on the southern slopes of the mountains, consisting of a series of strong fortifications covering communications centers and routes heading into the mountain passes. The second line, generally referred to as the main GOTHIC LINE, was to run along the higher peaks and steep rugged passes of the APENNINE ranges. The third line was to

be on the northern slopes of the APENNINES and to control the exits and corridors into the PO VALLEY.

These main defenses were to consist of steel and concrete pillboxes flanked by small emplacements for infantry armed with automatic weapons. Minefields and wire were to be used extensively. Troops shelters were to be constructed of heavy timbers to protect the soldiers against Allied artillery fire and bombings.<sup>12</sup>

#### Final Preparation

Due to the rapid withdrawal of the German forces after the fall of ROME, feverish preparation of these defenses as outlined by Rómmel was begun. However, shortages of personnel and materials further handicapped their preparation. The Germans had barely enough engineers to supervise the work so thousands of Italians were conscripted for labor.

Even though the GOTHIC LINE was never prepared to the degree Rommel had planned, the Germans found that when they did withdraw into these defenses they did not have the personnel to man the lines. The almost complete absence of a large mobile reserve was particularly significant, because Rommel's ideas for defense were geared to the principal of decisive counter-attacks, by large mobile reserves.

Field Marshall Rommel estimated that it would take 20 divisions to properly man the GOTHIC LINE. When the Germans finally withdrew to the defenses, they had the strength of ten divisions, which necessitated each division having responsibility

for a large sector (20-25 Km).

The PO RIVER was the next logical defense line. During the winter of 1944-45, much work was completed on this line, which the Germans never had the opportunity to use after the Allied penetration at BOLOGNA.

The final line Rommel had outlined for his series of positions was the ALPINE LINE (Blue Line), which extended from the southeast corner of SWITZERLAND easterly through TRENTO, BELLUNO, GORIZIA, and MONTEFALCONE.

#### The German Strategy

In Rommel's general plan for the defense of NORTHERN ITALY, this series of lines was laid out with the possibility in mind that the Allies would make assault landings in the GENOA-LA SPEZIA area in the west or in the RAVENNA-UDINE area on the ADRIATIC. This specter hung over the German high command until September 1944, when it became apparent that the Allies were committed to breakout into the PO VALLEY in the BOLOGNA-IMOLA sector.

The German high command in ITALY was particularly concerned with a possible landing in the VENICE-TRIESTE area of the ADRIATIC coast, particularly after the landing in SOUTHERN FRANCE. A landing in the VENICE-TRIESTE area would have trapped all the German forces in ITALY except for a few that could have escaped through some of the difficult passes through the ALPS.

---

<sup>1</sup> Paraphrased notes from: "The Italian Campaign", Chapter 9, Section II, by General D. ROTTIGER, Chief of the Armored Force (German), Army Group Southwest.



## APPENDIX NO. II

### VEHICLE RECOVERY AND EVACUATION<sup>1</sup>

In order to fully comprehend why vehicular recovery on the battlefield as performed in the 1st Armored Division was different from most other armored units in World War II, and to appreciate why it was done as it was, it is necessary to examine some pertinent facts regarding the Division, beginning in July 1940, the activation date.\*

#### Initial Organic Maintenance

From 1940 through the 1941 Louisiana Maneuvers the tank regiments' organic maintenance support consisted of a maintenance platoon which was a part of the regimental Service Company. This platoon had one ten-ton wrecker which was the only recovery vehicle in the regiment. The maintenance platoon assigned a crew to support each battalion. The platoon vehicles consisted of one half-track and one  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton truck. The maintenance section of each company was equipped with the same type vehicles. Throughout this long period comparatively little thought was given to battlefield recovery methods as they would be performed in combat. It is true that prior to and during the Louisiana Maneuvers, reports trickled in from Africa on British and German experiences in their desert combat. Some good was derived from their experiences as they applied to battlefield recovery, but, unfortunately, probably not the maximum. In attempting to foresee what difficulties would arise, and how problems were to be solved when they were met in combat, it was almost completely a case of the blind leading the blind.

### Reorganization of Organic Maintenance

Lessons were learned, and progress was made, despite groping and fumbling the dark. Shortly after maneuvers in early 1942 the 1st Armored Division was reorganized, and among the changes were improvements in the maintenance organization. It was quickly discovered, by the problems encountered during maneuvers, the one ten-ton wrecker per tank regiment was inadequate, to say the least. Therefore, the regimental Machine Gun Company plus elements of Service Company were combined to form a Maintenance Company in each tank regiment. The resulting Maintenance Company had four ten-ton wreckers.

There were no material changes in the organization of the regimental Maintenance Company from January 1942 until the spring of 1943. In Ireland, however, when it was necessary for the regiments to bivouac their battalions in separate areas, the maintenance crews (battalion sections) from the regimental Maintenance Company were attached to the battalions for the first time. But, unfortunately, not until the war in Africa had ended was the first real tank recovery vehicle received, the T-2, a modified M3 Medium tank.

### Vehicle Recovery Standard Operating Procedure

Along with prior training, equipment, and many obscure factors which would be difficult to enumerate, or evaluate, it is necessary to consider that time honored army phrase, Standard Operating Procedure, as it affected battlefield recovery in the 1st Armored Division. Settling on a completely workable S O P

was, like so many other factors in all phases of the development of the Division, a matter of many trials and many errors. By the time the Division entered combat in Africa in November 1942 an S O P for battlefield recovery had been formulated which, in its basic principles, worked surprisingly well. It required only those adjustments which one must expect of not only Standard Operating Procedures, but equipment and personnel, when exposed to the supreme test of combat. Following is the S O P used from November 1942 to July 1944.

The responsibility for recovering and evacuating vehicles from the battlefield was from lower units to higher. The using company that lost a vehicle was to initiate steps to recover the vehicle. However, if the company was unable to recover the vehicle, it would then report the location and condition of the vehicle to its supporting battalion maintenance crew. The battalion crew in turn had the same responsibility as the company, and if unable to make recovery, reported the location to the regimental Maintenance Company. The same responsibility then fell to the the Maintenance Company, who in case of inability to effect recovery requested assistance of the supporting maintenance company from the Division Ordnance Battalion. Because it was far better fitted from the stand-point of equipment and personnel than either the companies or battalions, the bulk of the recovery work was performed by the regimental Maintenance Company. The supporting division maintenance companies were seldom called on to perform battlefield recovery. The Division maintenance comp-

anies were employed primarily to evacuate vehicles from collecting points to which they had been towed by regimental maintenance or to clear vehicles from the battle area after the action had moved forward.

Of all the battlefield recovery which took place on two occasions were exactly alike. As in tactics, broad principles did not change, but the application of principles to a great variety of situations differed with each one.

