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Report date: 1944

Title: Report on the Invasion of Sicily

Author: Geary, John A.

Abstract: This report consists of information on the planning and execution of the Invasion of Sicily from June to August 1943. Commanders and units as finally selected were: Commander and Chief, Lt. Gen. Eisenhower; Naval Commander, Admiral Cunningham; Air Force, Marshal Teddar; 15th Army Group, Gen. Alexander; 7th Army, Gen. Patton; 8th Army, Gen. Montgomery; 11th Corps, Gen. Bradley; 1st Division, Gen. Allen; 4th Division, Gen. Middleton; 3rd Division, Gen. Truscott; 2nd Armored Division, Gen. Gaffey; 82nd Airborne Division, Gen. Ridgeway; and 9th Division, Gen. Eddy. This included the 5th, 50th, 51st British Divisions and the 1st Canadian Division.

Number of pages: 23 p.

Notes: From the MCoE HQ Donovan Research Library, Fort Benning, GA. Documents collection. Call #: D769.2 .G261 1944

Classification: Unclassified; Approved for public release

D 769.2
C 261

Sicilian campaign

The Invasion of Sicily was a logical step following the occupation of Tunisia. This decision was made by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill and their staffs at the Casablanca Conference held in January of this year.

As early as February preliminary planning commenced even though the size of the force and the units involved were unknown. An Invasion Training Center was established near Oran. Here amphibious training, defense against mines, and other specialized training and conditioning exercises were conducted.

The commanders and units as finally selected were:

Commander in Chief	- Lt. Gen. Eisenhower
Naval Commander	- Admiral Cunningham
Air Force	- Marshal Teddar

15th Army Group	Gen. Alexander
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7th Army - Gen. Patton	8th Army - Gen. Montgomery
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11 Corps Gen. Bradley	This included the 5, 50, 51st
1st Div. Gen. Allen	British Divisions and the
45th Div. Gen. Middleton	1st Canadian Div.

3d Div	Gen. Truscott
2d Armored Div	Gen. Gaffey

82d A/B	Gen. Ridgeway
9th Div	Gen. Eddy.

By the end of June it was known that the 6th Italian Army occupied Sicily. Headquarters of this Army was at Enna. At Palermo was the 12th Corps. This Corps consisted of three Coastal Divisions and two Infantry Divisions. One Coastal Division extended from Licata to Sciacca, a second from Sciacca to Marsala, and the third from Marsala to Cefalu. The two Infantry Divisions were situated in the western part of the Island.

At Piazza Armerina was the 16th Corps. This Corps had two Sea Coast Divisions, one extending from Cefalu to Syracuse, the other from Syracuse to Licata. Two Infantry Divisions were also in this area: One at Caltanissetta and the other northeast of Ragusa.

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It was believed the German Units consisted of three combat teams of the 15th Panzer Division, one in the Gela Area, another in the Cantania Area, with the third in the west. Actually the group in the Gela Area was from the Herman Goring Division while there was a fourth group west of Enna.

D-DAY was set for July 10th. Landings were to be made on the south and southeast coast of Sicily from Licata to a point just south of Syracuse. The British 8th Army on the right and the American 7th on the left.

1. The 45th Infantry Division and the 753 Reconnaissance Squadron was to land under cover of darkness in the Scoglitti Area, capture and secure the airfield north of Comiso by daylight D plus 2, secure the air landing ground north of Biscari by dark D plus 2, extend the beachhead to yellow, and contact the British 8th Army in the vicinity of Ragusa.

2. The 1st Infantry Division (with 2 Battalions of Rangers and 1 Battalion Engineers attached) to land under cover of darkness in the Gela Area, capture and secure the airport at Ponte Olivo by daylight D plus 1, extend the beachhead to YELLOW, contact the 3d Infantry Division on the left and be prepared to assist the 45th Division in the capture of the air landing field north of Biscari by darkness D plus 2.

3. The 3d Infantry Division (with Combat Command A and a Battalion of Rangers) was to land under cover of darkness in the Licata Area, capture and secure the port and airport of Licata by dark on D day, extend the beachhead to YELLOW, protect the left flank from interference from the northwest, and contact the 2d Corps on the right.

4. The 2d Armored Division (less C.C.A.) plus the 18th Infantry to sail with the assault and be prepared to land in support of any of the assaults.

