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FIFTH ARMY  
HISTORY

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R-8723-E

**DECLASSIFIED**

# FIFTH ARMY HISTORY

1 APRIL - 4 JUNE 1944

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*An infantry mortar platoon advances across the Anzio plain in the Fifth Army drive.*

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# FIFTH ARMY HISTORY



PART V

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## *The Drive to Rome*

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*Lieutenant General* MARK W. CLARK  
\* \* \* *commanding*

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*Preparation for the Attack*

ON 1 April Fifth Army under the command of Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark had essentially completed the shifts ordered one month previously, and lay concentrated either in the Anzio beachhead or in a narrow sector along the Garigliano River between the sea and the Camino hill mass. For the next month our men on the southern front, weary of rocky slopes and dark days, had that rest which they so badly needed.

Since the landing at Salerno on 9 September 1943 the divisions of Fifth Army had been fighting almost continuously, first in the drive past Naples and up the Volturno River to the German Winter Line behind Venafro and Mignano; then, from 15 November, in the harsh winter campaign through the mountains to the bloody rubble of Cassino. The battle for this town had lasted two months, from the middle of January to the middle of March. It had made names such as the Rapido, Belvedere Hill, Castle Hill, and the Abbey famous; but the troops available to us had not been able to crack the impregnable German positions.

Elsewhere, too, our drive in the winter had produced half-successes. The British divisions in 10 Corps had stormed across the Garigliano River the night of 17-18 January. In the next two weeks they gained a bridgehead, reaching from Minturno to Mount Joga, but German counterattacks stemmed their advance up the Ausonia Valley and prevented the capture of Castelforte. On 22 January two divisions of Fifth Army under VI Corps went ashore at Anzio. Though taken by surprise, the German High Command had quickly rallied and assembled every available division from north Italy and even units from France to push us back into the sea. The fierce German attacks of February and early March had failed, but General Clark had been forced to commit three more divisions to hold the beachhead.

At Cassino and at Anzio our attack had been stopped. Our troops were exhausted; and many units were woefully understrength. Yet the enemy too had suffered

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his heavy casualties in men and materiel—losses which it was far harder for him to repair. Further, our attack had brought strategic gains of great value. Allied troops now stood at the very entrance to the Liri Valley; Camino, Sammucro, Pantano, and Sant'Elia lay behind us. The establishment of a bridgehead across the Garigliano ensured that the next attack in this area would not have to start with a river crossing. The beachhead at Anzio, however difficult to maintain, was a foothold on the enemy's flank of inestimable value.

## A. FIFTH ARMY REGROUPS

1. *The Shift to a New Sector.* (See Maps Nos. 2 and 3.) After the winter campaign a major regrouping of the Allied forces in Italy was necessary to exploit our possibilities and to make the next attack a co-ordinated hammer blow which would crush the German armies before us. This regrouping was ordered on 5 March by General Sir Harold R. L. Alexander, commanding the Allied Armies in Italy (AAI), in his Operations Instruction No. 46.

The British 5 Corps under the direct command of AAI was to take over the east coast sector. Eighth Army would control the central sector, comprising the areas then held by the Polish Corps, the French Expeditionary Corps, and the New Zealand Corps. Henceforth the boundary between Fifth and Eighth Armies would run along Highway 6 from Capua to Mignano, thence along the railroad north of Mount Camino to its junction with the Sant'Ambrogio road, and generally down the latter to the Gari—Liri river junction. Fifth Army was thus relieved of the responsibility of the Atina, Cassino, and Rapido fronts. Its sector now consisted of a narrow strip 13 miles wide between the sea and the Liri River; in addition Fifth Army remained in command of the Anzio beachhead.

Plans for the future attack were not revealed in General Alexander's order of 5 March, but the general pattern could easily be discerned. Fifth Army, concentrated on a narrow front, presumably would be employed in a drive up the coast. At the same time strong forces from Eighth Army would smash up the Liri Valley. While a maximum effort was being launched in these zones, the remainder of the Allied line to the Adriatic would be held as thinly as possible.

Rain and the natural difficulties attendant on the movement of two large armies delayed completion of the reliefs and transfers until the end of March. The new interarmy boundary was placed in effect on 26 March; three days later the French Expeditionary Corps (FEC) and II Corps, the latter on the left, officially relieved the British 10 Corps in the Garigliano sector. 10 Corps was relieved

from Fifth Army on 31 March. This change had been contemplated since October 1943 to simplify our supply and administration but had never been tactically feasible. With the reduction in our sector and the arrival of fresh American troops the release of the British troops in Fifth Army became possible, except for the 1 and 5 Infantry Divisions at Anzio. The 56 and 46 Infantry Divisions, which had been with Fifth Army since Salerno, left the Mediterranean theater for a time; 10 Corps Headquarters remained with Eighth Army.

The front line of Fifth Army was held on 1 April by the 88th Infantry Division (339th Infantry of the 85th Infantry Division attached) from the sea to the vicinity of Castelforte and by the French 4th Mountain Division (4<sup>e</sup> Division de Montagne Marocaine) from that point to the Gari—Liri junction. More precisely, our line began at the sea just east of Scauri, curved north to Tremensuoli, and then east along the hills above the Garigliano plain to Minturno. Though we held this battered town, its streets were deserted by day, for the enemy had commanding observation here as elsewhere in our new sector. Further strongpoints marked the line through Tufo, along the lower slopes of Ceracoli Hill, and along the north side of Salvatito Hill. Below Castelforte the French took over and garrisoned the mass of bald, rugged hills on the east of Mount Majo—Mounts Turlito, Juga, and Ornito—around to the Garigliano. In the right half of the French sector our line followed the east bank of the river to the Army boundary.

2. *Rest and Training.* During April Fifth Army maintained the minimum of troops in the front lines along the Garigliano and at Anzio. At this time General Clark had seven American, three French, and two British divisions under his control. In II Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. Geoffrey T. Keyes, the 36th Infantry Division moved from Maddaloni to an area northwest of Avellino on 8-11 April and began strenuous mountain training. The 85th Division, which had reached Italy in late March, was attached to II Corps on 1 April, proceeded to the Qualiano—Mondragone area during 3-4 April, and continued training there for the next week. Troops of the division then moved into the line, and on 10-14 April the 85th Division assumed command of the left half of the Minturno bridgehead as far as Minturno itself, with the 339th Infantry on the left and the 337th Infantry on the right. The remainder of the II Corps line was held by the 349th Infantry under the 88th Division. During the next month the two new divisions gained battle experience in the relative quiet of the April lull. The one other major American unit on the southern front, Combat Command B of the 1st Armored Division, remained in reserve near Pozzuoli until the end of April.

The 4th Mountain Division, which was the freshest division in the FEC, held the Mount Juga bridgehead throughout April. The other two divisions of the Corps, the 2d Moroccan Infantry Division (2<sup>e</sup> Division d'Infanterie Marocaine)

and the 3d Algerian Infantry Division (3<sup>e</sup> Division d'Infanterie Algérienne), moved back to the area about Salerno, where they rested and carried out mountain training. In the middle of the month the 2d Moroccan Division came up to the FEC sector, and on 23 April its regiments began to take over the north part of the French bridgehead in rotation to get acquainted with the terrain. Command of the entire area, however, remained with the 4th Mountain Division under the FEC commander, General Alphonse Juin.

VI Corps under Maj. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott, Jr., held the Anzio beachhead with five and one-half divisions: the British 1 and 5 Divisions; the 3d, 34th, and 45th Infantry Divisions; and Combat Command A of the 1st Armored Division. Other units included the 36th Engineer Combat Regiment and the 1st Special Service Force. Outside of occasional raids, conducted to improve our positions or to maintain the offensive spirit in our men, the beachhead forces remained on the defensive, four infantry divisions in the line and the armor with one infantry division in reserve.

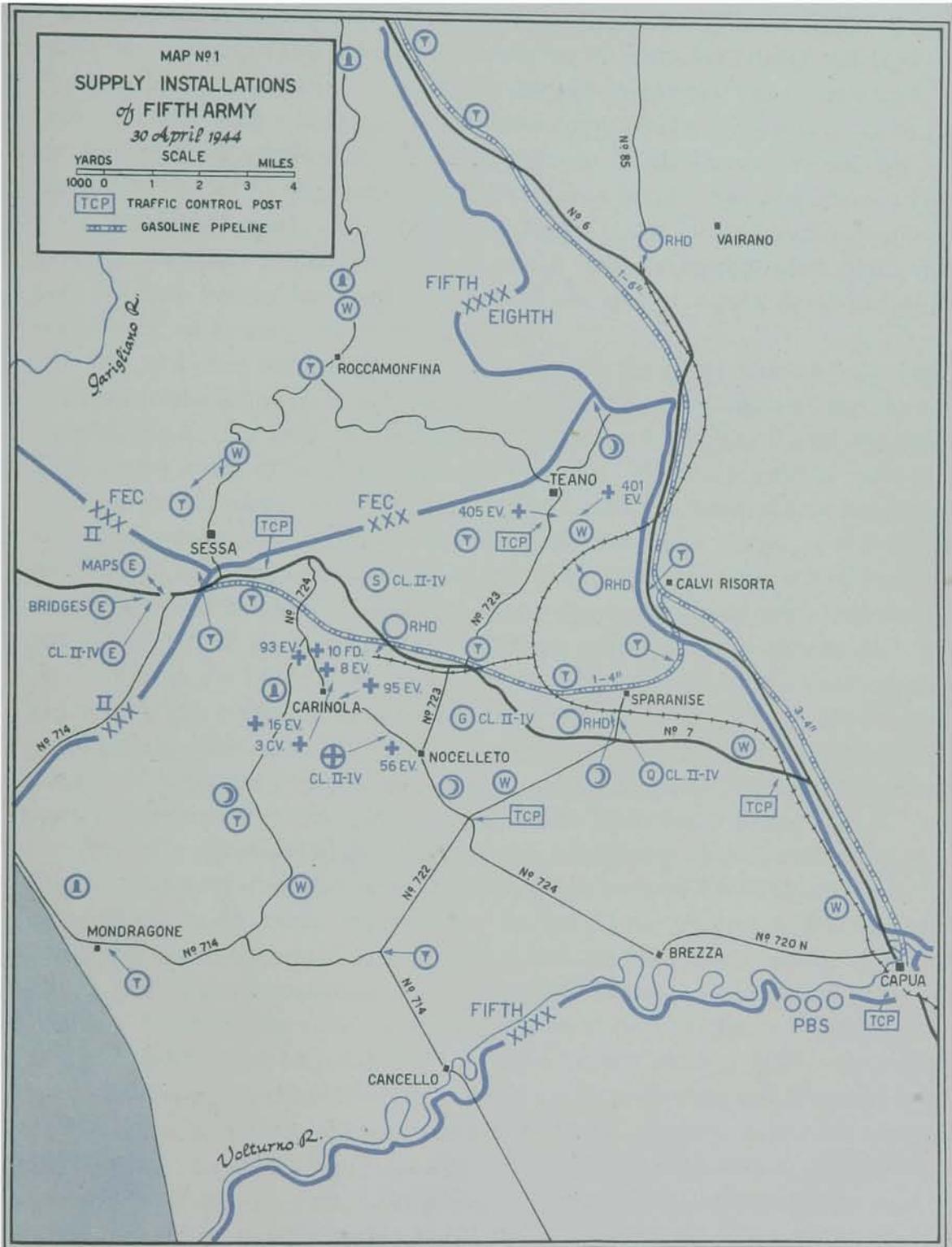
Men of all units at the beachhead and on the southern front received generous passes and allotments to rest centers in April. At the same time a carefully planned program of training was in progress to fit all members of Fifth Army both physically and mentally for the forthcoming attack. Units which had suffered heavily in the winter campaign were strengthened by the transfer of officers and the arrival of replacements, which brought every division up to strength. Equipment was overhauled, repaired, or replaced where necessary; for example, all field artillery pieces in the Army had been calibrated by the end of April. Tactical training revolved about exercises in mountain warfare and tank-infantry co-operation. Morale-building programs were carried out; above all the Italian sunny spring restored the morale of Fifth Army to the point it had reached at Salerno.

3. *The Supply of Fifth Army on the Southern Front.* (See Map No. 1.) The static situation in April favored the flow of supplies through the Army dumps and permitted the unimpeded transfer of our reserves from the axis of Highway 6 to that of Highway 7. By 14 April this transfer had proceeded to the point that the new set of supply installations could be announced in Army Administrative Order No. 48. Henceforth the rear boundary of Fifth Army ran along the Volturno River to Capua, and the forward boundary along the crest of the Mount Massico—Mount Santa Croce ridge. In comparison with the previous Army zone this area was much restricted, and our installations were necessarily crowded by the attempt to place them well west of Highway 6, now the main supply route of Eighth Army. In general Fifth Army dumps and depots lay behind Mount Massico, with some installations still in the Caserta—Capua area and a few dumps forward of the Massico ridge.

MAP No 1  
**SUPPLY INSTALLATIONS**  
*of FIFTH*  
**ARMY**  
 30 April 1944

YARDS SCALE MILES  
 1000 0 1 2 3 4

TCP TRAFFIC CONTROL POST  
 GASOLINE PIPELINE



Almost all supplies other than vehicles and Class III items were brought forward from Peninsular Base Section (PBS) in Naples by means of the Naples—Capua—Sparanise railroad. The principal railheads lay at Sparanise (Army and II Corps), Teano (FEC), and later at Carinola (II Corps); in addition the Caserta and Vairano railheads were still employed for some Army supply. Gasoline products came up through three 4-inch pipelines from Naples to Calvi Risorta. From this point one 6-inch line led to Mignano, and a 4-inch line to Sessa. The pipeline and railroad made the task of supply from the port of Naples to the forward Army installations much simpler than in the early months of the Italian campaign when motor transport had been heavily burdened. In view of the ease of supply Army dumps generally were maintained at low levels.

One first-class road, Highway 7, ran through the Army zone and was kept in excellent condition by the Army engineers. Since this route was used both by Fifth and Eighth Armies from the junction of Highways 6 and 7 to Capua, the bulk of Fifth Army traffic from Naples came to Canello. From this point it split, partly by Route 722 to Highway 7 below Sparanise, partly by Route 714 to Mondragone and then around the south end of Mount Massico to II Corps. Another road, 720N—724, ran from Capua to Brezza and on to Nocelleto, where it met Route 723, the main lateral line behind Mount Massico. In the spring, as rains decreased, all roads in the Fifth Army area were maintained more easily and bore up well under the burden of the heavy traffic of a large army in a limited area. Constant supervision by traffic control points and the Army military police kept this traffic moving at all times. Halting for any purpose on the main supply routes was forbidden; as a result of intelligent traffic supervision and preventive motor maintenance, extended jams of hundreds of vehicles did not occur in the Fifth Army sector.

The only difficulties in the supply of the Army came at the forward end of our lines of communication, for here all materiel and personnel had to cross the Garigliano River under enemy observation. In the II Corps area a floating bridge above the destroyed bridge on Highway 7 took the bulk of our traffic, with a foot-bridge and ferry downstream and two bridges (Damiano and Rossi) farther upstream. The FEC had four bridges at the bend of the Garigliano—Tiger (Pateley), Leopard, Jaguar, and Lion (Skipton). In the French sector it was estimated that 10 % of all enemy artillery fire was directed at Tiger Bridge, and the main bridges of both corps were damaged several times in April. Floating mines introduced by the Germans upstream also threatened the French bridges until a naval mine net was strung across the river. Beginning 5 April, chemical units laid a smoke screen every day and on moonlit nights at the two bridge areas to reduce enemy visibility, and further precaution was taken to build up stocks west of the Garigliano in the event of a temporary interruption in the supply routes.