From numerous battlefield recovery experiences the maintenance personnel of the Division built up a wealth of knowledge in methods to be used and measures to be taken in order to carry out successful recovery missions. This knowledge was constantly incorporated into un-written Standard Operating Procedures. If it had been necessary for a maintenance officer in the 1st Armored Division to consult a guide sheet when he had a recovery mission toward the latter part of the war, it would resemble the following:

a. Planning - Every phase of a recovery operation should be planned in minute detail from beginning to end. No matter how pressed for time, and normally time available will be limited, no details can be left to chance. As in any phase of military operations, planning is quicker and easier with seasoned troops, but regardless, the supervision of the execution of these plans is the sole responsibility of the officer in charge of the recovery operations.

(1) Vehicles and personnel to take part in any

operation must be carefully selected. The personnel must be the most skilled technicians available. They must be rapid workers and, when possible, volunteers. The vehicles must be the right ones to do the job, and the total number employed must be as small as possible without sacrificing unduly the efficiency of the group. The greater the number of vehicles and personnel used the greater the chances of attracting enemy attention.

- (2) Coordination and cooperation are inseparable essentials. It must always be borne in mind that vehicular recovery immediately after a battle is more often than not of secondary importance to everyone excepting the maintenance personnel charged with the job, their commanding officer and his staff. Yet, all the activity related to the planning stage of recovery and the recovery itself necessarily depends upon a certain amount of assistance from battle weary personnel to whom the most important and wonderful thing, at the moment, is rest. Cooperation must be secured from all personnel outside the maintenance company who are deemed necessary in the operation, and their efforts must be closely

coordinated with those of the maintenance group. Effecting this cooperation and coordination rests with the officer in charge of the recovery practically 100 percent.

(3) Never attempt a recovery mission without reliable guides. Operating at night over strange terrain with the mission of locating a relatively small object or objects will play havoc with the most experienced map reader, compass reader, or astronomer. This is especially true in open territory where distinctive landmarks are few.

(4) Never neglect security measures. It will save lives and limbs to secure competent personnel to locate booby traps and mines. Use dismounted troops as listening outposts as well as to deliver fire on wandering enemy patrols. This will give the working party a greater sense of security and thereby increase its efficiency immeasurably.

b. Orientation - Orient every man who is to take part in the recovery as to the general situation, the location of vehicle or vehicles, their reported condition, the terrain, if possible, and the tactical situation in the area. In addition to giving every-one the general picture, tell each man specif-

ically what part he is to play in the operation.

c. Speed and Aggressiveness - At best, in performing a recovery operation, the group is pressed for time. Lacking speed in both the planning phase and the execution, a recovery mission is almost certain to be a failure. All members of the recovery party must be aggressive, particularly the leader. This does not mean the taking of foolhardy, needless chances; but rather a very rapid estimate of the situation must be made, followed by positive action. The goal sought must be weighed against the danger involved, and a decision made and unwaveringly carried out.

Tank and other vehicle recovery was a very small phase of the 1st Armored Division's activity in World War II. The methods used were justified by the equipment available and the conditions under which the Division fought. What contribution was made to the over-all efforts of the Division by vehicle recovery crews cannot be accurately evaluated. It is certain that they helped immeasurably to keep a Division rolling that started fighting in November 1942 with tanks which were obsolete even then and for which spare parts and replacements were slow in arriving, to say the least.

---

NOTES FOR APPENDIX NO. II

<sup>1</sup>Sources: 1st Armored Division After Action Report.

Military Monograph: Battlefield Recovery of Vehicles in the 1st Armored Division, by Capt Arthur B. Rolph, Advanced Officers Class, 1947-1948, The Armored School.

APPENDIX NO. III

GERMAN ORDER OF BATTLE<sup>1</sup>

FIFTH ARMY FRONT

UNIT	COMMANDER
Army Group Southwest	Marshall Kesselring (Relieved 15 March 1945) General Von Vietinghoff
Fourteenth Army	General Von Machensen (Relieved June 1944) Lt General Joachim Lemelsen
1 Parachute Corps	
XIV Panzer Corps	
LXXV Infantry Corps	General Schlemmer
Herman Goering Panzer Division	
Herman Goering Reconnaissance Battalion	
1 Herman Goering Panzer Grenadier Regiment	
2 Herman Goering Panzer Grenadier Regiment	
Herman Goering Panzer Regiment	
Herman Goering Artillery Regiment	

Never engaged by Fifth Army after ROME. Constituted a threat during June and July 1944 by virtue of location near right flank of Fifth Army. Sent to Russian front in July 1944.

- 1 Parachute Division
- 1 Parachute Grenadier Regiment
  - 2 Parachute Grenadier Regiment
  - 4 Parachute Grenadier Regiment
  - 1 Parachute Artillery Regiment

German Tenth Army Troops; attempted to stop right flank of Fifth Army east of BOLOGNA in April 1945, to permit withdrawal of Tenth Army across PO RIVER.

- 3 Panzer Grenadier Division
- 103 Reconnaissance Battalion
  - 8 Panzer Grenadier Regiment
  - 29 Panzer Grenadier Regiment
  - 103 Panzer Battalion
  - 3 Artillery Regiment

Saved scattered elements from ANZIO to ROME. These elements overrun by CCA north of ROME, decimated by 13 June 1944 and dis-



appeared from contact. Reappeared east of GROSSETO 16 June. Rapidly pushed back north of VOLTERRA on the CECINA RIVER by the 1st Armored Division. Had to be bolstered by elements of 20 Luftwaffe Field Division and 26 Panzer Division. Retreated steadily and were north of the ARNO RIVER by 28 July. Held sector of Arno Line until 18 August 44, then removed from contact and sent to France.

#### 4 Parachute Division

- 10 Parachute Grenadier Regiment
- 11 Parachute Grenadier Regiment
- 12 Parachute Grenadier Regiment
- 4 Parachute Artillery Regiment

Attached:

- 3 GAF Battalion
- 7 GAF Battalion

Retreated from ROME in June 1944. Overrun by Task Force Howze 8 to 10 June. Placed in reserve 11 June for rehabilitation. In sector of French Expeditionary Force and II US Corps during fall of 1944. Decimated by end of October. Never again effective as division.

#### 8 Mountain Division

- 1057 Reconnaissance Battalion
- 296 Mountain Infantry Regiment
- 297 Mountain Infantry Regiment
- 1057 Artillery Regiment

Originally the 157 Mountain Division, renumbered in spring 1945 and held sector south of BOLOGNA in front of II US Corps. Quickly overrun and captured by II Corps in April.

#### 16 SS Panzer Grenadier Division (Reichsfuhrer SS)

- 16 SS Reconnaissance Battalion
- 35 SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment
- 36 SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment
- 16 SS Panzer Battalion
- 16 SS Artillery Regiment

Appeared in German Fourteenth Army 16-17 June. One of the best enemy units. Pushed back of PISA by 23 July. Participated in heavy fighting of APENNINES September and October 1944. Placed in Army reserve in winter. Departed for Germany in February 1945.

#### 19 GAF Field Division

- 19 Fusilier Company
- 37 Grenadier Regiment
- 38 Grenadier Regiment
- 46 Grenadier Regiment
- 19 Artillery Regiment

Appeared on left flank of IV US Corps. Took severe losses while retreating to CECINA RIVER; pulled out of line 10 July 1944 badly decimated. Disbanded in August 1944.