5. The 82d A/B Division (less paratroop elements) was to be prepared to support the assault on call after H hour on D day.

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6. One R.C.T. plus the Division Artillery of the 9th Infantry Division was to be alerted to move from Bizerte after D day.

7. The 505 Parachute Infantry plus 3d Bn 504 was to assist the 1st Division in landing and the capture of Ponte Olivo Air Field.

Transport loading areas were as follows:

45th Div. ----- Oran
2nd Armored ----- Oran

1st Div ----- Algiers
Hq. 7th Army -- Algiers transport Monrovia

✓ 3d Div ----- Bizerte
82d A/B ----- Kairouan

TOP SECRET

[REDACTED]

On the morning of the 9th a windstorm descended upon the Mediterranean as the great convoy of over 3,000 ships converged toward Malta. Bombers passed overhead flying toward enemy defenses to soften up prior to the invasion. The seas appeared too high for small boat landings and the wind too strong for airborne assault. Plans were being made to delay the invasion one day. By late afternoon the convoy had passed Malta and the wind and sea had decreased in violence so it was decided to continue on as originally planned.

The Paratroopers took off from Kairouan. They were to fly over Malta, skirt the coast of Sicily, then turn into their drop zones, which was the high ground north and east of Ponte Olivo Airport. One group to jump at 2330 and the other at 2400.

There was a quarter moon the evening of the 9th when over 200 combat loaded planes took off. A heavy wind came up after darkness. It was estimated to be thirty-five miles an hour. The formation began drifting. There were insufficient navigators present. Some of the planes missed Malta, some proceeded alone, and some joined British Formations.

Each Division had its own countersign. The Paratroops had been briefed on the mission of the 1st Division and the 1st Division was the only unit familiar with the Parachute Operations.

Paratroopers were scattered over the landscape from Ponte Olivo as far east as Syracuse in the British sector. Some fought with the British. The majority landed northeast of the Scoglitti Area.

Part of the 3d Bn. 504 landed northeast of Ponte Olivo. They were opposed by a large force of the enemy. Before they contacted the 1st Division they had exhausted their ammunition, and had many men captured, including the Battalion Commander.

Part of the 1st Bn. 505th landed east of Gela. In a hostile tank attack it lost a number of men, including the Battalion Commander.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The 2d Bn. 505th landed south of Ragusa. By noon the next day it had organized, captured two enemy strongpoints together with 144 prisoners. On the evening of the 11th it contacted the 45th Division.

Half of the 3d Bn. 505th landed just west of Vittoria. It was joined by the Regimental Commander. They assembled on high ground blocking the main highway then continued west. About noon the 11th they were attacked by Germans with Mark 6 tanks. Requests for help were sent and the Battalion took up a defensive position on high ground to the rear. Some Sherman tanks and a company of Engineers came to their support and with the aid of Naval Gunfire a successful attack was launched at 1900. Fifty Germans were killed and 50 taken prisoner at a cost of 43 killed and 100 wounded. Only three bazooka teams had remained in the Battalion. They were put out by the direct fire of 88mm guns and crushed by tanks. They had opposed a Battalion of the Herman Goring Division.

The night of the 11th the remainder of the 504th was to be dropped east of Gela, among their own troops. The 1st Division was informed but not the shipping and the shore batteries. The route to be followed was the same as that of the previous day.

An observer, General Lucas, stated that on July 6th General Patton and General Ridgeway of the 82d A/B had just been notified of this route and they were worried about getting the information to the troops who had already embarked. General Patton stated that he had been trying to get this dope from the Air Corps since the 2d of July.

Heavy antiaircraft fire from ships and shore destroyed over 30 planes and more were damaged. Those forced down near the coast were machine-gunned by their own troops as paratroopers attempted to launch rubber boats. This was the result of purely an administrative move.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The British also participated in an airborne assault. On the night of the 9th of July 2 Battalions of gliderborne troops took off with the mission of capturing a bridge south of Syracuse. Antiaircraft fire, heavy winds, and poor navigation caused scattering of the gliders. Many fell into the sea. One platoon landed correctly and took its objective.

On the night of the 13th a British Parachute Brigade (an organization comparing to our Regiment) was dropped south of Catania to capture a bridge. Here again many missed their drop zones but 200 succeeded in taking the bridge and removing the charges.