## B. THE TERRAIN OF THE MAY DRIVE

1. *General.* (See Map No. 19.) The terrain before our forces on the southern front consisted principally of a chain of steep and rugged mountains, averaging about 15 miles in width and stretching approximately 60 miles northwest toward Rome. Bounded on one side by the sea and on the other by the Liri—Sacco Valley, this strip presented all the variations which the Italian landscape can afford. At Gaeta and Terracina the mountains come down to the sea; elsewhere the high ground recedes and yields either to the flat, waterlogged Fondi and Pontine plains or to the fruitful coastal strip between Formia and Minturno. Inland are such formidable peaks as Mount Petrella and abrupt cliffs towering hundreds of feet; yet here too scrub-covered rolling hills set amid farmlands offer an immediate contrast to the sheer rock walls.

The first part of the mountain chain, the Aurunci Mountains, extends about 20 miles from the Garigliano to the Fondi—Pico road. Rising to 940 meters at Mount Majo southwest of the junction of the Gari and Liri rivers, the mountains then fall away into the Ausonia Valley but rise to 1533 meters at Mount Petrella. The two valleys which run respectively north and south from Itri and Pico almost separate the western portion of the Aurunci Mountains from the main elevations of the Petrella massif. North and west of Fondi lie 12 miles of the Ausoni Mountains as far as the Amaseno River valley. Beyond Sezze and the Palombara Gap the Lepini Mountains continue the chain 20 miles to the broad valley between Velletri and Valmontone. The mountainous area then ends with the Colli Laziali mass overlooking the Tiber Valley.

The scarcity of roads in the zone facing Fifth Army presented considerable difficulties, both to the defenders and to the attackers. The only good road along the axis of advance was Highway 7 on the extreme left. This route crosses the Garigliano below Minturno, follows the coast to Formia, and turns northwest through the mountains to Itri and Fondi. Then, after skirting the coastal marshes to the bottleneck of Terracina, it runs 31 miles through the level Pontine Marshes to Cisterna. The entire supply of II Corps depended on this road.

Since no routes break through the mountain mass about Mount Petrella, the FEC was forced to depend on a number of minor roads well over to its right flank. A poor road cuts northwest from Castelforte to Ausonia, north of which it joins the second-class river route leading from Sant'Ambrogio around through Esperia to Pico and San Giovanni Incarico. From this point the FEC could make use of two routes forward, one through Pastena and Ceccano, the other through Lenola, Vallecorsa, and Amaseno.

One lateral road branches off Highway 7 west of Minturno and runs north through Ausonia and San Giorgio a Liri to Cassino. Another useful lateral route, Highway 82, proceeds north from Itri through Pico and San Giovanni, and a third follows the valley Sezze—Prossedi—Frosinone. After the initial fighting the enemy was forced to withdraw at such a pace that he could not spare time for heavy demolitions and mining; damage to the road net accordingly did not delay Fifth Army as much as it did Eighth Army, struggling across the streams in the Liri Valley.

2. *The Aurunci Mountains.* (See Map No. 3.) The area immediately in front of Fifth Army, bounded on the north by the Liri River, on the west by Highway 82, and on the south by the sea, falls from the military point of view into several subsections: the hills centering about Mount Majo, the Ausonia Valley, the huge massif dominated by Mount Petrella, and the coastal plain in the region of Formia and Gaeta.

The northeast sector, isolated by the Ausonia Valley and the Ausonia Defile and partly encircled by the Liri and Garigliano rivers, is a hilly triangle approximately 6 miles wide at its northern end and 12 miles long. From the rivers the ground rises first slowly, then more rapidly in numerous hills past Sant'Ambrogio and San Giorgio to the main Majo mass. To the north this mass consists of two ridges, one running south from Cantalupo Hill and the other southeast from Castellone Hill. Between the ridges is the steep Vallemaio Valley; at their junction lies the peak of Mount Majo. The wild area running on southeast from Mount Majo, a series of limestone ridges and rounded hills separated by narrow and steep-sided valleys, is penetrated from the east only by the poor road from Castelforte to Coreno, and by a few trails which switch back and forth along the natural terraces of the mountain mass. Below Castelforte the land descends to Hill 413 (Mount Ciannelli) and Ceracoli Hill (110 meters), and then falls away south into the valley of Ausente Creek.

Between the Majo mass and the Petrella escarpment is a triangular area of gentle swells given over to open fields. This valley gradually rises to a height of 175 meters north of Ausonia and narrows to a defile, through which runs the Ausonia—San Giorgio road. Toward the south the valley is split by a wedge of low hills and small farm valleys extending from the Minturno ridge north to Mount dei Bracchi. In a narrow valley to the east of Mount dei Bracchi (205 meters) flows Ausente Creek, which drains most of the plains below Ausonia; a smaller stream, Capo d'Acqua Creek, rises below Spigno to follow the western fork of the valley.

The western side of the Ausonia Valley is sharply delimited by the high fault escarpment of Mount La Civita and Mount Fammera, which marks the beginning of the Petrella massif—a region of wild mountains and upland basins stretching on six miles to the Itri—Pico road. Though Mount Petrella is the highest peak,

the center of the region lies at Mount Revole (1285 meters). The mountains on the east side are more or less devoid of trees, but the scrub growth becomes thicker toward the west.

No roads traverse this mass in any direction, and only a few trails, made by charcoal burners and shepherds, run along its steep slopes and narrow valleys. On the south and east access to the mountain block is well-nigh impossible. The coastal plain to the south slopes up past the isolated hill of Mount Campese to the foot of the mountains, which rise almost sheer. To the east a steep cliff overlooks the Ausonia Valley along its entire length, except at Spigno. Here one trail ascends the escarpment to the northwest with a 51 % grade for the worst 500 yards and curves north and west of Mount Petrella to the mountain basin called the Fraile. Another possible route hugs the southern side of Mount Petrella and continues on to Mount Ruazzo.

The northern and western sides present easier slopes. A good mule trail leads southwest from Esperia to the Fraile; from the Itri—Pico road a trail which was being improved by the Germans before our drive runs as far as Piano del Campo, a level upland plain west of Mount Revole. While individuals and mules can penetrate to this peak from several directions, the movement of motorized equipment through the Petrella massif is completely out of the question.

On the south of the central mountains the terrain sinks into low hills and the plain through which Highway 7 runs to Formia and Itri, where it meets Highway 82. To the north of the massif the Esperia—Pontecorvo road follows relatively easy slopes through a region of hills and broad valleys. Directly northwest of Esperia the road runs below the conical peak of Mount d'Oro (846 meters); then it enters the low valley of Forma Quesa Creek and curves about Mount del Mandrone to Highway 82 east of Pico.

### C. ENEMY DISPOSITIONS

1. *Enemy Defensive Lines.* (See Map No. 3.) The mountainous terrain to our front, which could be approached by road only on the flanks, strongly favored the defense. The Germans had further improved their situation by the fortification of two main lines. The first of these was the famous Gustav Line, which ran along the hills above Minturno and Castelforte, in front of Mount Majo to the Gari—Rapido rivers, and up the Rapido past Cassino. The second, the Adolf Hitler Line, extended from Terracina along the Fondi—Pico road to Pontecorvo and across the Liri Valley through Aquino to Piedimonte.

Between these two lines in the Fifth Army zone were two switch lines, the Dora and the Orange. The former began at the sea near Gaeta and curved east and then north about the base of the Petrella massif to Esperia and Sant'Oliva, where it connected with a spur of the Hitler Line. Just west of Ausonia the Dora Line met the Orange Line, which ran from Castelforte west through Ausonia. The main works of this latter line were astride the road north of Ausonia and evidently were designed to bar the Ausonia Valley in the event we broke through at Minturno; the Germans apparently believed that we could not crack the Gustav Line frontally at Mount Majo itself.

During March and April our command gained a clear picture of the Gustav Line to our front, for the enemy was so lulled by the static situation as to change his installations infrequently. Through photo reconnaissance, patrols, interrogation of prisoners and escaped civilians, and all the other means available to G-2, we obtained a mass of detailed information extending our knowledge of the enemy far into his rear areas. Some of this collated intelligence was acted upon immediately, as in the artillery program for methodical destruction of bridges and nightly harassing missions on enemy routes of supply; but most of it was stored away to give the enemy a surprise on D Day.

The Gustav Line below the Liri had not been deliberately laid out in advance but was the result of the earlier action in the area. In January and February the British 10 Corps had captured Minturno, Mount Juga, and other points in the previous German line of defense; after halting our attack the enemy stabilized his line on the basis of the positions which he still held. In general the Gustav Line in our zone was characterized by such fortifications as trenches, firing pits, pillboxes, and dugouts.

The dugouts were usually excavations in the sides of hills, 9 feet long, 12 feet wide, and 12 feet deep. The walls were strengthened with timbers; three to four layers of logs were crisscrossed over the top; and earth was piled up over the roofing to a depth of five feet, making the outside appear to be an oval-shaped mound. Large stones and rubble were added for reinforcement and camouflage, while the entrance had winding steps for protection against shell fragments. The dugout was used by the enemy infantry primarily as living quarters and as cover during our artillery concentrations.

In the sector before II Corps the ordinary pillbox was based on an excavation five feet wide and three feet long. Pillars were placed in each corner, wooden beams were laid across these, and on top of the beams as many as three layers of railroad rails were placed. Further reinforcement was obtained by an additional covering of railroad ties, stone, and earth. Another type of pillbox was constructed by digging holes about five feet deep in the floor of a house and then reinforcing

them in the same manner as in the first type, with the exception that only wooden beams and earth were used as covering. If the houses were then demolished by artillery fire, the rubble merely added strength and concealment to the position. The pillbox accommodated both riflemen and machine guns; in addition uncovered machine-gun positions and fire trenches were used.

Defenses of this sort were placed in depth along the front, especially in the hills about Minturno and on the Castelforte—Ausonia axis. In the Mount Majo area the enemy's positions included crude stone bunkers, dugouts, and unsheltered automatic-weapon emplacements, but the Germans depended heavily in this district upon the natural difficulties of the mountainous terrain. Farther north the Gustav Line curved down to the close vicinity of the Garigliano behind barbed wire and an antitank ditch. Along the river the enemy forward positions lay on the lower foothills about 200 yards from the river bank; reserve positions were built on the gentle reverse slopes of the hills north and south of Sant'Ambrogio and at Sant'Andrea. Throughout the entire line the Germans made good use of commanding heights and reverse slopes, and placed their automatic weapons skillfully to command all avenues of approach.

Mines also were extensively used to protect the German positions against infantry and armor. Trails, draws, and every natural avenue of approach were mined and often wired as well. Patterned minefields were not common, but the Tellermines were normally spaced four yards apart and the wooden mines two yards. In some areas, however, the mines were so close that one detonation would set off a series. The use of antipersonnel mines and box mines was widespread in front of II Corps and was being increased when our attack started.

Our knowledge of the Hitler Line was less complete. In the Liri Valley it apparently was—and in fact proved to be—another belt such as the Gustav Line at Cassino, with « armored crabs » (portable steel pillboxes) and other carefully prepared positions. These steel and concrete defenses extended south of the Liri River to Sant'Oliva and curved east to anchor on Mount d'Oro. From Pontecorvo the Hitler Line also reached southwest to Fondi and Terracina; late in April prisoners reported that the Todt Organization was completing a line of steel bunkers on the line west of Lenola. From photo reconnaissance, however, the interesting fact developed that the Germans did not appear to be fortifying the Petrella massif or indeed stretching a continuous belt of defenses from the Liri to the sea at any point in rear of the Gustav Line.

The Dora Line, for example, had some fortifications in the vicinity of Mount Campese and others north of Esperia, but between these points the German High Command apparently relied on the rock cliffs of Mount La Civita and Mount Famera to break any attack. Prisoners taken after the beginning of our drive gave

a full description of the Dora Line at its northern extremity, with its concrete-roofed dugouts and emplacements for weapons, but reported it as far from complete. Wire had not been laid, no mines had been planted, and trees still limited the fields of fire; worst of all the dugouts had been constructed facing us so that direct fire from our artillery and tanks could cover the entrances. As our attack developed, it became increasingly clear that the Germans had not taken full advantage of their month of leisure to carry out a policy of ever improving their defenses in the rear; on the contrary their confidence in the Gustav Line, which had broken our earlier assaults, seems to have mounted to such a point that they relied in an almost fatalistic manner on the fortifications already built.

2. *German Forces in Italy.* (See Map No. 2.) During April and early May the enemy units before us remained generally in the same areas and under the same command as in March. The overall command was called Army Group Southwest, under Field Marshal Albert Kesselring. North Italy, with the Riviera and part of Yugoslavia, was called Area Witthoeft; the rest of German-occupied Italy fell under the German Tenth and Fourteenth Armies. The latter of these, commanded by General Eberhard von Mackensen, was responsible for containing our troops in the Anzio beachhead and for guarding the coast north of the Tiber, while Tenth Army under General Heinrich von Vietinghoff genannt Scheel held the southern front.

On 3 April Area Witthoeft was garrisoned by LXXXVII Panzer (Armored) Corps and seven divisions. In Italy proper were the 356th Grenadier (Infantry) Division near Genoa, the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division near Leghorn, the 162d Turcoman Division near Cecina, and the 278th Grenadier Division, forming on the east coast.

Fourteenth Army had two corps and eight divisions. In reserve were the 92d Grenadier Division, forming in the vicinity of Civitavecchia, the 29th Panzer Grenadier (Armored Infantry) Division near Lake Bracciano, and the 26th Panzer Division about Sezze. I Parachute Corps, on the north flank of the Anzio beachhead, had in line the 4th Parachute Division, the 65th Grenadier Division, the 1027th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, the Infantry Lehr Regiment, and the 3d Panzer Grenadier Division. In LXXVI Infantry Corps, on the south flank of the beachhead, were the 362d Grenadier Division and the 715th Light Division with attached German and Italian units.

Under Tenth Army, on the southern front, LI Mountain Corps was responsible for the Adriatic coast with the 334th Grenadier Division, the 305th Grenadier Division, and perhaps the 114th Light Division under its command. Most of the main front was garrisoned by XIV Panzer Corps: from west to east, the 94th Grenadier Division, the 71st Grenadier Division, part of the 44th Grenadier Division

—all these in the Fifth Army zone—then the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division in the Liri Valley, the 1st Parachute Division about Cassino, the rest of the 44th Grenadier Division above Cassino, and the 5th Mountain Division in the central mountains. Tenth Army reserve consisted of the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division north of Frosinone.

In all Marshal Kesselring had on 3 April 22 divisions, the same number as AAI. The equality in number of units, however, did not indicate equality in force, for the bulk of Kesselring's divisions was greatly understrength in men and materiel, as they had been throughout most of the Italian campaign. Favored units, such as the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division, were brought back up to full strength after each debacle, but the rest were reorganized after the January—March battles on an average strength of 300-500 men per infantry battalion.

The Germans were particularly weak in reserves. Of the units in Area Witthoef only the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division from the Leghorn area took part in the May campaign. Available reserves farther south consisted of three mobile units: the 90th and 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, and the 26th Panzer Division. When these had been committed, as they were early in the May drive, further reinforcements could be gained only by pulling units out of the Adriatic line. The German High Command had evidently decided that the requirements of other theaters precluded any increase in its Italian investment, and that the German forces in Italy would be adequate at least for an orderly, deliberate withdrawal in the event of a heavy attack. This proved to be costly economy.

Along the Garigliano front the enemy remained quiet throughout April and early May. (*See Map No. 3.*) The most sensitive sectors lay east of Mount Majo and at Ceracoli Hill, commanding the valley of Ausente Creek. Here the enemy apparently grew nervous on two occasions in the middle and end of April, for minor attacks were carried out to gain prisoners and information. In general, however, the German lines were lightly held during the daylight hours; night activity consisted of minor patrolling and alert outposting.

