

AMERICAN ARMOR AT ANZIO

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AMERICAN ARMOR AT ANZIO

PREFACE

This study of the employment of armor at Anzio is concerned with the principles of the employment of armor in expanding a beachhead, in the static defense of the beachhead, and in the preparation for the break-through and the break-through. It is not intended to be either a historical account of any one unit or a chronological account of the operation but rather the portrayal of illustrative examples of both typical missions and special missions assigned to armored units and to elements of armored units to include the methods employed in accomplishing the various missions and the mistakes made. The paper is intended to show the typical role of armor, the roles that armor is capable of performing and to serve as a basis for conclusions as to whether or not armored units (as distinguished from organic armor in the present Infantry Division) were advantageously employed in appropriate roles in the Anzio beachhead operation.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On 22 January 1944, at 0240, or 40 minutes after H Hour the three platoons of Co A of the 751st Tank Bn rolled from their LCT's onto the beach at ANZIO. The three platoons, one attached to each of the three Regiments of the 3 U.S. Div, moved inland according to plan and the initial beachhead objectives were soon secured. The remainder of this Tank Bn completed landing operations by early afternoon. No tanks were lost and no personnel casualties suffered by the 751st on the first day. As darkness fell on D Day there was no indication of the tremendous number of troops the Germans would shortly mass against the Allied beachhead forces or of the bitter battles that would be fought before they could hope to breakout of this beachhead area or even be assured that they held a firm footing.

During the next few months tanks were to prove their versatility. They were called on to act as artillery by firing indirect fire missions. In the defense they served as pillboxes with the front line units for days at a time. Seldom were they employed in such a manner to achieve the maximum results of their main capabilities, shock action, fire power, and mobility.

The offensive in Italy had been characterized from the beginning by slow advances against a determined enemy fighting a delaying action over terrain well suited to defense. During the

early months of the campaign it became increasingly clear that an amphibious assault behind the enemy line would be the only alternative to fighting a long and costly frontal battle the length of Italy.

At the BARI Conference on 8 November 1943, General Alexander, Commander of the Allied Armies in Italy, issued Operation Instruction Number 31 outlining his plan for a coordinated effort for a breakthrough to ROME. The third phase of these instructions consisted of an amphibious operation south of ROME. This third phase was entirely dependent upon the success of the first two phases, i.e. the positions to be attained by the Eighth and the Fifth Armies. The Eighth Army launched the first phase on 26 November 1943, but were halted twenty-five miles from their objective. This date represented a six-day delay due to adverse weather conditions. The second phase was launched on 1 December 1943, by Fifth Army but by 10 December they were still far from their objective. With the first two phases incomplete it was decided that the launching of the third phase, Operation "SHINGLE", must be postponed.

Marshal Kesselring, Commander in Chief South, and the German High Command had long considered the possibility of an amphibious assault by the Allied forces on either a tactical or strategical scale. In anticipation of this assault, orders were issued in December 1943 by the German High Command to the Commander in Chief West, to the Commander in Chief Southeast, and to the

Commander of the Replacement Army specifying the units that were to be transferred to Italy in the event of a landing. Marshal Kesselring, through his recently organized Army Group C, issued detailed orders to General von Vietinghoff, Commander 10th Army, General von Mackensen, Commander 14th Army, and to the Commanding Generals of his independent Corps, specifying the troops that were to be despatched to an endangered area. To facilitate planning, five general areas had been selected because of the suitable landing points within these areas. For security purposes these areas were assigned code names. (see map no. 1) With the exception of Case Richard, the likely landing areas were all in the 14th Army zone. To prepare and man the shore fortifications in these four areas, General von Mackensen had for the most part only battle weary troops. This situation came about through the policy of Army Group C of shifting combat units from the southern front to 14th Army in exchange for comparatively fresh units. This action was considered necessary because of the small number of German troops in this area. Further, the situation on the Russian front did not permit the transfer of new units to Italy and at one time the 14th Army was ordered to release one of its Infantry Divisions for use on the Russian front. This action, of course, further weakened the coastal defense in northern Italy.

In the 10th Army area no unit fit for combat could be spared from the front. Although both Army Group C and 10th Army realized the necessity for maintaining troops in the area around ROME,

from December until the actual landing at ANZIO they were never able to have much more than one Division in this area at a time. The continual effort of the Germans to keep a strong force at ROME seems to indicate that Marshal Kesselring held the same opinion that Prime Minister Winston Churchill voiced at the BARE Conference when he said, "Whoever holds Rome holds the title deeds of Italy."

Through Intelligence sources the Germans became aware that a major Allied attack at the GARIGLIANO River would be launched. However, this attack, when launched on 18 January, was so violent that before the attack was forty-eight hours old the Germans had committed all local reserves plus the bulk of the Panzer Division "Herman Goring". A breakthrough at this point was considered by Army Group C to be as dangerous as an amphibious assault in the vicinity of ROME, so, with the approval of the German High Command, it was decided to counterattack this threat at the expense of depleting the defensive forces west of ROME. Therefore, two Panzer Grenadier Divisions, minus small contingents left behind under the command of the 1st Parachute Corps, were shifted from the ROME Area to the southern front. This Corps was in a position to counterattack at the GARIGLIANO River when the first troops went ashore at ANZIO.

The availability of landing ships was one of the most important considerations to confront the Fifth Army in planning

for Operation "SHINGLE". This consideration continued to play an important role throughout the entire operation.

....As agreed by the Combined Chiefs of Staff at the Quebec Conference in August 1943, sixty-eight of the ninety LST's in the Mediterranean were scheduled to leave at once (November) for other theaters to be used in future operations in 1944. General Eisenhower, however, secured permission from the Combined Chiefs of Staff to retain the sixty-eight LST's until 15 December in order not to jeopardize the Italian campaign¹....

The landing ships were to be used initially to accelerate the build-up of Allied troops in Italy, then to increase the Strategic Air Force and finally for Operation "SHINGLE". Because of the postponement of the original landing it again became necessary to request permission to retain the LST's till a later date. This request was approved but only until 15 January. By 20 December, Fifth Army had not yet reached a position from which it could support the amphibious assault. It was at this point that the originally planned Operation "SHINGLE", dependent upon the advance of the Fifth Army, died and a new plan was born. When it became evident that Operation "SHINGLE" was no longer practicable a new approach to this landing was suggested by General Mark W. Clark, Commanding General of Fifth U.S. Army.

The new Operation "SHINGLE" was much larger than the divisional operation originally planned and further would be launched regardless of the position of the Fifth Army to the south. This new plan would present additional problems in transportation but, at the TUNIS Conference on 25 December, arrangements were made

to delay until 5 February 56 LST's scheduled to sail for England.

With 16 additional LST's withdrawn from the CORSICA run there would now be a total of 90 LST's plus a number of landing craft available for the assault. The VI Corps, under the command of Major General John P. Lucas, had been chosen for the operation, and, after handing over its commitments to the French Expeditionary Corps, moved to MADDALONI on 3 January 1944. The planning staff originally set up by Fifth Army had selected beaches for the assault in the vicinity of ANZIO. These beaches were still to be used. This area was chosen principally because of the open terrain suitable for maneuver and the good lines of approach leading inland to the key LAZIALI hill mass. Three beaches were selected as the suitable landing sites in the area (see map no. 2) One in the port of ANZIO, the second five miles west of ANZIO (suitable for assault craft up to LST(S)'s), and the third four miles to the east suitable for LCA's and LOV(P)'s.

....The Major assault units were to be the American 3rd Division, veterans of landing at Fedhala and Licata, the British 1 Division from the Eighth Army, the 504th Parachute Infantry, the 509th Parachute Infantry Bn, and three Ranger bns. As December drew to a close, planning staffs from these formations reported in and quickly began preparing detailed plans to meet the target date.2....

The 1 U.S. Armd Div, minus CCB, was not to be used in the initial landing. The plans for Operation "SHINGLE" called for the assault convoy to return to NAPLES as soon as the initial assault elements disembarked at ANZIO and to bring the 45 U.S. Div and the 1 U.S. Armd Div to the beachhead. The plan contemplated using

the 1 U.S. Armd Div either to strengthen the assault forces against German counterattack, or to thrust forward to cut the enemy lines of communication.³ On 10 January, after being notified that they were to participate in Operation "SHINGLE", the 1 U.S. Armd Div, minus CCB, began plans for the operation. CCB was engaged on the main Fifth Army front and was not used at ANZIO until several months later.

The assault convoy was divided into two forces, task force X-Ray transporting the American Force and Task Force Peter transporting British troops. (see map no. 2) The final decision to launch Operation "SHINGLE" was made on 20 January by General Alexander and at 0500 on 21 January the assault force set sail from NAPLES.

At 0005, 22 January, the assault convoy dropped anchor off ANZIO. Under ideal weather conditions the assault force, consisting of some 50,000 United States and British troops and more than 5,000 vehicles, began to unload.

On X-Ray beaches the landing was uneventful. The 3 U.S Div landed three regiments abreast over X-Ray Red and X-Ray Green beaches and pushed inland to their initial objectives. (see map no. 2) Before daylight they had gotten ashore all of their organic artillery, the 441st AAA Wpns Bn, and a large portion of the 751st Tank Bn. The Ranger Force landed on X-Ray Yellow and seized the Port of ANZIO. On Peter beaches the British experienced some difficulty due to an off-shore bar that made it impossible to bring the

boats nearer to the beach than 300 feet. Also, these beaches were lightly mined which further slowed the landing of troops and vehicles. By midday, however, all elements ashore had become firmly established on their initial objectives.

"German air reconnaissance had failed. Neither the embarkation of invasion forces nor their approach was observed." ⁴ Although our first wave hit the beach promptly at H Hour, 0200, it was not until about 0500 that Headquarters Army Group C received the first report of the landing. No other headquarters was in the ROME area at this time, which left Army Group C no alternative but to assume control locally and counter this major threat. At 0600 the mechanics of Case Richard were set into motion. This action was to start movement of troops from France, Yugoslavia, and Germany toward the beachhead. 14th Army received orders at 0730 from Army Group C to put their phase of Case Richard into operation. The three Divisions concerned left for ROME on the evening of 22 and during 23 January. Since it was known that tanks had been landed, it was considered important to release anti-tank forces and artillery for employment at ANZIO.

....At 0830 Army Group ordered Headquarters Tenth Army to transfer the Headquarters of 1st Parachute Corps and all combat troops that could be spared the beachhead as quickly as possible. ⁵....

At 1700 1st Parachute Corps was assigned command of the threatened sector. On the evening of the 22nd, Army Group C, decided to discontinue the counterattack at the GARIGLIANO River, thus making

available more troops for commitment against the beachhead.

By the end of the first day, German intelligence had pieced together a fairly accurate picture of the situation. Through signal intelligence and prisoner of war statements most of the units on the beach were indentified. A copy of the Allied landing plan had also fallen into enemy hands early in the operation. The German High Command had assumed that the first wave would attempt to seize the ALBANESE Mountains and then move northeast with the main objective being Mount LEPINI. To have accomplished this action, the Allies would have had to put a command several times the size of VI Corps ashore at ANZIO.

22, 23, and 24 January were spent by the Allies in consolidating their position and by the Germans in improving their defenses. By 24 January, the German defenses were well prepared and it was believed by the enemy that a break through of these defenses would be very unlikely.

....Telephone calls between Field Marshal Kesselring and the Commanding General, Tenth Army in the evening of 23 January, clearly indicated that the Army Group Commander believed that the danger of a larger scale expansion of the beachhead was no longer imminent.⁶....

Major General Lucas' mission was "to seize and secure a beachhead in the vicinity of ANZIO," and then to "Advance on COLLI LAZIALLE." In carrying out the first of his mission, General Lucas decided to consolidate an area of approximately seven miles in depth and fifteen miles in width ANZIO at the hub. This was considered to be the maximum area that could be held by the

limited forces available to VI Corps at this time.

Due to this decision and the fact that there were few enemy troops in the area to oppose our forces, the action during this period was very limited. On the afternoon of 23 January the third platoon Co A, 751st Tank Bn supported an attack by one battalion of the 15 Inf Regt and killed about fifteen enemy infantrymen with machine gun and cannon fire.⁷ On the morning of 24 January the third platoon of Co C, while supporting the attack of the 504th Pzcht Regt, captured four enemy soldiers and estimated that more than fifty enemy had been killed.⁸ Practically all of the tanks of the 751st Tank Bn had seen combat during these first few days and had accounted for themselves in a grand manner. However, the part that Armor had played in this initial stage of the operation was comparatively insignificant.

With the beachhead secure, VI Corps began preparations to complete the fulfillment of their mission by advancing on COLLI LAZIOLI. Two intermediate objectives, CAMPOLIONE and CISTERNA, were chosen to be used as pivots for the main attack. The British 1 Division was assigned to capture the first of these objectives while the 3 U.S. Div was assigned the latter. In the attack on CISTERNA the 3 U.S. Div was supported by the 751st Tank Bn. Prior to the ANZIO landing this battalion and the 3 U.S. Div had carried on an intensive training program in the area around NAPLES. This training had emphasized tank-infantry teamwork and the days that followed proved the value of this type of training.

After three days fighting the 3 U.S. Div had made penetrations of from one to two miles along its front but were still three miles from their objective. This attack had failed because of the rapid build-up and clever deployment of forces by the enemy. The Germans had fortified themselves in farmhouses along the road. These farmhouses were constructed of stone and when defended by well trained men were a formidable obstacle.

....These strongpoints had excellent fields of fire over the gently rolling fields and were supported by roving tanks and self propelled guns. They had to be knocked out one by one by our armor and artillery before we could advance.⁹....

The 3 U.S. Div and its attached Tank Bn had become familiar with this type of defense while fighting with Fifth Army before the ANZIO Operation. The experience gained during that time plus their training period was of great assistance in overcoming these obstacles.

The British 1 Div also failed to reach its assigned objective but did succeed in capturing THE FACTORY after a bitter fight against units of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment. THE FACTORY was a small village dominating the road net in the beachhead area. The enemy counterattacked this position the next mornign but were driven off in the afternoon leaving behind four burning tanks, one self propelled gun and quite a few prisoners. By the 28th, the British troops had gained an additional one and one half miles making approximately four miles gained during this four day period.

By 28 January, the 1 U.S. Armd Div, (minus CCB) and the

45 U.S. Div had arrived at ANZIO. "With 68,886 men, 508 guns, and 237 tanks ashore backed by the large credit in store on the beach-head, VI Corps was now prepared on 29 January to launch its attack."¹⁰ General Lucas' originally planned attack for COLLI LAZIOLI had been postponed one day to allow for final preparations and now, on 30 January, everything was ready. The 3 U.S. Div was again to attack for CISTERNA, and the 1 U.S. Armd Div was to attack up the ALBANO Road and seize the high ground to the left of the British 1 Div. All of these attacks failed. The most forward element of the 3 U. S. Div had, after three days fighting, reached a point less than a mile from its objective. The resistance encountered had been much stronger than anticipated. During this battle the 1st and the 3rd Rangers were lost with only six men making their way back to our lines. They had infiltrated the enemy lines in an attempt to seize CISTERNA by surprise. This small force was eliminated by the Germans by the afternoon of the 30th.

The British, in their sector, had succeeded in advancing two miles but had not, by the end of the first day, reached the enemy defenses at CAMPOLEONE. The plan of attack was changed the second day because of difficulties encountered by the 1 U.S. Armd Div. The difficulties were due mainly to terrain, not to the enemy. Because of the mud and stream gullies the armor of the division had lost its mobility. The terrain had succeeded where several divisions of enemy troops might have failed. The change in plan

called for the British 1 Div to seize OSTERIACCIA crossroads, 1000 yards above CAMPOLEONE. With this strongpoint secure, a tank column of the 1 U.S. Armd Div was to pass through and attack toward COLLI LAZIOLI along the ALBANO Road. This change was never put into effect, however, because of our failure to capture CAMPOLEONE. The 1 U.S. Armd Div on the left continued to attack with its armored infantry but were halted by heavy enemy fire

....At 1800, on 25 January, the Fourteenth Army took over the command in the Cicina sector, south of Livorno-Terracina. At this time the following German Troops were employed in the area of Rome.

Sector North of the Tiber River-Tarquinia
Elements of the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division and the 71st Infantry Division.

Sector south of the Tiber River-Terracina
Headquarters 1 Parachute Corps; numerous GHQ troops, and, elements of the 4th Parachute Division, 3d Panzer Grenadier Division, Panzer Division "Herman Goring", 16th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, 29th Panzer Grenadier Division, 26th Panzer Grenadier Division, 90th Panzer Grenadier Division, 1st Parachute Division, and 356th Infantry Division, and 15th Panzer Grenadier Division.

....All these units were employed in the defense line on the beachhead with the exception of elements of the 4th Parachute Division and the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division. These excepted units were employed along the coast on both sides of the beachhead. Moving towards ANZIO were the following German Divisions: 26th Infantry Division, (less one Grenadier regiment, and one artillery battalion,) from Genoa; 114th Light Infantry Division (Jager Division) from the Balkans; two regiments of the 362d Infantry Division from the coastal sector Rimini, and 715 th Infantry Division from southern France.¹¹

Fourteenth Army had been given command of the German force in the CICINA sector for one paramount reason; -to destroy the Allies' beachhead. It was originally thought that sufficient troops would be available by 28 January for a coordinated attack against the Allied line but because of a shortage in both troops and ammunition this date was changed to 1 February. During the VI Corps attack of 30 - 31 January and 1 February all available German units had been pulled into the battle either as defense or in a counterattacking role. On 1 February after VI Corps had discontinued its attack the Germans immediately began to reorganize for the major counteroffensive which they would launch on the night of 3 - 4 February.

During this period, and until the German attack of 16 February was finally stopped, the beachhead forces were slightly inferior in number of troops to the Axis forces facing them but were superior in numbers of tanks by more than two to one. General Lucas' VI Corps also had more artillery than the Germans. Consequently, a large part of the logistical problem consisted of artillery ammunition which was one of the heaviest item to transport and the most difficult to store and stockpile on the beachhead. No part of the beachhead was free from enemy shell-fire. The German aircraft that managed to penetrate our air cover concentrated on shipping in the port and on supply dumps. However, the unloading of supplies and troops progressed favorably

during the first week. On only two days during this first week was the weather such as to prevent unloading ships. By 1 February all units of the 1 U.S. Armd Div present on the beachhead had been withdrawn from the lines and placed in Corps reserve. The next few days were spent by this unit in maintenance and in preparing, along with the rest of the Corps, for the German attack that was certain to come.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER I

- 1
Fifth Army History, Volumn number 4 (Historical Section U.S. Army) p. 11
- 2
Ibid, p. 15-16
- 3
Report by The Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on The Italian Campaign, a report prepared by General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson (His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1946) p. 18.
- 4
The German Operation at ANZIO, (Produced at GNDS by a combined British, Canadian, and U.S. Staff) p. 11.
5.
Ibid, p. 12
- 6
Ibid, p. 14
- 7
After Action Report 751st Tank Battalion, January 1944
- 8
Ibid, January 1944
- 9
Op. Cit., Fifth Army History, p. 70.
- 10
Op. Cit., Report by p. 24.
- 11
Op. Cit., The German Operation at ANZIO, p. 15.

CHAPTER II

THE BEACHHEAD DEFENSE AND THE FALL OF THE FACTORY

Hitler had ordered the abscess below ROME to be removed whatever the cost and General Mackensen's Fourteenth Army was preparing for the decisive stroke.¹

This was the situation that faced the allies after their futile attempts on the 31st of January and the 1st of February to take CISTERNA and COLLI LAZIALI along the ALBANO ROAD.² It was obvious that they were facing a strong enemy who was rapidly preparing for an all out offensive.

The initiative in the fighting at ANZIO passed to the enemy when on 3 February, Fifth Army issued verbal orders to all units to assume the defense.³ This order was confirmed on 7 February by Operation Instruction No. 15. (see table 1) From Operations Instruction #15 we can see that though the Allies were preparing to slug it out toe to toe, their plans and thoughts were still on the offensive.

The enemys plans for carrying out Hitler's orders fell into three phases. The first of these to attack and pinch out the British salient up the ALBANO ROAD and to capture the strategic "FACTORY" area. The second, an all out attempt to break through to the sea along the axis of the ALBANO ROAD, and the third to attack from CISTERNA with the objective of the MUSSOLINE CANAL and the sea. To accomplish these three phases the 14th Army was reorganized. Enemy units were to form combat groups Peiffer X, Graeser, and Konrad. Group Graeser was to spear-head the attack against the beachhead line.⁴

(see Map No. 3).

To support these groups enemy artillery was concentrated in

tremendous numbers. In comparison with other theatres of war the quality and quantity of artillery pieces far exceeded any other action in German warfare.

TABLE NO. 1

Operation Instruction
Number 15

Headquarters 5th Army
APO 464, US Army
7 February 1944

1. Prior to resuming the offensive 5th Army on ANZIO front 1 MP reverts its present beachhead defense and conducts offensive probing of enemy positions.
2. Corps will:
 - a. Utilize every opportunity to improve its position and inflict maximum losses on the enemy.
 - b. Conduct full reconnaissance to preserve positions and prepare same insofar as possible with troops available. Special attention will be given to counterattack avenues of approach.
 - c. Develop the lateral road of communications within the bridgehead to connect the ANZIO CISTERNA and ANZIO CARPOLEONA roads and thereby facilitate movement of artillery, tanks, and reserve in attack or defense.
 - d. After detailed reconnaissance and study of enemy dispositions prepare plans for the earliest possible thrust in maximum strength on either VELLETRÉ or ALBANO.
3. To conserve personnel and allow for mobile reserves, maximum use will be made of mines, wire, and automatic weapons sited in depth.
4. Plans prepared will be submitted to this Headquarters as early as practicable.

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Commanding

The enemy at ANZIO had under their command approximately 370 artillery pieces whose organization, calibre and numbers are as shown in table #2.

TABLE NO. 2
ENEMY ARTILLERY

División Artillery

Panzer Artillery Regiments: 93rd and Herman Goering.
 Artillery Regiments 3, 29, 162, 165, 362, 661, 671.
 1 battery (105 howitzer) SS 16
 2 batteries (105 howitzer) of Grenadier Regt. 1027 and 1028.

<u>GHQ Artillery</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Calibre</u>
Artillery School Regiment	3	210-mm mortars
450 Artillery Battalion	12	150-mm med. howitzer
451 Artillery Battalion	8	150-mm " "
	4	100-mm med. guns
677 Artillery Battalion	8 Italian	100-mm " "
677 Artillery Battalion	6	170-mm guns
763 Artillery Battalion	6	170-mm guns
764 Artillery Battalion	6	170-mm guns
998 Artillery Battalion	3	French 220-mm guns
Battery Erhardt	2	French 240-mm rr guns
Battery 712	1	K5 280-mm rr gun
Battery 725	1	K5 280-mm rr gun

In addition to that shown on table no. 2 the enemy had the 5th Mortar Brigade with the 56th and 71st Regts which had thirty-six 150-mm mortars, eighteen 210-mm, and eight self propelled mount 150-mm mortars. The 56th Rocket Projectors had 41 guns, thirty-five of them 150-mm and six 210-mm. A glance at these figures and it becomes quite obvious that the Germans were not lacking in artillery.

Artillery General Walther Kuhn stated that despite these numbers and the excellent observation they had over the allied landing areas, troop movements, and groupings, the German artillery was unable to attain superiority of fire. His explanation for this failure was primarily the unchallenged control of the air that the

Allied forces possessed, plus the previously unheard of concentrations of smoke that the artillery laid in front of their lines at the slightest provocations thus blinding observation posts and neutralizing artillery.

He also stated that in the initial phases of the German offensive artillery ammunition was plentiful; however, with the increased bombing of their supply routes it was forever on the wane.⁵

In order to comply with the verbal order from 5th Army to defend, the Allied VI Corps on the morning of the 4th of February issued written orders outlining the Corps plans of defense for the beachhead. The defense was to consist of three main lines (see map no. 4) The initial line, the intermediate line, and the final beachhead line. The plans of VI Corps were to hold what it had gained falling back to the beachhead line only as a last resort.

To organize the defense the left flank of the beachhead was to be held by elements of the 45 U.S. Div. The critical central sector along the ALBANO ROAD by the British 1st Division. The area west of CARANO to the MUSSOLINI CANAL by the 3 U.S. Div. From the Canal to an area just north of SESSANO by the 504 Prcht Regt and from there to the sea by the 1st Special Service Force.

The 1 U.S. Armd Div located in the PADIGLIONE woods plus two regiments of the 45 U.S. Div were to constitute VI Corps Reserve. The role of the 1 U.S. Armd Div was to counterattack in any direction on Corps order. In addition it was to prepare but not occupy two positions along the original beachhead line behind the British 1st Division.⁶

To support the defense the Allies had a preponderance of artillery. (see table no. 3). These quantities, were continually augmented by additional artillery throughout the campaign.

TABLE NO. 3
ALLIED ARTILLERY

Division Artillery	Number	Calibre
3rd Infantry	36	105-mm howitzers
	12	155-mm "
45th Infantry	36	105-mm "
	12	155-mm "
1st British Inf.	42	25 pounders
81 Anti-Tank Regt.	36	6 "
	12	17 "
80 Medium Regt R.A.	16	4.5 "
78 Field Regt	24	2.5 "
24 Field Regt	24	105-mm SP
376 Parachute FA Bn.	12	75-mm howitzers
456 Parachute FA Bn	8	75-mm "
1st Armored Division		
27th FA Bn.	12	105-mm "
91th FA Bn.	12	105-mm "
<u>Corps Artillery</u>		
976th FA Bn	12	155-mm guns
977th FA Bn	12	155-mm "
1st Bn. 36th FA	12	155-mm "
1st Bn. 77th FA	12	155-mm "
69th Armored FA Bn	12	105-mm howitzer
<u>Naval Support</u>		
10 Destroyers	60	6 inch
3 Cruisers	24	8 & 10 inch
other naval support as available.		

The German divisions who sat glowering down on the little patch of Allied ground at ANZIO with only one thought, "Back to the sea" were in for a stiff battle and a great disappointment.

After looking at the strength and organization of both the Allies and the Germans it would now be only appropriate to consider the terrain over which the historic battle of ANZIO was to be fought.

The ANZIO NETTUNO region swings in a wide circle from rocky Cape CIRECEO past the PONTINE MARSHES which is cut in a straight line by the VIA APPIA no. 7. From here it extends to the southern slope of the ALBANO HILLS, again reaching the coast, together with the STONE PINE woods of PRATICA di MARE, just south of ROME. Thus the circle extended approximately 25 miles in width and averaged 8 miles in depth.

ANZIO is connected by road with VIA APPIA 7 by GENZANO, with CAPE CIRECEO and SABANDIA via LITTORIA, CISTERNA via NETTUNO and LE FERRIERE by a good broad straight asphalt highway and with TERRACINA by a smooth coastal road.

The wide plain of the marsh is as level as a table while the ground west of ASTURA BROOK, the actual battle area of the beachhead, is a short, wavy, washboard pattern, rich in ravines and partially covered with brush. Spurs from the rugged mountain range to the north jutted out at CISTERNA and CARROCETO thus providing the GERMANS with excellent ground observation toward the coast and over the entire battle area.