✓ About 2300 9th July the transports had arrived to within 6 miles of the shore line and unloading commenced. H hour was announced as 0245. As the smaller craft bounced up and down against the sides of the transports a few of the men suffered broken arms and legs while climbing down the cargo nets into the small boats. The rough weather caused some of the assault waves to be late in reaching the beaches.

Opposite the Gela Area searchlights hit the landing craft when they were a half mile off shore. Naval gun fire destroyed some while others were put out of action by small Naval assault boats firing 50 caliber machine guns. Hostile machine guns and the remaining searchlights were quickly put out of action. No large scale enemy resistance occurred at the beaches. All landings had been successful by 0600. At this time hostile planes commenced bombing and strafing the beaches and transport areas. Leading elements of the combat teams were approximately one mile inland and were continuing their advance.

Hostile tanks had been reported 6 miles east of Gela.

A small column of tanks had been reported moving south from Barrafranca and a large column moving southeast from Reisi. The Air Corps had bombed tanks and trucks on the Vizzini-Comiso Road and also the Caltagirone-Biscari Road.

The floating reserve, 2d Armored plus 18th Infantry, commenced landing on beaches east of Gela at 1800.

[REDACTED]

✓ By the end of D day all beachheads were secure.
Four thousand two hundred sixty-five prisoners were taken.

American casualties caused by fire and land mines along the beaches were 58 killed, 199 sick and wounded, and 700 missing.

Comments during this phase made by Major General Lucas, an observer accompanying the invasion in its early stages, were:

One small group of the 45th Division (18th Inf) landed six miles west of their beach into the 1st Division Area. With this exception the Navy did a fine job in landing the troops.

Some of the N.C.O.'s and Junior Officers failed in getting their men off the beach and moving them rapidly inland. At one time elements of the 1st and 45th Divisions had intermingled and remained one and a half hours on the beach. He said it took the combined efforts of General Keys and himself to start them off in the proper direction.

✓ He further stated that "digging in" should not be undertaken unless no farther advance can be made. It immobilizes men and once in the trenches it usually takes one or more officers to move the men out.

A captured Italian Officer told General Lucas that he had not been alerted until about an hour before the attack. His company then manned their positions but after the bombardment of the town and beaches all but four of his men ran away.

The framework of this talk is based on the Operations Report of the 7th Army, which does not describe the action of any small units. By piecing together comments of observers and their interviews with unit leaders it was possible to get a brief description of some small units in action at different phases of the campaign.

A member of the 3d Bn. 179th (45th Div.) gives the following account of his Battalion:

[REDACTED]

After landing, the Battalion marched the first day to Vittoria. That night it moved under cover of darkness to Comiso. The enemy was fighting a rear guard action all the way. We moved to high ground north of the town and took up a position, at 2300. Just after sunrise the next morning a strong German attack came at us. They had their backs to the sun. During the night they had slipped in close to our lines and gotten two Mark 4 tanks in position on the flanks. Their supporting weapons and tanks pinned us to the ground and we were in a real fix. They had gotten almost into our lines before they attacked. Our flanking company counterattacked with the bayonet and was supported by a platoon of 4.2 chemical mortars which laid down a screen of white phosphorus in front of us. The attack was broken up and we were saved by the combined action of the flank company and the mortar platoon. If we had kept up proper and vigorous night patrolling the Jerries never could have gotten to our position. As a result of this we had nine men killed and 76 wounded. (Capt. Putnam)

By July the 11th the enemy knew where the several landings had been made and by now had time to bring up his reserves.

At 0800 20 Mark 4 tanks attacked south down the Ponte Olivo-Gela Road. They broke through the 26th Infantry and approached within 2,000 yards of Gela before being stopped by artillery fire. Small arms fire drove back the accompanying enemy Infantry.

Later in the day a force of about 40 tanks attacked across the front of the 16th Infantry. They were stopped by the combined fire of rocket guns, antitank grenades, tanks, and artillery.

About 1630 another attack came towards Gela from the northwest. This was opposed by a group of Rangers, a Battalion of Infantry, and an Engineer Shore Group which were called from their beach duties. With the aid of naval gun fire this group was broken up.

[REDACTED]

On the left flank of the 45th Division a combat team of the 505th Parachute Infantry and the 180th Infantry repulsed an enemy tank attack. On the right of this sector Comiso and Ragusa had been captured.

In the left sector the 3d Division occupied Palma-Naro-Riesi. It had reached the YELLOW LINE.