From time to time regular reliefs were carried out in the front lines, but the sectors of the two divisions before us remained much the same throughout the month and one-half before our attack. When our offensive began, the 94th Grenadier Division still held the coastal sector from Scauri to Ausente Creek, with the 267th and 274th Grenadier Regiments in the line and the 276th Grenadier Regiment coast watching in reserve. (1) The 71st Grenadier Division, reinforced by elements of three other divisions, garrisoned the long sector from the Ausente to the Liri. The 211th Grenadier Regiment was deployed from the Ausente to Hill 413; then came

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(1) For the major components of the German divisions facing Fifth Army, see Annex No. 2E.

the 194th Grenadier Regiment in Castelforte and the 191st Grenadier Regiment in the hills just north of this town. A mixed group comprising the 131st Grenadier Regiment and the 44th Reconnaissance Battalion (44th Grenadier Division); the 171st Fusilier Battalion; and the 2d Battalion, 115th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (15th Panzer Grenadier Division), defended the vital sector extending from Mount Faito to the Garigliano and along the latter to its junction with the Liri. The enemy had long appreciated the importance of the Majo ridge, of which Mount Faito was a part, and kept it as well manned as possible; but his strength was so scanty that in some points he was forced to depend largely on the natural obstacles of the mountains. Outside of the division reserves and the 620th Ost Battalion (largely Russian) at Gaeta, the German command before us could count on no support in the first days of our attack.

The division artillery was mostly emplaced in the Ausonia Valley. Interesting shifts took place in the month of April as the enemy began to realize, though incompletely, the strength concentrated against him. At this time the artillery of the 94th Grenadier Division shifted farther west in the Formia—Mount Campese area, and the artillery of the 71st Grenadier Division withdrew to the west side of Ausente Creek; in both cases batteries tended to split up and so to reduce the effectiveness of our counterbattery fire. To compensate for the retreat of the light artillery an estimated battalion of nebelwerfers, apparently 120-mm with a range of 6500 yards, and a company or two of self-propelled guns were moved up to positions northwest of Mount dei Bracchi. Heavier artillery consisted of seven 170-mm guns near Itri and one near Gaeta, some 105-mm guns in the vicinity of Ausonia, San Giorgio, and Formia, and a battalion of 150-mm guns near Ausonia.

Throughout the lull before our attack enemy artillery remained silent in the morning when the sun favored our observation, and increased in the late afternoon. The main targets of enemy fire, limited severely by ammunition restrictions, consisted of our forward troop areas, the towns of Minturno and Tufo, our bridges over the Garigliano, and the American artillery along the coast; but the enemy was also quick to bring fire on excessive vehicular movements, tanks, and self-propelled guns. Though the enemy enjoyed good ground observation, he had little photo reconnaissance. Camouflage and flash defilade accordingly protected our artillery, even when well forward.

3. *Enemy Supply and Our Air Force.* (See Map No. 2.) While supplies for Fifth Army moved up in regular schedule from Naples, the materials of war for the enemy were forced to run a long gauntlet all the way down the Italian peninsula. Three means of transportation were available to the enemy—rail, motor, and ship—and all were hammered by our XII Tactical Air Command. Our air force had had abundant practice during the winter in learning how to block the enemy

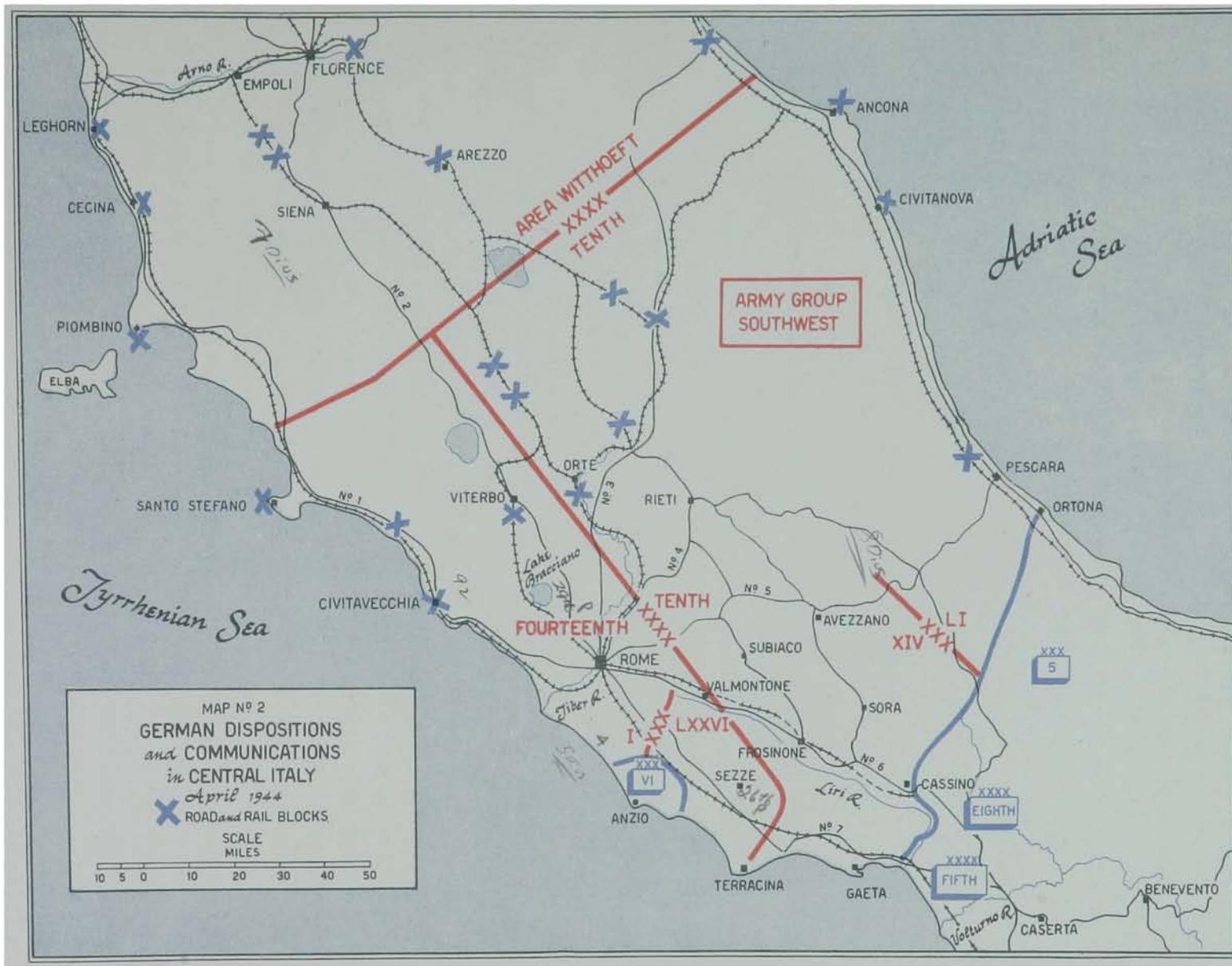
communications; as the flying weather improved in April it put its lessons into good effect, and devoted the bulk of its energy to jamming enemy supply lines.

At no time in April were the rail lines south from Florence and Leghorn clear. Our medium bombers created numerous blocks, some of them simultaneously. The Cecina bridge on the coastal line was out for the entire month. The Florence—Arezzo line was interrupted; the important bypass line Empoli—Siena was neutralized. Farther south the fighter-bombers took over, kept the main Orte line cut, and also hamstrung the lines through Viterbo. Photo reconnaissance reports agreed with the results from interrogation of prisoners: the Germans were unable to place any weight on the rail system south of Florence.

Accordingly the bulk of German supplies was transshipped in the Florence area from rail to truck and came down Highways 1 and 2 through Rome. This maneuver was not overlooked by our air force, which sent numerous armed reconnaissance flights over the road net behind the enemy lines, both by day and by night. Some increase in shipping along the west coast also took place, but the ports of Piombino and Santo Stefano were so damaged by our raids that a large part of the seaborne supplies was unloaded over open beaches. As a final blow to the Germans, our air force carried out a systematic program against their dumps, motor parks, and motor repair installations.

The results of this activity were disturbing to the German supply lines. When the weather permitted, between 100 and 200 sorties were flown daily against enemy communications and dumps. The report of one fighter group (the 57th) for the period 1-20 April gives a clear idea of the probable effect. In attacks against railroads the group claimed 111 track cuts and 8 bridges out, 24 engines destroyed and 30 damaged, 140 railroad cars destroyed and 348 damaged. Motor transport hit by the group included 133 flamers, 54 destroyed, and 114 damaged, while 1 road bridge was destroyed and 2 damaged. Eight gasoline dumps were set on fire, one oil dump destroyed, three ammunition dumps destroyed and one damaged. Other groups did as well.

Prisoners of war agreed that running the gauntlet of our air force from Florence south was unpleasant. On 13 April one German soldier went from Florence to Arezzo; when captured later, he reported the road « one tremendous M/T cemetery » with piles of destroyed vehicles on both sides and some recent casualties still blocking the highway. During his trip the road was bombed four times. Other prisoners indicated that enemy trucks, consisting mostly of Fiats, Spas, and Lancias, were overloaded by one-third and broke down frequently through lack of spare parts, which were rare since our bombing of the Italian truck factories at Milan and Turin. Such reports were scarcely exaggerated, as our troops discovered when they marched up the wreck-laden roads north of Rome in June.



MAP No 2  
**GERMAN DISPOSITIONS  
 and COMMUNICATIONS  
 in CENTRAL ITALY**  
*April 1944*  
 X ROAD and RAIL BLOCKS  
 SCALE  
 MILES  
 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50

Nevertheless the German forces on the front lines opposite us were never critically short of rations or ammunition, and any interruptions in the flow of supplies close to the front were due more to immediate artillery action on our part than to the activities of the air force farther to the rear. Enemy artillery ammunition had to be conserved, and enemy reserves in all branches of supply were not high; but enough materiel got through our aerial blockade to keep the enemy in fighting condition. Undoubtedly the burdens imposed on the German system of supply did help speed the enemy collapse in our May drive, but precise evidence on the importance of this factor is not yet available.

#### D. *GENERAL PREPARATIONS BY FIFTH ARMY*

1. *Reinforcements.* During the previous months of the Italian campaign Fifth Army had been built from the small force that landed at Salerno to a powerful organization well supplied with all the types of units necessary in a modern army. The fighting thus far, however, had revealed the need for further reinforcement in some categories, and efforts were made in April to obtain the necessary units. These efforts were partially successful, but the demands of other theaters prevented complete fulfillment of Fifth Army's needs.

As far as infantry divisions were concerned, Fifth Army entered the May battle with four essentially fresh divisions—two French and two American. The French 1st Motorized Division (1<sup>re</sup> Division de Marche d'Infanterie) began to unload at Naples on 20 April and closed at Benevento eight days later. This division, composed of the 1st Marine Regiment and the 1st, 2d, and 4th Infantry Brigades, included many of the early members of the Free French Forces, and used the Cross of Lorraine of that unit as its insignia. Since Allied Force Headquarters initially planned to train the division at the Invasion Training Center (Salerno), only one regimental combat team was requested by AAI for Fifth Army on 25 April. Five days later the entire division was attached to the FEC to give it combat experience. On 6 May AAI informed Fifth Army that plans for the amphibious training of the 1st Motorized Division were cancelled and that the unit was completely at our disposal for the May drive.

In addition to this French division the 4th Mountain Division was also completely assembled in Italy by the shipments on 4 and 27 April of its remaining elements from Corsica. Another group of tabors also arrived, and the First Goum Headquarters was attached to the FEC on 13 April to control the 1st, 2d, and 4th Groups of Tabors, which totalled about 12,000 by D Day.

By the beginning of the May attack the FEC under General Juin had been considerably strengthened in Corps troops. Large-scale attachment of American engineers was no longer necessary, and only in armor, field artillery, and antiaircraft artillery were American units employed in large numbers by the FEC. With 4 divisions and 3 groups of tabors, the French had an effective strength of 99,000 on 11 May. To cope with this increase in strength and to give combat training to command elements a second French corps headquarters under Lt. Gen. Edgard R. M. de Larminat was brought over, the commanding general arriving 11 May and his reduced headquarters early in June. Though the French troops were never officially split, this new command was employed by General Juin to direct part of his operations in May and June.

An American corps headquarters, IV Corps under Maj. Gen. Willis D. Crittenger, also came to Fifth Army. Arriving in Italy on 28 March, IV Corps remained at Pozzuoli and vicinity for the next seven weeks in charge of coastal defense. On 28 May the Corps was put in the line for a brief period, and it again took command of part of the Fifth Army zone in June.

Fifth Army had two fresh American divisions for D Day. The 88th Division under Maj. Gen. John E. Sloan had been employed in part to hold the lines above Cassino during March, and took over command of the II Corps sector on the lower Garigliano at the end of the month; but its first experience in attack came during the May drive. The 85th Division under Maj. Gen. John B. Coulter closed in Italy late in March and likewise received combat experience along the Garigliano during the quiet weeks of the April lull. These two units formed the spearhead of the attack.

Another division, the 91st Infantry Division, arrived in the Mediterranean theater in April, but its employment was indefinite for some time. On 5 April Natousa informed Fifth Army that the division would be assigned to us; six days later the destination of the division was changed to Oran and its assignment to Allied Force Headquarters. The 91st Division arrived in North Africa 21 April-4 May and began combat training at Arzew. General Clark, however, was still anxious to obtain further American troops and requested one regimental combat team of the division through AAI on 26 April, to be effective in Italy by 1 June. Allied Force Headquarters replied favorably and scheduled the 361st Regimental Combat Team to arrive on 27 May. The regiment finally reached Anzio by direct movement from North Africa on 1 June; the remainder of the division, after temporary assignment to Seventh Army, was released to Fifth Army late in May and came to Italy after the fall of Rome.

The rest of the Fifth Army reinforcement consisted of smaller units. Two pack artillery battalions, the 601st and 602d, were secured for the mountain warfare which lay ahead; and our long-range artillery received a notable reinforcement in

the form of 4 8-inch guns, with a range of 35,000 yards. Most of the other additions were dictated by the likelihood of a mobile situation developing in our attack, which would put greater demands on our reconnaissance elements and on transportation both from the railheads and in the mountains. The 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron arrived in the middle of May; truck units were secured from PBS and on loan from Seventh Army; and the number of Italian pack companies was increased from four to six. Other mules and mulehandlers were added to the two pack artillery battalions.

2. *Replacements.* Shortly after the cessation of active fighting in March all units of Fifth Army were brought back up to full strength and maintained at that level. The experience of the previous months, however, demonstrated that as soon as our combat troops again took up the offensive their strength would diminish rapidly through injuries and wounds. At Cassino and at Anzio rifle companies had been reduced to 60 and 80 men in only a few weeks of fighting, with a consequent reduction in morale and battle efficiency.

The system of replacements in the past had not proven satisfactory. In general infantry companies had received new men in bulk while they were in reserve, and frequently moved back into the line before the strangers could be absorbed into the close-knit organization of the unit. When a company had been so greatly reduced that the majority of its men consisted of replacements, its combat efficiency remained low for some time. Even worse, the new men, generally fresh from the United States, suffered disproportionate casualties until they became battle-wise. The results of the system had been undue losses, the slow weakening of good outfits in the line, and the bulk reception of new men who needed extensive training in too brief a time.