Most of the beachhead area is part of the huge reclamation and resettlement project of the Fascist regime. This low swampy bog land had been converted into an area of cultivated fields carefully drained and irrigated by canals and pumping stations. The Germans had flooded this area during the winter of 1943--1944 to lessen the danger of allied landings. The area just north of the cities of ANZIO and NETTURNO had scrub timber, bogs, and grazing land that had not been touched by the reclamation project.

The entire beachhead and defense area was spotted at frequent intervals along the paved and gravel roads with two story farmhouses.

The terrain in the beachhead area had its full effect on the use of US armor. That which was applicable to German Armor was equally applicable to US armor. After futile attempts to use armor in its intended role and the consequential failures, the mission assigned to General Harmon and the 1 U.S Armd Div was that of being a mobile, fast moving, defense unit. The armor and self propelled Artillery was to back up the Infantry Divisions in any and all sectors on call. Tanks were loaned to any unit in trouble and were immobile for weeks at a time (see plates 1, 2, & 3)

From the day of their arrival at the beachhead, elements of the 1 U.S. Armd Div continued their reconnaissance of the area but their findings were always the same. "Cross country movement was impossible and only primary and some secondary roads would support tank operation. The tank had met its primary obstacle--'Terrain'".

In conjunction with the Allied decision and order to defend, the enemy on the night of 3-4 February began his ANZIO offensive. It was to go down in history as one of the most famous sieges of the war.

The allied attack of 30 January - 1 February up the ALBANO ROAD had left a deep penetration in the enemy line. (see map no. 4) The elimination of this penetration and the pinching off of the British 1st Division was phase one of the enemy's three phases in the destruction of the allied beachhead. The enemy opened his attack at 2300 with an artillery concentration followed by infiltration of infantry into both flanks of the CAMPOLEONE salient. By dawn it was clear he was attempting to pinch off the salient at its shoulders.

The enemy utilized small numbers of tanks in this attack :

including Mark VI Tigers. The situation became critical for the allies as it appeared that the enemy would be successful in his 1st phase. However the fire of Companies C and B of the 894th T.D. Bn was taking its toll of enemy armor having accounted for four Mark VI, one Mark IV, and an anti-tank gun which the crew was manhandling into position. At 1600 when the strength of the enemy attack seemed weakening a counter attack supported by tanks was launched. After hours of bitter fighting, the enemy was forced to fall back after suffering severe losses and the original battle line was restored. General Lucas, however, decided the troops in the salient were in danger of being cut off by a second enemy attack. He, therefore, ordered them to withdraw to an area just north of the Factory which offered better defenses.⁹

The enemy had achieved his first objective of wiping out the CAMPOLEONE salient but he had suffered heavily and paid a high price. From the 4th to the 6th of February the enemy occupied himself by consolidating his gains and preparing for the second phase of the ANZIO battle. Their attack started at 2100 7 February with a heavy artillery concentration on both flanks of the British 1st Division. The enemy Group Graeser using the tactics of rapid infiltration which had proved so successful in previous fighting led in the battle for the FACTORY and CARROCETO.

The attack was launched simultaneously east and west of the ALBANO ROAD. After difficult and costly fighting one small group of the enemy got as far as the rear of the FACTORY where the 894th TD Bn had 3 tanks. One of these, commanded by Lt. Bernard Schaeffer, moved into position to fire on a house occupied by the enemy. Lt. Schaeffer

killed 40 with his 50 cal. machine gun while he blasted the building with his 90-mm. The remainder of the group, 30 in all, surrendered. At dawn on the 8th Allies still held the FACTORY and the east-west road leading into it. However, they had lost the BUONRIPOSE RIDGE and a counterattack was launched by the infantry supported by tanks and a platoon of Co C, 894th TD Bn. to retake this area. After bitter fighting and only partial success in its counterattack the Allies dug in and held what little they had regained. On the early morning of the 9th the enemy resumed his attack to take the FACTORY and CARROCETO. The little ground that had been regained in the counterattack was soon lost and in the FACTORY area enemy units were penetrating to its rear. By early afternoon the enemy controlled both the FACTORY and the lateral road leading into it.¹⁰

To support the British 1st Division against enemy penetrations, the 1 U.S. Armd Div was called on. It employed two companies of medium and two companies of light tanks in its counterattacks. At 0900 on 9th of February the 1st Bn of the 1 Armd Regt moved up for an attack on the BUONRIPOSE RIDGE. With its light tanks, Co A moved up the ALBANO ROAD and turned west after passing the first underpass. Once it had left the highway it had slow progress and at 1145 it was only 2000 yards north of the overpass. At noon Co B was ordered to attack the left side of the ridge. After passing through the main line it encountered a hasty mine field and two tanks were lost. The company attempted to go around the mine field but as soon as the tanks left the little dirt road they sank deep in the mud. In this attempt 5 tanks were lost. Accurate Anti-tank fire finally forced the company to withdraw with a

total loss of 7 tanks. Also, at noon, the 3d Bn of the 1 Armd Regt was ordered to send one company of medium tanks up the ALBANO ROAD to the FACTORY and a second company to the right of the FACTORY. Co H went up the main road and beyond the FACTORY where it was stopped by a mine field. It concentrated its fire on the FACTORY and succeeded in knocking out three tanks and two anti-tank guns before its withdrawal late in the afternoon. East of the FACTORY Co I had followed the road from PADIGLIONE northwest but found itself completely road-bound and under heavy anti-tank fire. It was thus forced to withdraw.

Battle Group Graeser had achieved its main objective by the capture of the FACTORY. However there still remained CARROCETO only 500 yards away. On the night of 10 February the enemy struck from the FACTORY with 15 tanks and a battalion of Infantry. Tank Destroyers of Co B 894th TD Bn and artillery fire broke up the armored attack and the infantry were driven off.

The Allies were not content with the FACTORY in the hands of the enemy and at 0630 on the 11th a counter-attack to regain this area had begun. Two companies of the 191st Tank Bn supported by a battalion of infantry were to make the attack. One company was to attack through the overpass at CARROCETO and strike the FACTORY from the west, and the other company to move up the road just east of the FACTORY and strike from the southeast. Co A of the 191st took the ALBANO ROAD. The first tank through the under-pass was knocked out by a direct hit from anti-fire and the second tank was destroyed only a few hundred yards up the road. After shelling the southwest corner of the FACTORY Co A withdrew at 0830 under a heavy smoke screen. Co B moved to the road junction

southeast of the FACTORY and pounded shells into the buildings until forced to withdraw for ammunition. However, one tank was left to direct the fire of the 27th Armd FA Bn which was supporting the attack. At 1030 Co A sent 6 tanks to the underpass to continue shelling the FACTORY but they were again driven back by accurate anti-tank fire.

At 1300 both Tank Companies and the Infantry resumed their attack. The shelling was beginning to take effect and enemy self-propelled guns and tanks were forced to withdraw. Co A of the 179 Inf Regt fought its way up to the buildings on the southwest corner of the FACTORY. Bitter hand to hand fighting resulted but, being outnumbered, our infantry had to fall back. By nightfall the counterattack was repulsed and the enemy still held the FACTORY. The following morning at 0200 the counterattack was again resumed by Companies B, C, and I of the 191st Tank Bn. (see map no. 5).

Co B attacked from the south, C from the southwest, and I paralleled the advance further to the east. Co C moved up as far as the FACTORY and there it was stopped by a hasty mine field that the enemy had laid during the night. One tank was lost and the others found cover behind farm buildings and supported the infantry by shelling the FACTORY and directing the artillery fire. By 0430 the infantry had penetrated the FACTORY area. Two hours later an enemy counterattack forced them to withdraw. In two days fighting the 191st Tank Bn had lost 7 tanks totally destroyed and several damaged.¹²

Terrain throughout the ANZIO area prevented the full utilization of the tank in its characteristic role. Piecemeal commitment caused by the fact that tanks had to be fought on roads, was the normal rather

than the exception.

On the night of 12 February the infantry was pulled back a few hundred yards to permit the bombing of CARROCETO. This 12 February marked the end of another phase in the battle by the Allies to hold ANZIO. The enemy had achieved his initial objective of wiping out the CAMPOLEONE salient and capturing the FACTORY and CARROCETO. He had won the 1st phase of the battle but the allies were far from defeated.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

- 1 Anzio Beachhead (Historical Division Dept of Army 1947) p. 43
- 2 V Army History V, IV (Historical Division of Army 1947) p. 86
- 3 Anzio Beachhead (Historical Division Dept of Army 1948) p. 40
- 4 The German Operation at Anzio (German Military Documents Section) p. 28
- 5 General Major Walther Kuhn, (Personal Report on Artillery at Anzio 1949)
- 6 Anzio Beachhead (Historical Division Dept of Army 1949) p. 47
- 7 Ibid p. 5
- 8 General Major Martin Schmidt (Personal Report on Armor at Anzio 1947)
- 9 Anzio Beachhead, (Historical Division Dept of Army 1947) p. 46
- 10 V Army History V, IV (Historical Division Dept of Army 1947) p. 117
- 11 Anzio Beachhead (Historical Division Dept of Army 1947) p. 65
- 12 V Army History V, IV (Historical Division of Army 1947) p. 123

CHAPTER III

THE MAJOR GERMAN OFFENSIVE (16--20 February)

After the successful enemy drive which eliminated the CAMPOLONE salient, General Lucas, commanding the Allied VI Corps, made changes in the disposition of his units to meet the expected resumption of the enemy's offensive. The defenses of the front line units were strengthened by attachment of armored units and tank destroyer units. The west flank, protected by the MOLLETA RIVER, was held, by the 36th Eng Regt. The right flank dug in behind the protection of the MUSSOLINI CANAL and the PONTINE MARSHES was held by the 1st Special Service Force supported by Co D, 81st Rcn Bn. Opposite CISTERNA the 751st Tank Bn, and Co D, 191st Tank Bn supported the 3 U.S. Div. The 45 U.S. Div, supported by the 191st Tank Bn (minus Co D), held the vital sector astride the ALBANO ROAD south of the FACTORY. To the left of the 45 U.S. Div, the British 56th Division was supported by the 46th Royal Tanks. (see Map No. 6) The mission of the tank units supporting the infantry in the line was to act in the role of anti-tank defense. In reserve General Lucas placed the 1 U.S. Armd Div (minus CCB) with the mission of counter-attacking or blocking any enemy penetration. The badly battered British 1st Division and 168th Brigade (from the British 56th Division) were also placed in reserve. During the comparatively quiet period of 12-16 February, the Allied VI Corps dug in and continued to improve positions while waiting for the enemy to follow up his gains and launch an all-out drive to the sea.

The capture of the FACTORY, CARROCETO, and BUONRIPOSO RIDGE Germans key positions from which to launch their all-out drive to

eliminate the Allied beachhead. The roads leading south and southeast could be used by tanks. There were no natural obstacles to hinder the advance to ANZIO. If the enemy could cross the three miles of open country between the FACTORY area and the final beachhead defense line he could employ his favorite tactics by infiltrating through the PADIGLIONE WOODS this wooded area stretched to the south from the final beachhead line almost to ANZIO. Heavy traffic from the ROME area to the beachhead, regrouping of enemy forces, and the forward movement of field artillery indicated that the enemy would launch his main effort down the ALBANO ROAD. At the same time he would launch diversionary attacks along the whole ANZIO front.

The enemy's tactical scheme was to break the main Allied defense line by massed infantry attacks supported by tanks, and then to follow through with an armored reserve. To carry out this plan the German Fourteenth Army planned to launch its main effort astride the ALBANO ROAD on a four mile front pierce the Allied defense line, continue the drive on to ANZIO, then destroy the separated parts of the Allied VI Corps. The assault was to be made by I Parachute Corps to the west of the ALBANO ROAD, and LXXVI Panzer Corps to the east. Six divisions were to be in the first assault wave--the 4th Parachute (elements only) and the 65th Inf Divs under I Precht Corps, and the and the 3rd Panzer Grenadier, 114th Light Inf, 715th Inf, and Hermann Goering Panzer (elements only) Divisions under LXXVI Panzer Corps. The 26th Panzer and the 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, plus two battalions of Panther and Tiger tanks, were to be held in reserve, and thrown into the battle as soon as the first assault wave had pierced

the main Allied defense. The great bulk of the forces under Fourteenth Army were massed around the beachhead. On 12 February the enemy had at least 120,000 troops, of which 70,000 were combat troops. To deceive the Allies, the Germans assembled their armored reserve behind CISTERNA on the 3 U.S Div front, and planned to move it at the latest possible moment to the rear of the initial assault forces.¹

The German commander, General Mackensen, doubted that his forces could eliminate the ANZIO BEACHHEAD. However, the German High Command was optimistic and Hitler gave his personal approval. The preliminary order of 9 February intended that the attack be launched at H hour on 15 February. On 13 February the time for the attack was changed to 0630, 16 February.

General Harmon's 1 U.S Armd Div was assembled in VI Corps Reserve. (see Map No. 6). In this defensive phase, General Harmon's tanks and armored infantry were to act as a mobile reserve, prepared to block or counterattack any enemy penetration. Plans and preparations for carrying out this possible mission were made and improved upon throughout the month of February. Earlier in the month of February the division reconnoitered the terrain and roads through the beachhead for possible routes and assembly areas for counterattacking in any direction. On 3 February CG VI Corps gave the division the mission of preparing, but not occupying, defensive positions, along the original beachhead line. On 4 February, CG VI Corps issued FO 21, placing the Division back in reserve prepared to counterattack North, Northeast or East on Corps order. On the basis of these orders and additional oral instructions, 6 Armd Inf Regt and 16th Eng Bn dug trenches and

emplacements and laid wire and anti-tank mines for a defensive sector consisting of three battalions on the MLR and two battalions on the RRL. At 1300 hours 6 February, after completing the rudiments of the positions, the Division ceased work on them by order of CG VI Corps, and the British 1st Division assumed responsibility for completing the positions.

As part of the Division's reserve and counterattack mission, Co C, 81st Ren Bn, plus one platoon from Co D, 81st Ren. Bn., were given the mission of patrolling the Corps West coastal flank. General Harmon believed the probability of enemy armored action in great strength either down the COAST ROAD or the ALBANO ROAD to be very strong. In order that the Division should have the earliest possible warning of such an attack, Co 81st Ren Bn established, on 5 February, liaison groups with direct radio communication at the C.P.'s of front line battalions. On 9 February, the 81st Ren Bn established daylight OPs and night LPs along the front.

During the comparatively quiet period of 11-16 February, direct fire positions for one battalion of medium tanks and two companies of tank destroyers were established. Indirect fire positions for the Division Artillery, 701 TD Bn and one battalion 1 Armd Regt were selected within the original beachhead. These positions were selected to cover each of the four approaches:

1. Along the WEST COAST ROAD.
2. Down the ALBANO ROAD.
3. Down the CISTERNA ROAD
4. West across the MUSSOLINI CANAL.

The men of the Division actually prepared direct fire positions along the WEST COAST ROAD and the ALBANO ROAD. Plans were completed for moving to the position selected in case an attack should develop from any one of the four directions.

The Division Artillery (-68th FA Bn, still on the Southern Italian Front) at times supported by tank destroyers and medium tanks of the Division in indirect fire missions, was constantly in support of the VI Corps Troops.²

After the failure of the attack to retake the FACTORY by the 45 U.S. Div on the 11-12 February, the companies of the 191st Tank Bn were located as follows: (see Map No. 6)

Co C was approximately 600 yards south of the enemy-held FACTORY. The tanks of the Company were located behind or inside of buildings or under any other cover available.

Co A was in position along the Lateral Road.

Co B with seven tanks, moved into the CASTLE area at PADIGLIONE. Three tanks remained in the vicinity of the CASTLE, and four moved into positions near the road junction north of PADIGLIONE.

The Assault Gun Platoon moved from LE FERRIERE into position in the wooded area just off the DEAD-END ROAD.

On 13 February, Lt. Col. Perkins, Commanding 191st Tank Bn was evacuated to the hospital area because of illness, and Major Asbury W. Lee III from the 1 U.S. Armd Div assumed command. At 122300 Feb. Co A relieved Co C in the forward positions. Co C occupied the position vacated by Co A.³

The 751st Tank Bn (plus Co D, 191st Tank Bn), commanded by

Lt. Col. Louis A. Hammack, was in support of the 3 U.S. Div. In order to satisfy the requests of all infantry units for tank support, the companies of the battalion were attached to infantry regiments and the platoons of the companies supported the battalions of the regiments.⁴ Co D, 191st Tank Bn had been attached to the 751st on 9 February and placed in 3 U.S. Div reserve in the vicinity of CONCA. Per VCOG, 3 U.S. Div, the battalion posted one tank each at bridges 6, 8, 9, 12 and 13 to act as bridge guard.

THE FIRST DAY, 16 FEBRUARY

During the night of 15-16 February the Allied troops in the forward positions, unaccustomed to and disliking the defensive role forced on them, listened for the sound of field artillery and vebelwerfer fire which would herald the expected attack. There was little activity with few hostile shells coming in. Before dawn the foe gave no indications of the impending assault, but the very silence was ominous.

At 0600 16 February, the enemy artillery opened up along the central beachhead front. For half an hour the forward areas shook from the hail of bursting shells and a pall of smoke gradually spread over the battlefield. Then through the smoke, gray-green uniformed troops, the finest in the Reich's army according to General Harmon, moved forward to drive the Allies into the sea.³ The enemy's plan to drive through to the sea down the ALBANO ROAD caused the 45 U.S. Div to receive the main impact of the assault. (see Map No. 6). The network of roads in the FACTORY area enabled groups of from four to eight tanks to move out of the FACTORY and fire at point-blank range into the fox holes of the U.S. troops. The enemy infantry, coordinating

Each of these in the later battle period proved to be an individual, mutually supported, blockhouse.

The allied defensive plan utilized the protection afforded by the MOLETTU RIVER on the west flank and the MUSSOLINI CANAL on the east flank. These terrain features permitted the allies to hold this area with relatively light forces throughout the entire battle.

The primary avenues of approach into the allied defense area are the ALBANO ROAD and the axis CISTERNO MONTELLO and CAMPO CERRETO.

The terrain had a very notable effect on the employment of tanks by both the enemy and the Allies. As the terrain dictates the battle so it was at ANZIO.⁷

The German Panzer units were intended primarily for terrain like that of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, where opportunity of utilizing tanks in the primary role of fire power, speed, and mobility was ever present. ANZIO, however, offered few opportunities for full employment of these characteristics. The tank was intended for offensive operation. Here it was on the defensive for the entire campaign.⁸

General Major Martin Schmidt of the German Panzers said,

....All the attacks and counterattacks were made with limited objectives and the tanks accompanied and directly supported the Infantry Divisions. Because of the terrain it was necessary to resort to the use of single tanks at a time moving from one previously reconnoitered firing position to the next. A movement off the road was certain to end in the loss of the tank. On some secondary roads the heavy Panther and Tiger tanks, because of their weight, bogged down right in the center of the roads thus blocking it for use of lighter tanks and wheeled vehicles.

General Schmidt also stated,

....that the necessity of parcelling out their tanks prevented any massing of armor and resulted in inexperienced leaders controlling tanks and tank groups.

with the tanks, worked down LA FICOCCIA CREEK and down CARROCETO CREEK.

Sgt. Charles W. Keyser, in charge of three tanks of Co A, 191st Tank Bn, was located behind a farmhouse 600 yards from the FACTORY. His No. 2 tank was knocked out in the morning by an artillery shell. At noon, enemy infantry worked down the ditch beside the road to the farmhouse. Turning the turret of his No. 1 tank, Sgt. Keyser, fired a 75-mm shell which grazed the house and exploded in the midst of the enemy. A second attempt to take the house was broken up with hand grenades. Then two enemy tanks approached down the road. Concealed by the cloud of dust around the house Sgt Keyser moved his No. 1 tank out. He knocked out one enemy tank with three rounds, and with four rounds set the other on fire. Well placed shells disposed of the enemy crews as they attempted to escape. At 1430 the No. 3 tank received a direct hit. Sgt Keyser's radio, which he had been using to direct artillery fire, was damaged and he failed to receive the order from his plat leader, 1st Lt. William E. Nangle, to withdraw. At 1615 six more enemy tanks appeared. Laying his own smoke screen the sergeant tried to make a run for it across country. Three hundred yards from the house his tank was hit and his driver killed. Badly burned, Sgt Keyser hid in a ditch until after dark when he returned to his battalion.

Lt. Molesky, commanding 1st Plat, Co A, 191st Tank Bn, moved forward toward the FACTORY. He encountered four enemy tanks and set one on fire. An enemy artillery barrage forced his tanks to take cover behind houses. Again the enemy tanks advanced and lost two

more tanks to Lt. Molesky's tankers. Sgt Kirch of the 3d Plat, Co A, located on the adjacent northwest-southeast road, fired on a Mark VI tank and saw it burn. Half an hour later the Sergeant's tank knocked out an enemy Mark VI. Four tanks from Co B, 191st were sent to support the 180 Inf Regt in the vicinity of PADIGLIONE.

Two Co A tanks were knocked out by a heavy enemy artillery concentration. Lt. Zoetewey was sent forward up the ALBANO ROAD with a platoon from Co C. They encountered enemy tanks moving south, and forced them to withdraw under fire. Lt Gangwisch, with 2d Plat, Co C, moved to the vicinity of the overpass to cover possible withdrawal of the forward platoon on the road.

Lt. Nangle's plat (Co A) on the road northwest-southeast had to absorb considerable punishment during the day. Lt Nangle's tank was hit at 0815 and then set afire by another hit. The crew was under fire when they abandoned the tank and had to remain under cover in the vicinity until after dark. On one occasion the platoon was cut off by enemy penetrations, but continued to fire and knocked out several tanks before it was withdrawn.

The enemy had poor luck moving cross-country. The Assault Gun Plat knocked out three Mark VI tanks which had bogged down. Co A accounted for two in the same manner.

The intensity of the attack did not diminish until late afternoon. The enemy expended both infantry and tanks lavishly. He repeatedly attempted to make penetrations by thrusting his tanks down through the network of roads and U.S. tanks continued to engage them. After dark three tanks from Co C under Lt. Cobb moved north on the

ALBANO ROAD then east to support Co E, 157 Inf Regt. At 2230 hours, four tanks of Co B, moved forward in answer to a request from the 179 Inf Regt and neutralized a force of enemy infantry which was occupying a building.

At the same time the main enemy assault was striking the 45 U.S. Div, diversionary attacks hit the U.S. 3d and British 56th Divisions. The tanks of Co B, 751st Tank Bn knocked out five enemy tanks and an enemy half-track in the 3 U.S. Div sector. The 46 Royal Tanks mopped up enemy infantry which had penetrated the British 56th Division front.⁵

At the end of 16 February, the first day of the enemy's big push, he had made only slight gains in the sectors of the U.S 45th and British 56th Divisions with heavy losses in tanks and infantry. It was evident that most of the attacks were intended only as diversions to wear down the strength of the defending troops and to pin reserves. The enemy had not yet committed his main force.

THE SECOND DAY, 17 FEBRUARY

Prior to midnight of 16 February the enemy resumed the attack, and continued during the night. The three tanks from Co C, 191st Tank Bn, under Lt. Cobb along with Co E, 157th Inf Regt became involved in a fight for their lives. The attacking Germans launched assaults from both front and rear compressing the company into a small area around Captain Felix L. Sparks' CP. Here the tanks assisted by firing their 75-mm guns point-blank into the oncoming waves of troops and swept the surrounding fields with their 50 caliber machine guns.

About 15,000 rounds of small arms ammunition were expended and even Tommy guns and carbines were fired from the turret ports. There were fourteen infantrymen, Lt. Cobb's tanks, very little ammunition and, all supply routes cut, when Capt. Sparks received permission to withdraw to the west of the ALBANO ROAD. At about 0500 four enemy tanks were closing on the flank of this small group. The enemy tanks came within 50 yards of Lt. Cobb's tanks, not realizing they were there. Two of the enemy tanks were knocked out. Under a protective smoke screen laid down by the artillery, the handful of men and tanks fought their way out of the trap. One of the tanks bogged down, threw a track and was destroyed by enemy fire a few moments after being abandoned. The remaining two tanks picked up the crew from the abandoned tank and moved across country. Fighting was so heavy that the crews could not operate in the overloaded tanks. The five men were let out to make their way back on foot. Only one returned. The two remaining tanks returned before daylight. Reliable estimates placed the number of infantry destroyed by Lt. Cobb's command at five hundred.

The enemy's success during the night was opening up a dangerous gap between the 179 and 157 Inf Regts of the 45 U.S. Div. The enemy moved swiftly to press his advantage. At 0740 thirty-five Focke-Wulf 190's and Messerschmitt 109's bombed and strafed the 45 U.S Div's front line. A few minutes later the 2d and 3d Bns, 179 Inf Regt, were under attack by a powerful force composed of the 25th Inf Regt, two battalions of the 145th Inf Regt and part of the 41st Inf Regt. During the day the enemy used approximately sixty tanks, employed in small groups, supporting his infantry.

One force of tanks and infantry moved southeast from the FACTORY to attack the 3d Bn along the northsouth road a mile to the east of the ALBANO ROAD. A second force, after driving south from CARROCETO along the highway, swung east to strike the 2d Bn, 179 Inf Regt in the flank. Co G, 179 Inf Regt, which had been fighting all night was virtually isolated by this force. At 0855 Colonel Manner, Commanding the 179th, ordered his 2d and 3d Bns to withdraw 1,000 yards to the west branch of CARROCETO CREEK. The withdrawal was made under heavy pressure, Co G being virtually destroyed. A line was eventually established on the DEAD-END ROAD less than a mile north of the final beachhead line. At 0855, the 3d Bn, 179 Inf Regt completed its move back to tie in with the 2d Bn north of the DEAD-END ROAD. The enemy, after this withdrawal by units of the 179 Inf Regt, had driven a wedge two miles wide and over a mile deep into the center of the 45 U.S. Div.

The tanks of the 191 Tank Bn fought continuously to help the infantry stem the German assault. Co A, holding the diagonal BOWLING ALLEY ROAD fired on enemy vehicles and infantry. At 1030, Lt. Zoetewey moved his plat of Co C north on the ALBANO ROAD. The second plat, under Lt. Gangwisch, occupied a position west of the road to protect the advance of the forward Platoon. Lt. Zoetewey's tanks fired on enemy infantry destroying machine gun emplacements. His mission was to hold the road until relieved by units of the 1 U.S. Armd Div. The relief was effected at about 1430.

To aid the hard-pressed infantry, VI Corps brought to bear all the artillery and air power at its disposal. In addition to the 432

guns of Corps and division artillery, three companies of tanks from the 1 U.S. Armd Div and four batteries of 90-mm AA guns were employed against ground targets. Two Allied cruisers assisted the Corps by fire. Further all the resources of XII Air Support Command were put at the disposal of VI Corps. The total weight of bombs dropped, and the number of heavy bombers employed, were the greatest up to that date ever allotted in direct support of any army.

During the afternoon the enemy continued his attacks until he had approximately fourteen infantry battalions committed. The main pressure continued down the ALBANO ROAD and to the east of the road against the 2d and 3d Bns, 179 Inf Regt. The Germans penetrated as far as the junction with the DEAD-END ROAD. Here tanks took concealment behind a group of farmhouses and the infantry dug in. Two enemy tanks made a penetration down the ALBANO ROAD to the first overpass before being stopped. On the west side of the road the 2d Bn, 157 Inf Regt, was almost surrounded by small groups of enemy infiltrating through the deep ravines between the battalion and the British 167th Brigade to its left.