The C.O. Co. D 16th Inf. has this to say about the first two days:

The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 16th were loaded in transports and the 3d Battalion in reserve was loaded into an L.C.I (landing craft infantry). About 2300 we started unloading into small boats while five miles off shore. The first wave shoved off at ⁰¹⁰⁰~~0100~~. Searchlights hit us when a half mile off the beach. There were machine guns on shore and an antitank gun on our right flank. A few men of the company were lost on the beach. I saw no barbed wire where we landed. We landed east of Gela and by dawn were about one mile inland. I saw hostile aircraft destroy two small boats and one tank landing ship. By 1100 the Battalion was nearly five miles inland. Off in the distance a cloud of dust was observed then 40-50 tanks were seen approaching. They stopped about three miles and were joined by 20 more. We radioed back to the Division for Artillery but got no support. Our Naval Liaison Officer from the Boise radioed for naval gun fire. About twenty minutes later the Navy had gun fire on the target and knocked out eight tanks. The tanks then withdrew, enveloped our left flank, and headed toward the beach. At the beach the attack was broken up by fire from Artillery and a Cannon Company.

The Battalion continued its advance but was held up shortly by machine gun and artillery fire. In the evening the Battalion made an attack and secured a hill. There were 150 men in the Battalion and 19 in my company. We failed to dig in and when the counterattack came we were forced to withdraw.


[REDACTED]

At one time during the advance I saw two 4.2 mortars take up a position under a tree. One of the mortars fired, got a tree burst, and both crews were completely wiped out.

S-3 2d Bn 18th Inf. stated:

The 18th Infantry was in 7th Army Reserve. We commenced landing at 2200 the tenth and prior to daylight the 11th we were ashore. We went into bivouac about three miles southeast of Gela. The 26th was reported to be in the direction of Ponte Olivo and the 16th somewhere to our right front. The situation was none too clear to me although we had been informed that the Americans had made three successful landings.

The Division C.P. was near the beach just east of Gela and the town was occupied by a force of Rangers. The Regiment was on high ground near the Gela Highway. We had two 105mm howitzers with us. Slit trenches had been dug for antiaircraft protection. About 1100 our O.P. spotted 19 hostile tanks approaching from the general direction of Ponte Olivo. They were German Mark 4's and Italians. One of our 105's knocked out two tanks then five of the tanks cut in and approached our guns. Our guns were put out of action. These tanks never came closer than 700 yards from our position so we were unable to use our bazookas and rifle grenades. Our cannon company wasn't with us. The tanks then continued their advance toward the beach. Four tanks from the 2d Armored Division took up a position in an orchard across the road from our Regiment. They knocked out three tanks then withdrew to the beach when their ammunition was exhausted. Near this area was the Cannon Company of the 26th Infantry which had gone into position behind a sand dune. It looked like the tanks approached within a few hundred yards of the Division Command Post. About 1500 there were only five hostile tanks remaining and these withdrew. Prisoners taken from this engagement were from the Herman Goring Division. I noticed more hostile planes than the day before but the only damage I could observe was the sinking of a Liberty Ship.



On the night of the 11th the 1st Battalion of the 18th was attached to the 16th Infantry while the 2d Battalion was attached to the 26th. The 26th planned a night attack on a hill near Ponte Olivo. It was to be a double envelopment with time of attack at 0300. The right flank battalion followed a draw paralleling the main highway. Our Battalion followed this outfit. Progress was extremely slow and there were several long halts. By daylight the attack had bogged down. Later four tanks came up to support us and by noon of the 12th the hill and the air field were captured. Concrete pill boxes and barbed wire entanglements were on the hill and a battery of artillery was at the head of the draw up which we advanced the previous night.

Commencing the morning of the 10th and continuing throughout the day several reports had been received that enemy tanks were close to or approaching the 1st Division Area. The weak enemy resistance at the beaches had been overcome and since the bombing and strafing at the beaches was negligible, due to our air superiority, it is difficult to understand why cannon companies, accompanying artillery, and tanks were not landed earlier and sent forward to the Infantry Regiments.

July 12th

On the right of the 7th Army sector elements of the 45th Division had contacted elements of the 8th British Army in Ragusa.

Enemy infantry and tank counterattacks south of Niscemi had been repulsed by the 1st Division with elements of the 2d Armored Division on its right. During the morning the Ponte Olivo airfield had been captured.