In April the flow of replacements from the United States permitted the establishment for the first time in the campaign of a replacement reserve. Natoussa and the War Department approved the suggestion made by G-1, Fifth Army, on 15 April that each infantry division be allotted an overstrength of 750 replacements. These men, all infantry, were integrated into the division on the basis of 250 per regiment. During the quiet period in April the replacements were rotated with the regular personnel of the infantry rifle companies and thus secured combat experience in the outfits to which they would eventually be assigned.

When the May drive began, all replacements were back in their divisional pools. As casualties began to reduce the strength of the front-line companies, requests for replacements went back much as ration requests and were filled as automatically. The strength of the infantry divisions in Fifth Army accordingly remained well up throughout the campaign, and its rifle companies continued to maintain a high peak of efficiency. All commanders were well satisfied with the new policy, which

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also had a definite influence in keeping up the morale of old men and replacements alike. The gaps caused by battle were filled so quickly that soldiers were less conscious of the casualties, and the new men came into their outfits with greater confidence as a result of their previous combat experience.

3. *The Army Plan to Ensure Surprise.* On 15 April Fifth Army issued a camouflage plan for the future operation. This plan, based on an AAI scheme, went beyond the purely technical aspects of camouflage to lay out an entire program to gain the great advantage of surprise in our drive. The general aim was to present a picture of normal defensive activity in the Fifth Army zone until the very last minute before D Day, H Hour. As many units as possible were to remain in their locations as of 15 April until the eve of the attack. Those which shifted forward proceeded by night into locations which had already been camouflaged; rear parties or other units maintained a semblance of activity in the old areas.

After 25 April units west of the Volturno which moved other than in normal reliefs did not post location signs, and to keep the presence of the 1st Motorized Division hidden its troops removed all unit insignia from clothes and vehicles before arriving in Italy. II Corps and the FEC were ordered not to use radio communication with the 1st Motorized Division and the 36th Division under any conditions, and all radio activity was carefully regulated to present a picture of the normal nets with a normal number of stations. Among other safeguards relieving units took over the call signs and frequencies of the relieved organizations.

Activity in the area forward of Mount Massico and Mount Santa Croce was especially restricted. Only troops in the initial assault moved west of this line; dumps were not established in the area unless essential and then gradually, well off the main roads. Traffic to these forward dumps moved as far as possible after dark without lights. Preparations for the construction of new bridges across the Garigliano after the beginning of our attack were carried out only on direct approval of Fifth Army.

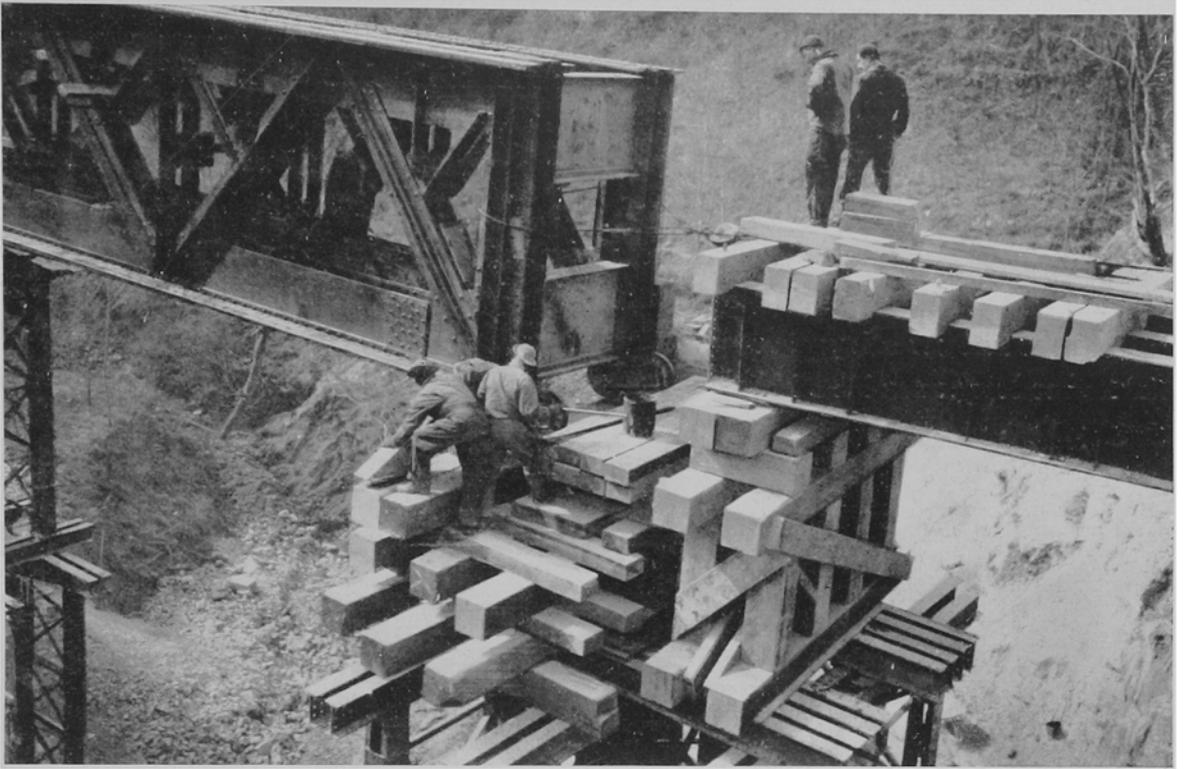
By 15 April the minimum of corps artillery necessary to support our defensive fires was in position, much of it still in its old locations east of Cassino. The rest lay in reserve, including all the heavy howitzers except for two 240-mm howitzers. These pieces were engaged in a program of methodical destruction of enemy bridges. During the entire month of April II Corps artillery fired 68,858 rounds, one-fifth of its May expenditure. As far as possible the May drive was supported initially from already established positions. The remainder of the corps artillery moved directly to battle positions from rest areas in the last few days before D Day, and an increase in the volume of artillery fire was carefully avoided.

All aspects of Fifth Army activity were thus regulated to present a picture of static defense. The regular reliefs continued in the front line, and new units of

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the 85th Division were committed, as if in a quiet sector to gain experience. Existing camouflage was maintained, but units already in position were not further concealed. Camouflage patrols inspected installations from the ground while our photo reconnaissance took pictures at regular intervals of the entire Fifth Army area from the Volturno forward. These photographs were studied, and instances of change from the situation on 15 April were immediately checked. In such a plan a slip by one unit might make the enemy suspicious, but that slip did not occur. As the attack demonstrated, our plan to ensure surprise worked admirably; the enemy did not reinforce his line before D Day, and he did not expect our attack with the strength and at the time it was launched.



*The military railroads are prepared for the drive on the southern front.*



*One of the large ammunition dumps at Anzio was hit by enemy artillery.*



*Santa Maria, the Ausonia Valley, and the escarpment of the Petrella massif.*



*Looking north from Castelforte to Mount Majo and the zone of the FEC.*

# CHAPTER II \* \* \* \* \*

## *Plans for the Attack*

### A. *ALLIED STRATEGY IN ITALY*

EARLY in April General Alexander informed Fifth and Eighth Armies of his future intentions. These outline plans of AAI served as a basis for further preparation by the armies and for the issuance of the army attack orders. Operation Order No. 1 of AAI, which gave the final plan, was not published until 5 May. (*See Annex No. 1A.*)

The intention of General Alexander, as stated in this order, was:

to destroy the right wing of the German Tenth Army; to drive what remains of it and the German Fourteenth Army north of Rome; and to pursue the enemy to the Rimini—Pisa line inflicting the maximum losses on him in the process.

In other words the German forces between Cassino and the sea were to be smashed and all enemy units swept back over 200 miles. Execution of this intention would free Rome, which had by now become a symbol of Allied success or failure in Italy, would give us additional air bases closer to the heart of Germany, and would be another step in the Allied mission in Italy to destroy the German forces before them. During the months of May through July these plans were carried out by Fifth and Eighth Armies substantially as ordered.

For the drive on Rome General Alexander directed a simultaneous attack by both armies on the southern front. Initially Eighth Army was to break through the enemy's positions into the Liri Valley; Fifth Army would capture the Ausonia Defile. Though this plan was very similar to the strategy of the January drive, such a concentration of forces represented a new departure in AAI plans. In a critique of our operations, which we later captured (*See Annex No. 2D*), Marshal Kesselring singled out this point:

In direct contrast to enemy tactics observed prior to the present offensive, which involved attacks strictly confined to small areas (no wider than 8-10 km. at the most), the enemy attacked for the first time on a wide front (of approximately 40 km.). The offensive was launched with absolute co-ordination.

After the initial breakthrough both armies were ordered to drive forward, Eighth Army on the general axis of Highway 6 to the area east of Rome with Fifth Army parallel to it but southwest of the Liri—Sacco rivers. In his preliminary discussions General Alexander had indicated that Fifth Army might swing northwest toward Frosinone to assist Eighth Army, but this point was not included in Operation Order No. 1. The final objective of the Fifth Army forces on the south front in fact was not announced at this time.

While the two armies drove northwest, 5 Corps on the Adriatic would hold its front with the minimum of troops but would vigorously pursue the enemy should he attempt to withdraw. The beachhead forces were ordered to attack after D Day on the general axis Cori—Valmontone to cut Highway 6 in the Valmontone area, thereby preventing the supply and withdrawal of the German Tenth Army on the southern front. This attack would be ready to be launched on 24 hours' notice from AAI at any time from D plus 4.

The estimate of probable enemy action, as given in Operation Order No. 1, proved to be extremely accurate. The Germans were expected to fight stubbornly for their initial positions. When forced out of the Gustav Line, they would retreat to the Hitler Line, for the defense of which all reserves at the disposal of the German Tenth Army were likely to be used. It was also expected that on losing these positions the enemy would make every effort to stabilize his front south of Rome by organized resistance on the general line Avezzano—Valmontone—Velletri. For the defense of that line all reserves of the German Fourteenth and Tenth Armies probably would be employed.

Neither D Day nor H Hour was announced in the AAI order. Their determination depended upon a number of factors. Preliminary planning had been begun by Fifth Army in March, based on an original intention to attack about 15 April; but the regrouping of Eighth Army was not fully completed until the middle of April. Thereafter units needed time to become acquainted with the terrain and to make their own plans of action. The forthcoming attack, moreover, was to be a hammer blow to end the German defense south of Rome once and for all, so careful preparations were necessary.

These conditions, coupled with the requirements of Allied strategy in the European campaign as a whole, put our attack on Rome some time in May. In Italy the month of May is one of the best periods for campaigning, both on the ground and

in the air. It is the spring month, neither so wet as to impede action nor so dry as to produce problems of water supply or unending dust. The temperature rises rapidly to an average of 64°, 7° more than in April; the average maximum is 75°—85°, the minimum 45° on the coast and 32° in the mountains. Precipitation drops off on the coast to an average of 2.42 inches at Gaeta but remains substantial inland. The Liri Valley averages over four inches of rainfall and is subject to brief thunderstorms which may produce flash floods and sticky soil. Cloudiness is less pronounced in the morning than in the afternoon, when cumulus covers part of the sky. Though coastal fog occurs five to six times in May, visibility generally is excellent.

The exact day in May for our attack was largely determined by the choice of a night attack to begin the drive. Enemy positions were so well known and so well fortified that an attack in the dark appeared to offer the best chances of breaking through the initial defense lines of the Germans. At the same time moonlight would be useful for the exploitation of our first gains. D Day was initially set for 10 May, then postponed 24 hours inasmuch as Eighth Army was not ready. D Day, accordingly, was 11 May and H Hour at 2300 (1).

On this day the sun set at 2012, and the moon, 4 days from the last quarter, rose at 2331. Our troops would thus have about two and one-half hours after dark to move into position, and approximately one hour of attack in the dark before the moon rose over Mount Massico. On 9 May the air force weather station reported that little rain and a minimum of cloudiness were expected for the next seven days. Rain was falling that day in north Italy, but the rain front moving south was not expected to reach the Garigliano.

## B. THE ATTACK ORDER OF FIFTH ARMY

*See Map No. 3*

1. *Mission and Methods.* The mission of Fifth Army, as assigned by AAI, was a difficult one. The Germans were well entrenched in a commanding area which they had held against a previous attack by 10 Corps. The natural defenses of this region were weakest at the south near Minturno, but even if we broke through here into the Ausonia Valley we should only have put ourselves into a salient commanded by the La Civita—Fammera escarpment on the west and by Mount Majo on the north. The enemy had built the fortifications in the Orange Line north of Ausonia against just such a possibility. Consideration of the terrain

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(1) Standard Army Time (from 0200, 2 April 1944) was B Time, two hours ahead of Greenwich Standard Time (Z).

immediately ahead of us made it clear that the difficult terrain about Mount Majo was the key to the Ausonia Defile; if we held Mount Majo, the Ausonia Valley and the Orange Line would fall almost automatically.

In many ways capture of the Ausonia Defile was an easier task than the subsequent advance. When we had reached the Ausonia Valley and the defile at its north end, our troops would then face the almost insurmountable rock cliffs of the Petrella massif. On either side of this mass roads led through to Itri and Pico, but the Germans had barred each flank with their Dora Line and also with the Hitler Line in the case of the Esperia—Pico route. Attack directly through the mountains from the east and south would be most difficult even to infantry; if the enemy were warned, he could throw enough troops into the area from the north and west to hold the mountains indefinitely.

A preliminary study of the terrain facing Fifth Army and of possible courses of action had been prepared as of 26 March by the Planning Subsection, G-3. This study pointed out the importance of Mount d'Oro as an anchor to the Hitler Line and stressed the significance of Mount Majo, the wedge of hills running up to Mount dei Bracchi, Mount Scauri, and Castellonorato. It then deduced that occupation of these points would be necessary to our operations. The Petrella massif, however, was considered impassable at the time of this report, and all proposed plans of attack detoured it on either side.

Four such plans were offered for consideration. The first involved an advance west along Highway 7 to Formia and Itri with the object of turning the enemy's southern flank. This attack had the advantage of proceeding along the main line of communications from a firm bridgehead and close to the sea where naval support could be obtained. The coastal strip, however, was narrow, strongly defended, and commanded on the right flank by high ground. Even if such an attack were successful, it would not necessarily open up the Liri Valley; the enemy could swing his right flank back on Terracina and Fondi and keep his central positions intact.

Another possibility was repetition of the January strategy of driving up the Ausonia Valley from Minturno with the object of debouching into the Liri Valley, securing Mount d'Oro, and penetrating the Hitler Line. Routes for such an advance were available and armor could be used. Here again we would be attacking against well prepared defenses along a narrow corridor dominated on both sides in this case by mountains.

The third suggested scheme of maneuver consisted of a push northwest from Mount Juga to secure in turn Mount Majo, the ridge running northwest therefrom, and Mount d'Oro. Enemy defenses in the area of Mount Majo were not formidable, and tactical surprise might be obtained by attacking at such a relatively

unexpected place. Our troops could deploy on a broad front from a secured bridgehead and would be driving straight for the dominating terrain. Tanks could not be used, and artillery support would be difficult after the first advance. Supply also would present problems, for maintenance initially would depend on pack trains and jeeps.

In the fourth plan we would attack across the Garigliano to gain Sant'Ambrogio and advance west to capture Mount d'Oro. Tanks could be employed here, routes of supply were available, and the attack could be supported by our artillery. On the other hand we would be crossing a defended, deep river, and both flanks would be under fire, from Mount Majo on the south and from across the Liri River on the north.