Late in the morning of 17 February General Harmon received orders from General Lucas, to support the 179 Inf Regt in a counter-attack with one battalion of medium tanks. Co H, 3d Bn, 1 Armd Regt, moved out shortly after noon and reached the first over-pass at 1410. One platoon of Co H advanced 500 yards further up the road assisted in holding off the enemy tanks, attacking toward the over-pass. The remainder of Co H developed along the OVER-PASS ROAD and covered the forward platoon. Co I followed the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD across the open

fields southeast of the FACTORY, to support the 3d Bn, 179 Inf Regt. Road-bound and under fire from enemy tanks, Co I made little progress and was recalled at dusk to take up positions near the cross-roads.

Co G had moved into position in support of Co I. The Assault guns took positions directly supporting Companies I and G. At dark Co H withdrew on orders of General Harmon. Companies I and G remained in positions held during the day, and continued to support the 45 U.S. Div until 1400 hours 18 February. Then the battalion assembled to participate in the Division counterattack on the 19 February. Neither of these counterattacks accomplished their mission. Both were costly in comparison to damage inflicted on the enemy. They failed because the boggy terrain forced the tanks to remain on the roads, which were covered by enemy anti-tank guns, and because the attacks were required to jump off with insufficient time for planning, coordinating, and reconnoitering.

Toward late afternoon four tanks of the 191 Tank Bn under Lt. Gangwisch, engaged six enemy Mark VI's and knocked out two. The enemy set two of Lt. Ganwisch's tanks afire, and the other two, in attempting to maneuver, bogged down, and being under fire were abandoned. While the crews took shelter in a nearby building the four tanks were burned. All twenty of these men returned to the Co C-P after darkness.

The enemy penetration down the ALBANO ROAD brought him almost to the final beachhead line of defense. In order to relieve some of the pressure on the 45 U.S. Div and to add depth to the defense,

General Lucas assigned to the British 1st Division, less the 3d Brigade which remained in Corps reserve, the job of holding a 2 mile sector of the final beachhead line extending east and west from the first over-pass. The British 1st Division tied in with the British 56 Division on its left and 1st Bn, 179 Inf Regt on its right. Corps attached the 2d Bn, 6th Armd Inf Regt, to the 45 U.S. Div. The battalion was placed under the control of the 157 Inf Regt and moved up to the first over-pass in position to relieve the 3d Bn, 157 Inf Regt. Major General G. W. R. Templar took command of both the British 56th and 1st Divs after General Penney was wounded, and General Truscott because Deputy Commander of VI Corps, Brig. General John W. O'Daniel assumed command of the U.S. Div.

In an effort to lessen the depth of the enemy penetration and to obtain a more defensible line, General Eagles ordered the 2d and 3d Bns, 179 Inf Regt, and 3d Bn, 157 Inf Regt, to launch a counter-attack on the night of 17-18 February. It was to move forward about 1000 yards to the west branch of CARROCETO CREEK. The two badly depleted battalions of the 179th Inf Regt jumped off on schedule at 2300, but the 3d Bn, 157 Inf Regt led by Capt. Merle M. Mitchell, who remained in command despite stomach and shoulder wounds, did not get under way until 0030. Because of heavy enemy fire Capt. Mitchell's battalion could go no further up the road than its juncture with the DEAD-END ROAD. One platoon of Co C, 191st Tank Bn, dug in north of the railroad overpass and, supported the 3d Bn of the 157 Inf Regt, the 179 Inf Regt reached its objective but was counterattacked on the left flank from the ALBANO ROAD and some units of the 179th were

out off. The counterattack lacking sufficient strength to throw the enemy off balance failed, and it left the troops of the 179 Inf Regt in an exposed position.

THE CRISIS, 18-19 FEBRUARY

All through the stormy night of 17-18 February the enemy moved up fresh units in preparation for a knockout blow. On the left shoulder of the salient he got between the 167th Brigade and 2d Bn, 157 Inf Regt, cutting the battalion's supply line. Aided by artillery fire. Small groups of enemy tanks and infantry keep up the pressure all night long. While continuing these attacks, Fourteenth Army completed its preparations for what was to be its supreme effort to punch through. During the day of the 18th all of the 721st, 741st, and 735th Infantry Regiments, and the 309th and 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiments, were to be employed. Armor continued to be used in small groups but on a more extensive scale than on any previous day. Each infantry unit had tank support. In the afternoon, when elements of the enemy reserve--the 26th Panzer and 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions--were committed, tanks were employed with as many as twelve in a group.

The first enemy thrust came at dawn, driving deep into the positions of the 179 Inf Regt. Co K was destroyed and only remnants of the 3d Bn filtered back to the final beachhead line. The 2d Bn, was almost cut off by a tank penetration on its left and the collapse of the 3d Bn on its right. By the middle of the morning it was forced to withdraw to the final beachhead defense line. Co I, 157 Inf Regt was holding a small area directly in front of the overpass. Although

this company took heavy casualties from enemy infantry and 170-mm and 210-mm guns, which were registered on the overpass, they littered the ring of barbed wire around their position with bodies of dead and moaning Germans. On the right shoulder of the salient the 2d Bn, 180 Inf Regt, under attack from three sides by enemy tanks operating along the roads east of the FACTORY, held fast. On the other shoulder of the salient the 2d Bn, 157 Inf Regt, virtually cut off from all support, likewise held. Although the enemy had widened the penetration and driven a half mile deeper, the 45 U.S. Div still prevented him from making a clean breakthrough.

At approximately 0700 Co I, 3d Bn, 1 Armd Regt received information, by liaison with the infantry, of a strong enemy attack which was moving southeast astride the railroad bed. The company commander immediately ordered one platoon to attack along the railroad bed to the northwest to break up this attack. This platoon, under cover of the remainder of the company, succeeded in moving one section completely through the enemy infantry thus stopping it, Co I received a heavy dive bombing attack at 1200 in the vicinity of the Crossroads. This attack wounded the company commander and disabled one tank. Co G, in process of relieving elements of Co I, had one tank disabled in the same attack. Co H moved back to an assembly area.⁹ Co I moved to PADIGLIONE and its vicinity during the night. The platoon of Co C, 191st Tank Bn, supporting the 3d Bn, 157 Inf Regt remained dug in north of the overpass during the entire day. Co A took up positions near the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD JUNCTION. At 0530, the Battalion forward C.P. position was threatened by the enemy advance and all personnel

without armored transportation were ordered to leave. During the morning, Captain Wilson, of Co A sent a platoon up the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD to "shot up" any enemy in sight. They destroyed five machine gun nests, a self-propelled gun, a Mark IV tank and an unknown number of infantrymen. At 1230 enemy planes dive-bombed Co A, killing Captain Wilson who was in the turret of his tank. The bloody struggle continued all morning under an overcast sky which prevented a repetition of the previous day's tremendous program of air support. However fighter-bombers flew 120 sorties, giving effective close support against enemy tanks and infantry, and twenty-four light bombers covered the FACTORY area with fragmentation bombs. The artillery support continued unabated, and at 1110 Captain William H. McKay, a cub pilot, adjusted the fire of 224 guns of Corps Artillery on about 2,500 Germans with tanks moving south from CARROCETO along the ALBANO ROAD. The enemy force disintegrated under this bombardment. Colonel William O. Carby took command of the shattered 179 Inf Regt, and was told to hold the final beachhead line at all costs. Enemy tanks were operating almost at will down the ALBANO ROAD and the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD. In the late afternoon of 18 February, as the enemy prepared to make his heaviest attack of the day, the Allied defenders of the ANZIO beachhead faced their most critical test. Colonel Lee of the 191st received orders from the 45 U.S. Div to keep all his tanks in position. Co A was located near BOWLING ALLEY ROAD JUNCTION, Co B near PADIGLIONE, Co C near the overpass. The Fourteenth Army renewed its attack with a thrust by twelve tanks down the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD, and only the blown bridge where the road crosses CARROCETO

CREEK kept them from breaking through. Under cover of the fire of these tanks the enemy infantry attacked. By 1750 the fighting was general along the whole front of the salient as far west as the overpass. Enemy units infiltrated through, but these forces had been whittled down until they were too weak to exploit their penetration and were wiped out during the night. Farther to the west the 1st Bn, 179 Inf Regt, and 1st Loyals were attacked by the enemy from across the open fields south of the DEAD-END ROAD. For four hours the enemy troops fought to break through east of the overpass, at one time penetrating all the way to the lateral road before being driven back in hand-to-hand fighting. Tanks of 1 U.S. Armd Div, patrolling the lateral road, helped the infantry hold off the enemy until the force of the attacks was spent. Advancing across the open country, the enemy was taking terrific casualties from artillery, mortar, and machine-gun fire. At 2130 there was evidence that the enemy was pulling back to reorganize. Never again was he to come so close to rolling up the final beachhead line.

At 2200 Co F, 2d Bn, 1 Armd Regt, began moving to the overpass road, and into position south of the road with the mission of supporting the infantry and holding the line along the overpass road. During the night 18-19 February, VI Corps assembled a counterattack force, while the 45 U.S. Div strengthened its position. West of the ALBANO ROAD, Lt. Col. Wilhelm P. Johnson, leading his 2d Bn, 6 Armd Inf Regt broke through to the 2d Bn, 157 Inf Regt, making it possible to send supplies and ammunition forward to the battalion. General Eagles released the 1st Bn, 157 Inf Regt, from division reserve and

attached it to the 179 Inf Regt. This fresh battalion relieved the decimated 2d Bn, along the lateral road. Major Tyron reorganized the remnants of the 3d Bn, 179 Inf Regt, and reinforced them with 50 men from rear areas. The 1st Loyals used rear-echelon troops to replace their casualties. (see Map No. 9) At 0400, 19 February, the enemy laid down an artillery barrage, and ten minutes later his infantry attacked. Two battalions of the enemy's reserve 15th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (29th Panzer Grenadier Division), supported by three tanks, penetrated to the lateral road, after overrunning the right flank company of the 1st Loyals. At dawn the tanks of Co F, 1 Armd Regt discovered that the enemy infantry had infiltrated into its position. This company, in conjunction with friendly infantry, and aided by a tremendous artillery barrage counterattacked and drove the enemy across the road and restored the line north of the overpass road. During this attack, two tank commanders, S/Sgt Koski and Lt. Dunning, were shot in the head by small arms fire from enemy infantry who were so close to their tanks that their tank weapons could not be employed.

At 0330 the enemy laid a heavy artillery barrage in the vicinity of the forward C.P., 191st Tank Bn and followed with an infantry attack. Our Five tanks located in the vicinity fired until dawn. Captain Middleton's tank was disabled by a round of high explosive which broke one of the tracks. He took over Co C's tank #13. Captain Hollis and the battalion commander Major Lee, after firing all ammunition, withdrew to the vicinity of the Assault Gun battery. The remnants of Co C moved to the same area and remained to guard the

north-south road. The Assault Guns had continued to fire during this period. One Assault Gun was put out of action by an enemy air burst.

During the morning the enemy tanks tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to operate down the main ALBANO ROAD. Tank Destroyers of the 701 TD Bn knocked out two Mark VI Tigers and five Mark IV's. At noon a final enemy attack down the same axis was broken up by artillery fire before any contact was made.

THE BATTLE IS WON 19-20 FEBRUARY

General Harmon was called to a conference at noon, 18 February, with General Mark Clark, commanding the Fifth Army, and Generals Lucas⁹ Truscott of the VII Corps. The Corps' original plan of counterattack was to send Force T, consisting of the 169 Brigade under General Templor, to attack on Corps order from the vicinity of the overpass to seize the ground north of the DEAD-END ROAD. Force H, under General Harmon and consisting of the 6 Armd Inf Regt (less the 2d Bn), a battalion of tanks from the 1 Armd Regt and the 30th Inf Regt, was to attack at 0630 on the 19 February up the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD to the junction with the first north-south road (see Map No 9). The original intention was to have the forces attack simultaneously to pinch off the enemy troops in the nose of the salient. Force T's 169th Brigade was delayed in landing at the port of ANZIO by naval mines dropped by German planes. The Brigade was unable to unload its equipment because the harbor was closed until these mines could be cleared. Inability on the part of Force T to assemble this equipment on the scheduled time, necessitated a modification of the

plan, to a "limited objective attack", by Task Force H.

During the afternoon and evening of the 18th February the men of Task Force H made preparations for the attack they would launch the next morning. After darkness fell, tanks began to move forward into position. Most of the infantrymen--had to march five miles through ankle-deep mud to get to their jump-off positions. At 0200, 19 February, at the time the Germans were fighting desperately to break through at the first overpass, General Lucas was faced with the decision of whether to employ General Harmon's armor of Task Force H to meet this drive head on in an attempt to stem it, or to go ahead with the counterattack as planned. General Harmon emphatically disagreed with changing the counterattack plan, and was given permission to proceed as planned. The VI Corps artillery blasted enemy assembly areas north and east of the FACTORY. They fired on the FACTORY and CARROCETO, and at 0600 laid down a barrage in front of the line of departure which was lifted on call. Eight British FA regiments, eight battalions of Corps artillery, Naval and 90-mm AA guns, fighter-bombers, and medium bombers, and medium bombers, participated in the plan of supporting fires for Task Force H. The 29th Panzer Grenadier Division (part of Fourteenth Army's reserve) was on its way down the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD, to attack when struck by this artillery preparation. The German division was shattered by this intense fire and was unable to launch its assault.

Force H attacked on schedule at 0630. Colonel Steele's 6th Armd Inf Regt on the left advanced along the south side of the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD while Colonel McGarr's 30 Inf Regt attacked abreast,

astride and north of the same road. Colonel Louis V. Hightower employed two medium tank companies of his 1 Armd Regt. Co H supported the infantry on the right flank and protected this flank by moving north from PADIGLIONE. Co G was to move up the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD in direct support of the infantry. The attack started well, at 0820 the 30 Inf Regt had advanced a mile beyond the line of departure, and the 6 Armd Inf Regt was meeting only slight resistance. Then the advance slowed. The 2d Bn, leading the 30 Inf Regt was under fire from enemy Mark VI tanks and from troops concealed along the banks of LA FICOCCIA CREEK and in the brush on the north side of the road. Lt. Col. Lyle W. Bernard was wounded and Lt. Col. Woodrow W. Stromberg took over the 2d Bn. Companies E and F were badly chewed up. The tanks of Co G, were held up by bridging in process on the BOWLING ALLEY ROAD. At 1330 the attack was resumed, and one platoon of Co G moved forward under cover of the remainder of the company. After Co G's tanks crossed the repaired bridge they drove up the diagonal road spreading panic among the already disorganized enemy troops. The tanks of Co H were meeting with equal success. They encountered considerable infantry in the houses and in the FSO DI SPACCASASSI. After advancing over a mile up the road leading north from PADIGLIONE, they turned west, one platoon reaching the bridge, in an attack to clear the area of enemy. Blasting the enemy infantry from the stream bed and from houses along the road, they took so many prisoners that they had to call on the 180 Inf Regt to dispose of them. By mid-afternoon the bridge was cleared and one platoon crossed to engage the enemy infantry by fire.

At 1620, 19 February, when General Harmon called a halt to the advance, the infantry had reached the objective called for in VI Corp's order. The main assault force was withdrawn during the night. Two battalions, left as a covering force engaged in aggressive patrolling throughout 20 February and were then withdrawn. Seven tanks of Co H remained in vicinity of bridge north of PADIGLIONE to defend it. Elements of the Ren Co., 1 Armd Regt were attached to Companies G and H for night security.

While Force H was making the main counterattack, other units on the beach launched limited counterattacks. Co D, 1 Armd Regt was ordered to attack north on the ALBANO ROAD and to go as far and cause as much damage as possible until darkness and then to return to the bivouac. Co D moved out of its bivouac at 1500 hours and one platoon advanced through the overpass where they received heavy direct AT fire which knocked out three of their tanks. The advance continued almost to the DEAD-END ROAD, before the remnants of the platoon were forced to withdraw under cover of a smoke screen. The 1st Loyals and a company of the 2d North Staffs, supported by tanks of the 46th Royal Tanks, attacked to wipe out the pocket of resistance along the lateral road left by the enemy's penetration in the morning. At 1600 the houses in which the enemy troops had barricaded themselves were retaken. The platoon of tanks of Co D, 1 Armd Regt aided this British attack by driving a large force of the enemy from cover. The British took over 200 prisoners, together with the prisoners taken by Force H, this brought the total for the day to 413.

General Lucas signalized the victory with a message to his

troops. "Swell work today. Keep after them." The decline in the strength of the enemy's attacks, the picture of disorganization in his units, and the spirit of disillusionment exhibited by the enemy prisoners, indicated that VI Corps by the evening of 19 February had won its battle. In their five day attack, 16-20 February, the enemy suffered at least 5,389 battle casualties in killed, wounded, and missing. VI Corps took 609 prisoners.

The Allied superiority in artillery and air power, the inability of the enemy to employ his tanks in mass, the breakdown of his morale, and the stubborn resistance of the Allied troops holding the beachhead. Were the reasons that the enemy's offensive had failed.⁶

NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1

Fifth Army History, V, VI, p. 128

2

After Action Report, 1st Armored Division, February 1944,
p. 2-4

3

After Action Report, 191st Tank Battalion, February 1944, p. 6

4

1st Lt. F. G. Nordstrom, personal interview

5

After Action Report, 191st Tank Battalion, February 1944,
p. 6-7

6

Anzio Beachhead, October 1948, Historical Division, Dept of
The Army, p. 87

CHAPTER IV

THE FINAL GERMAN DRIVE (20 February-4 March 44)

The Allies could not rest on their well earned laurels, nor could they take time out for a much needed rest. As long as the Germans had a large force to the front, a threat remained to the beachhead. Preparations to stop another German drive had to be made. General Clark asked for additional forces to strengthen his battle worn defenses, and redeployed those units he had at his disposal. Lines around the shoulders of the salient were drawn tighter; major units in the line were given smaller sectors; reinforcements were placed immediately in the line; armored units were given missions of supporting the front with direct and indirect fire; and a large mobile reserve was formed around the 1 U.S. Armd Div, less CCB.

The enemy could not reorganize and continue the assault at once because of heavy losses and general demoralization. General Mackensen was forced to pull back his main attacking force for re-supply and reorganization before he could push forward with another co-ordinated drive. However, he could not leave the beachhead to its own devices. Local raids were made all along the line with emphasis on the shoulders of the salient. "Jerry" was directing his efforts to enlarging the salient and softening the defenders for one more big push.¹

The primary role of armor did not change at this time. It still was to furnish close support to the infantry as an anti-tank weapon. The secondary mission was to reinforce the fires of the

artillery and to act as a mobile reserve. Fighting conditions had not changed and tanks were still being used as stationary pill boxes in the line. Experience had taught that two tanks, mutually supporting, were better than one. Therefore, wherever possible, tanks were placed in the line in pairs. These tanks would take positions of safety behind farm houses and haystacks in the daytime and move into the infantry lines at night. Also supporting tanks accompanied infantry units making raids. On these missions tanks would furnish close support acting as self propelled artillery.²

At this time the tank-infantry team was not too well coordinated. The need for team training was apparent on many occasions. One good example of this need was clearly shown in the action of Co F, 1 Armd Regt. During the night of 19-20 February enemy infantry had again succeeded in infiltrating into a position well within the beachhead lines. On the morning of 20 February, Co F was given the mission of driving this enemy out. With friendly infantry attached, this tank company started on its mission. During the fight which followed, the enemy infantry succeeded in getting so close to the tanks that the tank gunners could not bring their weapons to fire on the enemy. As a result, the success of this mission was overshadowed by the needless loss of life and material.³

After the successful counterattack by Force H, a defensive position was taken to ward off the German drive in that area. Here tanks were used the same as in other defensive positions in the line. Seven tanks of Co H, 1 Armd Regt, were assigned a mission of defending a vital bridge in front of the line. Elements of the Ren Co

were attached for security. During the 19th and 20th this small force was left in stationary positions. However, on the morning of the 20th, further security was added by sending one platoon of Co I, 1 Armd Regt, on a reconnaissance beyond this point. This platoon reported a large force of tanks and infantry approaching the bridge. This information proved to be the saving of the tanks defending the bridge.⁴

Tanks and artillery prepared to meet the enemy threat. Because the armored units in this area were under-strength, all tanks were placed under the command of the CO of Co H. During the afternoon of the 20th and all day the 21st, an intense tank fight developed. A platoon leader of Co I, who had lost almost all of his tanks, used his tank as a forward observation post. From his position he has able to direct the fires of the supporting artillery with excellent results. In the late afternoon of the 21st, the enemy withdrew suffering heavy losses in both men and material. The defending artillery had completely stopped the German Infantry and the supporting heavy artillery aided greatly in stopping his armor. Further, the American tanks, in prepared positions, had been able to pick-off the enemy tanks because the terrain was not suitable for tank maneuver. The "Jerry" tanks had to stay on the roads. Since the enemy could not maneuver his armor, neither could Co H. As a result, the 1 Armd Regt losses were also heavy and it was replaced in the line by the 191 Tank Bn.⁵

In reorganizing for the final drive, the Germans placed the 26th Panzer Division in position near CISTERNA to spearhead the

attack. To add force and striking power, the 715th Light Division was shifted to this area after a period of rest and reorganization. In addition to this attacking force the enemy had available, to exploit any success, the Herman Goering Panzer Division, the 362 Grenadier Division, and the 1028 Panzer Grenadier Regiment. This shifting of troops indicated that the main effort would come against the east shoulder. However, the enemy forces west of the ALBANO ROAD were not without sufficient strength to be a threat against that shoulder. Here the Germans had the 65th Grenadier Division, the 4th Parachute Division, the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division reinforced by the Infantry Lehr Regiment, and the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division. Although none of these units in the west sector were up to full strength, it is significant to note that "Jerry" had split his forces. All indications pointed to a secondary attack against the British in the west and a main effort against the 3 U.S. Div occupying the east shoulder.⁶

During the afternoon of the 28th the Germans smoked the front lines and moved into the attack position. This was to be the final drive. Anticipating this drive, the Allies moved tanks into direct and indirect firing positions in the east sector. Tank companies were moved in to help the artillery smother the enemy with shell fire.⁷ Movements and plans were made and changed in rapid fire fashion. The 1 Armd Regt received no less than 15 plans during the last week in February. On the 28th, Co F of the 1 Armd Regt was moved into an indirect firing position under control of the 91st FA Bn. On the 29th it was released from the 91st and

placed under the 160th FA Bn with no change in position or mission.⁸ It should be noted that to fire tanks as artillery was not as simple as it appears. The tanks were not equipped with indirect firing facilities, nor was the tank crew trained to fire with the artillery. Therefore, tank commanders were on the alert to find ways and means to correct this and to expedite training in this type of firing.⁹

In the line the situation was much the same. In the 3 U.S. Div facing the oncoming Germans, tank units were scattered throughout the entire line. The 751st Tank Bn was supporting the 3 U.S. Div; the 191 Tank Bn was with the 45 U.S. Div; the 701 TD Bn was in reserve as was the 1 U.S. Armd Div, minus CCB.¹⁰

During this phase of the defense, tank units, as such, had to be forgotten. Some of the units in the line were so broken up that it was impossible to identify any unit larger than a platoon. The 751 Tank Bn was a good example of the distribution of the front line armor. The disposition of this battalion, awaiting the attack, was as follows:

....At the end of the month of February 1944, the 751 Tank Bn (Co "D" 191 Tank Bn attached) was in support of the 3 U.S. Div (Reinf) on the Nettuno Beachhead. Co "B" less 2d Plat., plus 2d Plat., Co "A", and 2d Plat., Co "D" 191 Tank Bn was attached to the 7 U.S. Inf Regt Co "C" plus 2d Plat., Co "B" and 1st Plat., Co "D" was attached to the 15 U.S. Inf Regt Co "D" less 1st Plat., and 2d Plat., plus 1st Plat., Co "A" and mortar Plat., was attached to the 504 Prcht Regt Co "A" and 2d Plat. Co "D" were attached to the 509 Prcht Bn, and the remainder of the Regt was attached to the 3 U.S. Div (Reinf).¹¹

Tank platoon leaders took orders from the infantry battalion commander. Tanks were placed at the discretion of the tank platoon leader and the location approved by the infantry CO. The tactics

used were the same as in previous engagements with the enemy in the beachhead. Tanks would be up with the infantry at night and back behind houses during daylight hours. When rains prevented this movement, the tanks would dig-in and stay in the lines day and night. This was to furnish anti-tank protection for the lines.¹²

With his forces split, General Mackensen changed his tactics and in doing so further favored the defenders. On the east shoulder, where he threw his main attack, the forces were divided into small probing units. At about 0430, 29 February, the attack was launched.

Many of the units in the line for the defense thought it was another raid by the Germans.¹³ However, the beachhead command and staff knew it was a main effort and plans, previously made, were put into effect. The 27th and 91st Armd FA Bns were shifted to thicken the fires of the 3 U.S. Div Artillery. A counterpreparation was fired covering the entire front line. Never the less, the enemy infantry begin infiltrating the defensive positions before dawn. This action spread all along the eastern side of the beachhead. Instead of concentrating his forces, the enemy had launched an attack with small units at six different points.

The attackers made no substantial gains the first day. Small front line units of the Allies were driven out of position in only two or three places. As the day passed, battalion reserves were committed and these positions were either regained or neutralized. Due to the soft muddy ground, enemy tanks were forced to stay on the roads. It was a field day for the defensive armor. Tanks placed in the lines alongside the infantry paid great dividends to the U.S.

Also the artillery was able to concentrate fire on the enemy tank columns and thus break up many of the attacks before they became threats to the line.

The 3 U.S. Div had withstood the initial shock of the German effort, but that was not enough. General O'Daniel started counterattacks against the attackers late in the afternoon of 29 February. The 2d Bn of the 30 Inf Regt launched a counterattack just as the enemy offense started to bog down. This counteroffense progressed rapidly and on the morning of 1 March took its objective and dug in.¹⁴ For this action tanks were assigned to the 30 Inf Regt from the 1 Armd Regt. However, they were not used because the terrain was not suitable for armor and the Allies were not making the mistake the Germans had made of keeping the tanks in the attack and on the roads. It was a battle for the infantry and artillery. Tanks were used in the new defensive position as anti-tank weapons and by the reserve to thicken the fires of the artillery.¹⁵

The head-strong Germans tried the same tactics again on the morning of 1 March. The gains were less than on the previous day. During the night the defenders had laid new mine fields and new tank craters were dug. To aid the defenders further, pouring rain made the roads almost impassable tank traps. This rain also kept the Allied planes on the ground, which was a hindrance to the artillery, and the Allied airforce could not keep its promise of an all-out air attack. In spite of all this the Germans made an attack in the center of the line. The 7 Inf Regt, west of PONTE ROTTO, took this attack and stopped it with little difficulty. Tanks and tank-

destroyers sitting in the line as stationary anti-tank guns again dealt with the German armor. Since the enemy insisted on using tanks to lead attacks under these conditions, the defending tanks abided their time and stopped the oncoming tanks almost at will. Also forward observers called artillery fire down on stranded enemy tanks and again helped stop the attack before it became a serious threat. By nightfall, the attack was completely disorganized and "Jerry" had to withdraw. The day's activity had gained him nothing, and his losses were heavy.¹⁶

The day broke clear on the 2d and the air attack planned for the preceding day was launched. It proved to be greater than the ones flown during the main German drive. A total of 351 heavy bombers unloaded on the enemy areas around CARROCCETO, VELLETRI, and CISTERNA. To the already baffled and bewildered forces of the attackers, this was a final blow. Only one tank-infantry attack was launched, and it was against the prepared defenses of the 15 Inf Regt. The Germans used the same tactics and the defenders did not change theirs. The result was the same. This attack was stopped before it reached the beachhead lines. The enemy infantry, without the aid of tanks, tried to infiltrate the lines in two places without success. The attacks were growing weaker and the Allies seemingly were getting stronger.¹⁷

During this action tanks and infantry always worked together but still good smooth teamwork was lacking. One good example of this took place on the morning of the 2nd. The 1st Section of Co B, 751 Tank Bn was given the mission of supporting an infantry combat patrol.