✓ On the left the 3d Division advanced rapidly against scattered enemy infantry and tank units. It had pushed forward to Canicatti. There was a gap on its right into which enemy elements had infiltrated.

During the afternoon the advanced Army Command Post moved ashore, establishing one echelon in a school building in Gela and

another in a grove north of town. Some bombing and strafing continued but it had been materially reduced.

July 13th

The 3d Division was directed to continue reconnaissance to Agrigento. The two Ranger Battalions and the 2d Armored with the 1st Division were withdrawn from 2d Corps and became 7th Army Reserve.

The 2d Corps had advanced to 3 miles north of Ponte Olivo and Niscemi in the 1st Division sector and on the right advanced 4 miles north of Biscari and 5 miles northwest of Comiso.

The 2d Armored with two Ranger Battalions was 8 miles northwest of Gela.

Ponte Olivo airport and a landing strip near Gela were ready to receive planes.

By this time the mounting total of captured and deserting Italian troops was burdening the Divisions with hundreds of prisoners. Additional prisoner-of-war guards were requested to take over the captured enemy personnel.

During the evening a battle group of the Herman Goering Division was reported five miles east of Niscemi.

It was now estimated that there were two German Divisions on the island, the Herman Goering and the 15th Panzer in addition to four companies of Mark 6 tanks.

July 14th

It was now apparent that the enemy was withdrawing northward toward Enna and eastward toward the Catania Plain. The 3d Division maintained its position with active reconnaissance to the west and north.

Combat Command B of the 2d Armored operated on the front of the 2d Corps. The capture of Biscari Airfield marked completion of the initial missions of the 7th Army.

Orders from the 15th Army Group now swung the effort of the 7th Army toward the northwest.

[REDACTED]

The 4th Tabor of Goums of the French North African Army landed at Licata and were attached to the 3d Division. This organization corresponded in strength to an Infantry Battalion.

On July 15th a Provisional Corps was organized comprising

3d Div. + a Bn. of Rangers
5th Armored F.A. Group
82d A/B Div + 39 RCT + Bn.F.A. + Chemical Weapons Bn.

The 3d Division was given the mission of securing the highway from Canicatti to a point east of Caltanissetta and be prepared for further action on the 19th.

The 82d A/B to assemble at Palma and be prepared to move westward.

July 16th and 17th

Port Empedocle near Agrigento was taken by the Ranger Battalion while the 82d Division commenced moving by motor to an area south of Agrigento.

A company of an armored regiment, during this period, had been given the mission of securing high ground northwest of the town of Canicatti. A number of 88mm guns were in position here.

The company advanced across a level plain dotted with almond groves. The visibility was poor. As the advance continued the company opened up with every weapon they had. Their machine gun fire was particularly heavy. The position was taken and only one of the 18 tanks was lost. Most of the enemy casualties were caused by machine gun fire.

This is a good example of pinning the enemy down with area fire instead of waiting to find the exact location of guns.

On July 18th

the 3d Division was continuing its advance while the 82d was west of Agrigento.

19th

3d Division advanced to within 10 miles of San Stefano and the 82d was near Sciacca and the 2d A/D assembled at Campobello.

20th

3d had advanced to San Stefano while the 82d took Sciacca and advanced half way to Castelvetro.

21st

3d Division occupied Corleone with right flank patrols contacting the 45th Division.

82d pushed north to Santa Margherita.

Task Force X was organized: It contained 39th R.C.T., a Battalion of 155's, and a Battalion of Rangers. It moved to Castelvetro and covered the assembly of the Armored Division.

22d

Task Force X advanced to Marsala and extended east. The 2d Armored and the 3d Division marched on Palermo which was entered that evening without resistance.

23d

82d took Trapani.

On July 31st the Provisional Corps was reorganized; the 3d Division and the 45th interchanged Corps.

On July 14th

the 1st Division had taken Niscemi. Its left was a few miles south of Barrafranca while its right flank extended nearly to Caltagirone.

The 45th Division had taken Biscari Airport and advanced until its left flank approached Caltagirone and its right flank near Vizzini.

The executive officer of the 1st Bn. 180th Inf. related the following incident:

About five miles north of Biscari we were caught in position by 16 tanks and half tracks. We had only seven rounds of 81mm, 7 A.T. grenades, and 6 bazooka rockets and were in a tight spot.