In conclusion the report of 26 March favored the third plan, that of taking Mount Majo and pushing on to Mount d'Oro. In Phase I of this attack, two divisions of the FEC (the 4th Mountain Division in the lead) would take Mount Majo, while II Corps advanced as far as Mount Scauri, Castellonorato, and Mount dei Bracchi. In Phase II one division of the FEC was to mop up northwards to Sant'Ambrogio, and another was to take the ridge running northwest from Mount Majo to Castellone Hill, including Ausonia in its sweep. II Corps would clear the south part of the Ausonia Valley and regroup below Ausonia. Phase III consisted of the FEC attack to take Esperia and Mount d'Oro; then II Corps would pass through and in Phase IV exploit northwest to Mount Leucio and Pico.

A suitable corps boundary would be Castelforte—Coreno—Ausonia to allow the FEC to concentrate its forces, for we would have to hit the enemy at Majo with everything we had. Sufficient troops must be kept on hand to maintain maximum pressure on the enemy for at least three weeks in the area of our main thrust. If tactical surprise were obtained and the battlefield efficiently isolated by our air force, success should be achieved in a shorter space of time.

Two days later, on 28 March, General Keyes submitted a proposed plan of action for II Corps, based on the tentative placing of D Day in the middle of April. Until that time the 85th Division on the left would rotate its regiments in the line to gain experience while the 88th Division held the right flank. The 36th Division was to continue training as long as possible. Preliminary operations to secure commanding points were indicated; in the main attack it was suggested that II Corps block Highway 7 generally along the line Scauri—Spigno and assist operations of the FEC by taking the hills south of the Castelforte—Coreno road.

When the attack was delayed by AAI beyond 15 April, General Clark in conjunction with the FEC devoted further thought to his problems. The final solution was issued in Fifth Army Field Order No. 6, 20 April (*See Annex No. 1B*), in which General Clark defined the Army mission:

Fifth Army from present Garigliano positions attacks with Corps abreast, secures Ausonia defile, advances south of the Liri River to cut the Pico—Itri road... Subsequent advance on army order.

The plan of attack was a bold one. If the mountains dominated our objectives, then Fifth Army would attack through the mountains. First we would take Mount Majo, as previously planned; then we would take the Petrella massif. Afterwards we could fan out and seize the lower ground to the flanks. Surprise and aggressiveness were the keynotes of the plan. All four divisions of the FEC were committed at H Hour, at least in part. II Corps initially assisted the FEC, but the plan of passing it through the French in later phases was dropped in favor of an independent drive by the American divisions through the mountains on the north side of the Formia corridor and up the corridor itself. Instead of slugging forward slowly, we would smash the enemy with one fierce blow and crack him open. As the order noted, « The success of the attack depends to a great degree on secrecy, speed of execution, and co-ordinated action by the corps. »

In this scheme we would hit the enemy at the point where he least suspected attack, and would penetrate his lines of defense at the least fortified points. Time after time in the past Italian campaign Fifth Army had found it easier to advance in mountainous terrain, where enemy observation and fields of fire had numerous blind spots, than over a rolling countryside, the even slopes of which afforded superb final protective lines to the German machine guns. Yet another factor which facilitated our final decision was the presence of the 4th Mountain Division and the *goumiers*; trained for mountain warfare, these French troops were just what we needed to spearhead the drive.

Access to Mount Majo was relatively simple, for several trails penetrated the area. The trails of the Petrella massif, however, required careful study. Two separate trail reports were issued, on 24 and 30 April, based on thorough photo reconnaissance studies. Though Army engineers were of the opinion that only foot troops without mules could ascend the steep trail from Spigno over the escarpment, the French decided that this route would be practicable not only to their mountain infantry but also to their pack artillery. Once Mount Revole had been reached, the striking force could fan out on several trails toward the north and west. The mountain basins such as Piano del Campo offered good drop zones for aerial resupply, and a conference with AAI worked out full details on this subject. Prisoners reported that the sources of water in the mountains were drying up, but our attack was launched before this scarcity grew serious.

2. *The Plan of Attack.* The drive to the Itri—Pico road, the limit covered by Field Order No. 6, was divided into four phases. In Phase I the objective was the

Ausonia—Formia road. The FEC was to take Mount Majo, fan out on the two ridges running north to Castellone Hill and Cantalupo Hill, and secure the Ausonia Defile. The capture of the lower ground at La Guardia Hill at the same time would put all the Majo district in our hands. II Corps had more limited objectives: Hill 413 just west of Castelforte, the S Ridge running southwest from Santa Maria Infante, Mount dei Bracchi, and San Martino Hill. From these points it could cut the lower reaches of the Ausonia road. The plans for preliminary attacks outlined by II Corps on 28 March were scrapped to secure surprise.

The objective of Phase II was the placing of French troops on Mount Revole and exploitation in the Ausonia Valley. The FEC was to take the hills commanding the Coreno—Castelforte road, and then pass its mountain troops through to seize Mount Revole and Mount del Lago. Assistance from II Corps consisted principally of the capture of Mount La Civita and Spigno; American troops would also take Mount I Cerri and Castellonorato.

Phase III would bring the cutting of the Itri—Pico road in the vicinity of Itri and the fanning out by the French. The objective of the FEC in this phase was Mount d'Oro. While part of II Corps took Mount Scauri and Mount Campese, other units were to advance across the mountains south of Mount Petrella and cut the Itri—Pico road near Itri. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion was alerted to drop in the mountains in the II Corps zone to facilitate this advance.

The fourth and final phase would put Fifth Army on the Itri—Pico road ready for further advance. With the aid of II Corps the FEC would cut the road from its position at Mount Revole. Both corps were then to bring up their forces and prepare to continue the attack.

All divisions of Fifth Army on the southern front except the 36th Division were committed in Phase I. This unit constituted the mobile reserve of the Allied forces in Italy. By AAI order it was not to be committed without prior consent of that headquarters. General Clark placed it in II Corps reserve with the dual mission of being ready to attack in the zone of II Corps or to move rapidly to the beachhead in support of VI Corps. On 5 May the 36th Division was withdrawn from II Corps and placed in Army reserve, but continued to have the same mission.

3. *Support of the Attack.* Prior to H Hour our artillery fire and aerial activity were restricted to the normal amount suitable to a defensive attitude. As soon as our attack jumped off, all possible support was furnished by all arms. During the night of 11-12 May this assistance consisted primarily of an extensive artillery program, to be delivered by the guns and howitzers of 7 divisions and 28 separate battalions.

The initial artillery fires were designed to be a quick, smashing blow. Beginning at H Hour, corps artillery laid down counterbattery fire in heavy concentrations

on known positions, this fire lasting for 40 minutes in the FEC zone and for 80 in the II Corps zone. Then the corps artillery shifted to enemy command posts, reserves, dumps, and routes of communication, while divisional artillery kept up its fire on areas closer to the front lines. Special attention was to be paid to isolating the battle area by interdicting roads and trails and by destroying bridges. These initial fires were carefully co-ordinated and their control so strongly centralized that the artillery of Fifth and Eighth Armies from the sea to beyond Cassino acted as one great machine of destruction on the night of 11 May.

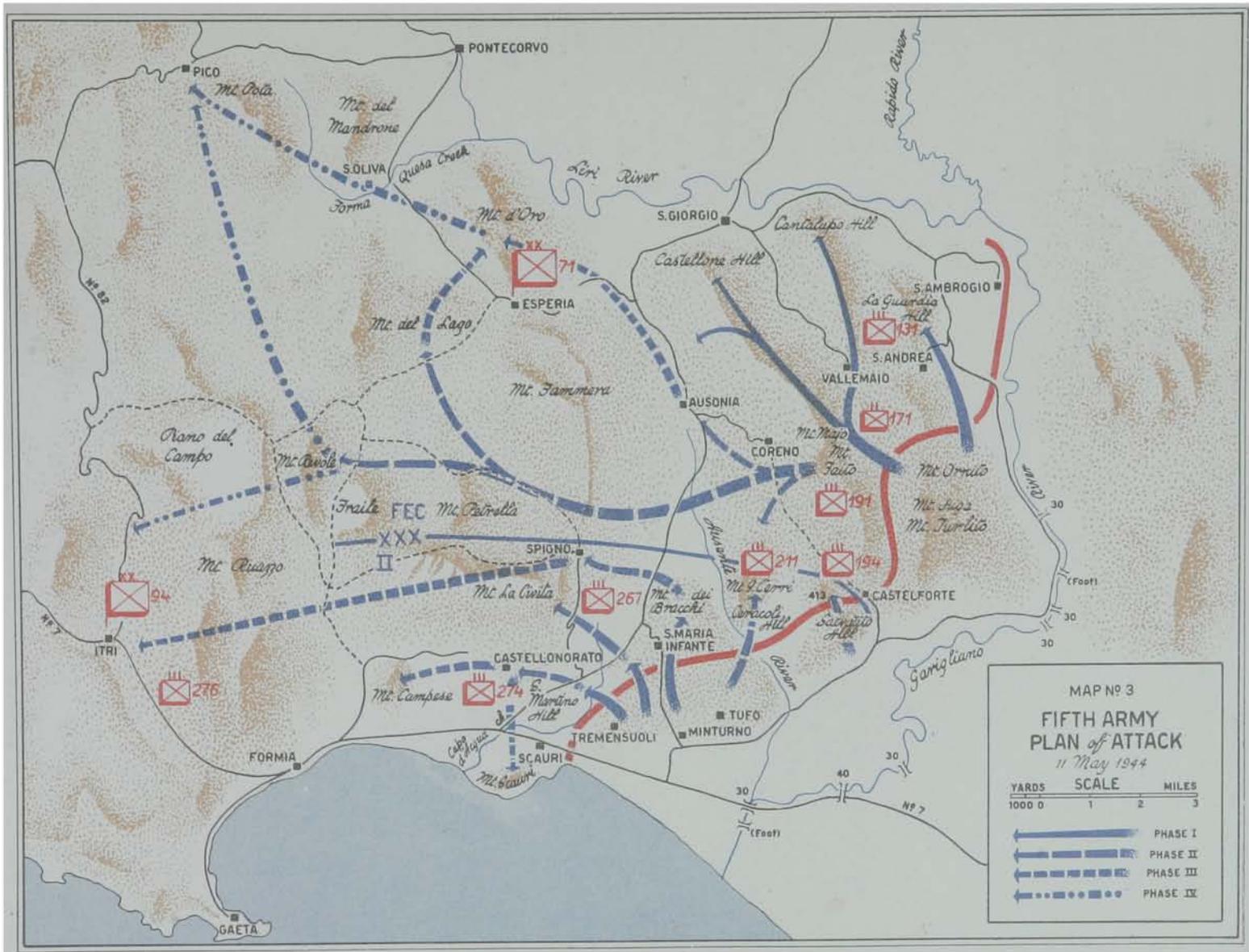
To extend the range of our artillery and to support possible naval raids in the vicinity of Mount Scauri and Sperlonga, one cruiser was made available to II Corps on call during D Day-D plus 5. This vessel was to fire at least 5 missions, expending about 100 rounds each, as a daily average on suitable firing days. Naval targets, laid down generally in an annex to Field Order No. 6, were the town of Itri with the dumps and heavy guns in the area, the Itri—Formia road, and points about Sperlonga and Mount Scauri.

The Air Support Plan, issued on 29 April, divided aerial operations into four phases corresponding with the ground phases. The primary task of XII Tactical Air Command throughout the operation was to isolate the battlefield and to restrict enemy movement thereto and therein. On second and third priority were counter-battery targets and close support targets.

In Phase I isolation of the battlefield was to be achieved by sustained attacks on five points. Two of these, the Itri road center and the Pontecorvo—Esperia road in the vicinity of Sant'Oliva, lay close enough to our lines to be hammered also by our artillery. The other three, which were the responsibility of the air force, consisted of the San Giovanni—Pico road, the Pastena road, and the Vallecorsa—Lenola road. The FEC had first call on second and third-priority targets.

Isolation of the battlefield continued in Phase II by attacks at the same points. Close support targets to ensure the fall of Mount La Civita, Spigno, and Ausonia received second priority with the preference to II Corps. By Phase III our troops would be so advanced that the air force was to concentrate on the San Giovanni, Pastena, and Vallecorsa road; Highway 7 was entrusted primarily to the navy. Counterbattery missions held second priority and close support targets third place. Priority in close support missions was given to the FEC in attacks on Mount d'Oro. The proposed drop by the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion would occur in this phase, and requirements of this operation, if mounted, took precedence over all other missions. Aerial support in Phase IV continued in the same fashion as the third phase, with priority to the FEC.

The mechanism for handling air support targets now consisted of an Air Support Control Section under Fifth Army, which relieved the British 7/9 Army Air



Support Control on 20 April. This agency arranged for first-priority targets in all phases by D minus 3, and transmitted daily corps requests for second and third-priority targets. Details on second-priority requests were submitted by the corps not later than 1100, and on third-priority targets not later than 1700 on the day preceding the desired attacks. Targets of opportunity continued to be handled in an expeditious manner in accordance with the standing operating procedure of the previous campaign.

### C. *THE APPROACH OF H HOUR*

1. *Final Movements.* On 5 May the corps and division commanders of Fifth Army attended a conference at the command post near Francolise. General Clark and his staff presented the plans in detail and last arrangements were made. On the following days the subordinate commanders held their own conferences. Final changes in artillery support plans were issued, and our troops prepared for the attack to come.

Movements into position for the drive had been delayed until the last practicable date. In the II Corps zone the 36th Division moved to the Qualiano area just north of Pozzuoli 29 April-9 May. Departure from the training camps near Avelino was open, but arrival in the new area was carefully camouflaged. Combat Command B went to the beachhead in small increments on 26 April-7 May. The 85th and 88th Divisions regrouped from 3 May in preparation for the attack; tank and reconnaissance troops closed in forward areas; and in the night of 10-11 May divisional commanders established advance command posts.

The FEC had more extensive shifts to carry out in preparation for the attack. Throughout April the 4th Mountain Division had held the Mount Juga bridgehead, and defense of the sector remained the responsibility of this division until H Hour. Elements of four divisions, however, were to take part in the initial assault. Initially the French front was held by two regiments of the 4th Mountain Division in the bridgehead and by two reconnaissance battalions along the east bank of the Gari-gliano on our right flank. By 1 May one regiment of the 2d Moroccan Division took over the north half of the bridgehead, with one mountain regiment in the south half. In the next phase of the build-up, 4-9 May, the 2d Moroccan Division and the 4th Mountain Division increased their front-line strength across the Gari-gliano to two regiments each and brought across the bulk of their reserves.

The 1st Motorized Division moved up by train from Salerno to Teano on 3-7 May and then to forward assembly areas on the east bank of the river. The 4th

Brigade crossed into the bridgehead and placed one battalion in the line at the junction of the bridgehead with the Garigliano River. On the night of 10-11 May two battalions of the 4th Tunisian Infantry (4<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Tirailleurs Tunisiens) from the 3d Algerian Division and two battalions of the 8th Moroccan Infantry (8<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Tirailleurs Marocains) of the 2d Moroccan Division crossed the river. In the last hours before the attack the regiments of the 2d Moroccan Division and the 4th Mountain Division on the front line shifted from a linear formation to dispositions in depth.

By H Hour the attack formations had been achieved without any incident to interrupt the schedule of movements. Two entire divisions and substantial elements of two more were now in the French bridgehead; the remainder of the 1st Motorized Division and the 3d Algerian Division with three groups of tabors lay in forward positions close to the river. In the bald hills of the bridgehead and on the open plains along the Garigliano, both under enemy observation, the slightest slip might have given away the entire movement; but closely co-ordinated shifts in small increments at night left the enemy unaware of the impending thunderbolt.