20 Luftwaffe Division  
20 Fusilier Company  
39 Grenadier Regiment  
40 Grenadier Regiment  
20 Artillery Regiment

Constituted from Luftwaffe ground service troops from Denmark. A poor division, poorly led, appeared south of CIVITAVECCHIA, on 6 June 1944. Quickly decimated by 1st Armored Division north of ARNO RIVER during summer. Held in reserve in August during reorganization. Again hit hard by 1st Armored Division around LUCCA. Relieved by 42 Mountain Division on 4 September 1944. Did not again appear as a division in Fifth Army sector.

26 Panzer Division General Von Luetwitz  
26 Reconnaissance Battalion  
9 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
67 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
26 Panzer Regiment  
93 Artillery Regiment

Transferred from German Tenth to Fourteenth Army on 13-14 June 1944 to halt drive of Fifth Army in line around LAKE BOLSENA; Shifted westward 27-28 June to halt drive of 1st Armored Division on VOLTERRA. Forced back of CECINA RIVER by 1 July 1944, and north of ARNO RIVER by 18-19 June with heavy losses. Held ARNO Line near PONTEDERA until 22 August, then returned to Tenth German Army.

29 Panzer Grenadier Division  
129 Reconnaissance Battalion  
15 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
71 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
129 Panzer Battalion  
29 Artillery Regiment

Appeared on Fifth Army front opposing French Expeditionary Corps on 15 June 1944. Fought well, but by end of July was forced back north of FLORENCE. Constituted principal reserve element of German Fourteenth Army during fall and winter of 1944. Committed piecemeal in several sectors of Fifth Army front during October. Badly mauled by 1st Armored Division and 10 Mountain Division southwest of BOLOGNA in final drive to the PO RIVER.

42 Light Division  
142 Reconnaissance Battalion  
25 Grenadier Regiment  
40 Grenadier Regiment  
142 Artillery Regiment

Committed 4 September 1944 north of LUCCA to stop drive of 1st Armored Division and IV Corps. Relieved 16 SS Panzer Grenadier Division. Relieved by 148 Grenadier Division and 4 Mountain Division (Italian) to shift south of BOLOGNA in October.

65 Grenadier Division  
65 Fusilier Battalion  
145 Grenadier Regiment  
146 Grenadier Regiment  
147 Grenadier Regiment  
165 Artillery Regiment  
165 Engineer Battalion  
165 Anti-tank Battalion

Lt General Pfeifer

Badly shot up in drive from ANZIO past ROME. North of ROME was under I Paratroops Corps, Tenth Army. Opposed the 1st Armored Division in drive to TUSCANIA and was virtually annihilated. Placed in Army reserve 11 June 1944 and sent to LUCCA for rehabilitation. Reappeared near PISA 20 July, reinforced with the Panzer Lehr Regiment. Elements overrun by CCA in September and forced back into the APENNINES with heavy losses. Relieved by 94 Grenadier Division and sent south of BOLOGNA to oppose the drive of II US Corps in October. Decimated in drive to BOLOGNA in April 1945. Remnants of Division surrendered to Fifth Army 29 April 1945.

90 Panzer Grenadier Division  
190 Reconnaissance Battalion  
155 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
200 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
361 Panzer Grenadier Regiment  
190 Panzer Battalion  
190 Artillery Regiment

Major General Von Behr

Shifted from Tenth German Army to halt drive north from ROME about 12 June 1944. Fought good delaying action to ARNO RIVER. Fought heavy engagement with CCB around MONTECATINI; sent back to Tenth German Army in August 1944. Returned to II US Corps front on 20 October to stop drive to BOLOGNA. In Army reserve during winter of 1944-45. Committed in April 1945 to halt drive of 1st Armored Division and 10th Mountain Division. Badly shot up, and withdrew north of PO RIVER late in April 45. Surrendered on 29 April 1945.

92 Grenadier Division  
92 Fusilier Battalion  
\*1059 Grenadier Regiment  
\*1060 Grenadier Regiment  
192 Artillery Regiment

Lt General Goeritz

Decimated south of ROME. Remnants absorbed by 362 Grenadier Division on 6 June 1944 in sector opposite 1st Armored Division. Disbanded as a division in July 1944.

\*Reactivated as part of 362 Grenadier Division in June 1944.

94 Grenadier Division                      Oberst Mueller  
    94 Fusilier Battalion  
    267 Grenadier Regiment  
    274 Grenadier Regiment  
    276 Grenadier Regiment  
    194 Artillery Regiment

In quiet sector in front of IV US Corps 5-14 October 1944. Shifted to east 14 October to stop drive of II Corps. Held winter line in front of elements of 1st Armored Division. Badly cut up by 1st Armored Division 14-20 April 1945. Withdrew remnants toward PO RIVER to surrender 29 April 1945.

98 Grenadier Division  
    98 Fusilier Battalion  
    117 Grenadier Regiment  
    289 Grenadier Regiment  
    290 Grenadier Regiment  
    198 Artillery Regiment

Relieved 44 Grenadier Division 12 October 1944. Shifted eastward on 20 October to assist in halting II US Corps drive on BOLOGNA. Held line in winter along Highway 64. Quickly overrun in April 1945.

114 Light Division                      Major General Strahammer  
    114 Reconnaissance Battalion  
    721 Grenadier Regiment  
    741 Grenadier Regiment  
    661 Artillery Regiment

The last dregs of the German Army in Italy. Placed opposite IV Corps sector southwest of ZOCCA in April 1945; routed 14-20 April by IV US Corps.

148 Grenadier Division  
    148 Fusilier Battalion  
    281 Grenadier Regiment  
    285 Grenadier Regiment  
    286 Grenadier Regiment  
    1048 Artillery Regiment

Two regiments reinforced by one regiment 4 Mountain Division (Italian) relieved 42 Division opposite IV Corps sector on 17-18 October 1944. Held quiet sector until April offensive. Were quickly overrun and had to be reinforced by one regiment 90 Panzer Grenadier Division from Army reserve on 20 April. Cut off in APERNINES by IV Corps. Surrendered 29 April 1945.

162 Grenadier Division (Turkoman) Lt General Greiner  
236 Fusilier Battalion  
303 Grenadier Regiment  
314 Grenadier Regiment  
329 Grenadier Regiment  
236 Artillery Regiment

Made up of turn-coat Russian prisoners of war under German officers and NCO's. Committed as an emergency measure to halt Fifth US Army drive 11 June 1944; virtually annihilated by 19 June 1944. Required support from 19 Luftwaffe Division and 16 SS Panzer Division. Completely relieved by 26 Panzer Division about 28 June 1944 and not contacted again.

232 Grenadier Division Lt General Gablenz  
232 Fusilier Battalion  
1043 Grenadier Regiment  
1044 Grenadier Regiment  
232 Artillery Regiment

Consisted of poor troops formed as "Labor Division". Took over sector north of LUCCA 5 October 1944. Remained in line throughout winter. Driven northwest in April 1945. Remnants of Division surrendered near CREMONA 29 April 1945.