Our Artillery Liaison Officer, Capt. Robert Wood, was wounded in the hip by a shell fragment. While an aid man was working on his hip he managed to get his radio going and called

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for fire. One air burst for adjustment came right down over the tanks. He then called for fire for effect. I don't know how many batteries were massed but the fire was magnificent. Several tanks were destroyed and the others driven off.

July 15th

The 45th Division assisted the 1st Canadian Division in the capture of Vizzini.

The new boundary between the American and British army was Vizzini-Enna-San Stefano.

July 16th

The 45th Division, as a result of the turning movement to the northwest, was pinched out. It was ordered to proceed southwest to Gela then advance to an area south of Barrafranca.

By the 17th the Division was south of Caltanissetta. This town was bombed by the Air Corps and the enemy withdrew during the evening.

The following day only slight resistance was met and a point midway between Enna and Stefano was reached. Again little resistance was met the following day as the advance continued.

On the 20th an Italian Battalion with two tanks was met and pushed back and the advance continued. By the 22d elements of the Division were in the outskirts of Palermo and on the north coast road west of Cefalu.

The following day the Division advanced toward the east. Bridge demolitions, antitank ditches, and road blocks were encountered. By the 24th it had advanced three miles beyond Cefalu and had taken the inland town of Castelbuono. During the next two days against gradually increasing resistance the Division had advanced half way to San Stefano. It was believed the entire German 29th Motorized Division would oppose the advance along this route.

During the next three days the advance was very slow. Mistretta was taken and the Division was preparing to make a flank attack against San Stefano from the south.

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The C.O. 3d Bn 180th Inf (Lt. Col. Patterson) had the following remarks to make covering part of this period:

I've always known scouting and patrolling were important but I never dreamed they are as important to a Battalion as they proved to be in combat.

West of San Stefano at Tusa two German Companies were in position in front of us. A strong patrol was sent out to seize a hill on the flank. The hill was taken at night and a Company was sent to occupy it. The Company Commander sent out three six-man patrols.

One got on high ground overlooking Tusa.

The second made a reconnaissance of routes in and around the town, while the third got on high ground on the far side of the town and kept it under constant observation. The Jerries must have thought that a large force was attempting to cut off their withdrawal. The two companies withdrew without firing a shot and gave up a good position. This was caused by 18-20 men on night patrols.

The C.O. 3d Bn, 179th (Lt. Col. James) stated that near Tusa Station one of our patrols worked around the flank getting on high ground. It then worked along a ridge line and completely cleaned out a German Artillery O.P. This silenced all German Artillery in the area and made possible the advance of the Regiment for several miles the next day.

San Stefano was being defended by a Regiment of the 29th Motorized Division. A U.S. destroyer furnished naval gunfire support for the attack on this town which was taken the night of the 31st. The 45th Division now reverted to the Provisional Corps in the west and it was replaced by the 3d Infantry Division.

On July 16th the 26th Infantry of the 1st Division had two Battalions abreast along a ridge close to Barrafranca. A Battalion of Light Tanks was on its right. In the middle of the morning 12-15 German Tanks came from the east exit of the hilltop

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town of Barrafranca. They approached through a wooded area toward one of the tank companies which was in defilade behind a ridge. At 250 yards the 37's from the tanks opened up knocking out seven of the German tanks while the Artillery knocked out two others. The remaining German Tanks immediately withdrew. About noon a number of rounds from a German rocket gun landed among the tanks. Two had their tracks thrown but no other tank damage was done even though one of the 210mm shells landed within 10 feet of a tank. Four men outside of the tanks were killed.

July 17th the Division was six miles east of Caltanissetta. It advanced toward Enna, which was taken on the 20th and the advance to the northwest continued.

On the 23d Petralia was captured and the highway cut. The Division then moved along the highway toward the east.

On the 26th the Air Corps reported that enemy reinforcements were moving across the Straits of Messina. The 15th Panzer Division was fighting a delaying action against the 1st and progress was slow.

On the 28th Nicosia was taken. The Air Corps reported about 200 vehicles around Cesaro.

On the 31st Cerami was taken and the Division advanced within five miles of Troina. The 4th Tabor of Goums, which was attached now to the 1st Division, captured Capizzi.

The 9th Infantry Division remained behind at Oran. The 39th R.C.T. and two Battalions of Artillery moved to Bizerte then on 14th July sailed for Licata and was attached to the 82d A/B Division.