2. *Preparations of the Supporting Arms and Services.* Corps and divisional artillery also went into firing positions as late as possible, and registered one gun per battery under covering fire from other units already in place. In the II Corps zone the 697th Field Artillery Battalion took up new positions on 7-8 May and emplaced one 240-mm howitzer almost in the front lines near Minturno. On the same night the 932d Field Artillery Battalion came up from rest areas east of Sparanise; and on the two nights 7-9 May the 173d Field Artillery Battalion moved one battery of its 155-mm guns into position below Minturno. With the arrival of the 36th Division artillery and the 6th Field Artillery Group in the same period, II Corps artillery was ready for the attack.

In the French zone the artillery of 3 divisions was brought forward, and 4 of the 13 battalions of Corps artillery moved up from rest areas. Some of the divisional artillery, including the 75-mm pack howitzers of the 4th Mountain Division, proceeded into the bridgehead, but none of these pieces were allowed any registration fire. The remainder took up positions east of the river. Additions to Corps artillery included the 630th Field Artillery Battalion on 4 May; the 2d Battalion, RACL (Régiment d'Artillerie Coloniale du Levant), and the 178th Field Artillery Battalion on 5 May; the 248th Field Artillery Battalion on 6 May. On 8 May the 1st Battalion, RACL, shifted forward to better positions for the attack.

During the static situation in April the other arms and services had completed most of their preliminary work for the attack, but a few important tasks remained for the weeks before the attack. During the period 27 April-11 May Army Ordnance received 19,192 long tons of ammunition and issued out 16,238 tons, 3 times

the amount expended in the previous 2 weeks. The proximity of PBS dumps made it possible to move this supply from the base dumps to Army dumps and then immediately to using organizations. As a result Army dumps never became so large as to reveal our plans for the attack.

The engineers had replaced most of the Bailey bridges in the Army and corps zones with permanent structures during April and had an ample store of bridging material located well forward by D Day. Preparations for additional bridges across the Garigliano had been completed, and some inconspicuous foundation work done; but actual construction waited for the night of 11-12 May. The signal units likewise had made their plans to extend the main Army open-wire pole line beyond the Garigliano, but could not proceed until the attack had begun.

3. *Orders of the Day, 11 May.* At 1600, 11 May, the commanders of all units announced to their men two Orders of the Day, one from General Alexander and the other from General Clark. The message from the commander-in-chief of AAI (*See Annex No. 2A*) stressed the bravery which our troops had already shown, noted the substantial victories we had won, and announced prophetically:

The Allied armed forces are now assembling for the final battles on sea, on land, and in the air to crush the enemy once and for all. From the East and the West, from the North and the South, blows are about to fall which will result in the final destruction of the Nazis and bring freedom once again to Europe, and hasten peace for us all. To us in Italy has been given the honour to strike the first blow.

General Clark recalled to his men their fight from Salerno, past Naples, and up to the mountains (*See Annex No. 2B.*) He noted the value of the Anzio beachhead, and placed the whole Italian campaign of Fifth Army in its proper setting:

It may appear to you, since the Fifth Army's progress in terms of territory gained during the past few months has been slow, that our campaign is no longer a major one or that it is not having significant success in the war as a whole. Nothing could be farther from the truth. You have made a conspicuously successful invasion of the continental fortress which the Germans boasted was impregnable. You have required the Germans to devote more than twenty divisions to the costly and losing task of retarding the Allied progress to the north. You have inflicted heavy losses upon their troops and have taken more than 13,000 prisoners. You have placed the enemy in his present distressing position of trying hopelessly to hold back the Allied forces, which he knows will eventually overrun him from two directions.

I have direct personal knowledge that the accomplishments of the Fifth Army are understood and appreciated by the governments and peoples of the United Nations... I have full confidence that, as in the past, the men of the Fifth Army will meet the tests to come as true soldiers and that with God's guidance and help you will press on to great and decisive victories.

Our troops were ready; the plans were made. Six hours after the reading of the Orders of the Day the final drive on Rome began.

# CHAPTER III \* \* \* \* \*

## *The FEC Breakthrough*

DARKNESS settled slowly over the Garigliano River on the evening of 11 May. The day had been cloudy, and a little rain had fallen. After sunset smoke and haze still blanketed the valley, but the vast canopy of stars shone down brightly from a clear sky. Except for the crash of an occasional artillery piece all was still. Long columns of swarthy French colonial troops and laden mules moved softly along the steep trails and roads leading to the Mount Juga bridgehead. On the lines of departure the infantry stirred restlessly. The enemy came out of his hiding places and went unsuspectingly about his tasks of strengthening fortifications, patrolling, and bringing up supplies. All was normal, as it had been to German eyes and ears for the past month.

Suddenly at 2300 the guns on the right roared into action. Great flashes burst up from the hills and hundreds of shells screamed across the Garigliano. Then the crash and roar swept down the line through II Corps to the sea. The mountains across the river became an inferno of exploding shells and bursting flares. The ridges were outlined briefly, faded quickly from sight, and then came into view again and again.

Throughout the night and the following day more than 1000 guns roared from Cassino to the sea. Of these, about 600 were massed under the control of Fifth Army; during the first 24 hours of the attack our artillery fired 173,941 rounds against the enemy. The effect of this savage, concentrated smash was overwhelming. Enemy batteries were tossed in ruins; routes of supply were pitted by shell holes; command posts disappeared from the web of German communications.

When the sun rose on 12 May, our air force began its operations to isolate the battlefield. Though cloudy weather seriously interfered with these efforts, our pilots reported fair results. In addition to 294 fighter-bomber sorties 429 medium-bomber sorties were flown on communications behind the enemy lines. In the heavy-

bomber class 728 sorties hit at communications and other targets. Kesselring's headquarters was attacked twice during the day, and the bombs of 80 heavy bombers completely destroyed Tenth Army Headquarters. Continuation of this pounding day after day brought a cumulative effect which hampered the enemy severely and made his ruin the more certain.

Successes had been reported in the first hours of the attack, as our infantry drove forward swiftly under cover of the artillery concentrations. On the left, before II Corps, the enemy held more firmly, but on the right the French smashed through to Mount Revole by 16 May. The Gustav Line was destroyed, the Hitler Line itself was turned by 19 May, and every effort of the enemy to reorganize his defenses had failed. The French drive, indeed, was one of the most spectacular operations thus far in the history of Fifth Army.

#### A. THE PLANS OF THE FEC

1. *The Attack Order.* (See Map No. 4.) On 27 April General Juin had completed his outline plans for the part of the FEC in the forthcoming attack. The general directive from Fifth Army, to drive along the Mount Juga—Pico axis, was broken down into four parts: 1) to secure the mountain mass dominated by Mount Majo; 2) to block the Ausonia road as far north as possible, enlarging the present bridgehead as far as that road; 3) to reach the Itri—Pico road; 4) to put the center of the French force around Pico preparatory to moving on the rear of Arce or against Frosinone, both in the Liri Valley. General Juin further developed each of these four parts of the FEC mission into a specific phase of action, generally along the lines of the four phases in Fifth Army Field Order No. 6. An operation order covering the plans for Phases I and II was issued on 7 May.

In the initial attack elements of all four divisions were in the line. The 4th Brigade of the 1st Motorized Division, backed by the 757th Tank Battalion, held a narrow zone on the west bank of the Garigliano, astride the river road to Sant'Andrea. The 2d Moroccan Division, which had the main role in the attack, lay concentrated on the west slopes of Mount Ornito. To the left again came the 4th Mountain Division from Mount Turlito to the vicinity of Castelforte. The tabors and the 1st Moroccan Infantry remained east of the Garigliano, waiting until the way was cleared for their dash to Mount Revole. All of the 3d Algerian Division was in reserve except for a task force composed of the 4th Tunisian Infantry and the 755th Tank Battalion in the south part of the 4th Mountain Division zone.

Phase I was divided into two parts. In the first, which began at H Hour, only two divisions were initially to attack, with the objective of taking the hill mass up to and including Mount Majo. On the right the 2d Moroccan Division was directed to seize Mounts Faito and Girofano, then Mount Feuci and Agrifoglio Hill, and finally the vital point of Mount Majo. Part if not all of this operation was scheduled to be carried out in the first night. The 4th Mountain Division on the left was to protect the south flank of the 2d Moroccan Division by moving onto the south slopes of Mount Faito and was also to seize the high ground north-east and north of Castelforte.

The second part of Phase I would bring three divisions and part of the fourth into action to exploit the breakthrough. The 2d Moroccan Division would advance rapidly on the two ridges running north and northeast from Mount Majo as far as Cantalupo Hill and Castellone Hill. In addition to taking these points, which would hamper the enemy retreat from the Garigliano bend, the 2d Moroccan Division would support by fire the drive by the 1st Motorized Division at daybreak on D plus 1 toward Sant'Andrea and La Guardia Hill. On the left the Moroccans were also ordered to attack against the flanks and rear of the enemy's defenses in the Coreno—Ausonia area. The 4th Mountain Division would take Castelforte, drive on Mount Ceschito and Hill 335 from north and south, and so open the north side of the Castelforte—Coreno road. A simultaneous operation by the 88th Division of II Corps would clear the hills south of the road.

In Phase II the main objectives were the Ausonia Defile and the cliffs overlooking the Ausonia Valley from the west. Two divisions, the 2d Moroccan Division and the 1st Motorized Division were to continue to clear the district from Mount Majo north to the Liri with the aim of gaining control over the east side of the defile. The « Mountain Corps », composed of the 4th Mountain Division and all the goumiers, would attack first toward Coreno and Ausonia to bar the Ausonia Defile against possible enemy armored counterattacks from the north. At almost the same time other elements of the Mountain Corps were to get a foothold in the Petrella massif in preparation for the drive west to Mount Revole.

To its right the 3d Algerian Division would be employed immediately following the capture of Mount Ceschito and Hill 335 to operate between the 2d Moroccan Division and the 4th Mountain Division in the Ausonia—Esperia area. In Phase II this division was directed to open the Castelforte—Coreno road and advance its armored group swiftly to assist the 4th Mountain Division in beating off any counterattacks through the Ausonia Defile. Complete relief of the mountain troops in the Ausonia area would follow as soon as the 3d Algerian Division came up.

The activity of the FEC in Phase II thus involved swift, overlapping advance on a wide front from the Petrella escarpment around to Sant'Ambrogio. The

enemy would have no time to regroup his broken forces in defense of vital points; success on our part would sever the enemy north-south communications through Ausonia as well as pave the way for a drive through the mountains to the Itri—Pico road.

2. *The Artillery Plan.* The Corps artillery of the FEC was organized under the 13th Field Artillery Brigade (U.S.) and included the 17th Field Artillery Group with two battalions of 155-mm howitzers; the 178th Field Artillery Group with two battalions likewise of 155-mm howitzers; the 194th Field Artillery Group with two battalions of 155-mm guns, one battalion of 8-inch howitzers, one battalion of 240-mm howitzers with an 8-inch gun attached; the RAAC with two battalions and one battery of 155-mm guns; and as independent units one battalion of 4.5-inch guns and one battalion of 8-inch howitzers. More than half of the Fifth Army artillery was thus placed in support of the main thrust. In particular, the FEC received most of our long-range artillery, which could support the drive both in Phase I and in Phase II without displacement; for it would be difficult to find good artillery positions anywhere east of the Ausonia Valley. The artillery of the FEC in general lay south of Mount Camino, but the 194th Field Artillery Group remained in its old positions along Highway 6. These units could support both the FEC and the drive of 13 Corps across the Rapido River; British artillery in the same area was on call for FEC targets.

The initial preparation by Corps and divisional artillery was carefully coordinated and centralized to ensure the delivery of a quick, terrific blow at H Hour. Before that moment artillery fire remained normal; but at 2300, 11 May, every battery in the FEC opened up on the enemy. The ensuing program was divided into 2 sections, H Hour to H plus 40, and H plus 40 to H plus 400. During the first 40 minutes the Corps artillery laid down counterbattery fire. Every known enemy gun position received a concentration of from 24 to 48 rounds in 2 minutes, and then 15 to 20 minutes later another concentration of the same weight. The next six hours were devoted to a program of harassing and interdiction fire, designed to cut enemy roads leading into the area, to neutralize enemy reserves, and to smash enemy command posts and dumps.

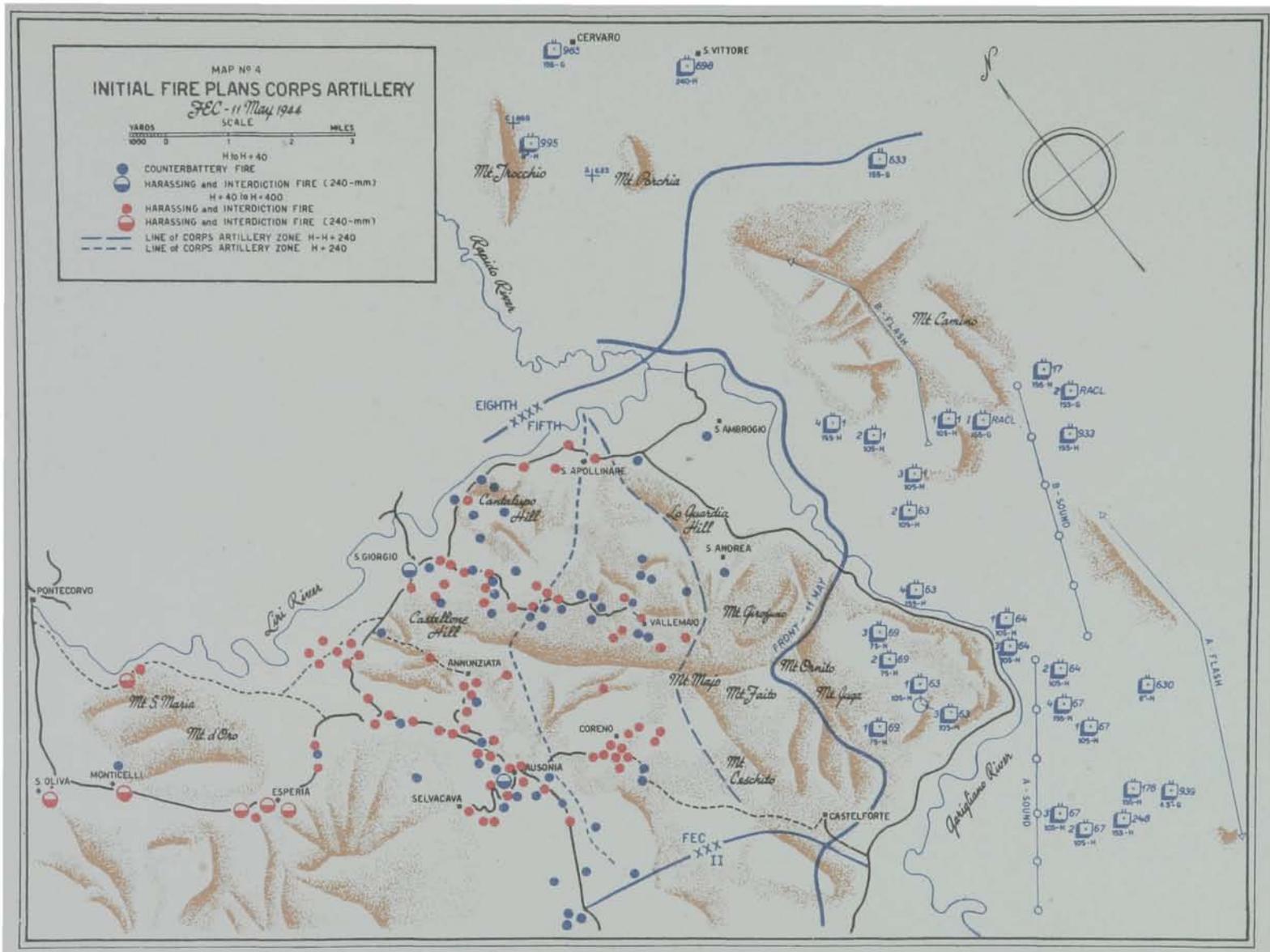
The pattern of targets in this period showed a careful concentration of fires on the most vital points of the German rear areas. The enemy reserves at Coreno were raked over by heavy fire from the 8-inch howitzers of the 630th Field Artillery Battalion and of Battery C, 995th Field Artillery Battalion. Fourteen concentrations were spotted along the Ausonia—San Giorgio road in the defile north of Ausonia. In particular, the 985th Field Artillery Battalion (155-mm gun) was to put 50 rounds per hour from H plus 120 to dawn at 2 points on the road; after day-

MAP NO 4  
**INITIAL FIRE PLANS CORPS ARTILLERY**  
*FEC - 11 May 1944*

SCALE  
 YARDS 0 1000 2000  
 MILES 0 1 2 3

H to H + 40

-  COUNTERBATTERY FIRE
-  HARASSING and INTERDICTION FIRE (240-mm)  
H + 40 to H + 400
-  HARASSING and INTERDICTION FIRE (240-mm)  
H + 40 to H + 400
-  HARASSING and INTERDICTION FIRE (240-mm)  
H + 40 to H + 400
-  LINE of CORPS ARTILLERY ZONE H - H + 240
-  LINE of CORPS ARTILLERY ZONE H + 240



light it could continue at not more than 30 rounds per hour if observation indicated sufficient enemy movement. This battalion was also to lay 80 rounds per hour on the Esperia—Pico road west of Esperia, continuing after daylight at a rate up to 60 rounds per hour if necessary. The 240-mm howitzers fired on San Giorgio and Ausonia in the first period; then put 40 rounds on Esperia, the command post of the 71st Division, from H plus 50 to H plus 105; and interdicted the Esperia road and the route north of Mount Santa Maria with 10 rounds each. Command posts of reserve units at Sant'Oliva and Monticelli would also be given 20 rounds apiece.