305 Grenadier Division Major General Von Schellwitz  
305 Fusilier Battalion  
576 Grenadier Regiment  
577 Grenadier Regiment  
578 Grenadier Regiment  
305 Artillery Regiment

Located on Fifth Army right boundary in spring of 1945; entire Division captured by II US Corps around BOLOGNA during April 1945.

334 Grenadier Division Lt General Boehlke  
334 Fusilier Battalion  
754 Grenadier Regiment  
755 Grenadier Regiment  
334 Artillery Regiment

Shifted variously from II Corps front to IV Corps in September & October 1944. Held line in front of elements of 1st Armored Division during winter. Decimated by 1st Armored Division and 10 Mountain Division in April 1945.

356 Grenadier Division  
356 Fusilier Battalion  
869 Grenadier Regiment  
870 Grenadier Regiment  
871 Grenadier Regiment  
356 Artillery Regiment

Hurriedly moved into MONTEFIASCONE sector to cover troop movements from Tenth German Army organizing to delay Fifth US Army drive in early June 1944. Suffered heavy losses first week in line. Retreated steadily north before French Expeditionary Corps to north of FLORENCE. Relieved about 7 September 1944; reorganized; departed for Germany in December. Never directly engaged by 1st Armored Division.

362 Grenadier Division	Lt General Greiner
362 Fusilier Battalion	
956 Grenadier Regiment	
*1059 Grenadier Regiment	
*1066 Grenadier Regiment	
362 Artillery Regiment	
362 Engineer Battalion	
362 Anti-tank Battalion	

Rallied assorted small elements fleeing from ROME. Absorbed remnants of 92 Grenadier Division for a stand north of ROME about 6 June 1944 opposing 1st Armored Division. Overrun by CCA and Task Force Howze. Placed in army reserve on 10 June for reorganization. Reappeared north of ARNO RIVER 18-19 July on right flank of 1st Armored Division sector. Forced back from ARNO RIVER in early September until relieved by 16 Panzer Division. Went into position near FIRENSUOLA 20 September. Suffered severe losses south of BOLOGNA in October. Relieved by 42 Mountain Division on 18 October. Never again identified on front.\*Formerly part of 92 Grenadier Division.

715 Grenadier Division (Motorized)  
    715 Fusilier Battalion  
    725 Grenadier Regiment  
    735 Grenadier Regiment  
    1028 Grenadier Regiment (Added)  
    671 Artillery Regiment

Badly decimated in June 1944 south of ROME. Placed in army reserve awaiting replacements. Appeared on right flank US Fifth Army for a short time in September 1944. Departed from Italy in March 1945 minus 1028 Grenadier Regiment.

---

NOTE FOR APPENDIX NO. III

1Sources:

Translation of After Action Report, Fourteenth German Army.  
Fifth Army History.  
After Action Report, 1st Armored Division.

APPENDIX NO. IV

SPECIAL UNITS OF FIFTH ARMY

1. Task Force Ramey.<sup>1</sup>

From the time of its final drive on ROME until its relief from the line north of ROME 10 June 1944 II Corps had used Task Force Ellis, under command of Lt Colonel Charles A. Ellis, Commanding officer of the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, to protect its right flank. This force consisted of the 91st Squadron plus minor reinforcements. Upon the relief of II Corps Task Force Ellis was assigned to IV Corps and immediately committed in the area between the main forces of IV Corps and the French Expeditionary Corps on its right. The zone assigned to the Squadron proved to be excessive for its strength, and on 12 June General Crittenberger, IV Corps commander, ordered Task Force Ramey organized to assume responsibility for the zone of Task Force Ellis.

Brigadier General Rufus S. Ramey assumed command of the new force, which had the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron as the nucleus for a provisional brigade. To form a headquarters for this new organization General Ramey received Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Armored Group. Initial troops attached, in addition to the reconnaissance squadron, were:

3d Battalion, 141st Infantry, 36th Division  
59th Armored Field Artillery Battalion  
2d Battalion (less Company F), 39th Engineer Combat Regiment  
A Company of the 52d Medical Battalion

Task Force Ramey existed as a Fifth Army unit the rest of the war. Its troop list changed often. When, on 31 July 1944,

it took over the 91st Division sector, it attained its maximum size. Use of the task force to replace an infantry division was based on Allied plans to hold along the TYRRHENIAN Coast, where the force was committed, and to make the main effort in the center and on the eastern side of the Italian peninsula. The task force troop list at this time was as follows:

Headquarters & Headquarters Company 1st Armored Group.  
Headquarters & Headquarters Company, CCB, 1st Armored Division  
11th Armored Infantry Battalion  
14th Armored Infantry Battalion  
757th Tank Battalion, less assault guns.  
Reconnaissance Co, 805th Tank Destroyer Battalion  
Troop B, 91st Reconnaissance Squadron, (Reinforced)  
91st Division Artillery (Subsequently Relieved by the 1st Armored Division Artillery).

2. Task Force 45.<sup>2</sup>

Task Force 45 was formed as a result of an Allied decision to reduce the western flank of the Italian front to a holding sector. Late in July 1944 long range Allied plans called for the main effort to be made against the GOTHIC LINE on the eastern side of the Italian peninsula and in the center north of FLORENCE. On the western side the troops were to maintain an active defense and follow up any enemy withdrawal. In order to rest the infantry divisions which held this line, General Clark ordered that troops ordinarily used in support roles be employed to hold the line.

To relieve the 34th Division, Task Force 45, named for the 45th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Brigade, the headquarters of which took command of the new unit, was formed. This brigade



had furnished anti-aircraft defense for Fifth Army combat units and lines of communication. The necessity for such defense declined with the virtual disappearance of the German Air Force from the Italian front. It therefore became feasible to use the personnel of many of these units to relieve the infantry.

Created on 26 July 1944 by IV Corps order, Task Force 45 consisted of the 91st AAA Group, the 107th AAA Group, and the 2d Armored Group. The latter units were organized as follows:

91st AAA Group

435th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion  
439th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion  
Reconnaissance Co, 894th Tank Destroyer Battalion  
673d Medical Collecting Company

107th AAA Group

536th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion  
898th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion  
91st Reconnaissance Squadron, Minus Troop B  
671st Medical Collecting Company

2d Armored Group (Initially task force reserve)

Hq Hq & Co, 2d Armored Group  
39th Light AAA Regiment (British) minus one battalion.  
751st Tank Battalion, less assault guns.  
Company B, 805th Tank Destroyer Battalion  
434th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion, (SP)  
34th Division Artillery (later relieved by Corps artillery units).