This patrol was to take a house in the area. Tanks led the attack. When the patrol reached a position about 400 yards from the objective they received heavy anti-tank fire. This was enough for the tanks. With no help from the Infantry, and apparently unable to defend themselves, they withdrew to a position of safety back of the lines.¹⁸ Such action as this was due partly to the German tactics of waiting and surprising the patrols; partly to the flat terrain which did not lend itself to tank action because it was too soft; and partly because tanks were sometimes sent on missions that were infantry type missions only.¹⁹

The final attempt to smash the beachhead was made on the 3d. At dawn tanks and infantry tried once again to overrun the defenses just west of PONTE ROTTO. This effort, more or less concentrated, succeeded in driving back one platoon of the infantry. This success was short lived. The battalion in that area held and in the afternoon launched a counterattack which retook almost all the ground lost and neutralized the rest. In this action the Germans were stopped once again by coordinated use of tank fire and artillery fire. The tanks waiting in camouflaged positions used their direct fire to stop the lead tanks and helped confuse the foot troops. This was the final effort of the Germans to push the beachhead back into the sea.

As if by a prearranged signal, the Allies started a counter-offensive action on the afternoon of the 3d. No time was given the Germans to consolidate any success they had gained during the past month's action.²⁰ In preparing for this counterattack, tanks and tank destroyers were used in the reserve as mobile anti-tank weapons.

Tank destroyers were given the mission for which they were designed. However, most of this type work could not be done in force. Due to the lack of sufficient armor, and the need for it throughout the entire beachhead, armor was still scattered rather thinly. Companies were broken up and platoons were assigned to divisions and regiments to support in these local counterattacks. Co B of the 701 TD Bn was alerted on the afternoon of the 2d to send one platoon to the 3 U.S. Div. During the night of 2-3 March two platoons were sent to this Division to be in mobile reserve.²¹ This was done to add strength to the Division's mobile reserve in preparation for the offensive action which was to start the afternoon of 4 March.

Once these counterattacks started, the entire beachhead made preparations to better itself. Due to the terrain and to lessons learned from the German use of Armor, most of the counterattacks were made with infantry supported by artillery. Tanks played a minor part. The sustained action by the armor in the line rendered it unfit for future extensive action at this time. Many of the armored units in the line were withdrawn completely or replaced with other units which had been in indirect firing positions. The infantry met with great success. However, the objectives were limited. This counter-action was made to regain vital ground lost and to place the defenses in the most advantageous positions. VI Corps had reached a point of almost complete exhaustion and no full scale offense could begin at this time.²²

On March the German High Command recognized the facts about the situation in central Italy, namely, the Fifth Army beachhead

was there to stay. Instructions were issued to the German attackers to hold their present positions; to develop them defensively as quickly as possible; and to make preparations to gradually reduce the Nettuno (ANZIO) Beachhead.²³ The Allies had won the right to stay in central Italy. Since no war is won by defensive action, the Germans were admitting their inability to defeat the beachhead defenders.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- 1
Fifth Army History, v. IV, p. 147.
- 2
1st Lt. F. G. Nordstrom, personal interview.
- 3
After Action Report, 1st Armored Regiment, February 1944,
p. 2.
- 4
Ibid, p. 3.
- 5
Ibid, p. 37.
- 6
Fifth Army History, v IV, p. 148.
- 7
Ibid. p. 151.
- 8
Op. Cit., After Action Report., p. 32.
- 9
Lt. Col. Lyden B. Cole, letter to Commanding Officer, 1st
Armored Regiment, dated 27 March 1944.
- 10
Op. Cit., Army History, p. 152.
- 11
After Action Report, 751st Tank Battalion, February 1944,
p. 4.
- 12
Op. Cit., Lt. Nordstrom.
- 13
Op. Cit., Lt. Nordstrom.
- 14
Op. Cit., Army History, p. 153.
- 15
After Action Report, 1st Armored Regiment, April 1944, p. 15.

- 16
Op. Cit., Army History, p. 154.
- 17
Op. Cit., Army History, p. 155.
- 18
After Action Report, 751st Tank Battalion, March 1944, p. 1.
- 19
Op. Cit., Lt. Nordstrom.
- 20
Op. Cit., Army History, p. 156.
- 21
After Action Report, 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, March
1944, p. 2.
- 22
Op. Cit., Army History, p. 156.
- 23
German Operation at Anzio, WD, Camp Ritchie, Md., p. 78.

CHAPTER V

DEFENSE IN THE STALEMATE (5 March - 22 May)

After the German attacks were stopped, the character of fighting at ANZIO underwent a radical change. The Allies were content to stay in their positions and execute a very active defense for about eleven weeks. Although plans and training for a breakthrough were taking shape in the rear areas, the front lines had to continue to hold and wait for the offensive. It had been a long hard battle to save the beachhead position and now it was a relief to just sit, improve positions, and make small raids and reconnaissance missions.

Immediately upon receipt of the order from the high command to defend, General Mackensen had to content himself with a drastic reduction in troops. Field Marshall Kesselring ordered the Hermann Goering Panzer Division to the north for rest and refitting; the 114th Light Division to the ADRIATIC front; and the 26th and 29th Panzer Grenadiers were withdrawn to an area south of ROME as the Fourteenth Army reserve. Some replacements were sent into the area around ANZIO to contain the Allies, but they were considered inferior troops. They were mostly green, untrained youngsters along with some 2,000 Italians whom the Germans never trusted. By the end of March the only unit in front of the beachhead which was considered a first class combat unit was the 3d Panzer Grenadier Division. Although the Germans had increased their combat strength in the Italian Campaign, their forces on the ANZIO front had been greatly reduced.

The VI Corps, holding the beachhead, also undertook an extensive program of regrouping and refitting its units. Some of the U.S. forces left this area for other battlefields. The Ranger Force departed along with the paratroopers. The 504th Prcht Inf Regt rejoined the 82 U.S. Airborne Div in the United Kingdom and on 1 April the 509th Also departed. However, these losses were more than offset by the arrival of reinforcements. The battle seasoned 34 U.S. Div arrived and relieved the 3 U.S. Div in the line. Also, about 14,000 replacements were received and the Allies were up to full strength. By the end of March the combat strength of VI Corps was equal to that of six full divisions--approximately 90,000 men--which was more than the opposing Germans.¹

Along the front things were not peaceful and quiet. The enemy had not completely stopped fighting. Raiding parties had to be stopped and small patrols turned back but they accomplished no serious damage to the defenders. Infantry still held the lines reinforced by tank units. The 751 Tank Bn was scattered through the east sector. Later, when the 3 U. S. Div was relieved, this Battalion passed to the control of the 34 U.S. Div and remained in the line. The 191 Tank Bn had one company in the line with the 3 U.S. Div and the remainder of the Battalion in the 45 U.S. Div reserve. On 24 March another company of the 191st was placed in the line relieving one company of the 751st. In this change it is interesting to note that two tanks of the 751st were so well camouflaged by rubble and debris from German shelling that the Battalions exchanged tanks so that these two could remain camouflaged.²

The 701st TD Bn was in direct support of the U.S. left flank with the weapons firing field artillery missions.³ The U.S. Armd Div was still in Corps reserve and was given the mission of training tank-infantry teams.⁴

The line units were still having trouble with tank-infantry teams. Tanks in the line were still sent on raiding and reconnaissance missions with or without infantry. On 17 March the platoon leader of the 3d plat, Co A, 751 Tank Bn was sent on a mission of neutralizing enemy positions in two houses in front of the 509th Precht Regt. On his way up to a firing position, in front of the lines, his tank hit a mine and was disabled. On the following morning another tank was sent on the same mission and, after reaching a firing position, fired sixty rounds into the two houses. On the return trip it hit two mines, lost both tracks and was disabled. The result of this mission was the loss of two tanks and the enemy still used both houses as firing positions and observations posts.⁵

Morale in the 751 Tank Bn began to decline and the sick list was steadily growing. However, most of this was due to the action this battalion had gone through during the month of February and the first two weeks of March. The after action report for this Battalion records:

....During the first two weeks of March 1944, the morale and health of this Battalion declined. This was chiefly caused by the accumulative effect of the crews having to stay in the tanks for long periods of time. The tanks were placed in front line defensive positions for over a month and were subjected to continual artillery and small arms fire thus making it impossible for the crews to get out and stay out of the tank any appreciable length of time.

This situation was relieved when the 3 U.S. Div increased the quota of men to go back to the rest area. Also replacements were received to enable rotation of the front-line tank crews.⁶

The use of tanks in the front line was much the same as during the defensive operations against the German drives. Many of the tanks were dug in and never moved during this period. Tanks in regiment and battalion reserve positions were placed so as to supplement the fire of the artillery. Tank destroyers were also placed in indirect firing positions. These weapons were also dug in and camouflaged so that movement was restricted. During the month of March, tank units that could be spared from these front line positions were sent to the rear areas so that training with the infantry could be accomplished. However this action affected only units of the 1 U.S. Armd Div during the early stages of training.⁷

The Allied defenders could not know that the Germans had given up the offensive completely and therefore had to be prepared for any action on the part of the enemy. The 1 U.S. Armd Div prepared ten counterattack plans against possible German penetrations. To further carry out its Reserve mission, this Division supported the Corps defensive effort by keeping its artillery engaged in actions to the front. When critical areas developed, this Division shifted troops and artillery to the weakened or threatened sectors. Also elements of the Division Reconnaissance units maintained patrols in front of the lines and furnished front line liaison groups.⁸

Assault guns, tank destroyers and tanks were used to reinforce the fires of the defensive artillery. These weapons were still having trouble with indirect firing equipment. The 701 TD Bn

improvised a night lighting device for the panoramic sight. It was discovered that this Battalion needed a direct sight with night lighting features as well as night lighting for the panoramic sight. The improvised lighting device was workable but not satisfactory. Manytimes errors as great as 20 mils would occur when large changes were made in range and direction.⁹

About the middle of March a plan was made to counterattack to the north with the mission of making a breakthrough. Although this plan was never put into effect, preparations for this action greatly aided in the defense. Early in the month the 81st Rcn Bn, supporting the Special Service Force, received orders to prepare for an attack to be made against the enemies' southeast flank. The object of this action was to divert the German's attention from the north and cause him to move reinforcements to the southeast. This plan included the establishment of many dummy British command posts and a series of artillery concentrations in this sector. The full success of this action was not known. However the enemy was reported moving armor to the southeast and many enemy patrols were sent on missions of capturing prisoners. Some of these Allied prisoners managed to escape and reported that the Germans were greatly interested in just what was going to happen in this sector. Although the VI Corps cancelled its plans to attack to the north, this preparatory action caused the enemy to disperse his forces and kept him on the alert for a possible attack. This aided greatly in the defense of the beachhead.¹⁰

Many times tactics of the defenders differed with each battalion and each operation. In the 191 Tank Bn, supporting the 45 U.S.

Division and later the 3 U.S. Division in the same sector, much time was spent in harrassing the enemy. Tank units would fire as batteries, aiding the artillery. A plan was devised whereby these tank batteries would fire from one position and move to another under the cover of artillery fire. This type of action proved so successful that these units were used on preplanned missions supporting the infantry on raiding and reconnaissance missions.

During the latter part of April this Battalion took part in a small attack in close cooperation with the infantry. This reinforced unit was to take a hill, reduce the enemy positions, and withdraw to a prearranged position and hold. This was the last of a series of six small raids. The attack and withdrawal were successful because of much planning and training for this action by the tank-infantry team. Major Asbury W. Lee, III, Commanding Officer, 191 Tank Bn, records:

....Thus a successful infantry-tank team attack must depend upon careful planning, close coordination, reconnaissance, proper means of control, the will to fight, and, above all, mutual confidence--the infantry in the tanks and the tanks in the tanks and the tanks in the infantry. 11

The 81st Rcn Bn had an unusual experience in support of the 1st Special Service Force on the southeast flank of the beachhead. On the 15th of April the light tank platoon of Co D, supported by infantry, made a successful raid on the town of CERRETO ALTO. Under the cover of mortar and machine gun fire, which the infantry was able to place on the town, these light tanks crossed over a culvert leading into the village. Through fire and maneuver these tanks were able to enter CERRETO ALTO and flush out about twenty Germans.

After the town was entered all firing stopped within a few minutes the prisoners were sent back to the beachhead. Infantry came in and cleared all the houses and reduced all the enemy positions. Then the attackers withdrew as planned.¹²

During the last week in April it became necessary for the 81st to raid the town of CERRETO ALTO again. A small reinforced unit, similar to the one used on the 15th of April was organized and sent out on the morning of 1 May. This force met with disaster. The enemy had placed AT and AP mines in the road and with a little AT fire succeeded in stopping the attackers before they reached the town. Many reasons were given for the failure. Some are as follows:

....The tank platoon leader placed too much reliance on his radio and too much time trying to repair it...There was not time for complete reconnaissance....It would have been wise to have employed a tank platoon and infantry company that had previously trained or fought together....The attack was a repeat performance of a previous one....Only a stupid enemy could be caught twice....Infantry must cooperate better in aiding tanks with mines....Tanks can explode AP mines for the infantry, but not when the AP field is full of AT mines too....Tanks, in a withdrawal, aren't much help to infantry that insist on bunching and walking in double column on a previously registered road, as happened after CERRETO ALTO....¹³

After 1 May most of the tank units in the line were withdrawn or replaced with fresh units in preparation for the coming breakthrough. The 81st Rcn Bn (-Co A) reverted to 1 U.S. Armd Div control.¹⁴ The 191 Tank Bn was relieved by the 2d Bn, 1 Armd Regt and returned to the rear areas for training.¹⁵ The 701 TD Bn rotated units in the indirect firing positions so that repairs could be made.¹⁶ The 751 Tank Bn was relieved by the 3d Battalion, 13 Armd Regt, and returned to the rear areas for training and reorganization.¹⁷

During this period the Germans made no serious attempts against the beachhead. However, they did carry out many raiding and reconnaissance missions. The defenders were kept on the alert by these enemy actions and by continuous active patrolling and small unit attacks. As a result the defense was never in any danger of being penetrated.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER V

- 1 Fifth Army History, v IV, p. 159.
- 2 After Action Report, 191st Tank Battalion, March 1944, p. 2.
- 3 After Action Report, 701st Tank Battalion, March 1944, p. 3.
- 4 After Action Report, 1st Armored Regiment, March 1944, p. 1.
- 5 After Action Report, 751st Tank Battalion, March 1944, p. 2.
- 6 Ibid, p. 3.
- 7 Anzio Beachhead, American Forces in Action Series, p. 113.
- 8 Op. Cit., 1st Armored Division, March 1944, p. 3.
- 9 Op. Cit., 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, March 1944, p. 9.
- 10 After Action Report, 81st Reconnaissance Battalion, March 1944, p. 1.
- 11 Op. Cit., 191st Tank Battalion, April 1944, p. 14.
- 12 Op. Cit., 81st Reconnaissance Battalion, April 1944, p. 3.
- 13 Ibid, May 1944, p. 1.
- 14 Ibid, p. 8.
- 15 Op. Cit., 191st Tank Battalion, May 1944, p. 1.
- 16 Op. Cit., 701st Tank Destroyer Battalion, May 1944, p. 2.
- 17 Op. Cit., 751st Tank Battalion, May 1944, p. 2.

CHAPTER VI

PREPARATIONS FOR THE BREAKTHROUGH

The reason for the Allied landing at ANZIO was to cut the supply lines of the Germans fighting in SOUTHER ITALY. German opposition prevented the successful cutting of these lines of supply by the initial thrust. For the next several months the Allies defended their position in the beachhead, while preparing for the breakout which was necessary in order to accomplish the original mission. These preparations took the form of retraining, resupplying, reequipping, and reinforcing the troops within the beachhead.

By 22 May there were five German Divisions on the perimeter. (see Map No. 10). The 4th Precht Div garrisoned the costal sector north of MOLETA. The 65th Grenadier Division was astride the ALBANO ROAD. The 3d Panzer Grenadier Division, reinforced by one Infantry Regiment (Lehr), held the sector between the 65th and CARNO CREEK. The Germans expected the Allied main effort to be exerted over terrain held by the 3d Panzer. The 362nd Grenadier Division held the sector in front of CISTERNA. The 715th Light Division, reinforced by 1028th Panzer Grenadier Regiment and the 7th GAF Battalion and the Italians held the Eastern flank. American Intelligence estimated that the German Armor on the perimeter amounted to approximately 220 tanks.¹

This reorganization left the German defenses much weaker than the Allies had expected. What actually happened was that all possible 14th Army reserve units were rushed south to meet the new Allied drive,

launched by the Fifth and Eighth Armies on the 11-12 May. Among these units were the 26th Panzer Division and the 29th Panzer Regiment, plus two Battalions of the 8th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, all veterans of ANZIO. This left no ready available reserves for the already weakened front line units. The Herman Goering Panzer Division, now in the vicinity of LEGHORN, was the closest unit.

Thus on 23 May when the VI Corps launched it's attack they found a much weakened enemy, as compared to what they had encountered three months earlier. The Allies had expected to find stubborn and determined opposition. Particularly, they expected costly counterattacks by the 26th Panzer, from the direction of VELLETRI, to hit their left flank. However, as it later developed, the 26th Panzer had been sent South and was not available to the 14th German Army for counterattack purposes. The Allies also found that the enemy had expected them to attack up the ALBANO ROAD, and had left the CISTERNA area lightly held. Thus plan Buffalo did not meet the type of resistance that it had been prepared to cope with. After the breakthrough actually occurred there was no large scale counterattack by the Germans to attempt the restoration of their line.²

In spite of the one time shortage of Artillery ammunition, the volume of fire laid down by the Allies remained fairly constant through the operation. Tanks were substituted for Artillery with good results. There was always a plentiful supply of tank ammunition available. During this time all tank crews were taught the technique of the Artillery method of fire support.

Following the German attack of 29 February, the Allies also

busied themselves reorganizing and strengthening their positions. They yielded a little ground in some places, and in other areas, small scale attacks were launched to gain objectives which were important to their defenses. In the main, however, the Allies busied themselves with revitalizing, reorganizing, resupplying, and later stockpiling for a resumption of the offensive. It was certainly evident by this time that to break out of the beachhead, tanks were necessary. Tanks couldn't roll over this flat low marsh land, cut by drainage ditches until the arrival of spring and of dry weather.

It was during this reorganization and regrouping of troops by the Allies in March that the British 56th Division, which had been rushed into the beachhead at ANZIO during the most critical time, was replaced by the British 5th Division. The 56th left the beachhead immediately. The British Commando units were also withdrawn from the front. The 34th Guards Brigade, was sent to NAPLES to reorganize, and was replaced by the British 18th Brigade. The British 1st Division remained at ANZIO.

During March, April, and May, all units within the beachhead carried out extensive combined arms training programs. This training was conducted in the rear areas near the beach and was under direct observation of the enemy from hill positions overlooking the beachhead. Smoke screens were used to conceal, or at least obscure the detailed training that was going on.

Three plans were completely rehearsed under code names of Grasshopper, Turtle, and Buffalo. (see Map No. 8). Of these three

plans, plan Buffalo and Grasshopper were the two most likely to be adopted. There had already been abortive attacks which were essentially the same as the proposed plan Turtle.

This last plan was to be used only if the Germans became confused as to Allied intentions and shifted their better troops to the Southern portion of the beachhead, or even further south, to counter the advance of the Fifth and Eighth Armies. Since it was not considered likely that the enemy would react in such a manner, plan Turtle was never really considered a probability. The failure of previous similar local attacks had indicated that the best German troops in the area were astride the ALBANO ROAD. They were placed to prevent the Allies from breaking through and moving on to the prize objective, ROME.

Plan Turtle used the shortest route to ROME but called for slugging it out, over unfavorable terrain, and through the best defenses of the enemy. The axis of advance was up the ALBANO ROAD through THE FACTORY, CAMPOLEONE STATION, and CECCHINA to ALBANO. The execution of this plan would mean: 1. Hitting the enemy at his strongest point. 2. Attacking over most disadvantageous terrain. 3. Breaching his most formidable obstacles. Even if ALBANO were captured only one of the main supply routes to the south would be cut. To move from ALBANO to FINOCCHIO INN (situated at a road crossing on Highway 6) would have been another long, mountainous route, which would require considerable time, effort, and equipment.

Plan Grasshopper called for cutting Highway 7 in the zone held by the German 715th Light Division, the weakest and most thinly manned area of the perimeter, at the point where the highway crossed

the MUSSOLINE CANAL. The objective of this attack was SEZZE. At this point the attack would move in two directions. One force would capture FROSINONE, thus cut Highway 6 which was one of the two main supply routes to the south. The other spearhead would swing south to TERRACINA with the objective of contacting the Fifth Army which was attacking toward TERRACINA from the south. This plan enjoyed the advantages of: 1. Attacking the enemy at his weakest point. 2. Launching the attack over rather flat terrain initially. 3. Cutting one of the main supply routes to the south quickly. There were three disadvantages to the plan. After cutting Highway 7, the road center of SEZZE must be captured to prevent the Germans from detouring the road block to the east. The final stages of this operation would have to be carried out over rather rough terrain. However, the division of force to fight in two directions was probably the greatest weakness of the plan.

Plan Buffalo offered all the advantages of plan Grasshopper plus offering the quickest possible means of cutting both main supply routes to the south. This plan offered the most advantageous terrain available all the way to the objectives.

Essentially, plan Buffalo projected a breakthrough on the CISTERNA front toward CORI at the base of the COLLI LAZIALI mountain range. The attack would continue through the VILLETTRI GAP to VALMONTONE, to cut Highway 6, which was the main supply route of the German 10th Army. The initial assault was to be launched through the front held by the 34 U.S. Div, with the 1 Armd Div advancing on the left, the 3 U.S. Div in the center (objective CISTERNA) and the

reinforced 1st Special Service Force on the right. On the left flank the 45 U.S. Div was to penetrate beyond CARANO as far as the CAMPOLEONE-CISTERNA railroad. The 36 U.S. Div was to be brought in from the southern front to exploit the breakthrough. The British 1st and 5th Divisions, holding the Western end of the beachhead, were to launch local attacks to deceive the enemy as to our main effort and to contain enemy forces that were opposing them. The British Divisions were detached from VI Corps and reverted to Fifth Army control on 22 May, the day before the attack.

Major General Lucian K. Truscott, who had succeeded Major General Lucas as commander of the VI Corps, initiated his vigorous training program to give valuable and necessary training in teamwork and the technique of teams of combined arms. This training also had an unproclaimed mission of keeping the troops busy, mentally as well as physically. This prevented a lapse into complacency and the adoption of the defensive attitude, so dangerous to an offensive operation.

The 1st Bn of the Armd Div was located about five miles northwest of ANZIO in the same position they had occupied from the time of the initial landing. They had prepared elaborate dugouts of a permanent type for protection from the harrassing German Artillery fire. Life here was like garrison life any other place in our army except that the installations were underground, including the "Playhouse", an underground theatre. The assault guns of the Battalion were attached to the 68th FA Bn for the purpose of reinforcing their fires during this period. The remainder of the

Battalion started a training program in May, which stressed crew training followed by training in the art of mutual support of the Tank, Infantry, artillery team. Each of the line companies supported by Assault Guns, Mortar and Reconnaissance Platoons of Battalion Headquarters ran a series of tactical exercises with Battalions of the 6 Armd Inf Regt and the 135 Inf Regt of the 34 U.S. Div. These problems stressed the crossing of streams and ditches. It was most important to include this training in as much as the terrain in this part of ITALY is covered with a series of deep ravines; irrigation and drainage ditches and other tank obstacles. In this training the infantryman was taught to recognize a tank obstacle and immediately make the necessary arrangements to help the tanks cross the area.³

Each arm had a basic training period specific to its branch. For the most part, the infantry, artillery, armor and engineers were returned to the beach area for this training. Units were generally rotated in units of regimental size through this training. Rather early in the training phase, task organizations were formed and assembled for maneuvers together, as a team of combined arms. For example, after the 1 Armd Div had carried out tank exercises it was combined with the 135 Inf Regt of the 34 U.S. Div. This Regiment had been assigned to the 1 Armd Div for the breakthrough. The 6 Armd Inf Regt, which was organic to the 1 Armd Div, completed the Infantry portion of this Armor-Infantry team. These combined arms teams carried out rehearsals of the three breakthrough plans. Elements of these teams learned to work with, and to understand each other in the minutest of detail. The artillery and engineers were worked into the team toward the end of the training phase. The last detail of all

three plans were worked out and rehearsed by combat and supporting units. When time for the attack came, all that remained to be done was to choose one of the three plans. (see Map No. 11)

During this training phase the 1 Armd Engineers were busy developing and perfecting usages of a section of steel bridge. This was to be propelled ahead of a tank, to aid in creek and ditch crossings. (see plate No. 7) The Engineers were also working on a Grapnel, sort of a hook to clear the forward areas of barbed wire, to aid the infantry troops in their advance. The third device developed, and later used by one combat command, was called 'The Snake'. It was used against mine fields and built up areas.

Allied tanks, in addition to carrying out the combined arms training as referred to above, were also used as artillery. They were shuttled from place to place, where fire support was needed by troops holding Allied front lines. During this training period, all tankers were taught artillery methods of fire control and support. They learned to elevate the tank tracks, on logs or on the banks of the many drainage ditches present in the area, to get the desired or required tanges. This was to supplement artillery fire, which at one time was limited by short supply of ammunition. During the latter days of this training phase, artillery units dug new positions and dumped ammunition on them. These newly constructed positions were to be occupied, when the attack jumped off, to furnish close support.

The main combat activities during this period consisted of active patrolling on both sides. During the earlier days of May Allied patrols increased somewhat. More reconnaissance flights were launched to increase allied knowledge of enemy locations and of the terrain.

These were very important activities, in as much as the attack to be launched by the allies would take them into the more mountainous and wooded areas. This was in contrast to the rather flat open terrain over which they were operating.

PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS FOR PLAN BUFFALO

After almost three months of through training and planning, while fighting a defensive war, the time had arrived for a command decision as to which of the three plans, so carefully rehearsed, should be put into effect. The Buffalo plan was adopted on 5 May. From then on, secrecy was stressed, and physical preparations were carried out to effect this plan. Preparations for Buffalo was to be carried out in two phases. Phase one called for all leaders and commanders to be thoroughly familiar with all terrain over which their units to operate. This terrain study was to extend down to the individual soldier within each small unit of squad size. General Harmon stated that every platoon leader and company commander in the 1 Armd Div was afforded the opportunity to go up in an observation plane to get a look at this terrain over which he was to operate. The second phase was to be the actual physical preparations to implement the plan, which was to be executed in three distinct phases. The air reconnaissance was followed by what might prove to be the most thorough map and photo study ever made by an Allied Army. Sand tables were set up, reproducing practically every fold in the ground as well as small pieces of commanding ground. Subordinate leaders were shown just where they were to operate and what their objectives were. Soldiers were not only encouraged, but required to follow the details as presented on these

terrain models. All this detailed planning was carried out, as the commanders realized at a risk of loss of security. It was done in order that every soldier might have an understanding of what was to take place and what was expected of him at a given time. Plan Buffalo was explained to every man of the 1 Armd Div and attached troops, long before the plan was adopted.

Having adopted the plan, a certain number of additional troops were deemed necessary in order to give the beachhead forces the strength required to insure a decisive victory and to insure the collapse of the enemy defenses. Among these troops were CCB which joined the 1 Armd Div in small increments between 26 April and 7 May. This brought the 1 Armd Div up to strength for the first time since long before the landing at ANZIO. CCB was not brought into the beachhead initially because it was felt that CCA would accomplish the armored mission at ANZIO. In addition to this reason CCB was employed at the time in southern ITALY. Also there was not enough water transportation available initially to support the operations of the entire armored Division at ANZIO. Thus CCB was brought in only after it became evident that if the stalemate in the beachhead was to be broken, more armor must be brought into use. As soon as the wet marshy terrain dried out enough to support the weight of the tanks they were brought in.

The 36 U.S Div landed and moved in huge convoys. In four nights time they had closed east of NETTURNO, by morning of 22 May. This brought the beachhead strength up to seven combat Divisions plus large numbers of auxilliary and supporting units. Among these supporting

units were several additional truck companies, for the most part loaded with ammunition. These trucks were not unloaded until the attacking troops used their basic loads and needed resupplying.

As late as 15 May, General Clark had under consideration a plan to shift two Divisions of III Corps (the 85th and 88th) by sea to ANZIO. This was to be done after these divisions had fulfilled their missions in the breakthrough in the south. They were to have combined with VI Corps in the powerful drive out of the beachhead. But the pace of the advance in the south promised to collapse the German coastal defenses and permit a quick juncture between II and VI Corps by land. Shipping was also still a very critical item. This plan was given up, and on 20 May General Clark directed II Corps to continue its attack toward TERRACINA, situated at the Southern end of the coastal plain that extended Northwestward to the ANZIO beachhead.

Since supply and numbers of troops are closely related, it is needless to say that supply was a huge problem. Especially was this true in anticipation of launching an attack on the scale such as Buffalo was destined to be. Too, supply at ANZIO, was an exceptionally difficult problem due to shortage of water shipping that could be spared from other fronts for this operation. In spite of this, it was decided that forty days supply was to be stockpiled before starting the operation. This was in addition to the ten days supply normally retained through the entire operation.

In view of what has been said, it should be remembered that if plan Buffalo was to be effective, proper timing was of utmost importance. This plan was to be executed only after the southern forces,

consisting of the Fifth and Eighth Armies, had advanced to specific locations on the terrain. Intricate timing was necessary in order to launch the ANZIO attack after the Germans had deployed their reserves to meet the Allied southern advances. Thus we see plan Buffalo, originally scheduled to jump off on 21 May postponed for 24 hours, followed by a second such postponement.⁴

FINAL PREPARATION FOR THE BREAKTHROUGH

In making final preparations for the breakthrough, the two extra days caused by the postponement of the attack, were utilized to very good advantage by the VI Corps to complete the many final details. This enabled the Corps staff to effect almost perfect coordination. The attack jumped off exactly according to plan at 0630 on 23 May.

As plan Buffalo was set up it called for an operation carried out in three distinct phases. (see Maps 12, 13 and 14) In the first phase the 34 U.S. Div was to hold its line below CISTERNA and prepare gaps in the minefields through which the 1 Armd Div the 3 U.S. Div, and the 1st Special Service Force would attack.

The second phase called for the 36 U.S. Div to pass through the 3 U.S. Div beyond CISTERNA and continue the attack through CORI. The 1 Armd Div was to swing north to gain the OB line and hold the enemy north of this line. (see Map No 13) For phase two the 3 U.S. Division's objectives were: LA VILIA, CISTERNA, and that portion of the X--Y line just beyond these towns. The 1st Special Service Force was to reach the X--Y line just east of Highway number 7 and hold the enemy south and east of the MUSSOLINI CANAL until CISTERNA was

captured, then advance to MOUNT ARRESTINA. These attacks were to cut Highway 7 north and south of CISTERNA while the 3 U.S. Div took CISTERNA. The 45 U.S. Div was to expand the left flank of the penetration by pushing its line up CARANO CREEK to the railroad. The 45th together with the British 1st and 5th Divisions were to patrol vigorously, to prevent withdrawal of reserves from the western portion of the beachhead.

The third phase would at this time require the 3 U.S. and 36 U.S Divisions to continue the attack on ARTENA and VALMONTONE. (see Map No. 14)

The detailed plans for Buffalo were distributed to commanders and troops concerned. The field order contained information in the form of annexes dealing with support by air, artillery, and tank operations mutually supporting the infantry in the attack.

A great number of deceptive measures were resorted to in order to prevent the enemy from determining Allied intentions or suspecting that an attack was to be launched.

Beginning 13 May, the artillery of the VI Corps embarked on a schedule of firing intended to uncover enemy defensive fires and to mislead the enemy as to the time and place of the attack, if indeed they suspected that the Allies would attack. This schedule of firing called for fifteen minutes out of each 24 hour period to be devoted to firing by all artillery units, supported or reinforced by tank and infantry weapons. During this short period each day, all organizations fired concentrations into German lines, and gun positions. Some of the first of these shots did trick the enemy into laying down his final defensive fires. From this premature use of

these final defensive fires Allied observers were able to gain much valuable information such as gun positions, strong points, and the locations of areas swept by fire, as well as front line and supporting troops. These barrages or shoots were changed each day as to time and place at which delivered. From this, some rather surprising information was obtained. It was found that the enemy was most alarmed if the shoot occurred at night or at dawn. This indicated that the best time for the allies to attack would be either at night or very early in the morning. Thus in making plans the Allies decided on an early morning attack.

On 19 May, General Truscott, the Corps Commander, ordered concentrations fired for the attack. These concentrations were then fired each night until the attack jumped off. On the night of 19-20 May preliminary moves were carried out, mostly by the Corps and Division Artillery units. These units had previously prepared their positions for moving forward to support the attack, which was at this time scheduled to jump on 21 May.

On this same night the 109th Engineer Battalion was busy constructing by passes and gapping the mine fields in front of the 34 U.S. Div, which they were supporting.

On the morning of the 20th the 1st Battalion of the 133 Inf Regt made a successful surprise raid to secure a bridgehead across CISTERNA CREEK, providing a line of departure for the 1st Special Service Force.⁵

As previously pointed out, timing and coordination with the attack of the Fifth and Eighth Armies was of utmost importance. General Clark decided that Buffalo should be delayed because the

rapid advance of Southern Allied Forces had not yet progressed sufficiently forward, and also because the Germans as yet had not shifted their local reserves to meet this advance. He personally gave the order to delay Buffalo for 24 hours. The following day another 24 hours delay was deemed necessary. Thus final plans were set for the attack to jump off at 0630 on 23 May following a 45 minute artillery concentration.

With this additional amount of time available all movement of supplies and troops could be accomplished at night. These movements were well planned and carried out, with considerable difficulty, and extreme care to avoid the loss of security. Secrecy must be maintained and the road net must be efficiently utilized. Perfect coordination was essential. This job was admirably handled by the VI Corps Staff. Three nights were used in getting troops and supplies into position; not one major traffic jam occurred.⁶

Since we are discussing the movement of troops and supplies forward into attack positions, let us examine the commendable job done by Armored units in this action.

Getting tanks forward into attack positions, without the enemy suspecting anything, was the problem at hand. Many days prior to the original time of the attack, this problem had been anticipated and solved. Coinciding with the 15 minute daily shoot, which had been carried on for many days, tanks loaded up with ammunition and thundered noisily up to the front and fired up their ammunition at enemy front lines, installations, or just aimed and fired in the direction of the enemy. The Germans soon decided this was a very

foolish and wasteful American practice, so they developed the habit of crawling into shelter and waiting for the show to stop. For many mornings prior to the attack, all tanks were started and run until their motors were thoroughly warm, then run to and fro about the beachhead, making no attempt to prevent noise. The Germans had learned that the tanks stayed within Allied lines to do this mission. Beginning around 18 May, the wet marshy ground having become dry enough that tanks could leave the roads, many of the tanks that joined in on this run, pulled off into covered and concealed positions near the front. They stopped, having expended no ammunition and very little gas. Many of these tank crews did not leave their tanks for three or four days for fear of being observed. Each time the tanks rumbled up for the "Fire Works Display" a few more would pull off and hide and remain there awaiting the word to attack. As a result of the attack having been postponed, a greater part of the tanks to be committed initially were hidden in forward areas when the attack was finally launched. None of them had been discovered by the enemy even though they held all the high ground with good observation over the entire beachhead held by the Allies.¹

While the engineers completed the gapping of the minefields below CISTERNA, which they had started on the night of 19-20 May, the British Divisions launched an attack on the left flank to divert the attention of the enemy from the CISTERNA area. Elements of the British 3d Brigade launched a small scale attack at 2030 hours on 22 May on the west of the ALBANO ROAD, which met with negligible success.

The British 5th Division Artillery started an extensive preparation at 0215 hours on 23 May on the lower MOLETTA RIVER. Two hours later the British 17th Brigade attacked. This attack was supported by tanks after daylight and made limited gains. However, they were forced to withdraw that night to the positions they had left that morning. These attacks plus continuous vigorous patrolling were part of the deceptive plan. This deception paid dividends by preventing the enemy from shifting his local reserves to the southeast. In addition to tying down the reserves, these attacks proved the soundness of plan Buffalo. These attacks confirmed what the allies already suspected, that the strongest points along the German defenses were astride the ALBANO ROAD. This timely information was of great value in the attack that was to follow later that day.⁷

Up to the time of the jump-off the enemy suspected nothing. According to captured documents, the German Intelligence had decided that ANZIO would never amount to much. They considered it an effort to divert their attention from other fronts. Thus when the attack came it was a complete surprise up to the time Allied troops crossed the line of departure. The German artillery didn't attempt to return our fire until after the jump off.

The advance of the Fifth and Eighth Armies on the southern front made the juncture of the ANZIO force with the southern Armies inevitable several days prior to the actual meeting.

This contact between II Corps and the VI Corps was accomplished at 0731 on 25 May at BORGO CRAPPA by Task Force Brett. Contrary

to the German High Command Intelligence, the ANZIO attack was to become the main attack for the Allied Armies in ITALY, when on 23 May on Army order plan Buffalo was put into motion, and the second phase of the drive on Rome was under way.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

1

Fifth Army History, 1 April to 4 June 1944, a report prepared under direction of Col. John D. Forsythe, Army Historian, by Lt. Col. Chester G. Starr, Jr. with other assistants (Milan Italy: bound and printed by Pizzi and Pizzi), Part V p. 102.

2

Ibid, p. 103

3

After Action Report, 1st Bn., 1st Armored Division, 23 May to 26 May 1944.

4

Anzio Beachhead, October 1947, Historical Division, Dept of the Army p. 117.

5

Op. Cit., Fifth Army History, p 108.

6

Major General E. N. Harman, "Our Better Days at Anzio", The Saturday Evening Post, (25 September 1948)

7

Op. Cit., Fifth Army History, p. 108.

CHAPTER VII

THE BREAKTHROUGH

At 0545 on 23 May, a tremendous Allied artillery barrage was directed against the enemy defenses along the CISTERNA front. Forty-five minutes later U.S. tanks and infantry emerged from the smoke all along the front, from CARANO to the MUSSOLINE CANAL, to launch the assault. At first, the enemy resistance was stiff, and German mine fields took a heavy toll of U.S. tanks and tank destroyers. However, before noon, the 1st Special Service Force had cut Highway No. 7 below CISTERNA, and all units had reached their initial objectives. (see Map No. 15) Bad weather curtailed the planned air support, but before the day was over 722 missions had been flown. CISTERNA and more distant objectives were heavily bombed. By evening, the 1 U.S. Armd Div had crossed the CISTERNA-CAMPOLEONE railroad, and had smashed the enemy main line of resistance.

The enemy estimated that, after the first day's attack, the 362d Inf Div had lost 50 percent of its fighting power, and two regiments of the 715th Inf Div had been badly mauled. The Herman Goering Panzer Division rushed southward from Leghorn. The Germans planned to detach combat units from I Prcht Corps, holding the MOLETTA RIVER-ALBANO ROAD sector, to bolster the shattered forces of LXXVI Panzer Corps on the CISTERNA front. This step was frustrated by the holding attacks of the British 1st and 5th Divisions and the attack on the left flank by the 45 U.S. Div. General Mackensen realized his precarious position, but his request to withdraw

his left flank to the base of the LEPINI MOUNTAINS was refused.

Resuming the attack on 24 May, VI Corps troops drove forward beyond the railroad to cut Highway No. 7 above CISTERNA, and virtually to encircle the city itself. On 25 May the German defenses to the rear of CISTERNA crumbled, and CISTERNA itself fell to the troops of the 3 U.S. Div, who collected nearly a thousand enemy prisoners. By nightfall, the 3 U.S. Div and 1st Special Service Force units were at the base of the LEPINI MOUNTAINS before CORI. Meanwhile, 1 U.S. Armd Div Troops had reached a position halfway between CORI and VELLETRI, thus facing the entrance of the VELLETRI GAP, and its reconnaissance units reached the outskirts of ARTENA, only three miles from the goal of VALMONTONE and Highway No. 6. Although ARTENA was captured on the following day, VI Corps advance then came to a temporary halt.

VI Corps' highly successful offensive out of the ANZIO BEACH-HEAD was never the less costly both in men and material. In the first five days of the attack, combat casualties exceeded 4,000. They were almost twice as heavy as during the five days of the big German attack of 16-20 February. The 1 U.S. Armd Div and other armored units supporting the infantry lost at least eighty-six tanks and tank destroyers in the first days' attack alone. Enemy losses were far heavier. No figures are available for the number of enemy troops that were killed and wounded, but in the first five days of the attack VI Corps captured 4,838 prisoners and destroyed or damaged more than 2,700 motor transports 318.

At this time let us look at a blow by blow description of

the breakthrough by the Armored units that fought it.

1ST ARMORED DIVISION 23 to 27 MAY

On 23 May the attack jumped off at 0630 following an intense aerial and artillery bombardment. The attack CCA on the left was initially very successful, primarily due to the use of six 'snakes'. When detonated, these snakes not only cleared adequate gaps in the minefields, but killed or stunned personnel in forward strong points. As a result the initial waves of infantry riding on medium tanks were able to mop up with almost no opposition. This initial advantage was held throughout the day. The first tank elements of CCA reached the line of the CISTERNA-CAMPOLEONE Railroad at 1300, and the days objective was secured well before dark. Losses in tanks and personnel in CCA were very light.

CCB made slower progress. Enemy resistance was stronger, especially on the right. Snakes were not used. Losses from AT mines in tanks and tank destroyers were high, and it was necessary to attach 1st Plat Co B 701 TD to CCB to replace losses. By dark, the line shown on map no 15 had been secured.

When the situation had stabilized itself for the night, FO No. 11 was issued for continuing the attack 24 May. Necessary regrouping of troops took place during the night.

On 24 May the action started at 0530. The advance of both combat commands was rapid. Until 0900 resistance in CCA sector was light. After that time, resistance consisting of all types of fire, increased. CCB, which was south of the railroad at H hour moved forward rapidly, and at 1100, tank elements of both combat commands

had cut Highway No. 7. By 1300, CCA, with infantry had secured its entire objective. During the afternoon enemy artillery and tank fire on CCA positions was intense. At 1620 81st Recon Bn (-Co A) was ordered to push reconnaissance toward VELLETRI. By dark they had barely progressed beyond the forward line of infantry, where they stopped for the night. CCB continued the attack in their sector against slackening resistance. By dark, 1st Bn 13 Armd Regt had seized the combat command objective.

At 2300, 6 Inf Regt had secured the CCB objective. 168 Inf Regt (-3d Bn) and Co 109 Engr Bn were attached to the Division at 1800. Under Division control, 168 Inf Regt relieved 6 Inf Regt on the objective during the night. 6 Inf Regt organized and prepared to continue the attack.

At 2300, CG 1 U.S. Armd Div issued FO No. 12 for continuing the advance 25 May to secure the Division third objective.

The day's attack was extremely successful. Not only were the Division objectives secured, but CISTERNA was cut off and CORI evacuated. 850 PW's were taken and an unknown amount of material destroyed.

On the 25th at 0630, control of the Division sector passed to CG 34 U.S. Div, and the attack began.

In the CCA sector, enemy resistance and unsuitable tank terrain continued. The enemy counterattacked repeatedly. By dark, after having beaten off an exceedingly heavy counterattack, the line was still 2,000 yards short of the objective.

In the CCB sector, resistance was slight and the terrain

suitable for tank action. The attack, made primarily with tanks, progressed favorably. Having seized their objective and cut the CORI-VELLETRI ROAD at 1300, CCB was ordered to halt and secure the position. The infantry, advancing on foot, had secured the line by dark. At 1800 Co A, 81st Rcn Bn advanced with almost no opposition and cut the GIULIANELLO-VELLETRI ROAD.

Around dark, orders were received from CG VI Corps detaching a task force (Task Force Howze), to the 3 U.S. Div to continue the attack on ARTENA, and shifting the Division attack along the axis of Highway No. 7 to seize VELLETRI. Plans to shift the direction of advance were put into effect at once, and FO No. 13 was issued for resuming the attack on 26 May.

In the CCB sector the day's activity had been very successful and indicative that the enemy was withdrawing as rapidly as possible. General Harmon stated that it was a definite mistake not to continue to press along the CISTERNA-VALMONTONE axis. In the CCA sector, the attack brought out that we were running into a new defensive line in a sector definitely unsuited for armor. Our own casualties in personnel were exceedingly light, although 17 tanks were destroyed or damaged by enemy action. Known casualties inflicted on the enemy were lighter than in the previous 2 day's fighting.

On 26 May the change in direction of the Corps main effort involved considerable shifting of troops. By 1000 all Division elements were in position for the attack which was ordered by CG VI Corps to jump off at 1100. The attack started at 1100. Progress

in both CCA and CCB sectors was impeded as it had been the previous day in the CCA sector. The main enemy resistance was concentrated along Highway No. 7. The Rcn Co 3 Armd Regt Co D 13 Armd Regt moved around the right flank of CCB to cut the VELLETRI-ARTENA ROAD. They met no resistance until within 1500 yards of their objective. There they were stopped entirely by enemy minefields and guns. By dark our lines were still 2000 yards south of VELLETRI.

Plans were put into effect at dark for the 36 U.S. Div to relieve the Division and for it to reassemble behind the lines. By midnight this reassembly had started.

The day's attack partially developed a new enemy defensive line running generally NE--SW through VELLETRI and proved that the sector was poorly chosen for an armored attack. Despite difficulties of terrain and enemy position, the attack had netted 300 PW's, 2--8 guns captured and one Mk V tank destroyed. The Allies lost 8--M-4 and 10--M-5 tanks and only about 30 men.

By noon 27 May, all Division elements (less Task Force Howze detached) were regrouped in assembly areas where badly needed maintenance was made.²

CO A 1ST BN 1ST ARMD REGT TO 27 MAY

At 0630 hours columns of medium tanks began moving toward the line of departure followed by what seemed to be countless numbers of infantrymen moving over the ground like swarms of ants. They in turn were followed by light tanks. The first and second platoons were in assault, and the third platoon in reserve.

By the time the line of departure had been reached, the entire

area behind was nothing but an immense cloud of powder smoke from the hundreds of artillery pieces. To the front the visibility was less than 600 yards due to the smoke and dust raised by thousands and thousands of bursting artillery and mortar shells, and the bombs rained down by our air forces. One cannot help but feel that Jerry must have shuddered in his boots and thought that all of Hades had been turned loose upon him.

Prior to the attack the biggest initial worry was German mine fields. However, the Allied "secret weapon", the snake, did a magnificent job of blowing a path 200 yards long and 15 yards wide through them. The first and second platoons closely supported the infantry during the entire day, going immediately to their assistance upon call, to wipe out MG and mortar positions dangerous to the Infantry. On at least two occasions, the Jerries made suicidal attempts to knock out our tanks by running right up to them and attempting to throw grenades in the open turrets. Tanks commanded by Sgt. Alph J. Steel, Louisville, Kentucky and S/Sgt. Micheal J. Swartz, Scranton, Pa., both of the first platoon, were targets for the fanatical Nazis, but easily dispatched them by machine gun fire. On another occasion S/Sgt Thomas C. Simpson, Louisville, Ky., had to run right up to an enemy dugout and throw in an incendiary grenade in order to dislodge the occupants.

At about 1000 hours, Lt. Rothwell's tank ran into a hitherto unknown enemy minefield, hitting two tellar mines and blowing off both tracks. He immediately jumped out of it and got into another one in the platoon and continued on his mission. The T-2 was

immediately sent up to retrieve the disabled tank, but in the process of pulling it out of the minefield it struck four more Teller mines completely destroying and burning it. No member of the crew was injured. The first objective of the attack was the railroad line running generally parallel with Highway No. 7 from NW to SE, and the high ground about a thousand yards beyond it. This was secured about 1900 hours, and the consolidation of the position was begun immediately. The third platoon was ordered to tow up 57-mm anti-tank guns belonging to the infantry, and the order was carried out immediately. After that the 3d platoon rejoined the company and went into a tactical bivouac for the night.

On the second day, 24 May, orders were received to push off again, this time for the purpose of cutting Highway No. 7 about two miles northwest of CISTERNA DI LITTORIA. The 1st Platoon was ordered in reserve and the 2d and 3d in assault. When the action started the infantry began calling for help to eliminate enemy machine gun nests. S/Sgt Skags and Sgt. Trinidad V. Hernandez of the 3d Platoon were right at the job and took care of them at once. No other opposition was encountered for about five hundred yards. Then suddenly an enemy self-propelled 88 or 75-mm gun, cleverly camouflaged in the many orchards and vineyards in the rolling country, opened up and knocked out one of the leading medium tanks. The disposition of this SP gun was clearly a job for the infantry. They realized this also and they went ahead quickly, quietly, and efficiently. They outflanked it in a way all the authors of the pertinent FM's would be proud of, and knocked it out with bazookas and grenades.

After that, however, it was difficult to get the medium tanks and tank destroyers to push out ahead. Therefore the 2d and 3d Plat's took it upon themselves to do so. Realizing that there had been only the one 88 left there as a one gun delaying force, they bypassed the big boys. Later, after knocking out a few MG nests and snipers they were soon looking down on the famous Highway No. 7. All this had been accomplished by 1030 hours, and evidently much sooner than even our own artillery expected. Because as the 3d Plat looked down on Highway No. 7 it was still being pestered with dozens of rounds. Then the unexpected happened. For some unaccountable reason they cut their range four hundred yards and started laying them right in the third platoon's lap. Frantic calls over the radio failed to stop them, and to top everything off, the medium tanks started blasting the house a hundred yards to their rear. About that time, just as suddenly as before, the artillery shifted back to the road and then stopped. The mediums and the TBs finally poked their heads over the crest of the hill, and seeing that their way was clear, rushed down to cross Highway No. 7.

It took some time to get things organized again, consolidate the ground, and move up more tanks, AT guns and infantry. Thus it was 1600 hours before they pushed off again. Crossing Highway No. 7, they pushed northwest, parallel to the road. There was very little opposition encountered and the attack progressed rapidly. However, things were halted about 1900 hours and orders were received to draw back to the vicinity of the railroad to launch an attack in another direction the following morning.

On the morning of 25 May the assault was continued. This time, working in a northwesterly direction up VIA APPIA, plans were to attack with a light tank battalion, supported by tank destroyers and infantry. Co B of the 1 Armd Regt in the lead, followed by the 1st and 3d Plat's of Co A. Almost at the start the Jerries threw in terrific concentrations of air bursts which fortunately were short. The attack had not gone more than two thousand yards when Co B's lead tank was knocked out by a German Mk V 'Panther' tank. Co A was ordered to bypass Co B and try to outflank the German tanks, estimated by friendly infantry to be three.

However, due to the intense enemy artillery falling in that area, it was impossible to go around the left flank. The 3d Plat leader pulled his tank up behind a house and attempted to fire through a hole in the corner. However, the muzzle blast raised so much dust that it gave away his position and he had to withdraw. He then attempted to direct artillery fire on the position but due to faulty communications he was unable to do so. The situation became stalemated until an artillery forward observer could be brought up. Due to a misunderstanding in fire orders the friendly artillery fell on the 3d Plat instead of on the Germans. Again a stalemate was in effect until things could again be reorganized. An organized artillery plan was set up with Co B in the assault and Co A with direct communication to the artillery supporting unit. Co B moved into the attack with every gun blazing closely followed by the infantry and Co A. Friendly artillery fire was falling 300 yards in front of the lead tanks. Co's A and B had run into the German artillery line.

In spite of our own intense artillery barrage they laid direct fire upon us including 120's and 88's. When our own artillery was called upon to lift their fire 300 yards they did so for five minutes then started dropping them all over the place. During this action T/4 Chester Lunieski of Minneapolis, Minnesota had a German bazooka gunner run from a dugout and fire point blank at his tank. For some reason he missed. Then T/4 Lunieski grabbed a grenade, dismounted from his tank, ran to the dugout, and hurled it in thus eliminating the resistance in that area. Due to the friendly artillery and the direct fire from the enemy Co B was forced to withdraw and the 1st and 3d Plat's of Co A were ordered to cover the withdrawal. When Co B had completely withdrawn the 1st Plat and three tanks from the 3d Plat then attempted to knock out 2 MG nests that were preventing the evacuation of a badly wounded infantry officer and enlisted man. At this time the engines, 'little joe', battery, and radio of the 3d Plat leader's tank went dead, and he ordered it abandoned and burned. The last remaining tank covered them while they assisted in the evacuation of the two wounded infantrymen.

This tank also withdrew at that time. The entire company then went into a tactical bivouac at approximately the line of departure.

During this action the Battalion Executive Officer was wounded and Capt. Gerald M. Daily was appointed Executive, Lst. Wayne B. Yale took command of Co A and 2d Lt. Edward J. Bock, Denver, Colorado took command of the 2d Plat.