Rates of fire, as set forth by Army order for all corps artillery, were one round per gun per minute for all pieces through the 155-mm gun, and one round per gun each two minutes for the 8-inch and 240-mm howitzers. These rates could be exceeded for short bursts of not more than five rounds per gun. After the counter-battery fire one gun in each battery would be rested in rotation for ten minutes if the scheduled fire for the unit lasted more than an hour. Allotments of ammunition for D Day were 250 rounds per 4.5-inch gun and 155-mm howitzer; 200 rounds per 155-mm gun and 8-inch howitzer; 100 rounds per 240-mm howitzer. On D plus 1 and succeeding days these allotments were reduced by approximately one-half, except for the 155-mm howitzers.

After the scheduled fires had been completed, the artillery support was designed to be as flexible as possible in accordance with the changing situation. At 0800, 12 May, the 17th Field Artillery Group was placed in support of the 2d Moroccan Division and the 178th Field Artillery Group in support of the 4th Mountain Division. The 8-inch howitzers of the 630th Field Artillery Battalion would fire on Sant'Andrea and Castelforte as requested by the respective divisional commanders. A zone of primary responsibility for the divisional artillery had been laid down, to be shifted forward at H plus 240; but Corps and divisional artillery both were utilized as necessary during the attack.

## B. *THE CAPTURE OF MOUNT MAJO*

11-13 MAY

1. *The 2d Moroccan Division Breaks the Gustav Line.* (See Map No. 5.) The opening blow in the French zone was struck by two regiments of the 2d Moroccan Division under Maj. Gen. André W. Dody. The 8th Moroccan Infantry moved northwest from the summit of Mount Ornito to take Mount Faito. On its right the 4th Moroccan Infantry was set to drive up the slopes of Cerasola Hill and Mount Girofano. The 5th Moroccan Infantry remained in reserve.

At 2300, 11 May, the artillery opened the attack with heavy concentrations on enemy positions on Mounts Faito, Feuci, and Girofano. This blast so damaged enemy communications that the 8th Moroccan Infantry encountered no enemy artillery or mortar fire during the first 45 minutes of its attack. At 2348 its leading elements gained the crest of Mount Faito against stubborn infantry resistance. The eastern slopes were cleared shortly after midnight, and by 0300, 12 May, the entire summit was firmly in our hands. Troops of the regiment moved down the western slopes before dawn and began to work their way toward the saddle connecting Mount Faito with Mount Feuci to the northwest. At about 0930 patrols drew enemy fire, both automatic-weapon and mortar, from enemy dugouts on the eastern side of Mount Feuci and from positions on the reverse slopes. By 1130 the 8th Moroccan Infantry was definitely stopped along the saddle between the two summits.

The 4th Moroccan Infantry had started off with equal vigor and quickly gained the lower slopes of Cerasola Hill despite some delay on the left flank due to an intricate barbed-wire entanglement. At 2355 the enemy opened up with Fougasse flame throwers which had been dug in to cover the minefields; these were operated by remote control from a centrally located dugout. Here again enemy artillery and mortar fire was lacking, but the rapid fire of German automatic weapons constantly swept the flaming slopes. The 1st Battalion, 4th Moroccan Infantry, on the right continued its advance across the east side of Cerasola Hill in the face of this opposition, while the 2d Battalion on the left started up the summit of its objective. In one charge the regiment met success and swept over the hill in a matter of minutes.

At 0015 the 1st Battalion, moving on north across the draw to Mount Girofano, received a terrific mortar concentration from the north slopes of the hill. This fire soon split and also pinned down the 2d Battalion on the northwest slopes of Cerasola Hill. Losses were heavy in both battalions, especially in the 1st Battalion which was farther forward. The situation became confused as both sides developed their maximum fire power, but the 4th Moroccan Infantry clung to its positions on Cerasola Hill with fierce determination throughout the rest of the night.

During the morning the 1st Battalion attempted to move around the western slopes of Mount Girofano to Hill 739, but the grazing fire of the enemy machine guns stopped the effort. The 5th Moroccan Infantry was moved up from division reserve to the left flank of the regiment just before noon to compensate for its heavy losses, which totalled about 10 officers and 450 men by 1530 on the 12th. Both units were formed into a task force under the assistant division commander, but renewal of the drive on Mount Girofano waited until dark.

After regrouping during the first hours of darkness the 4th Moroccan Infantry and 5th Moroccan Infantry attacked at 0300, 13 May. Under the cover of a strong artillery preparation, laid by divisional artillery and by the 17th and 178th

Field Artillery Groups, the 5th Moroccan Infantry advanced around the northwest edge of Mount Girofano and the 4th Moroccan Infantry toward the summit. At 0730 the task force commander was able to report that the crests of Mount Girofano and Hill 739 to the northwest were both securely held by our troops. Casualties during the attack had been much lighter than on the 12th. Though the German mortars and artillery reacted as strongly as before, the infantry did not fight stubbornly. A sense of futility seemed to have come over the enemy, for over 100 prisoners were taken on Mount Girofano alone.

On the left flank, meanwhile, the 8th Moroccan Infantry had planned an assault on Mount Feuci from the Faito saddle, to begin at 1400, 12 May. The enemy was alert, and at 1310 the entire 2d Battalion, 115th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, launched a counterattack against Mount Faito under mortar support. Four of the 12 battalions of artillery which had begun preparatory concentrations for the attack were forced to shift to defensive fires on the west end of the saddle. The violence of the enemy attack, verging on desperation, caused considerable alarm in Corps headquarters, and General Juin hastened to the scene to direct the battle personally. At 1515 the Germans were finally forced to retire after inflicting and receiving considerable casualties.

Determined to take advantage of the enemy withdrawal, General Juin ordered our planned attack to begin immediately. This prompt exploitation met a tremendous concentration of enemy mortar and artillery fire which covered the entire eastern side of Mount Feuci; by 1540 the 8th Moroccan Infantry had been driven back to the saddle. The Corps commander decided that another daylight attack on the position would be too expensive, and ordered infiltration by the moonlight of the early hours onto its eastern slopes, to be followed by an assault at 0800, 13 May.

The night patrols made little progress. As the artillery opened up for the morning attack, three enemy companies counterattacked our positions in the saddle and thus delayed the push until 1020. Artillery and mortar resistance was again heavy, but as at Mount Girofano the enemy infantry fought with less tenacity. At 1130 the summit of Mount Feuci was occupied by our troops. This capture opened the way for an attack directly on Mount Majo, 1000 yards to the northwest, and the regiment moved out promptly after mopping up Feuci. The steep rocky slopes of the new objective offered more resistance than the enemy garrison, which had been ordered to evacuate its post. By 1615 the 8th Moroccan Infantry had taken the crest of Mount Majo.

In less than two days of fighting the 2d Moroccan Division had driven through the Gustav Line to the keystone of all German defenses west of the Garigliano. From this penetration the enemy was never to recover, and every step thereafter which he took to plug his gap was always one move too late. Immediately, the

success of the division assured a breakthrough by the French units operating in the lower ground to either flank.

2. *The Drive to Sant'Andrea.* To the northeast of Mount Majo the 1st Motorized Division under Maj. Gen. Diego Brosset struck against the enemy forces holding the bend in the Garigliano River. The 4th Brigade had moved into position on the northern rim of the bridgehead during the last few days before the attack, and the rest of the division lay on the east bank, ready to cross the river to support the attack. The plan of maneuver called for an armored group, composed of the 757th Tank Battalion (U. S.) and the 8th Tank Destroyer Battalion (8<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Chasseurs d'Afrique), to attack in three waves in the low ground to the right and for an infantry task force to clear the hill slopes to the left in co-ordination with the attack on Girofano by the 4th Moroccan Infantry. Since the enemy antitank ditch across the flat could not be approached until H Hour, the 1st Motorized Division was forced to schedule its full attack somewhat after 2300.

As the artillery concentrations began, crews from the armor and infantry set to work with the engineers in clearing away the network of barbed wire in front of the ditch and in filling up a section of the ditch itself. Other engineers rushed to completion an infantry footbridge over the river just behind our lines so that from 0100 on other elements of the division were able to use this shortcut into the north part of the bridgehead. Work on the antitank ditch proceeded at a rapid pace with little interference, for most of the enemy forces were absorbed in the heavy fighting to the west in the Girofano area. Between 0300 and 0400, 12 May, the passage across the ditch was opened.

The first wave of the armor, which planned to jump off at 0400, was delayed for one hour by a small enemy counterattack from the northeast slopes of Hill 433, a commanding point on the left flank of the division. Then the leading tanks crossed the ditch. On the right the second and third armored waves remained on our side of the ditch in a draw between the obstacle and the river, ready to furnish fire support to the first wave. After an advance of 700 yards along the slopes west of the road, our armor met several enemy strongpoints built around machine guns, mortars, and a few antitank guns. The 44th Reconnaissance Battalion, which manned the defenses, was greatly aided by the dense fog and smoke of the early morning and stopped our tanks. The attack then became an infantry battle carried on by the leading elements of the 22d Motorized Battalion of the 4th Brigade, backed by our tanks and tank destroyers. In four hours of very heavy fighting, 0600-1000, the infantry occupied the main enemy positions on the wooded knolls of Conventi, which command the point where the river road turns west.

On the left of this thrust the 24th Motorized Battalion advanced to the heights of Fontanelle, just west of Conventi, before noon of 12 May. Though this thrust

put the 24th Battalion in positions overlooking the road almost to Sant'Andrea, its left flank was exposed to fire from Mount Girofano. After noon the battalion withdrew to maintain contact with the infantry on its left, but the troops and armor in the Conventi area were able to hold their ground. To the far left the 21st Motorized Battalion had pushed north while the antitank ditch was being filled and captured Hill 290 on the east slopes of Girofano before daybreak. This advance under fire from the enemy positions on top of Girofano was assisted materially when a special force seized Hill 433.

During the afternoon preparations were made for an all-out attack in conjunction with the 2d Moroccan Division drive on Girofano. Light tanks of the 1st Motorized Division moved to the east bank of the Garigliano after dark to furnish a base of fire, and a battalion of 105-mm howitzers was pushed across the river to join the infantry cannon companies. A ferry was installed a few hundred yards downstream of the footbridge. The plan of attack was designed to avoid exposing our troops to the murderous fire from the enemy positions on Girofano. The 21st Battalion on the left was to hold in place on Hill 433 until the 4th Moroccan Infantry had gained Mount Girofano, and to support this push; farther to the right the 24th Battalion, which was less subject to the enemy fire, would again advance to Fontanelle and so gain observation over the eastern approaches to Sant'Andrea. Then an assault on Sant'Andrea itself would be launched.

The attacking elements moved out before dawn on the 13th and advanced swiftly. On the left the 4th Moroccan Infantry took Girofano by 0730, and the 4th Brigade itself was on the Fontanelle—Conventi line by noon, with the armor forward on the right to the point where the river road turns west. This advance represented a breakthrough of the main enemy line, and the second wave of the armor came up to speed the capture of Sant'Andrea. After it had taken positions on the east and the first wave had moved up to the southeast, the infantry battalions moved north down the slopes of the hills, opposed by automatic-weapon fire from the village.

The supporting artillery battered the objective for ten minutes beginning at 1800, and elements of the 4th Brigade drove into the village. The armor, which had by-passed Sant'Andrea, converged on the road junction to the north at 1925 and then split again, the first wave east to Sant'Ambrogio and the second wave west to Sant'Apollinare. By midnight of 13 May both villages had been occupied. The infantry moved on from Sant'Andrea and took La Guardia Hill, which dominated the Garigliano bend. The prisoner toll for the day ran into several hundred and marked the end of the organized resistance in this area.

3. *Castelforte and Mount Ceschito.* On the left flank of the FEC three infantry regiments were employed by Maj. Gen. François Sevez of the 4th Mountain Division in his initial assault. The enemy positions on the east side of the gorge of

Riva Grande from the vicinity of Mount Juga to Mount Rotondo were entrusted to the 6th Moroccan Infantry (6<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Tirailleurs Marocains) and the 2d Moroccan Infantry (2<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Tirailleurs Marocains); the town of Castelforte was assigned to the 4th Tunisian Infantry of the 3d Algerian Division operating under the control of the 4th Mountain Division.

In conjunction with the 2d Moroccan Division on its right flank the 6th Moroccan Infantry drove northwest at H Hour from the pass between Mounts Juga and Turlito. Stiff enemy resistance delayed the two assault battalions temporarily, but the troops fought on to occupy Hill 664 on the south edge of Mount Faito, overlooking the upper reaches of Riva Grande. There the regiment consolidated its gains and waited further progress by the 8th Moroccan Infantry, which had just taken Mount Faito. Since this unit was stopped throughout the 12th on the saddle between Mount Faito and Mount Feuci, the 6th Moroccan Infantry remained quiet until the night of 12-13 May.

On its left the 2d Moroccan Infantry pushed northwest from Mount Nata in a series of separate thrusts which cleared most of the western slopes of Mount Juga and Mount Turlito by daylight. Stiff resistance was met only at the pillbox at Tolarso, at the end of a ridge running southwest from Mount Juga. During the morning the regiment held its new positions and hammered at the pillbox. The companies attacking this point had suffered 50 % casualties by dark, but their stubborn attacks finally reduced the enemy garrison early on the 13th.

While two regiments of the 4th Mountain Division had been gaining positions north and east of Riva Grande, the third regiment, the 1st Moroccan Infantry (1<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Tirailleurs Marocains), remained in reserve. Action on the left flank of the division was entrusted instead to the 4th Tunisian Infantry of the 3d Algerian Division under the immediate supervision of Brig. Gen. Georges Guillebaud, commanding the division armor. The 1st Battalion of this regiment, located behind the southwest spur of Mount Nata, moved out at H Hour and gained Mount della Torre during the first attack. At dawn on the 12th it attempted to swing south onto Mount Siola, but heavy enemy resistance forced it back. During the day the battalion worked along the north slopes of Mount Siola in an unsuccessful effort to open a path to Mount Ceschito.