The time permitted for infantry training was short. The anti-aircraft battalions had been performing anti-aircraft missions until 24 July when they were ordered into bivouac to begin intensive infantry training. Anti-aircraft artillery equipment was stored, and necessary infantry equipment borrowed from the

34th Division. Each battalion was reorganized as an infantry battalion: 3 batteries were converted into rifle companies of 4 platoons each, with each platoon composed of 2 former gun sections of 16 men; 1 battery in each battalion was set up as an infantry heavy weapons company. Training was directed by regular infantry officers attached for that purpose. Initial training before going into the line was as short as two days for the 898th Battalion, but training continued throughout August. Troops in reserve received infantry instruction from the time of their relief until their turn to reenter the lines again. Members of armored reconnaissance units making up part of the task force had generally been fairly well trained in fighting dismounted before they took over this assignment. The tank and tank destroyers were used chiefly in an artillery role.

### 3. First Special Service Force.<sup>3</sup>

British study in 1942 of a diversionary operation for Commandos led to the formation of the American First Special Service Force. The British plan called for the employment of parachute troops which would be dropped with a special vehicle over the widely scattered snow areas of Europe.

Lt Colonel Robert T. Frederick of the Operations Division, General Staff, wrote the strategical estimate of the plan for the US Army. Despite his conclusions that the project, as a military operation and not as a test that a vehicle would master the snows, could not and would not succeed, Col. Frederick was placed in command of the hand picked unit activated in July 1942.

The Force contained both Canadian and American personnel. Its unique mission demanded a variety of skills, requiring it to become a combination infantry - armored - engineer - parachute - mountain force. To meet these unusual requirements special tables of organization were adopted. There were two echelons, combat and service. In the service echelon were all the clerks, cooks, mechanics, armorers, parachute packers, supply men, and base medical aid men.

Since such a conglomerate organization would attract too much attention, the units were assigned full infantry nomenclature. The combat force was broken down into three regiments, each commanded by a colonel, but with a total strength of only 32 officers and 385 men (enlisted strength was later raised by 50 per cent). The regiment was divided into two battalions of three companies each, three platoons in each company. The platoons contained two sections, the basic fighting units, each being exactly the same as to strength and armament. Each of the 108 sections had four weasels.

With the Force so conceived it took part in operations in the Aleutians in August 1943. By November 1943 the force was engaged in mountain fighting in Italy. Through the Winter of 1943-1944 it covered itself with glory in the historic battles in the CASSINO area. On 2 February the Force joined Allied Forces in the line on the Anzio Beachhead.

NOTES FOR APPENDIX IV

- 1 Fifth Army History, Vol VI, Pages 38 and 100.
- 2 Ibid, Page 98
- 3 Lt Colonel R. D. Burhans, The First Special Service Force, a War History of the North Americans 1942-1944 (Washington Infantry Journal Press, 1947), Pages 1, 8, 15, 67, 87, 166.

APPENDIX NO. V

STATISTICAL SUMMARY <sup>1</sup>

1st ARMORED DIVISION

June 1944 to May 1945

CASUALTIES:

Date	Killed		Wounded		MIA		Captured		Total	
	Off.	EM	Off.	EM	Off.	EM	Off.	EM	Off.	EM
June 44	19	99	44	355	6	27	0	0	69	481
July 44	10	122	22	339	3	16	0	2	35	479
Aug 44	1	33	4	89	1	16	0	5	6	143
Sept 44	1	34	4	140	1	78	0	1	6	253
Oct 44	7	60	19	235	4	65	0	0	30	360
Nov 44	1	24	12	135	0	28	0	0	13	167
Dec 44	1	12	3	81	0	3	0	28	4	124
Jan 45	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	12	0	17
Feb 45	0	3	1	32	1	10	0	0	2	45
Mar 45	3	23	1	90	0	11	0	0	4	124
Apr 45	12	96	32	383	4	47	0	0	48	526
May 45	1	6	1	17	0	0	0	0	2	23
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1820</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>2634</b>

NON-BATTLE CASUALTIES

Date	Died	Disease	Injuries	Exhaustion	Self Wound
June 44	3	583	186	91	0
July 44	3	976	0	186	9
Aug 44	1	725	94	14	9
Sept 44	2	577	104	13	2
Oct 44	2	585	81	54	4
Nov 44	0	370	36	48	0
Dec 44	1	34	39	50	0
Jan 45	4	594	66	15	0
Feb 45	3	246	31	25	2
Mar 45	0	424	52	34	9
Apr 45	3	399	114	61	5
May 45	11	482	118	13	5
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5,995</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>42</b>

TOTAL BATTLE CASUALTIES: 2,843  
 TOTAL NON-BATTLE CASUALTIES: 7,595  
 TOTAL CASUALTIES: 10,438

AWARDS:

DSC	Legion of Merit	SS	BS	PH	SM	Combat Inf Badge	Total
7	29	231	759	2,131	67	1,516	4,740

PROMOTIONS:

B/G	Col.	Lt. Col.	Maj.	Capt.	1st Lt.	2nd Lt.
1	3		46	98	331	118

GENERAL COURTS:

Convicted	Acquitted
334	18

SPECIAL COURTS:

Convicted	Acquitted
529	75

SUMMARY COURTS:

Convicted	Acquitted
1183	28

PRISONERS OF WAR CAPTURED  
FROM ROME TO THE ALPS

June 44	1217
July 44	388
Aug 44	24
Sept 44	279
Oct 44	62
Nov 44	15
Dec 44	7
Jan 45	0
Feb 45	11
Mar 45	18
Apr 45	29,752
May 45	<u>33,396</u>
TOTAL	65,169

AMMUNITION EXPENDED:

Date	3" Gun (25 lbs)	75MM Gun (19.6 lbs)	75MM How (18 lbs)	105MM How (42 lbs)	81MM Mort (6.92 lbs)
June 44	2,957	14,363	10,622	115,726	842
July 44	3,760	12,230	9,907	111,541	4,344
Aug 44	61	37,387	8,437	30,367	13,042
Sept 44	6,457	52,840	8,690	96,852	5,600
Oct 44	11,097	9,804	15,006	54,141	11,570
Nov 44	14,941	7,831	9,729	25,384	5,810
Dec 44	2,455	3,007	10,087	14,708	2,911
Jan 45	Division not in combat				
Feb 45		119	3,904	8,583	2,422
Mar 45		100	7,623	43,606	11,852
Apr 45	225		13,315	61,084	3,635
TOTALS: Rds	41,953	137,681	97,300	561,982	62,028
Tons	525	1,377	876	11,982	218

TOTAL ROUNDS EXPENDED: 900,944  
 TOTAL TONS AMMUNITION (less S/A): 14,798

NOTE: Other types ammunition not computed.