CCA's sector of the attack was between VIA APPIA and

Highway No. 7 in the direction of VELLETRI. The usual method of attack was to be used; medium tanks out in front followed by light tanks and infantry. Co A's right boundary was Highway No. 7. The attack progressed rapidly with little opposition for about two thousand yards. At this point the lights again bypassed the mediums and proceeded up the route of advance. S/Sgt. Micheal Swartz had to get on Highway No. 7 to bypass a deep waddi. Just as he had crossed the bridge over the waddi he was fired upon by an AT gun approximately 500 yds. to his direct front. He told his driver to back up. Somehow his driver backed off a twelve foot bank, turned a complete flip, and landed on his tracks still backing up. During this time the rest of the 1st Plat pulled back from the road and tried to get around the waddi to the left. The 2d Plat succeeded in making a crossing in that sector and was followed across by the 1st Plat. The 3d Plat pulled up to a ridge immediately overlooking the bridge. Some medium tanks then crossed in the wake of the 1st and 2d Plats and after an artillery observer had brought fire on the AT gun all units again began to advance. 1st and 2d Plats advanced across country and the 3d Plat pulled out on the road, crossed the bridge and joined the other two platoons. Working immediately behind the infantry thru some vineyards the 1st and 2d Plats helped to clean out local snipers and MG nests, and established a line for the night about 2 miles south of VELLETRI. At 12 o'clock that night Co A received word that it had been relieved and returned to a bivouac area in the vicinity of CAMPO MORTO for necessary maintenance and rest.³

CO B 1ST BN 1ST ARMD REGT TO 27 MAY

On Tuesday, 23 May the company moved at 9835 hours from the pine woods to an assembly area just west of COMPOMORTO. They were held in Division reserve and maintained contact with Headquarters, 13 Armd Regt, from which unit they received their orders. The company was not committed and remained at this location for the entire day. This area under enemy observation.

On Wednesday, 24 May the company remained in Division reserve in the same area as on the preceeding day. At 1600 hours they moved to a new assembly area, two miles northwest of CAMPO MORTO and stayed there the rest of the day.

Co B was released from Division reserve on Thursday, 25 May and placed under control of the 1st Bn 1 Armd Regt as of 0030 hours. They moved at 0100 hours to an assembly area one mile and half due west of FOUNTANIL arriving there at 0500 hours. Ammunition was carried on tanks for the supporting infantry and was dropped in this area. The company jumped off in the attack due north at 0800 hours with one company 2d Bn, 6 Inf Regt, supporting. Upon reaching the first Phase Line heavy enemy mortar and artillery fire was received. One artillery shell scored a direct hit on the turrett of Lt. Branyon's tank, knocking it out of action.

At 1100 hours the reserve platoon was committed. Four tanks which had been bogged down were recovered and placed back in action shortly after 1200 hours. The company held their ground and re-organized into two platoons because of the losses sustained. The attack was continued from 1530 hours until darkness and anti-tank

guns and snipers were put out of action by the company. Captain Frank A. Rudin's tank destroyed a German Mark V Tank. Three of the company's tanks were put out of action when they ran unsuspectingly into a deep ditch. Total losses for the day were seven tanks.

S/Sgt Rufus L. Patterson, and T/4 Fisher F. Curry, were killed at 1700 hours when an enemy 88-mm shell passed through the turret of S/Sgt Patterson's tank. The company's maintenance worked the entire night recovering the seven light tanks and the T-2 belonging to the battalion which had mired during the days action. The company bivouacked at the assembly area used in the morning.

On Friday, 26 May the company with a total of eight tanks in operation was placed in CCA reserve and moved at 0830 hours to an assembly area one third of a mile west of FOUTANILE, which is on Highway No. 7. It remained there the rest of the day.⁴

CO C 1ST BN 1ST ARMD REGT TO 27 MAY

Organization moved in administrative march from bivouac area 6 miles north of ANZIO, into tactical assembly area in the vicinity of CAMPO MORITO at 0100 hours. Operation "Buffalo" commenced at 0630 hours. The company moved to forward assembly area at 'H' minus 30 to support the 1st Bn, 135 Inf Regt which in turn was preceded by Co H, 1 Armd Regt. This company deployed with the 3d Plat under Lt. Schoberth, supporting Co A, 135 Inf Regt, with the left flank on FOSSO DEL BOVE. The 2d Plat, under Lt. Bonawitz, supported Co B, 135 Inf Regt with the right flank on BOVE. The 1st Plat, under Lt. Tierney, supported Co C, 135 Inf Regt echeloned to the left with the left flank on FOSSO DEL CARANA. Friendly

forces on the flanks were the 2d Bn, 135 Inf Regt with attached elements on the right, and elements of the 45 U.S. Div on the left. Artillery preparation fires, including dive bombing attack and detonation of snakes were from H minus 45 to H hour.

At H hour, the attack moved forward with visibility approximately 150 yards due to dust and smoke of the artillery preparation. A light rain began to fall clearing the air considerably by the time the first phase line was reached. Enemy artillery fire was very light up to this time. In attacking known enemy strong point on the first phase line, the medium tank platoon supporting Co B, 135 Inf Regt lost four tanks in a friendly mine field. The fifth medium tank evacuated the wounded and dismounted men. Lt Bonawitz and Sgt. Walton, section leader, seeing that the medium tanks had missed the mine field gaps, quickly moved through the prepared gaps to within 40 yards of the enemy's strong point and placed 37-mm and MG fire thereon. The infantry quickly took advantage of the situation and with grenades and bayonets cleared the position in a very short time taking from 15 to 20 prisoners. Meanwhile, Lt Austin, Co D, 16th Engr Bn, with the aid of his Sgt., gapped an enemy mine field which lay immediately in rear of the above mentioned strong point. The gapping of the minefield by Lt. Austin was a magnificent job performed under shell fire which had grown quite heavy by this time that would be lost if the 1st Plat should have to wait for the field to be gapped in its sector, Lt Tierney was ordered to move through the prepared gap, seing left and wait for his Infantry company to join him. Thus the light tanks preceeded the medium

tanks toward the first objective, with plans to allow the mediums to pass through if heavy resistance was met.

The attack then proceeded with all elements abreast, meeting only light resistance except for increasing artillery fire. At a point 400 yards short of the railroad the medium tanks passed through the lights since heavy resistance was expected along the railroad and heavier firepower would be needed. A section of mediums then crossed the railroad track without incident and were immediately followed by the 1st and 2d Plats. This force attacked a large orchard-vineyard 400 yards north of the railroad at the request of the Infantry Command. Aided by the fire from the two medium tanks, the target area, including a number of buildings, was thoroughly covered by 75-mm, 37-mm, and 30 cal fire. At the conclusion of this firing thirty-nine prisoners walked out to the tanks under cover of a white flag. The dose was ordered to be administered a second and third time, resulting, respectively, in fourteen and eight prisoners. The infantry then moved in to mop up. Altogether, 150 prisoners were taken from this position. By this time the first position was taken and consolidation operations were begun. Sniper and artillery fire continued to be heavy in the area. Sgt. Walton was killed by a sniper's bullet and Lt. Tierney received a severe wound in his hand. Lt Markeim took command of the 1st Plat.

The 3d Plat under Lt. Schoberth, had in the meantime fared much the same as the 1st and 2d Plats, except that they had received considerable anti-tank fire. Sgt. Dahlen's tank was

completely destroyed when it struck an enemy mine, or mines. Pvt. Hmelo was killed and the remainderd. S/Sgt. Buttars was also severely wounded by artillery fire. Lt. Henley, who volunteered to take the company maintenance tank to replace the lost tank, engaged in a fire fight with a German Mark VI Tank. Lt. Henleu's tank was hit by the Mark VI and burned. The crew escaped without injury.

On 24 May, the 3d Plat was attached to the 2d Bn, 135 Inf Regt in a defensive position. At dawn of this day an attack was launched to take the second objective. They succeeded in taking this objective in an hour and a half, meeting small arms, artillery, and bazooka fire. Taking the objective was comparatively easy. Holding it was another matter. Time after time throughout the day the enemy counter-attacked heavily, supporting his Infantry with heavy tanks and self-propelled guns. Lt. Col. Phalan, Bn commander, placed all tanks in the area under one control, and in defensive position on line with the Infantry. The density of the shrubbery made control very difficult, and radio channels were so jammed it was virtually impossible to secure artillery support. Six tanks were without gasoline, since they had been unable to withdraw and refuel the night before. Although it seemed that little progress was made and results were of a rather intangible nature. It was at this point that well defined and concrete plans seemed to sort of peter out.

During the attack on 25 May, this company was not committed until mid-afternoon. By this time, due to the dense woods in the zone, it was extremely difficult to locate, or identify troops,

or vehicles in the area. The platoons did a great deal of firing with undetermined results. The 3d Plat succeeded in hitting a clear area and was able to engage enemy infantry with good results, taking a number of prisoners. At darkness the company remained in position to support the 2d Bn, 135 Inf Regt, who passed through and relieved elements of the 6 Armd Inf Regt.

On 26 May, attached to 3d Bn, 135 Inf Regt, along with Co I, 1 Armd Regt an attack was made south of VELLETRI, the axis of advance center of triangle formed at junction of Highway No. 7 and VIA APPIA. After a confused beginning, resistance was light, and progress rapid, right up to the final objective. The force was halted for three hours in order that flank forces might catch up. Capt. Ruppert's medium tanks had left little work to be done by either the light tanks or the Infantry. During the night all of the tank forces were withdrawn to the old assembly area near CAMPO MORTO for two days rest and maintenance.⁵

2ND BN OF 1ST ARMD REGT 23 - 27 MAY

D day was 23 May, H hour 0630. The Bn less Co D moved to forward assembly position in the vicinity of CAMPO MORTO with the mission of protecting the left flank of CCA and to move into positions occupied by the 3d Bn, 1 Armd Regt as they displaced forward. Co E and F moved up south of the railroad, and had one platoon of Co B, 701st TD Bn attached. Co E was also assigned forward observers from the 27th FA. Co E lost a tank in a friendly minefield. A tank of Co D was disabled by shell fire.

Co D, attached to 3rd Bn, 135 Inf Regt to support the attack on the second objective. Co E moved up on the right of Co D. Later, Co D was ordered to move east and get astride Highway No. 7 going NW out of CISTERNA to prevent the escape of the garrison there. This was accomplished and the company contributed in taking some 200 PWs. Ron Co, 1 Armd Regt was attached to the battalion and were employed as flank protection on the right flank east of Highway No. 7.

On 26 May the battalion was assigned to CCB and with the 2d Bn, 6 Armd Inf Regt attacked NW with Highway No. 7 as the left boundary. The tank and infantry plan consisted of two companies attacking abreast and one in reserve. H hour was 1100 hours. The attack went well as planned. The companies halted 1000 yards short of the objective due to an error in map reading. Co D accounted for 200 of the enemy who were killed owing to their fanatical resistance. Co E was never committed but was used to mop up several pockets of resistance. At dark they relieved Co D. That night the division less this battalion was relieved by elements of the 36 U.S Div and this ⁶ battalion was relieved at dawn.

3RD BN OF 1ST ARMD REGT 23 - 27 May

On 23 May the Battalion received orders and made final preparations for the all-out attack to be launched at 23 0630 May. The battalion was to operate as part of GCA and attached to the 135 Inf Regt, 34 U.S. Div as a part of the initial assault. The attack jumped off precisely as planned with considerable success. The enemy in forward positions were completely surprised and

overwhelmed. Attacking Co's H and I moved forward to the first day's objective rapidly, crossing the CISTERNA-ROME railroad between 1200 and 1400. Objectives were reached and completely consolidated and at the close of the period received orders to support the attack of the 3d Bn, 135 Inf Regt to secure high ground. All action was immensely successful, causing great losses to the enemy and very slight losses to the Battalion.

On 24 May the companies remained in approximately the same positions as at the close of the previous period assisting infantry in the expansion, consolidation, and defense of positions. At approximately 1530 Co G was ordered to move to the left flank of CCA to assume defensive positions.

On 25 May orders were received during the night to move the Battalion (-Co G) with the 2d Bn, 6 Armd Inf Regt Co D, 16th Engineers was attached in the assembly area as CCA reserve. This move was completed at 0615. Co G was in Division Reserve.

At approximately 1200 the 2d Bn, 6 Armd Inf Regt and Co H were ordered to return to the latter's old positions and assist in the defense against strong counterattacks then in progress.

Co I was attached to the 2d Bn, 135 Inf Regt to support its attack. This attack was coordinated with an attack by the 1st Bn, 1 Armd Regt and the entire operation was commanded by Lt. Col. Cole. The attack progressed slowly and succeeded in halting a strong German counterattack which had begun in that sector. Fighting continued through out this period.

On 26 May Co I withdrew to night defensive positions at

approximately 2000 to await orders. Co G returned to Battalion control at approximately 0730. The Battalion (-Co H) received orders to support the 3d Bn, 135 Inf Regt in an attack west of Highway No. 7. This attack jumped off at 1100, Co I moving forward from positions of the previous night and Co G moving on its right. The attack progressed slowly. Co G, meeting still resistance at the bridge. This resistance was finally overcome by crossing the stream about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles southwest of the bridge and attacking high ground commanding the bridge area from the flank and rear.⁷

With the action of these combined units, the beachhead was no longer a beachhead, than Allies had broken through and were now on that famous march to ROME.

On the eve of the landing on 22 January 43, the Allied High Command had hoped that the surprise assault behind the Germans, combined with a strong offensive in the south, would collapse the enemys resistance along the Gustove Line and lead to a rapid march on ROME.

What had been envisioned as a brief operation became an isolated and bitter struggle to preserve a strategic fact hold far behind the main enemy line. Reinforced, Allied Vi Corps was able to hold the beachhead, and then to build up its forces to fulfill its role in the spectacular spring offensive. Operation SHINGLE was crowned with final success; the grim defense of the US and British troops who held the ANZIO beachhead led to a victory that forecast the collapse of the German was machine. Armor played an important part in this victory.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

- 1
Anzio Beachhead on the Breakthrough, 23 to 26 May 1944
Historical Division, Dept of the Army
- 2
After Action Report 23 - 26 May 1944, 1st Armored Division
- 3
After Action Report 23 - 26 May 1944, "A" Co, 1st Battalion,
1st AR, 1st AD
- 4
After Action Report 23 - 26 May 1944, "B" Co, 1st Battalion,
1st AR, 1st AD.
- 5
After Action Report 23 - 26 May 1944, "C" Co, 1st Battalion,
1st AR, 1st AD
- 6
After Action Report 23 - 26 May 1944, 2d Battalion, 1st AD
- 7
After Action Report 23 - 26 May 1944, 3d Battalion, 1st AR,
1st AD

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

The original plans of bringing Armor into the ANZIO Beachhead were two fold. The first was to utilize it to strengthen the assault force against the German counterattack to the south and second to thrust forward to cut the enemy lines of communication if the opportunity should present itself.

With the rolling ashore of the 751st Tank Bn on 22 January American troops and armor were to face new problems on their multiple horizons. That of the soldier and armor in a sustained defense. A defense that was to turn every foot of ground at ANZIO into another Stalingrad.

The unbelievable rapidity in the build up of the German troops in the ANZIO area was almost phenomenal. This had not been anticipated by the Allies.

Prior fighting in Italy had demonstrated to the Fifth Army that close cooperation and direct support by tanks and infantry would be essential in the ANZIO operation. The training in close teamwork of Armor with the 3d Infantry Div paid off when on 23 January the 751 Tank Bn in support of the 15th Infantry drew its first blood. This attack toward CISTERNA and the following attack by the 1st Armd Div up the ALBANO ROAD toward CAMPOLEONE gave the Allies the breathing space required in the beachhead. In these two attacks it was realized that due to the condition of the terrain the tank was drawn

to the roads as if by a magnet and that any attempt at cross country operation was suicidal and useless.

With the tremendous build up of the German forces it was obvious to the Allies that a major attack was imminent. Accordingly on 3 February orders were issued to defend. With the thought of the offensive in their minds the Allies prepared for their new role. The American Armor assumed the role of a mobile striking reserve and of anti-tank support ready to back up any unit on the line in trouble or need. From the first attack to the last major German offensive of 19 February never once did the Armor fail to perform its mission most notably and heroically.

During the period of the German all out drive of 16 - 20 February Armor was parcelled out by companies, platoons, and in some instances, by individual tanks to satisfy the perpetual cries of the infantry for tank support on the line.

Attempts to use armor in its intended role of mobility and mass were again frustrated on 17 February. This attack through the FACTORY by the 1st Armd Div again brought to mind the futility of fighting terrain and the necessity for preplanning and reconnaissance in an attack.

After the final failure of the enemy to break through the beachhead line on 19 February he pulled his main forces back for reorganization and resupply. During this time the role of Armor remained basically the same, however more emphasis had developed in the use of tanks as mutually supporting anti-tank weapons and as a close support weapon to accompany the Infantry on raids. The tanks

also developed and emergency role of self-propelled artillery and were so utilized on many occasions with Field Artillery Battalions.

On 29 February, leading with his heavy armor the enemy launched a new attack. However the use of the tanks in the front lines as anti-tank weapons paid tremendous dividends. After repeated attempts to penetrate the Allied lines the enemy withdrew and after a small scale counterattack by the Allies a stalemate resulted until the Allied breakthrough in May. During this period aggressive patrolling supported by tanks was conducted, this and the anti-tank role were typical. Tank units in reserve were utilized to supplement the fires of the field artillery.

1 May marked the first sign of armor leaving the front lines in preparation for the breakthrough of 23 May. This preparation included the training in three plans of attack for the breakthrough. All of these plans were carefully rehearsed and developed by the 1st Armd Div. Infinite pains were taken in these plans for the attack to gain surprise and to deceive the enemy as to the time, place, and nature of the attack.

On 23 May the attack was launched and complete surprise was gained. The 1st Armd Div attacked from the positions it was occupying in the line toward the CISTERNA-CAMPOLEONE Railroad. By evening they had smashed the enemy main line of resistance. On 26 May the 1st Armd Div was halted as it stood poised for the dash up the VELLETRI GAP. Orders were changed and the 1st Armd Div was withdrawn. Preparations for the next mission of supporting the 45th Div in their attack up the ALBANO ROAD were begun. After bitter

fighting the road to ROME was open and another page of history had
been written.

LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The realization by the allies after the landing at ANZIO that no mobile offensive action can be accomplished without a strong tactical base resulted in the consolidation of gains and preparation for defense. The further realization that armor's greatest defense is its offensive action. Here at ANZIO it was controlled and influenced by that treat master of both men and machines, terrain. Tank operations are hampered and restricted by this obstacle. Futile attempts at ANZIO by both the enemy and the allies to disprove this fact repeatedly resulted in an ever increasing number of tanks lost due to the terrain.

During the defensive phase at ANZIO many lessons were learned. Primary among these was the fact that in this sustained defense the tank played a dual role. The most formidable anti-tank weapon is the tank itself. Therefore some tanks must be the holders on the line with the infantry as anti-tank defense and direct support assault weapons. The other role, for the bulk of the tank force, is to be the 'hitters'. The powerful concentrated rolling blow to overwhelm and destroy the enemy--this was the 1st Armd Div. However, the necessity in the defense at ANZIO of developing 'holders' out of armor resulted in many minor errors. Armored units accustomed to command and support by their parent units suddenly found themselves under infantry commanders and reduced to a supporting role at ANZIO. Individuals unfamiliar with the potentialities and limitations of tanks ordered missions that were unsuited to armor. There

There close teamwork and cooperation were an absolute necessity individual tanks found themselves supporting strange units. Communications were difficult due to this lack of proper training and coordination between the infantry and tanks. The defense and static phase at ANZIO conclusively proved that in an emergency, when properly trained and equipped, the tank could assume the role of indirect artillery batteries. When the tank and tankers were trained and organized and made organic to the Infantry Division they became a very integral part of that division and the backbone of its Anti-tank defense.

In the planning phase and final breakthrough by the Allies at ANZIO certain violations of armored tactics were conspicuously obvious. Probably the most flagrant of these was the use of the 1st Armd Div on an equal bases as in infantry division. Its occupancy on the line, shoulder to shoulder, with infantry divisions, its restriction by boundaries and by limited objectives in the attack destroyed the power and mobility of armor. While the 1st Armd Div fought in the breakthrough to make its own penetration an infantry division awaited in reserve to exploit any success in the breakthrough.

After reaching its limited objective on the 1st day of the attack the potential of the 1st Armd Div as an exploiting force was lost when they were ordered to withdraw from the area and prepare for their next mission, another penetration.

The Allies' judicious defense at ANZIO was their foundation for victory. The present TO & E of the infantry division is a

living testimonial that the tank at ANZIO proved their power and importance in the defense.

At ANZIO errors in concepts and judgments existed but the will of God, the grave errors of the enemy and the courage of our soldiers prevailed, thus bringing the allies one step further towards their final goal of victory.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II

TROOP LIST ALLIED VI CORPS

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Antiaircraft Artillery:

35th AAA Brigade, Hq & Hq Btry
68th Coast Arty Regt (AA)-(3d Bn)
106th AAA Automatic Wpns Bn (Sp)
216th AAA Gun Bn
433d, 451st, and 536th AAA Automatic Wpns Bn.
102th AA Balloon Btry (Very Low Altitude) - (Detachment)
690th and 692d Mg Btrys (Airborne)
6673d Gun Operations Room Pl (Provisional)

Armored Force:

1st Armd Div (-CCB) which joined between 26 April to 7 May
Hq & Hq Co
Service Co
1st Armd Div Trains, Hq & Hq Co
Maintenance Bn (-Co B) which joined between 26 April to 7 May
Supply Bn (-Co B) which joined between 26 April to 7 May
47th Armd Medical Bn (-Detachment, Bn Hq and Co B) which joined
between 26 April and 7 May
81 Armd Recon Bn
16th Armd Eng Bn (-Cos A & B and 1 Pl Co E) Joined with CCB
1st Armd Div Arty, Hqs 27th & 91st Armd Arty Bns (105-MM Hows)
6th Armd Inf Regt
1st Armd Regt
141st Armd Sig Co (-Detachment)
Hqs & Hqs Detachment, CCA

Attached to 1st Armored Division:

191st Tk Bn
434th AAA Automatic Wpns Bn (-Detachment, Bn Hqs and 2 Btrys)
2d Pl, 47th Qm Co (Graves Registration)
751st Tk Bn

Chemical:

83d & 84th Chem Bns (Motorized)
24th Chem Co (Decontamination)

Engineers:

36th & 39th Eng Combat Regts
661st Eng Topographic Co
Co B, 405th Eng Water Supply Bn

Field Artillery:

18th Field Arty Brigade, Hqs & Hqs Btry
35th Field Arty Gp, Hqs & Hqs Btry
15th Field Arty Observation Bn
1st Bn, 36th Field Arty Regt (155-MM Gun)
69th Armd Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
1st Bn, 77th Field Arty Regt (155-MM How)
141st Precht Field Arty Bn (-Btrys C & C) (75-MM Pack)
976 & 977th Field Arty Bn (155-MM Gun)

Infantry:

3d Division

Hqs & Hqs Co
3d Div Band
3d Cav Recon Troop (Mechanized)
10th Eng Bn (-Cos A, B, & C)
3d Div Arty, Hqs & Hqs Btry
9th Field Arty Bn (155-MM How)
3d Medical Bn (-Cos A, B, & C)
703d Ord Light Maint Co
3d Qm Co
3d Sig Co (-Detachments)
MP Platoon

7th Regtl Combat Team:

7th Regt
10th Field Arty Bn (104-MM How)
Co A, 10th Eng Bn
Co A, 3d Med Bn
Detachment, 3d Sig Co

15th Regtl Combat Team:

15th Regt
39th Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
Co B, 10th Eng Bn
Co B, 3d Med Bn
Detachment, 3d Sig Co

30th Regtl Combat Team:

30th Regt
41th Field Arty Bn (105 How)
Co C, 10th Eng Bn
Co C, 3d Med Bn
Detachment, 3d Sig Co

Attachment to 3d Division:

441st AAA Automatic Wpns Bn (S P)
601st Tk Destroyer Bn
2d Pl, 48th Qm Co (Graves Registration)

45th Infantry Division:

Hqs & Hqs Co
45th Div Band
45th Cav Recon Troop (Mechanized)
120th Eng Bn (-Cos A, B, & C)
45th Div Arty, Hqtrs & Hqtrs Btry
189th Field Arty Bn (-155-MM How)
120th Med Bn (-Cos A, B, & C)
700th Ord Light Maint Co
45th Qm Co
45th Sig Co (-Detachments)
MP Platoon

157th Regtl Combat Team:

157th Regt
158th Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
Co A, 120th Eng Bn
Co A, 120th Med Bn
Detachment, 45th Sig Co

179th Regtl Combat Team:

179th Regt
160th Field Arty Bn (-105-MM How)
Co B, 120th Eng Bn
Co B, 120th Med Bn
Detachment, 45th Sig Co

180th Regtl Combat Team:

180th Regt
171st Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
Co C, 120th Eng Bn
Co C, 120th Med Bn
Detachment, 45th Sig Co

Attached to 45th Division:

3d Pl, 48th Qm Co (Graves Registration)
645th Tk Destroyer Bn

504th Regtl Combat Team: left the beach in March

504th Prcht Regt	"	"	"	"	"
Co C, 307th Airborne Eng Bn	"	"	"	"	"
376th Prcht Field Arty Bn (75-MM Pack How)	"	"	"	"	"

509th Prcht Bn (-Co G) - left the beachhead 1 April

36th Div

(Came into the beachhead and were in position by 22 May)

Hqtrs & Hqtrs Co
36th Cav Recon Troop (Mechanized)
111th Eng Bn (-Cos A, B, & C)
36th Div Arty, Hqtrs & Hqtrs Btry
155th Field Arty Bn (155-MM How)
111th Med Bn (-Cos A, B, & C)
736th Ord Light Maint Co
36th Qm Co
36th Sig Co (-Detachments)
MP Platoon

141 Regtl Combat Team:

141st Regt
131st Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
Co A, 111th Eng Bn
Co A, 111th Med Bn
Detachment, 36th Sig Co

142d Regtl Combat Team:

142d Regt
132d Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
Co B, 111th Eng Bn
Co B, 111th Med Bn
Detachment, 36th Sig Co

143d Regtl Combat Team:

143 Regt
133d Field Arty Bn (105-MM How)
Co C, 111th Eng Bn
Co C, 111th Med Bn
Detachment, 36th Sig Co

1st British Division:

Hqtrs 1st Div

1st Div Royal Arty (RA)
2, 19 & 67th Field Regts RA (24-25 Pounders)
81st AT Regt RA (36-57-MM Guns; 12-17 Pounders)
90 Light AA Regt RA (54-40-MM Guns)
24 Army Field Regt RA (24-105-MM How SP)
78th Field Regt RA (24-25 Pounders)
80th Medium RA (16-4.5 inch Guns)
1st Recon Regt (1 Bn)

2d Inf Brigade

6th Bn, Gordon Highlanders
1st Bn, Loyal Regt
2d Bn, North Staffordshire Regt

3d Inf Brigade

1st Bn, Duke of Wellington's Regt
2d Bn, Sherwood Foresters
1st Bn, King's Shropshire Light

24th Guards Brigade (replaced by 18th Brigade in March)

1st Bn, Irish Guards
1st Bn, Scotts Guards
5th Bn, Grenadier Guards

56th British (London) Inf Div

Left beachhead in March

Hqs 56th (London) Div

(replaced by 5th British Div)

56th Div Royal Arty
64, 56, & 113d Field Regts RA (24-25 pounders)
67th AT Regt RA (36 57-MM Guns; 12-17 Pounders)
100th Light AA Regt RA (54-40-MM Guns)
44th Recon Regt (1 Bn)

167th Inf Brigade

8th Bn, Royal Fusiliers
9th Bn, Royal Fusiliers
7th Bn, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Inf

1st Recon Regt

188 Inf Brigade

10th Bn, Royal Bershires Regt
1st Bn, London Scotts
1st Bn, London Irish Rifles
1st Bn, London Irish Rifles

Medical

52d Med Bn
33d Field Hosp
549th Ambulance Co, Motor

Military Police:

206th M.P. Co
Co C, 504th MP Bn

Ordnance:

56th Ord Bomb Disposal Squad (Separate)

Rangers:

left area in March

6615th Ranger Force, Hqtrs. & Hqtrs Co (Provisional)
1st, 3d, & 4th Ranger Inf Bns

Signal:

57th Sig Bn
Detachment, 51st Sig Bn
Detachment B, 128th Sig Co (Radio Intercept) - Attached
Detachment E, 849th Sig Intelligence Service (from AFHQ)
Detachment, 163d Sig Photo Co
1st Radio Repair Sect, 180th Sig Repair Co
Detachment, 229th Sig Operation Co

Special Service Force:

1st S'S F
Hqtrs & Hqtrs Detachment
1st, 2d, 3d Regts
Serv Bn
16th Finance Disbursing Sect

Tank Destroyer:

701st & 894th T D Bns

Transportation:

Cos B & C, 53d Qm Trk Bn (Dukw)

In addition to above several other truck Cos were brought in to beachhead ready loaded. They hauled the supplies direct to positions between the dates of 1st and 21 May.