The remainder of the Division Artillery left Bizerte 22d July, arriving the next day at Licata and was attached to the 2d Corps. On August 4th it reverted to the 9th Division south of Capizzi.

[REDACTED]

The C.G. (Eddy) C/s, G-3, G-4, and the Division Q.M. left Oran by plane the 28th and landed at Palermo.

The Division sailed from Oran the 29th in five Liberty and five passenger ships and arrived at Palermo the 31st. For two hours the following morning they were bombed and strafed by air but had no losses.

On the east coast the British had captured Syracuse and by July 13th had taken Augusta. In a further advance toward Catania they were held up by the stiffest resistance of the entire campaign. Finally on the 5th of August the town fell and the advance continued up the coast road and northwest around Mt. Etna.

August 1st the 1st Division was in contact with the enemy who were strongly entrenched on high ground at Troina. The next day the Division repulsed an enemy counterattack but made little advance due to damaged bridges, roads, and heavy mining. Engineers were at work clearing the minefields and repairing the roadway to permit the advance of the Artillery and transportation.

On the 3d the 16th Infantry enveloped from the north and one Battalion of the 18th from the south but little progress was made.

The following day eight and one-half Battalions Artillery placed a 50-minute preparation on the town and were supported by 72 planes dropping 500 bombs on Troina. In spite of this preparation only small advances were made. On the 5th the 60th Infantry of the 9th Division moved out from Capizzi to make a flank envelopment from the north. It was to proceed cross-country with a mission of securing the high ground north and northwest of Cesaro. The movement of this unit which was observed by the enemy probably influenced greatly the withdrawal of the enemy from Troina the night of the 5th. The 60th continued across rugged terrain. The Engineers were following behind constructing roads and trails for the transport. In the meantime pack mules and hand-carrying parties were used for supply

[REDACTED]

On the 5th enemy vessels were reported in Messina Straits for an enemy evacuation.

In spite of support from dive bombers little progress was made this day. Under cover of darkness the Germans withdrew continuing to the east. The following day the 1st Division advanced east of the town and by daylight the 7th were relieved by the 9th Division.

On the north coast road the 3d Division advanced and on August 1st the 30th Infantry was four miles east of San Stefano. The following day with the aid of naval gunfire it had advanced to a point two miles west of San Fratello. Progress here was very slow. At 0400 the 8th July the 2d Bn, 30th Infantry supported by a platoon of tanks and two Batteries of Artillery in ^{an} amphibious flanking movement made a surprise landing two miles east of Santa Agata and cut the highway. San Fratello and Santa Agata both fell that day. On the 11th another amphibious movement was made by the same Battalion at Brolo. The enemy resistance was now decreasing but demolitions slowed down progress. The advance was continued and the night of the 16/17th leading elements of the 3d Division (7th Infantry) entered Messina.

Early in the morning of the 7th the 60th Infantry was advancing in column of Battalions. The 1st Battalion in the lead suddenly received heavy mortar and Artillery concentrations. Twenty-seven men were killed and over 100 wounded. It dug in and evacuated its dead and wounded. The supporting artillery were displacing at the time and were unable to go into position. Whenever the Battalion attempted to move the artillery fire was shifted on it. The Regimental Commander held all Battalions in place and directed strong patrols be sent out at daylight the next day to locate enemy positions. A strong German patrol had ambushed the rear of the 2d Battalion and caused five casualties.

[REDACTED]

The next morning patrols discovered the enemy had withdrawn and it was not until 1100 the next day that the Regiment continued its advance. Four days later they cut the road north of Randazzo.

By 8th August the 9th Division had taken Cesaro and advanced against gradually decreasing enemy resistance. By the 13th Randazzo had fallen and the 1st Division replaced the 9th. It continued the advance toward the northeast and was halted on the 15th by orders of the 7th Army.

Advance elements of the British Eighth Army reached Messina the 17th just after the Americans had entered.

The German Army had utilized to the maximum the road nets and terrain which favored the retiring force, and had conducted a brilliant withdrawal which permitted the last of its units to escape to Italy the night of 16th August.

Three points are stressed as a result of this campaign:

1. Continuous mountain warfare causes excessive physical strain.
 2. The necessity of advancing without the regular means of transportation.
 3. The necessity for seizing high ground and the avoidance of natural avenues of approach.
- [REDACTED]

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