VEHICLES EVACUATED:

Date	Med			Trk	Amb	Trk	Hvy	105			Hvy			Lt
	Tk	H/T	Amd					Tk	Tk	Tk	Tk	Tk	Tk	
	M4	M2	Car	Rec	3/4	1/4	Wrk	M5	SP	2 1/2	3/4	M3	M8	M24
June 44	86	1	0	2	2	56	2	53	9	23	5	10	3	0
July 44	15	0	1	0	0	9	0	9	5	0	2	0	0	0
Aug 44	106	8	0	1	0	82	3	63	5	0	21	13	11	0
Sept 44	9	6	0	1	2	32	1	0	2	24	0	7	4	0
Oct 44	4	4	0	2	2	26	0	3	2	15	4	4	1	0
Nov 44	5	4	1	0	1	29	0	0	1	17	0	3	0	0
Dec 44	1	2	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	17	11	3	4	0
Jan 45	1	4	2	1	2	25	0	1	7	6	3	3	0	0
Feb 45	5	7	3	1	2	34	1	3	5	60	6	4	2	0
Mar 45	3	15	4	0	1	19	0	1	0	3	1	4	0	0
Apr 45	4	9	4	0	9	36	1	58	8	8	29	5	0	8
May 45	36	6	11	7	11	72	1	8	2	296	2	16	7	4
TOTALS:	275	66	28	15	33	420	9	199	47	469	104	72	25	12

TOTAL NUMBER OF VEHICLES EVACUATED: 1,781

VEHICLES DESTROYED BY ENEMY ACTION:

Med Tanks	79
Lt Tanks	38
Carriages, M10	11
Carriages, M15	1
Carriages, M8	2
Dozer, M4	1
Armored Car, M8	15
Armored Car, M20	1
H/Tracks	19
Ambulances	2
1/4 T Trucks	40
3/4 T Trucks	2
2½ T Trucks	5
105 MM S.P.	<u>2</u>
TOTALS	218

ENEMY EQUIPMENT DESTROYED OR CAPTURED:

Tanks, all types	83
Vehicles, Motor	3,129
Armored Cars	11
Self Propelled	152
Anti-Tank Guns	356
Arty Pieces	<u>180</u>
TOTALS:	3,911



SIGNAL EQUIPMENT CONSUMED OR LOST IN COMBAT:

Date	Radio Sets						
	BC603	BC604	300	508	509	528	536
June 44	15	13	9	4	56	4	24
July 44	5	0	8	1	40	1	10
Aug 44	4	1	0	0	0	1	2
Sept 44	0	0	2	0	3	0	0
Oct 44	4	7	0	0	17	0	2
Nov 44	6	0	0	0	6	0	1
Dec 44	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Jan 45	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Feb 45	0	0	0	1	4	0	1
Mar 45	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
Apr 45	9	4	4	14	1	18	1
May 45	1	3	3	4	6	1	1
TOTALS:	44	28	27	25	134	26	45

Date	Batteries, Telephones and Wire					
	BA 30	BA 39	BA 40	EE 8	#110	#130
June 44	10,950	734	937	69	1,085*	50*
July 44	5,000	973	605	25	705	56
Aug 44	12,391	430	430	7	1,054	132
Sep 44	18,500	606	819	38	1,763	42
Oct 44	17,100	885	1,097	21	454	26
Nov 44	13,800	401	354	27	325	20
Dec 44	15,300	420	530	16	115	34
Jan 45	22,700	302	357	18	124	9
Feb 45	18,300	470	415	9	370	48
Mar 45	7,900	542	756	3	446	76
Apr 45	8,100	800	955	3	676	31
May 45	4,000	173	190	15	506	5
TOTALS:	154,071	6,736	7,445	251	7,623 *	529 *

\*Miles of wire.

NOTE FOR APPENDIX NO. V

<sup>1</sup> Source: 1st Armored Division After Action Report

APPENDIX NO. VI

PERSONALITIES

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMMANDER AND DATE OF COMMAND</u>
Fifth US Army	Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark 24 Dec 42 to 16 Dec 44
	Lt. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott 16 Dec 44 to -----
II US Corps	Lt. Gen. Geoffrey Keyes
IV US Corps	Maj. Gen. Willis D. Crittenberger
VI US Corps	Lt. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott 23 Feb 44 to 16 Dec 44
1st Armored Division	Maj. Gen. Earnest N. Harmon - Apr 43 to 17 July 44
	Maj. Gen. Vernon E. Prichard 17 Jul 44 to 26 July 45
CC "A", 1st Armored Division	Brig. Gen. Maurice W. Daniel 12 May 44 to 8 July 44 13 Aug 44 to 13 Sept 44 21 Sep 44 to 15 Nov 44 24 Nov 44 to 30 Nov 44 15 Feb 45 to 1 Apr 45 21 Apr 45 to 5 May 45
	Colonel Hamilton H. Howze 8 Jul 44 to 13 Aug 44 3 Sep 44 to 21 Sept 44 15 Nov 44 to 24 Nov 44 30 Nov 44 to 15 Feb 45 1 Apr 45 to 21 Apr 45
CC "B", 1st Armored Division	Brig. Gen. Frank A. Allen, Jr. ----- to 1 Aug 44
	Colonel Lawrence E. Dewey 1 Aug 44 to 4 Sept 44 6 Sep 44 to June 45
	Brig. Gen. Maurice W. Daniel 4 Sep 44 to 6 Sept 44

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMMANDER AND DATES OF COMMAND</u>
1st Armored Regiment	Colonel Louis V. Hightower -----to 26 June 44
	Lt. Colonel Edson Schull 26 June 44 to -----
Task Force Howze	Colonel Hamilton H. Howze 26 May 44 to 8 July 44
1st Tank Battalion	Lt. Colonel Lawrence V. Greene 20 July 44 to 5 Feb 45
	Major Gerald M. Dailey 5 Feb 45 to 10 Feb 45
	Lt. Colonel Rudolph Barlow 10 Feb 45 to 2 Aug 45
	Lt. Colonel John R. Wright, Jr. 2 Aug 45 to -----
4th Tank Battalion	Lt. Colonel Frank F. Carr 1 Aug 44 to 31 May 45
13th Tank Battalion	Lt. Colonel Henry E. Gardiner 20 July 44 to 30 Apr 45
6th Arm'd Inf. Battalion	Lt. Colonel William W. Harvey, Jr. 20 July 44 to 27 Feb 45
	Major Robert G. Long 27 Feb 45 to 1 Apr 45
	Lt. Colonel Robert R. Linvill 1 Apr 45 to 31 May 45
11th Arm'd Inf. Battalion	Major Albert W. Phillips 20 July 44 to 2 Aug 44
	Lt. Colonel Earnest B. Ripley 2 Aug 44 to 18 Apr 45
	Major Francis A. Smith 18 Apr 45 to 30 May 45
14th Arm'd Inf. Battalion	Lt. Colonel Robert R. Linvill 20 Aug 44 to - Nov 44