ORDER OF BATTLE OF GERMAN DIVISIONS
(never all present or available at
any one time during the campaign)

Divisions	Type	Inf Regts	Arty Regts	Fusilier or Recon Bns	Panzer Tk units	AT Bns	Eng Bns	AAA Units
1	Prcht	1, 3, 4	1	-	-	1	1	1
3	Pz Gren	8, 29	3	103 Rcn	103 Bn	3	3	-
4	Prcht	10, 11, 12	4	-	-	4	4	4
5	Mt	85, 100	95	85 Rcn	-	95	95	-
8	Mt	296, 297	1057	-	--	-	1057	-
15	Pz Gren	104, 115	33	115 Rcn	115 Rcn	33	33	315
16	SS-Pz Gren	35, 36	16	16 Rcn	16 Bn	16	16	16
26	Panzer	9, 67	93	26 Rcn	26 Regt	51	93	304
29	Pz Gren	15, 71	29	129 Rcn	129 Bn	29	29	313
44	Inf	131, 132, 134	96	44 Fus	-	46	80	-
65	Inf	145, 146, 147	165	65 Fus	1165 Br.	165	165	-
71	Inf	191, 195, 211	171	71 Fus	-	171	171	171
90	Pz Gren	200, 361	190	190 Fus	190 Bn	90	190	293
92	Inf	1059, 1060	192	92 Fus	-	192	192	-
94	Inf	267, 274, 276	194	94 Fus	-	194	194	-
114	Jager	721, 741	661	114 Fus	-	114	114	-
162	Inf	303, 314, 329	236	236 Fus	-	236	236	-
278	Inf	992, 993, 994	278	278 Fus	-	278	278	-
205	Inf	576, 577, 578	305	305 Fus	-	305	305	-
334	Inf	754, 755, 756	334	334 Fus	-	334	334	-
356	Inf	896, 870, 871	356	356 Fus	-	356	356	-
362	Inf	954, 955, 956	362	362 Fus	-	362	362	-
715	Inf	725, 735, 1028	671	715 Fus	-	715	715	-
Hermann Goring	Panzer	1, 2 Hermann Goring	1 Hermann Goring	1 Rcn	Herm. Goring Regt	1 H.G	1 H.G	1 H.G

APPENDIX III

STATISTICS (1 US Armd Div)*

MONTH	PERSONNEL		MISS- ING :
	KILLED:	WOUNDED:	
Feb.	77	495	51
Mar.	48	132	5
Apr.	11	162	1
May	256	1276	

VEHICLES

MONTH:	DESTROYED
Feb.	7 M-5 tanks 26 M-4 tanks 2 105s SP 6 3 inch SP 14 wheel vehicles 1 half-track
Mar.	2 75-mm SP 3 half-tracks 4 wheel vehicles
Apr.	1 M-5 tank 2 M-4 tanks 1 105 SP 2 tank-recovery vehicles 1 scorpion tank 1 half-track 1 6-ton bridge truck 1 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton truck
May	45 M-5 tanks 108 M-4 tanks 2 75-mm SP 9 105's SP 7 Armored cars 4 3-inch SP 15 half-tracks 1 57 AT gun 23 trucks

APPENDIX IV

THE 1ST ARMORED DIVISION

The 1st Armd Div was organized at Ft Knox, 15 July 1940 as an experiment in a self-supporting, permanent fighting unit with tanks as a nucleus. It was the first such unit in the United States Army. Major General Bruce R. Magruder was the Division Commander.

Two light tank regiments--the 1st and 13th--came from the 7th Cavalry Brigade. The medium tank regiment, the 69th, was formed from a cadre of the 67th Tank Regiment from Fort Benning. The 6th Infantry Regiment was lifted intact from Jefferson Barracks, Missouri.

The 81st Rcn Bn was formed from cavalry troops drawn from two posts. The 16th Armd Eng Bn took its personnel from the 47th Eng Troop and its name from an inactivated World War 1 unit. The 141st Sig Co was formerly the 47th Sig Trp. The 47th Med Bn was formed from the 4th Med Trp stationed at Ft. Knox.

The 68th Armd FA Bn was formed from the 68th FA Regt, and the 27th Armd FA Bn was foremed from the 19th and 21st FA Bns. The 19th Ord and 13th QM Bns combined to form the division's maintenance Bn.

When the organization was completed, the division had tanks, artillery and infantry in strength. In direct support were tank destroyer, maintenance, medical, supply and engineer battalions.

But bringing the division up to its full quota of tanks,

guns and vehicles was difficult. Although new equipment was received almost daily, the division had until March, 1941, only nine ancient medium tanks. Principal armament of each of the nine was a 37 millimeter gun.

After a year of training at Ft. Knox, the Division left in September of 1941 for three months manoeuvres in Louisiana. Back at Ft Knox after Pearl Harbor the Division was reorganized. All the tanks were put in the 1st and 13th Tank Regiments, a third Armd FA Bn, the 91st, was formed and the 701st TD Bn was organized and attached to the Division.

In March of 1942 the Division was on its way to the Ft. Dix staging area. Major General Orlando Ward had relieved General Magruder as Division Commander.

Training continued after landing in Ireland until November when the Division embarked for Africa to participate in the African landings and campaign.

On 9 April 1943 General Ward was relieved as Division Commander by Major General Ernest N. Harmon.

40,000 Nazi troops in the northeast corner of Tunisia surrendered unconditionally to the Commanding General of the 1st Armd Div at 1055 on 8 May 1943 and ten days later the Division was enroute to French Morocco for rest and more training.

The Division arrived in Italy in mid-November and bivouaced at Capua, about 30 miles north of Naples. Task Force Allen was organized at the end of the year to take Mt. Porchia. This was accomplished by 9 January after which the Division was

split temporarily. CCB stayed in the Porchia sector but CCA became part of the ANZIO landing force.



221448





Italy #116

HISTORICAL DIVISION / SS / USA PHOTOGRAPH
BY CAPT. J. C. HATLEN

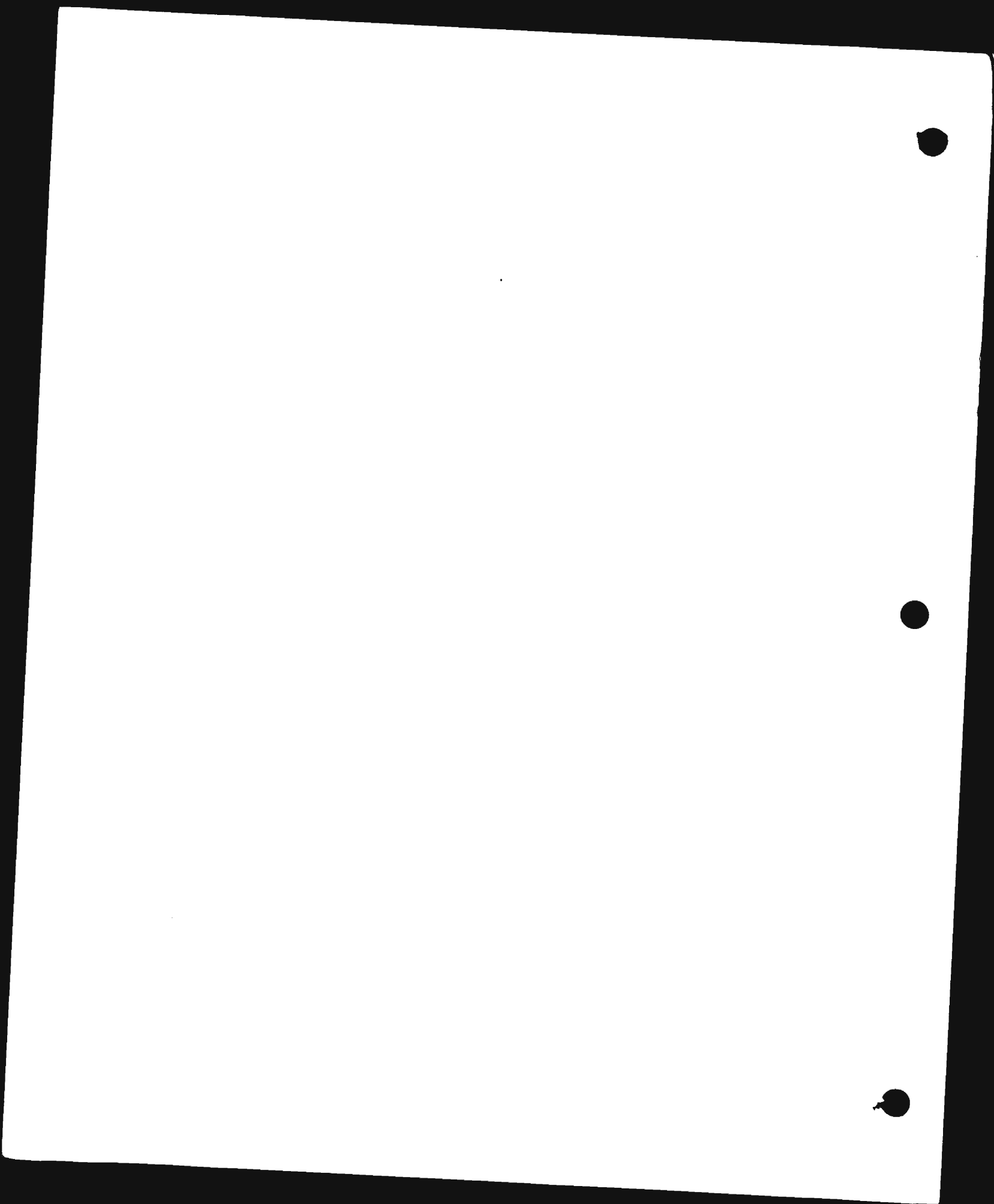


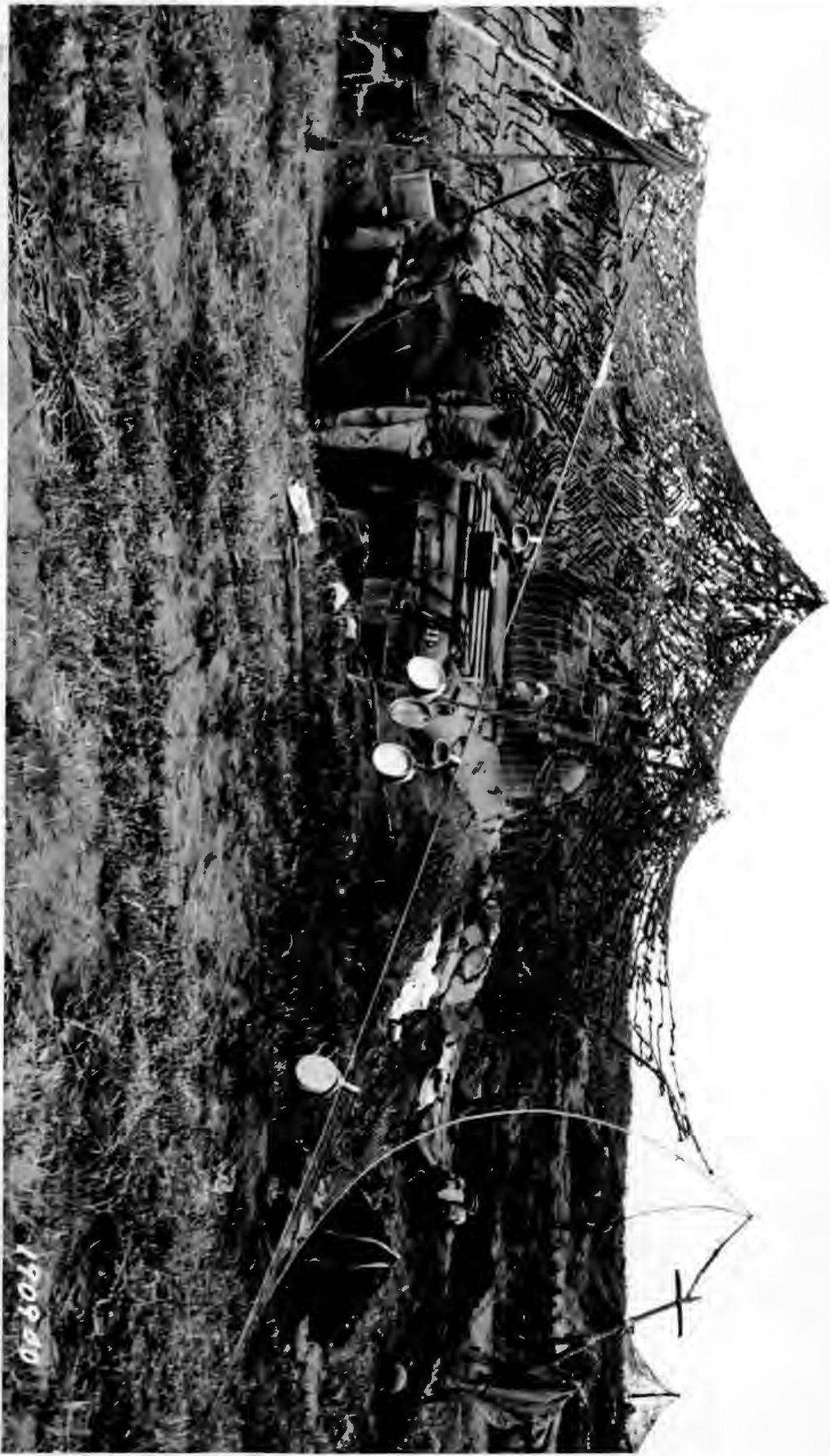
189572



PLATE V
ARMOR BURIED AND HIDING AT ANZIO

189571



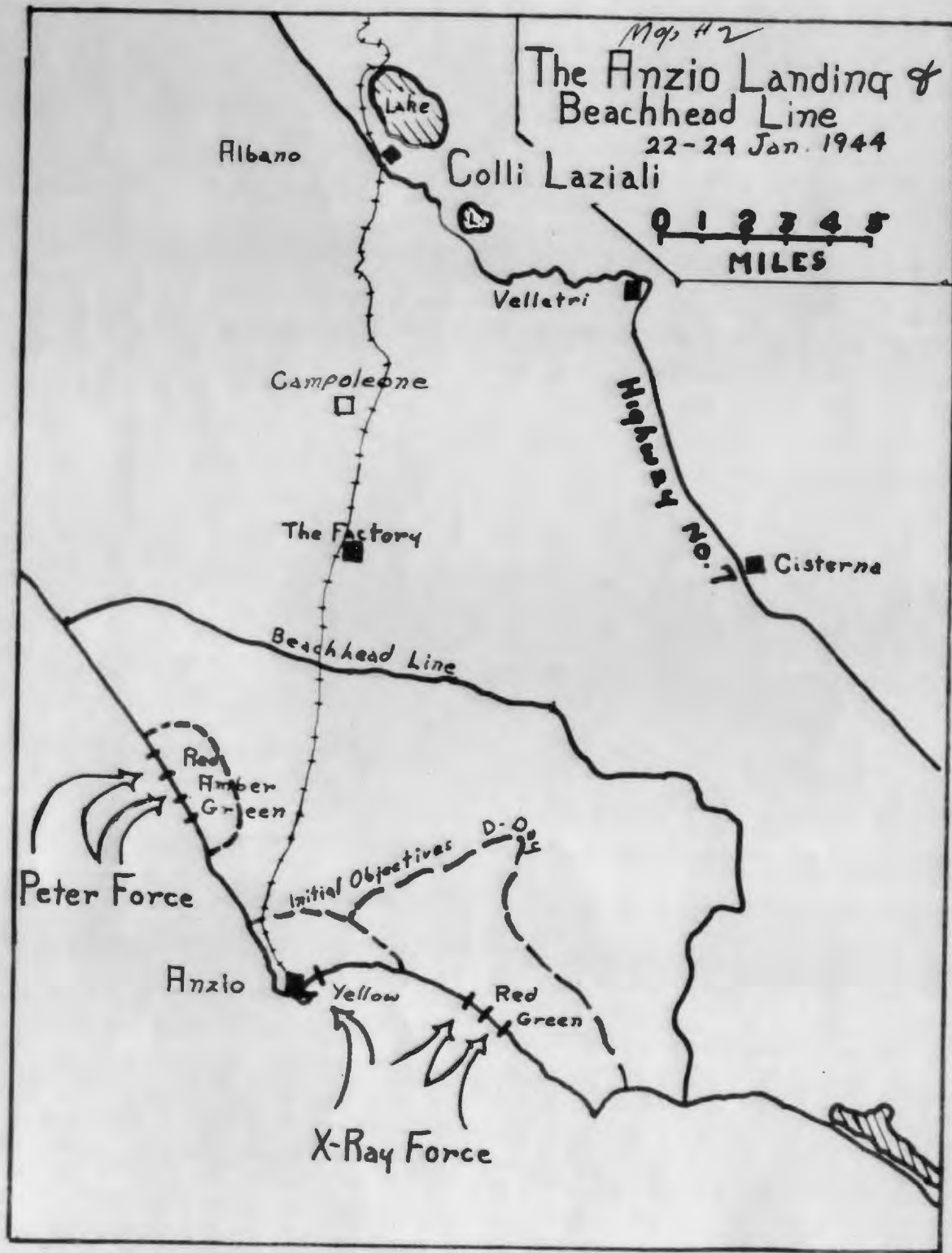


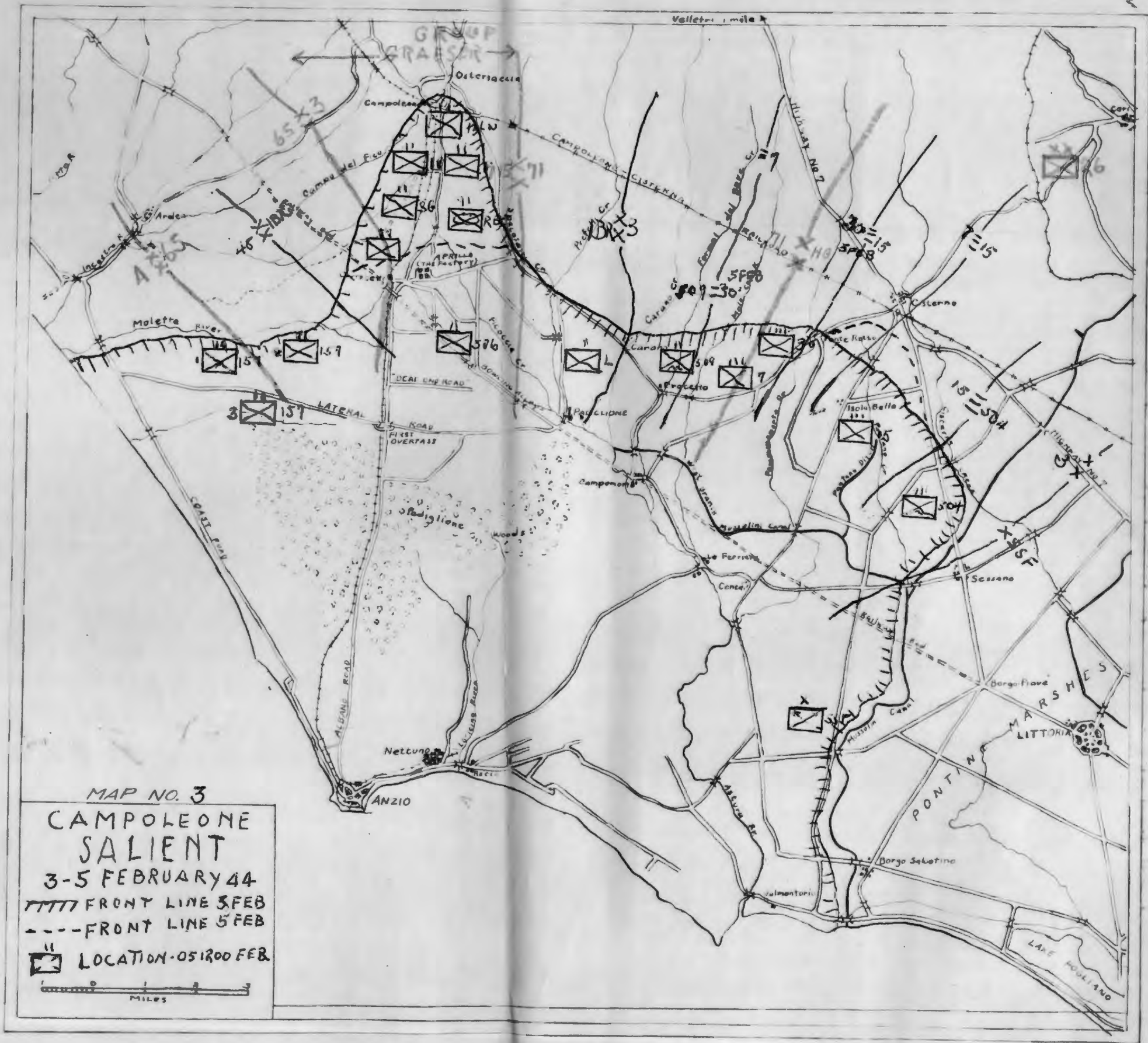
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APPENDIX V

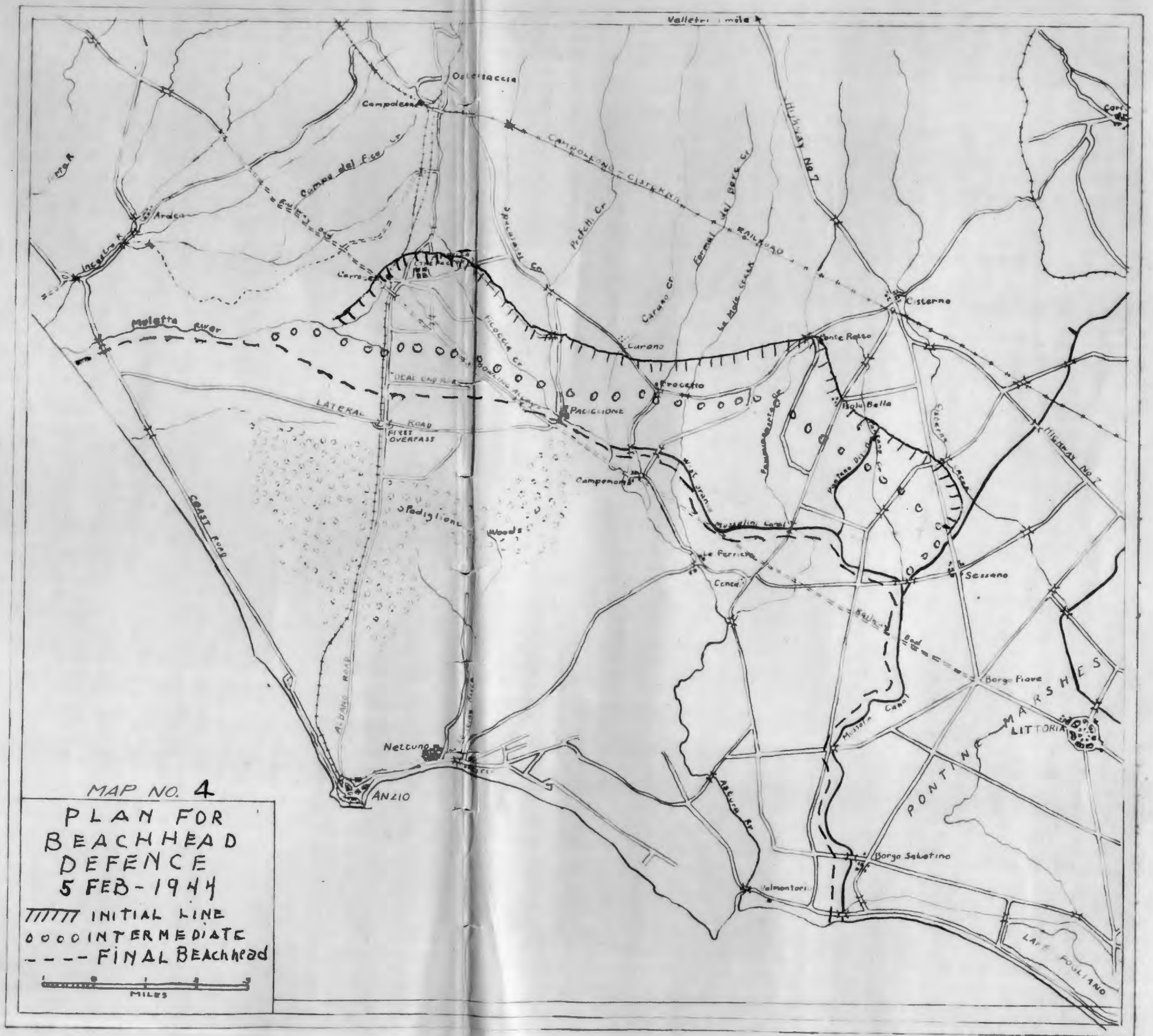
MAPS

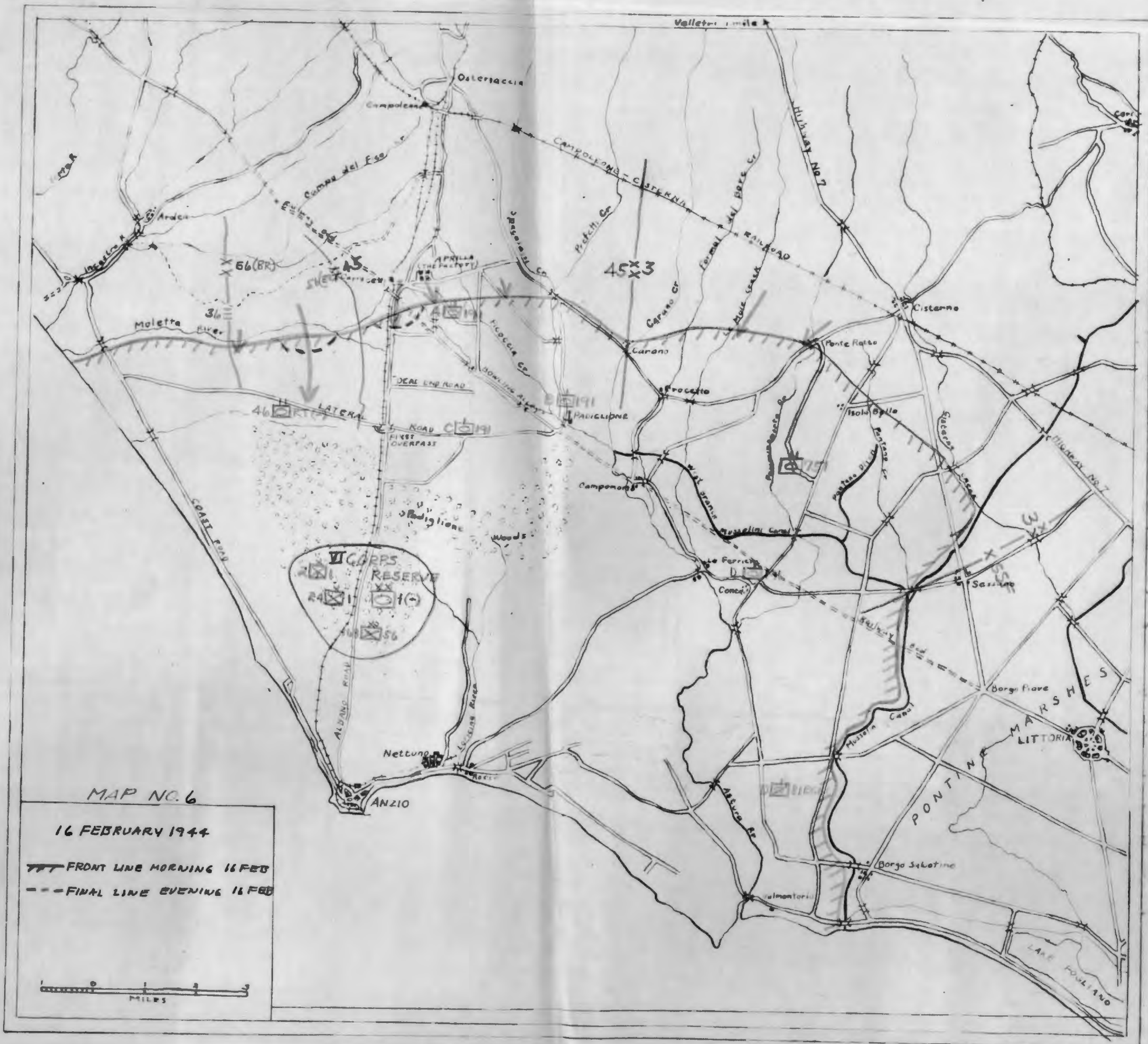






MAP NO. 3
 CAMPOLEONE
 SALIENT
 3-5 FEBRUARY 44
 ——— FRONT LINE 3 FEB
 - - - FRONT LINE 5 FEB
 [] LOCATION - 051200 FEB
 0 1 2 3
 MILES