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMMANDER AND DATES OF COMMAND</u>
14th Arm'd Inf. Battalion	Lt. Colonel Albert W. Phillips - Nov 44 to 31 May 45
27th Arm'd F.A. Battalion	Lt. Colonel R. J. Handy -----to 4 Feb 45
	Lt. Colonel Philip R. Draper 4 Feb 45 to 24 May 45
	Lt. Colonel Pillsbury 24 May 45 to -----
68th Arm'd F.A. Battalion	Lt. Colonel James R. Pritchard - June 43 to 2 Jan 45
	Lt. Colonel G. J. Helms 2 Jan 45 to -----
91st Arm'd F.A. Battalion	Lt. Colonel John W. McPheeters 2 Mar 43 to 19 Mar 44
	Lt. Colonel Loren D. Buttolph 25 Mar 44 to 19 Mar 45 30 Apr 45 to -----
	Major Francis E. P. McCarter 19 Mar 45 to 30 Apr 45
81st Cav. Recon Squadron	Lt. Colonel Michael Popowski, Jr. -----to 31 July 44
	Lt. Colonel Edwin A. Russel, Jr. 31 July 44 to 19 Feb 45
	Major Thomas O. Rooney 19 Feb 45 to 20 July 45
701st TD Battalion	Lt. Colnnel Harrison King ----- to 26 Mar 44
	Major Frank M. Doran 30 Mar 44 to 16 Apr 44 30 May 44 to 12 July 44
	Major Redding 16 Apr 44 to 30 May 44 31 July 44 to -----

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMMANDER AND DATES OF COMMAND</u>
701st TD Battalion (Cont'd)	Major Childs 12 July 44 to 31 July 44
16th Arm'd Engr Battalion	Lt. Colonel John L. Inskeep 20 Aug 42 to 1 July 44
	Major Ralph N. Hale 1 July 44 to -----
123rd Arm'd Ord. Battalion	Lt. Colonel Wayne L. Browning 1 July 44 to - May 45
47th Arm'd Medical Battalion	Lt. Colonel Morris R. Holtzclaw 1 May 44 to 16 Nov 44
	Lt. Colonel James O. Gooch 16 Nov 44 to 2 Mar 45
	Major Leon D. Beddow 2 Mar 45 to -----
141st Arm'd Signal Battalion	Lt. Colonel Harold C. Williams - July 43 to - Jan 45
	Lt. Colonel George S. Eager -Jan 45 to - June 45
Supply Battalion	Major Milton F. Putman - Feb 44 to 20 July 44

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PERSONALITIES

- Major General Earnest N. Harmon - Relieved command 1st Arm'd Div. 17 July 1944 to return to the US and command a Corps. Born 26 February 1894 in Massachusetts. Entered army from Vermont. Graduated USMA 1917 as 2nd Lt. of Cavalry. Member of G.S.C. 17 August 1935 to 21 July 1939; Army War College 1934; C and GS School 1933; Cavalry school 1921; Brig. Gen. (AUS) 13 March 1942; Maj Gen. (AUS) 9 August 1942; Appointed Col. Regular Army, 28 December 1945.
- Major General Vernon E. Prichard - Relieved 14th Armd Div. to command 1st Arm'd Div. July 1944. Commanding General 14th Armd Division 1942 at its activation and promoted Major General September 1942. Born Smithland, Ia. 25 Jan 1892. Graduated USMA as 2nd Lt. of Infantry 22 June 1915. WWI campaigns: Verdun and Chateau-Thierry. Graduated FA School 1924; PMS&T Yale Univ. 1925 to 1929. Graduated C and GS School two year course 1931. Graduated Army War College 1940. Chief of Staff 4th Arm'd Div. 1941.
- Brigadier General Frank A. Allen, Jr. - (Nick named "Honk" for his 105MM larynx) Director of Public Relations August 1944 to August 1945. Ohio Born 1896. Entered Army WWI, attended Officers' Training Camp, Ft. Benjamin Harrison, commissioned 2nd Lt. of Infantry-Reserve, August 1917. Received Regular Army commission September 1917 in Cavalry. Promoted Brigadier General 11 September 1942.
- Brigadier General Maurice W. Daniel - Born Indiana 1 October 1896. A.M.A. Indiana. S.S., L.M., B.S.M. (O.L.C.); Graduated USMA 1920; member G.S.C 20 September 1941 to 16 April 1942; graduated C and GS School 1937; graduated F.A. School basic course 1921; graduated Advanced Motor Course 1932; BS University of Louisville 1918; MS Purdue University 1931. Lt. Col. (AUS) 11 December 1941; accepted 12 December 1941; Col. (AUS) 2 July 1942; Brig. Gen. (AUS) 1 August 1944; terminated Brig. Gen. (AUS) 31 January 1946; Col. (AUS) 2 July 1942. Cadet MA 14 June 1918; 2nd Lt. of Infantry 2 July 1920; 1st Lt. 2 July 1920; transferred to Field Artillery 2 August 1920; 2nd Lt. (15 December 1922); 1st Lt. 4 September 1925; Capt. 1 August 1935; Maj. 1 July 1940; Lt. Col. 2 July 1943; Col. 18 July 1947.
- Lieutenant Colonel John W. McPheeters - Commanding Officer 91st Arm'd Field Artillery Battalion. Killed in action by "Tree Burst" of 3" shell from 894th TD Bn. 24 March 1944. McPHEETERS HALL located at the Armored School, Ft. Knox, Ky, is named in his honor.

APPENDIX NO., VII

INDEX OF ITALIAN CITIES AND TOWNS

MAPS: Italy Road Map 1/200,000, A.M.S., M592, First edition  
1943.. Sheets 4 through 17.

ALBANO	(F 880 475)
ALTOPASCIO	(Q 335 755)
ANZIO	(F 885 165)
BAGNI de LUCCA	(Q 260 980)
BAZZANO	(L 675 505)
BELLAVISTA	(V 495 895)
BELLUNO	(B 620 295)
BELVEDERE	(V 580 965)
BERGAMO	(K 640 875)
BIELLA	(J 360 815)
BOCCHIGLIANO	(V 580 940)
BOLGHERI	(Q 255 110)
BOLOGNA	(L 870 470)
BOMBIANA	(L 575 175)
BRACCIANO	(F 485 900)
BRESCELLO	(L 245 960)
BRESCIA	(F 050 670)
C. al VENTO	(Q 560 255)
CANINO	(A 150 320)
CARPI	(L 530 820)
CASINO di TERRA	(Q 295 215)
CASOLE D' ELSA	(Q 405 220)
CASONE	(Q 620 135)
CASTAGNOLI	(Q 465 050)
CASTEL di PIETRA	(E 503 890)
CASTEL FRANCO	(L 660 605)
CASTEL GONDOLFO	(F 870 500)
CASTELLETO	(L 655 440)
CASTELNUOVO	(Q 480 075)
CASTEL SAN GIMIGNANO	(Q 580 285)
CASTELVECCHIO	(Q 350 945)
CASTENDOLO	(F 115 600)
CASTIGLIONE	(L 735 100)
CECINA	(Q 170 200)
CENTOCELLE	(F 820 645)
CERRO BALESTRO	(V 570 900)
CHIUSDINO	(Q 635 050)
CICIANO	(V 620 995)
CINIGIANO	(E 875 795)
CIVITAVECCHIA	(F 170 890)
CIVITELLA	(V 780 920)
COLLE di VAL ELSA	(Q 660 305)
COLLI LAZIALI	(F 950 500)

COLONNA	(F 965 599)
COLORNO	(F 150 000)
COMO	(E 180 030)
COTONNIANO	(Q 675 105)
FAENZA	(M 315 240)
FATT QUERCETO	(Q 640 195)
FIRENZUOLA	(L 905 065)
FLORENCE	(Q 780 690)
FONDERIA	(V 500 775)
FOSINI	(Q 515 030)
FORTE DEI MARMI	(H 930 930)
FROSINI	(Q 680 060)
FUCECCHIO	(Q 430 655)
FUTA PASS	(L 830 045)
GABELLINO	(V 775 925)
GATTERA	(Q 455 245)
GENOA	(O 960 475)
GERFALCO	(Q 545 000)
GIUNCARICO	(E 545 830)
GHEDI	(F 080 530)
GORIZIA	(O 710 065)
GRIZZANA	(L 735 230)
GROSSETTO	(E 640 660)
IL BELAGAIO	(V 737 925)
IL GIOGO PASS	(Q 910 985)
IMOLA	(M 185 320)
ISOLA FARNESSE	(F 665 815)
LA BACCHETTOMCINA	(Q 405 285)
LA COLONNA	(Q 705 850)
LAGONI	(Q 595 040)
LAKE BOLSENA	(A 300 400)
LAKE BRACCIANO	(F 500 900)
LAKE GARDA	(F 300 600)
LAKE MASSA CIUCCOLI	(Q 050 780)
LAKE VICO	(A 470 140)
LAMA	(V 755 940)
LANUVIO	(F 920 420)
LA PIANA	(L 842 289)
LA SPEZIA	(P 660 100)
LEGHORN (LIVORNO)	(Q 015 470)
LEPRE	(Q 300 259)
LUCCA	(Q 180 785)
LUCCHIO	(Q 360 995)
LURIANO	(V 660 960)
MARLIANO	(E 765 470)
MANZIANA	(A 455 940)
MARANO	(L 630 190)
MASSA MARITTIMA	(V 470 890)
MAZZOLA	(Q 490 250)



MELETA	(V 608 870)
MENSAPELLO	(Q 644 273)
MENSANO	(Q 620 165)
MIEMO	(Q 305 305)
MILANO	(K 250 650)
MODENA	(L 560 660)
MOL. BADI	(V 475 885)
MONFALCONE	(H 630 910)
MONTE ADONE	(L 845 325)
MONTE ALBANO	(L 225 155)
MONTE ALTO	(V 670 875)
MONTE BATTAGLIA	(M 060 185)
MONTE CASTELLI	(Q 535 135)
MONTECATINI	(Q 370 280)
MONTE CUCCO	(F 450 820)
MONTE D' AVIGO	(L 754 323)
MONTEFIASCONE	(A 380 480)
MONTEGEMOLI	(Q 400 215)
MONTE GRANDE	(F 979 330)
MONTEGUIDI	(Q 565 160)
MONTE LA FINE	(L 960 160)
MONTE LIGUANA	(Q 375 940)
MONTE MASSI	(V 610 920)
MONTE MILANO	(L 745 304)
MONTE MOSCA	(L 698 307)
MONTE OMBRARO	(L 625 360)
MONTE PERO	(L 684 279)
MONTE PESCALI	(E 625 795)
MONTE PISANO	(Q 240 650)
MONTERAMICI	(L 840 280)
MONTEROSI	(A 605 010)
MONTEROTONDO	(Q 450 000)
MONTE SOLE	(L 775 278)
MONTECIANO	(V 710 980)
MONTIERI	(V 570 980)
MONTEGGIOLI	(Q 605 085)
NAVICELLO	(L 625 680)
NOVARA	(J 790 650)
OLIVETTO	(L 720 465)
ORIOLO ROMANO	(F 460 970)
ORTE	(A 680 290)
OSTERIA	(V 670 955)
OSTERIA FINOCCHIO	(F 915 640)
PADULE di FUCECCHIO	(Q 435 750)
PAGANICO	(E 765 845)
PALAZZO	(L 635 220)
PARMA	(L 090 860)
PAURANO	(Q 650 235)
PENTOLINA	(Q 705 050)
PEROLLA	(V 300 550)
PESCIA	(Q 340 850)

PLACENZA	(K 718 165)
PIANORO	(L 875 345)
PIERAZZI	(E 800 865)
PIEVE	(Q 675 175)
PISA	(Q 080 650)
PISTOIA	(Q 530 875)
POD LAMA	(Q 510 165)
POMARANCE	(Q 455 170)
PONTE a MORIANA	(Q 220 865)
PONTEDERA	(Q 380 580)
PONTE GINORI	(Q 355 225)
PONTE SAMOGGIA	(L 735 560)
PONTE SAN PIETRO	(Q 150 805)
PORRETTA	(L 575 125)
PRADURO	(L 805 375)
PRATA	(V 545 935)
PRATO	(Q 670 820)
RADICONDOLI	(Q 600 135)
RADICOSA PASS	(L 875 125)
RAVENNA	(M 670 375)
REGGIO	(L 335 740)
RIMINI	(S 850 975)
RIOLA	(L 634 240)
ROCCA STRADA	(V 685 835)
ROME	(F 750 655)
RONCIGLIONE	(A 530 115)
RUBIERA	(L 450 675)
SACCA	(F 385 320)
SALINE	(Q 425 245)
SAMOGGIA	(L 660 370)
SAN BENEDETTO di PO	(F 580 095)
SAN DALMAZIO	(Q 510 135)
SAN di GAVORRANO	(E 498 877)
SAN GODENZO PASS	(R 085 855)
SAN LORENZO	(Q 540 095)
SANTA CROCE	(Q 405 640)
SARTEANO	(A 255 890)
SASSO	(. 455 035)
SASSOFORTINO	(V 645 855)
SAVIGNO	(L 670 370)
SCALVAIA	(V 680 940)
SEGROMIGNO	(Q 270 845)
SESTO	(Q 750 765)
SILLA	(L 580 150)
SOLAIO	(Q 535 070)
SORIANO	(A 540 260)
SUSANO	(L 673 270)
TARQUINIA	(F 145 075)
TATTI	(V 575 855)
TIVOLI	(G 000 745)

TOLE	(L 655 320)
TORRIELLA	(V 680 920)
TR. SAPIENZA	(F 840 665)
TRAVALE	(Q 570 025)
TRENTO	(A 770 245)
TRIESTE	(H 820 720)
UDINE	(C 410 200)
VACCINA	(F 420 760)
VALMONTONE	(G 100 535)
VELANO	(A 425 040)
VENICE	(G 685 510)
VERTO	(Q 560 255)
VERGATO	(L 698 257)
VERNO	(L 725 050)
VETRALLA	(A 390 150)
VIAREGGIO	(U 975 830)
VILLA BASILICA	(Q 310 880)
VITERBO	(A 440 255)
VOLTERRA	(Q 450 280)
ZOCCA	(L 610 340)
TUSCANIA	(A 250 260)