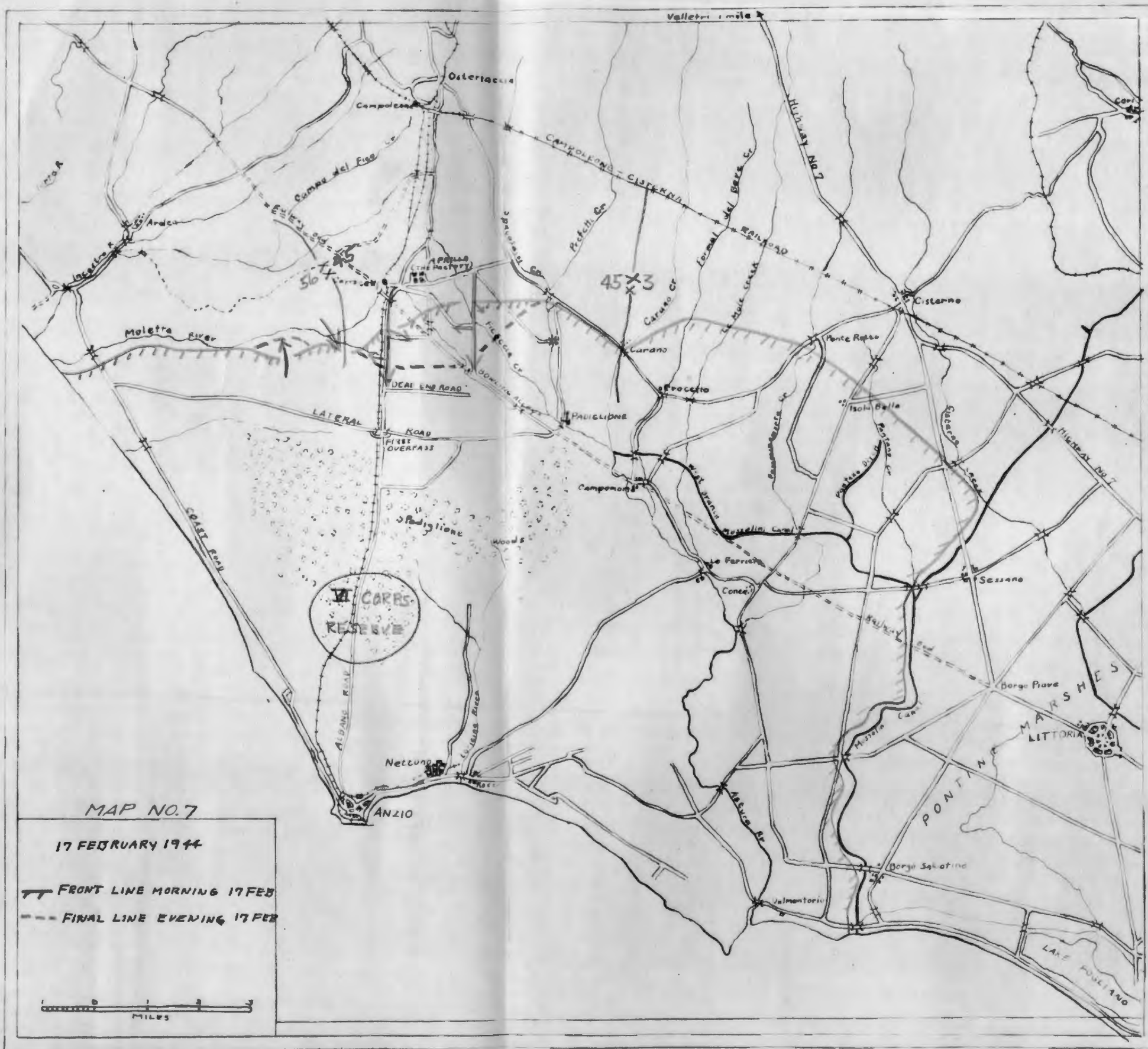


MAP NO. 6

16 FEBRUARY 1944

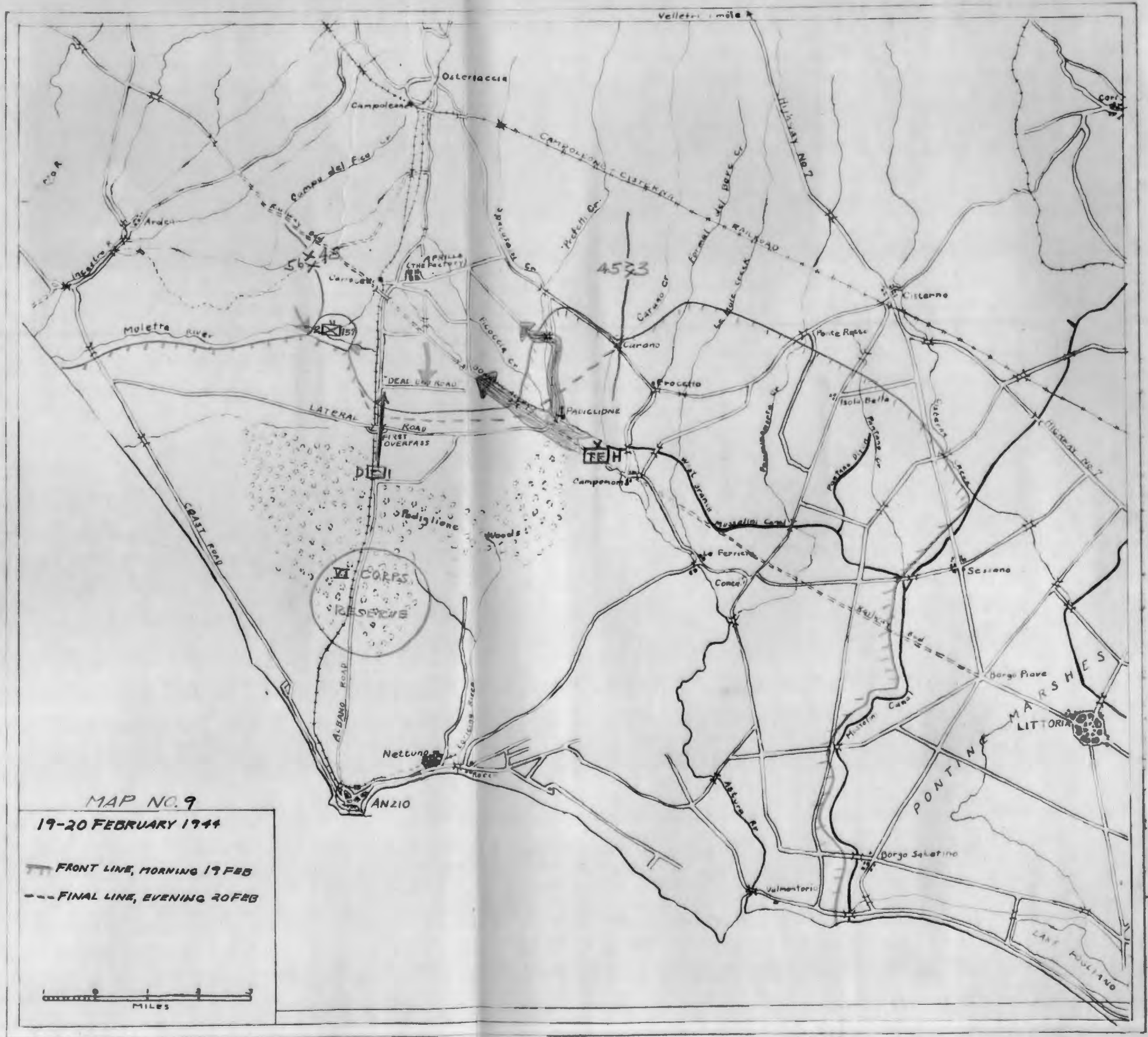
--- FRONT LINE MORNING 16 FEB
 - - - FINAL LINE EVENING 16 FEB





MAP NO. 7
 17 FEBRUARY 1944
 ——— FRONT LINE MORNING 17 FEB
 - - - FINAL LINE EVENING 17 FEB

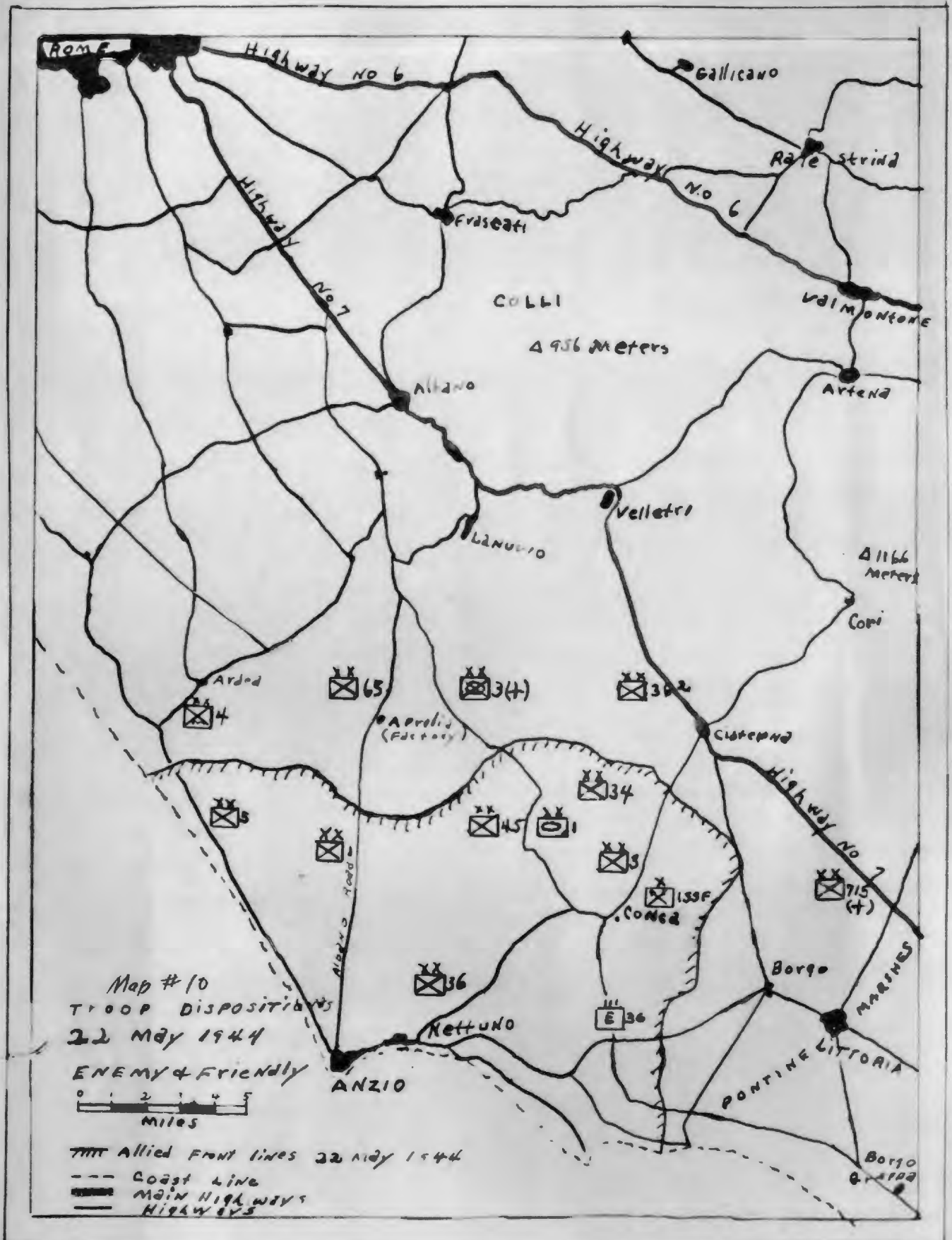
0 1 2 3 4
 MILES



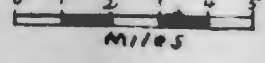
MAP NO. 9
19-20 FEBRUARY 1944

— FRONT LINE, MORNING 19 FEB
- - - FINAL LINE, EVENING 20 FEB

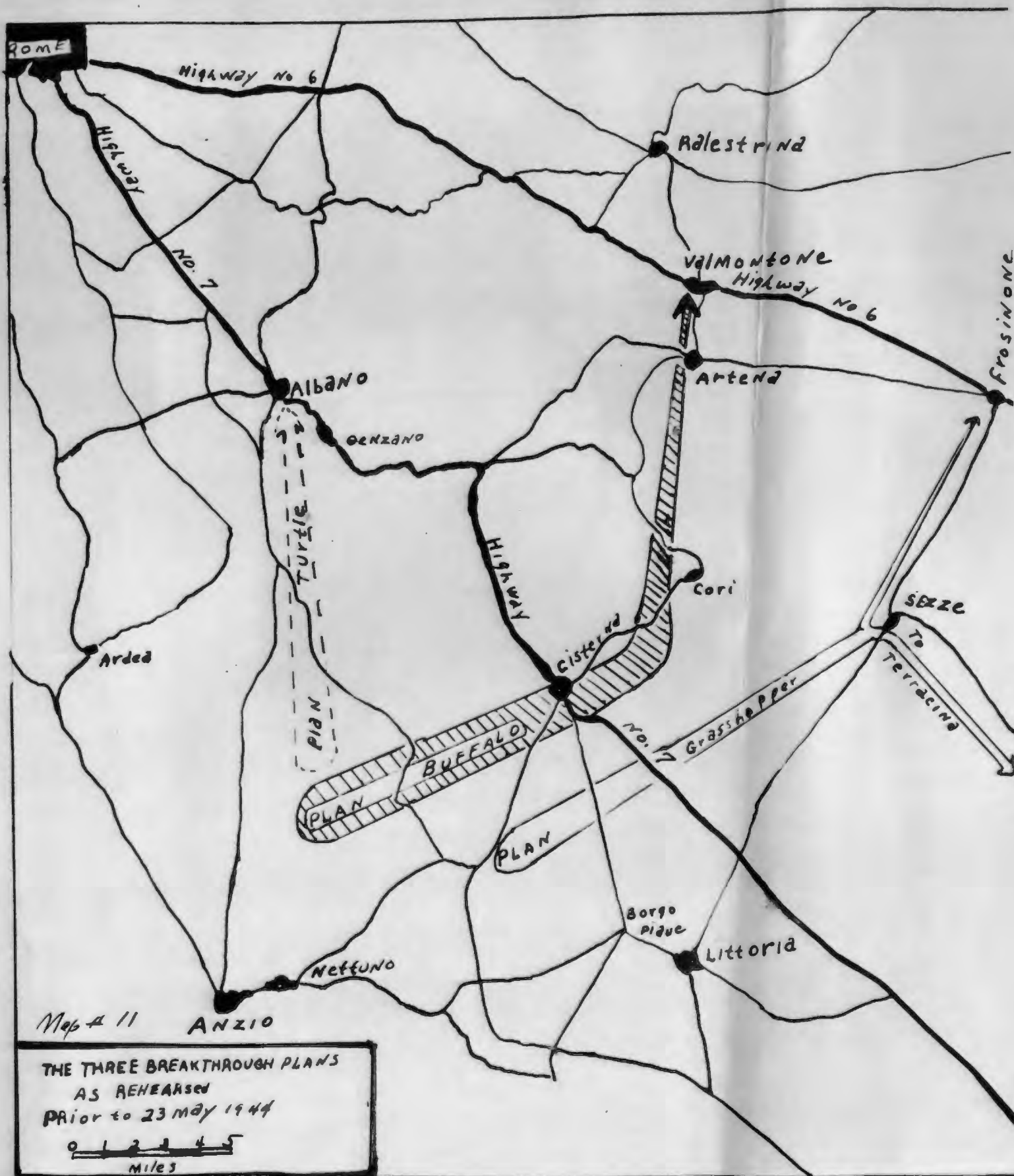




Map # 10
 TROOP DISPOSITIONS
 22 May 1944
 ENEMY & FRIENDLY

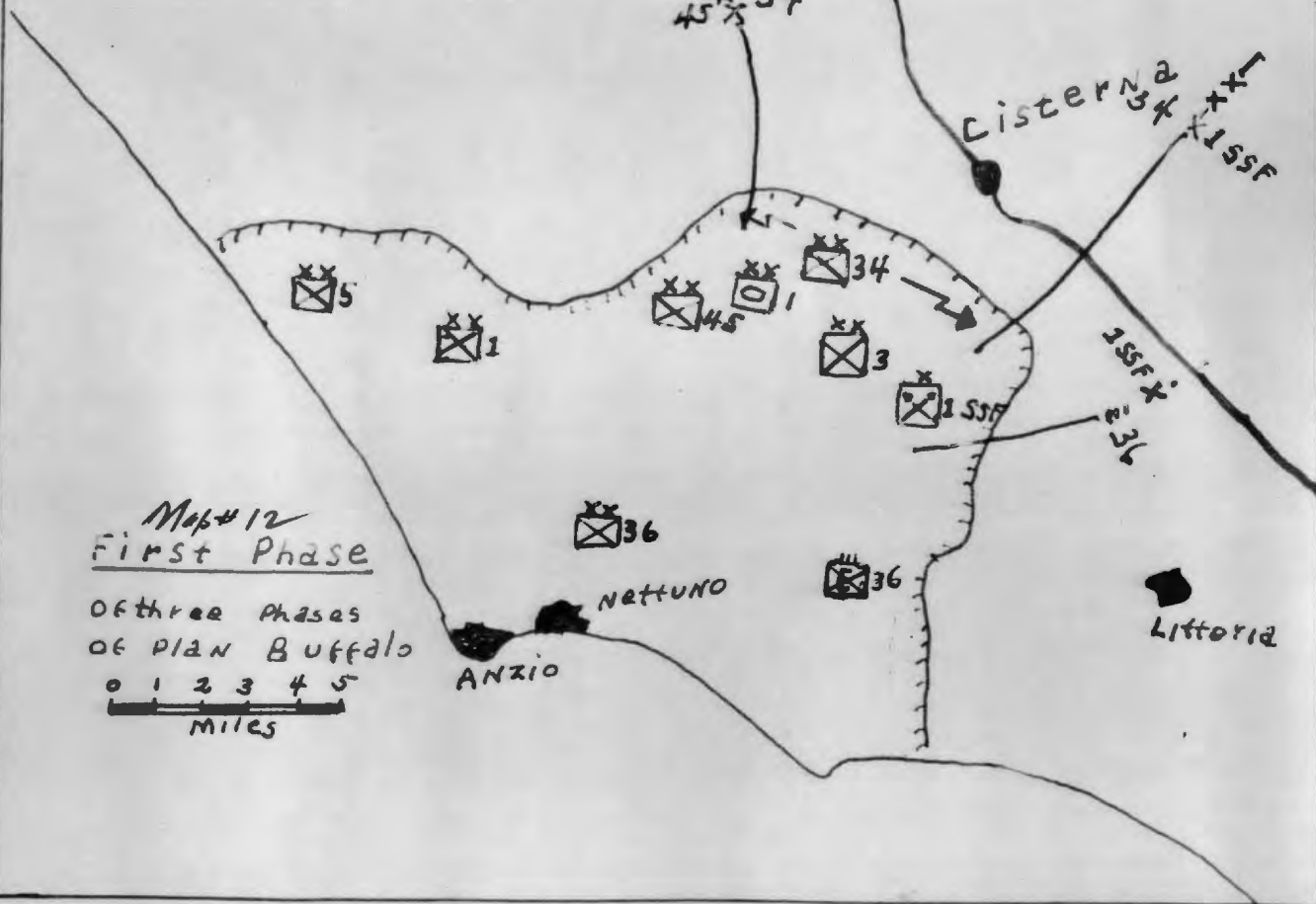


--- Allied Front Lines 22 May 1944
 --- Coast Line
 --- Main Highways
 --- Highways



ROME

This Phase Required
the 34th Div. to hold
its line below
Cisterna and clear
gaps through mine
fields for passage of
the 3rd Div, the 1st S.S.F.
and the 1st Armored Div.



Map #12
First Phase

Of three phases
of Plan Buffalo
0 1 2 3 4 5
MILES

ROME

Highway No. 6

Highway No. 7

Valmontone

This Final Phase
called for all units
to hold objectives
captured in phase two,
except 3rd + 36th Divs.
were to proceed from
Cori to capture Ardena +
Valmontone

Albano

Genzano

Valerico

Ardena

O.B. Line

Cori

45
1st Div

45
1st Div

1st Div

36
1st Div

5

5
1st Div

1

45
1st Div

34
1st Div

Cisternd

36
1st Div

36
1st Div

Map #14
Third Phase

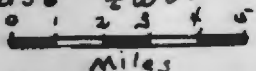
of three phases
of plan Buffalo

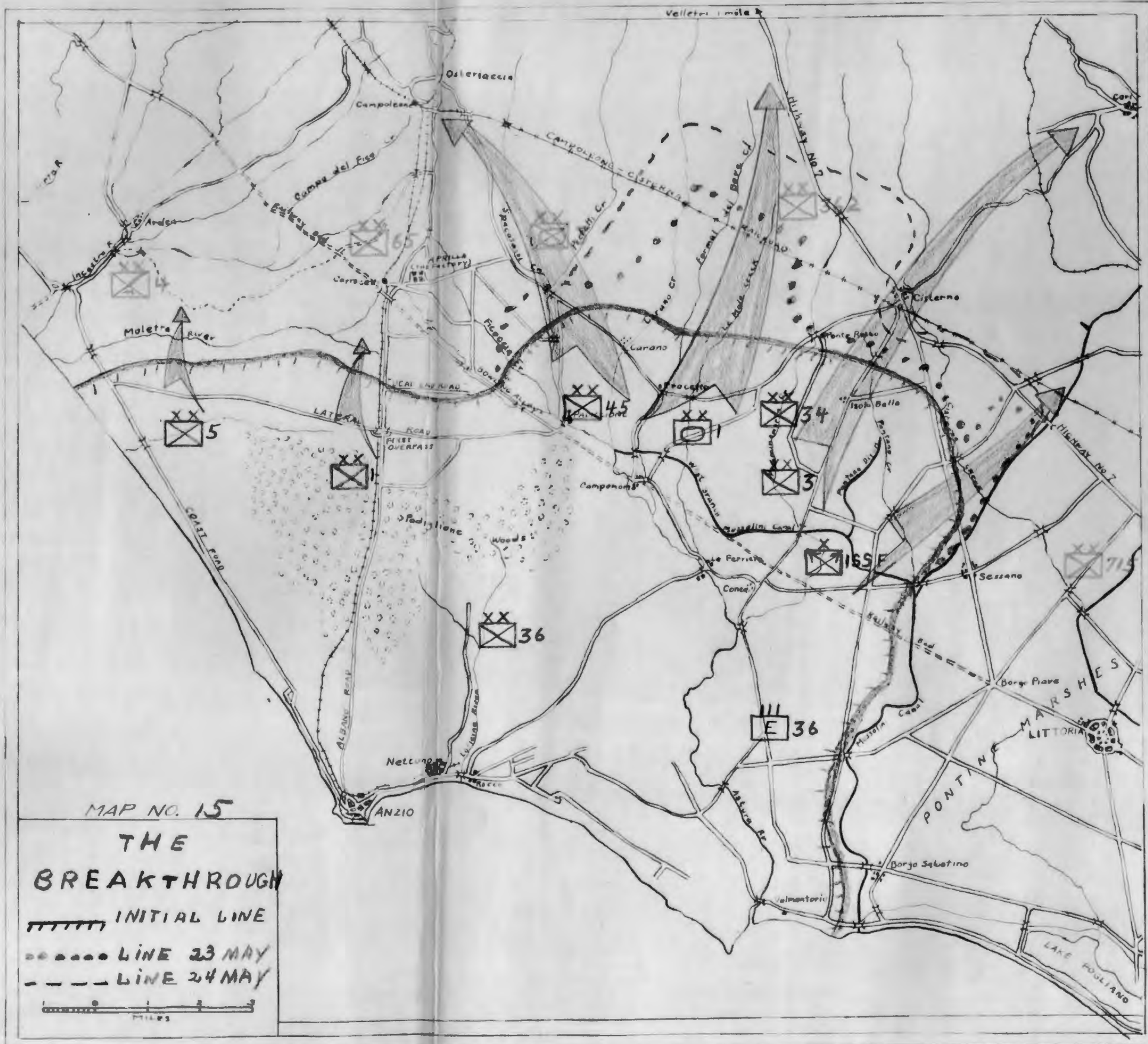
Front line 22 MAY ANZIO
units shown in location
Proposed for end of
Phase two.

Nettuno

E 36

Littoria





MAP NO. 15
**THE
 BREAKTHROUGH**
 INITIAL LINE
 LINE 23 MAY
 LINE 24 MAY

MILES