The 3d Battalion, 4th Tunisian Infantry, was on the west bank of the Gari-gliano at H Hour but delayed its attack until the supporting armor crossed Lion Bridge. One company of infantry set out before the armor was in position and gained the crest of Cimprone Hill, a knob on the east side of Mount Siola, but could not advance farther because of its exposed flanks. An enemy counterattack hit the right side of this company at 0900 but was beaten off. Shortly after daylight the 4th Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion (4<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Spahis Marocains), elements

of the 755th Tank Battalion (U.S.), and the 7th Tank Destroyer Battalion (7<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Chasseurs d'Afrique) completed their movement, and the 3d Battalion advanced west across the flat by the Garigliano. Below Castelforte it split into several groups. One infantry company with ten tanks advanced a few hundred yards north from the main road on the Castelforte road; another group of infantry, tanks, and tank destroyers moved around the southwest slopes of Mount Siola to the high ground a thousand yards north of Castelforte.

Meanwhile the 2d Battalion, 4th Tunisian Infantry, under the regimental commander, Colonel Lambilly, crossed the Garigliano by the Damiano Bridge and worked its way to the slopes of Damiano village by 1000. Armored support for this battalion included a squadron of the 3d Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion (3<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Spahis Marocains), the bulk of the 755th Tank Battalion, and a squadron of tank destroyers from the 7th Tank Destroyer Battalion.

The main activity in the zone of the 4th Mountain Division on the 12th consisted of efforts to reduce Castelforte. By noon the infantry and armor in the 4th Tunisian Infantry task forces had almost ringed the objectives, with one group to the west by Damiano, another south of the town on the road, a third on Cimprone Hill, and a fourth to the north of the town. The 350th Infantry of the 88th Division had by this time occupied Mount Cianelli and the hamlet of Ventosa, which secured the French left flank; on the right the 2d Moroccan Infantry held the east side of Riva Grande.

All morning the enemy harassed the advance with mortar and machine-gun fire from Castelforte and Damiano, and during the afternoon the garrison put up a stiff resistance. Attacks were begun by our forces at 1400 and at 1600, but stopped each time because of insufficient strength. Shortly after a new attack was launched in force at 1700, the enemy was radioing that we were all about the town and that the situation was desperate. The 2d Battalion, 4th Tunisian Infantry, on the south found the entrance to Castelforte blocked by rubble, which was not cleared by the bulldozers until 1930. To the east two infantry platoons and part of the armor advanced up the hill immediately above the town and entered the southeast corner of Castelforte at 1720. The armored detachment on the high ground north of the town gave supporting fire to the attack, which was completely successful. Mopping up continued until well after dark, but Castelforte was firmly in our hands.

The capture of Castelforte opened the way to Coreno. Before the Mountain Corps could advance, however, it was necessary to widen the gap by taking the hills on either side of the road. Mount Rotondo on the south was taken by the 350th Infantry on the afternoon of the 13th, and the French spent most of the day in reducing enemy resistance about Mount Ceschito to the north of the road. This

action involved the co-operation of the 6th Moroccan Infantry to the north, the 2d Moroccan Infantry to the east, and the 4th Tunisian Infantry to the south.

The 3d Battalion, 4th Tunisian Infantry, jumped off from Castelforte at 0500 and worked its way along the hills north of the road under the protection of fire from the 755th Tank Battalion and the 350th Infantry. After noon the battalion swung north, occupied Hill 335, and pushed on toward Mount Ceschito. In order to permit the expansion of our forces in this area the armored elements which remained in reserve, as well as the 3d Algerian Infantry (3<sup>e</sup> Régiment de Tirailleurs Algériens), were sent forward at noon from the east bank of the Garigliano. The 1st Battalion, 4th Tunisian Infantry, which had remained on Mount della Torre, was pulled out and moved up to assist the 3d Battalion in the stiff fighting on Hill 335 and the hills to the north and west.

Thus protected to its rear, the 3d Battalion pushed on to the north. The 6th Moroccan Infantry, relieved from its previous positions by the capture of Mount Feuci, came down the ridge running south from Mount Faito, and the 2d Moroccan Infantry began a frontal attack on the east slopes of the objective. At 1700 the units, approaching from three directions, met on the crest of Mount Ceschito. Over 700 prisoners, including an Army staff officer, were trapped in this brilliant attack. Since the 2d Battalion, 4th Tunisian Infantry, had mopped up Mount Siola in the afternoon, all organized opposition by the enemy on a line from Mount Majo to Mount Ceschito had been crushed. The 2d Moroccan Infantry remained behind to clean out the last German stragglers while the rest of the force drove on.

By the evening of 14 May the French had everywhere broken through the enemy lines. On the right the 1st Motorized Division had reached Sant'Apollinare and was preparing to drive on to San Giorgio. The main thrust by the 2d Moroccan Division in the center had put our forces in firm control of Mount Majo, the key to the Ausonia Defile. Skillful penetrations by the 4th Mountain Division with one regiment of the 3d Algerian Division on the south had gained Castelforte and the hills overlooking the Coreno road. Over 1000 prisoners had been taken, and the 71st Grenadier Division to our front was rapidly disintegrating in the rout. Coordinated, speedy action by the troops of the FEC had thus prepared the way for rapid exploitation to Esperia and to Mount Revole.

## C. *THE DRIVE THROUGH THE PETRELLA MASSIF*

13-19 MAY

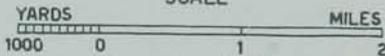
1. *Opening the Way.* (See Map No. 6.) The operation against Castelforte had provided a base of departure for the startling drive of the Mountain Corps

MAP Nº 5

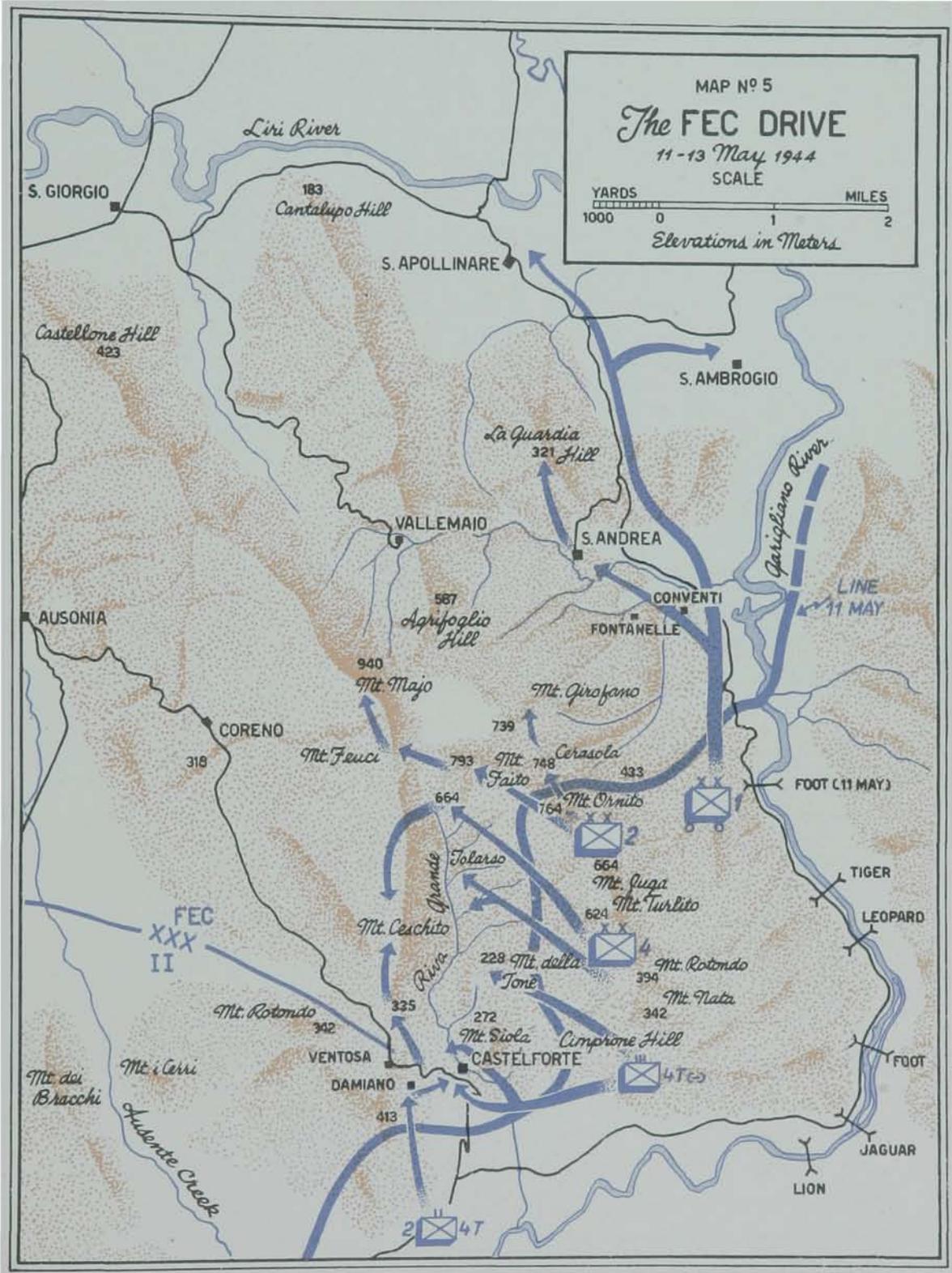
# The FEC DRIVE

11-13 May 1944

SCALE



Elevations in Meters



across the Ausonia Valley, up the stern cliffs on its western side, and over the mountains to the Itri—Pico road. This force consisted of the 1st, 3d, and 4th Groups of Tabors, the 1st Moroccan Infantry of the 4th Mountain Division, and the 2d Battalion, 69th Algerian Artillery Regiment (69<sup>e</sup> Régiment d'Artillerie Algérienne): a total of approximately 12,000 men and 4,000 animals.

Initially the tabors were held in reserve on the east bank of the Garigliano. On the morning of the 12th they began to move forward by the Damiano Bridge, entered Castelforte in the evening behind the forces of the 4th Tunisian Infantry, and moved out promptly from the north end of the town after dark. Cover was provided by tank destroyers of the 7th Tank Destroyer Battalion, which were lent by the 4th Tunisian Infantry.

About 500 yards northwest of Castelforte the tabors turned off the Coreno road and continued west along a trail toward Mount I Cerri. In the valley north of Mount Rotondo they halted and waited throughout the 13th for the other French forces to clean out Ceschito to the north. During this halt Brig. Gen. Augustin Guillaume divided his Mountain Corps into three groups or task forces (groupements) as follows: the 3d Group of Tabors and the 6th Moroccan Infantry; the 4th Group of Tabors and a battalion of the 1st Moroccan Infantry; the 1st Group of Tabors and a second battalion of the 1st Moroccan Infantry. At this time the 6th Moroccan Infantry was still operating under the control of the 4th Mountain Division, but it could be expected to swing west and join the 3d Group of Tabors on completion of the Ceschito action.

The plan of action called for all three groups to move out as soon as Ceschito had fallen. The 3d Group of Tabors under Colonel Bondis would drive northwest along the Coreno road to seize Ausonia or at least to bar enemy counterattacks out of the Ausonia Defile. When the 3d Algerian Division came up, the Bondis Group was to move on Mount Fammera. The other two groups under the direct command of General Guillaume would push west to the break in the Fammera—Civita escarpment at Spigno and then enter the mountains. Advance across the Ausonia road was necessarily dependent upon success by the 88th Division in its mission of seizing the high ground about Mount dei Bracchi and also the Civita crest south of Spigno.

During the night of 13-14 May, after the fall of Ceschito, the three groups fanned out in accordance with their orders. To the south the 1st Group of Tabors with a battalion of the 1st Moroccan Infantry followed the Corps boundary west and by 1430, 14 May, had pushed its advance guard to a point just east of the Ausonia road. Here enemy infantry and tank opposition forced the group to halt; on its left the 753d Tank Battalion of II Corps was held up by a large enemy minefield. The 4th Group of Tabors and a battalion of the 1st Moroccan Infantry moved out in the center and headed northwest, by-passing Avrito Hill on the west.

In the afternoon of the 14th this force came out on the Coreno road but turned west again toward the Ausonia road to positions 1200 yards northwest of the 1st Group of Tabors. Both groups spent the night along the banks of Ausente Creek. To the right the 3d Group of Tabors struck northwest for Ausonia, with the 6th Moroccan Infantry in the hills above. Enemy opposition was light as far as Coreno, and the Bondis Group pushed on toward Ausonia.

The French breakthrough to Mount Majo and the stubborn attacks by II Corps forced the enemy to withdraw the bulk of his shattered forces from the Ausonia Valley during the night of 14-15 May. At dawn on the 15th the 1st Group of Tabors moved west across the Ausente against light opposition; cut just north of Spigno, which the 351st Infantry already held; and by 1130 had gained Mount Castello directly north of the town. The 4th Group of Tabors likewise moved west but halted below the escarpment until the 1st Group of Tabors had gained its foothold. To the north elements of the 3d Group of Tabors scaled Mount Fammera. The way for the dash to Mount Revole was open.

2. *The Goumiers Race West.* During the afternoon of 15 May the Moroccan mountaineers under General Guillaume split into two echelons and began the ascent of the tortuous trail on Mount Strampaduro. In one stretch of 700 yards this path, barely wide enough for a man, rises 400 feet; yet the first echelon scrambled up on horseback and assembled on the first heights of the Petrella massif by 1600. The second echelon contained heavier equipment and made the climb more slowly but no less successfully. No opposition was met in the ascent.

As the drive to Esperia got under way on the north, General Guillaume pressed west along the miserable trails of the mountains. During the night of 15-16 May the goumiers of the 1st and 4th Groups of Tabors kept steadily on the march, except for a brief halt every four hours. Passing below Rave Grande and along La Valle, they crossed the basin of the Fraile by dawn, and at 0600, 16 May, the advance guard had reached the crest of Mount Revole—a gain of 12 miles from the old bridgehead line in 4½ days. Opposition was paltry during this last push, for there were almost no Germans to meet our troops. Once again the daring of our plan, to strike the enemy where he least expected an attack, was proving justified.

During the rest of the 16th the remainder of the goumiers closed at Mount Revole. The exhaustion of men and mules forced a brief halt at this point, while the two battalions of the 1st Moroccan Infantry kept on to positions to the north. By 1200 a battery of the 3d Battalion, 69th Algerian Artillery Regiment, was in position on Polleca Creek 1800 yards to the east of Mount Revole. From the latter could be observed the general enemy withdrawal before II Corps into Itri, but the 75-mm pack howitzers with the goumiers could not reach these tempting targets. Prearranged plans for aerial resupply were carried out on 17 May, when 36 A-20's

of XII Tactical Air Command dropped 40 tons of mixed supplies along the Spigno—Strampaduro—La Valle trail. Recovery of roughly 60 % was reported and proved sufficient to keep operations moving until the pack trains could bring up supplies.

The Mountain Corps now had two objectives: the first to cut the Pico—Itri road, and the second to bring its full weight against the rear of Pico to smash the expected enemy stand on the Hitler Line. On the 17th the goumiers pressed west from Mount Revole in three columns. One group struck out due west for Mount Calvo, about three miles from Mount Revole; a second group turned northwest toward Mount Faggeto; and a third group headed on beyond the second for Serra del Lago. Despite the long marches all three positions were reached by 1800, 17 May. The drive to Mount Calvo proved uneventful, but at its destination the first group met stubborn resistance from German troops defending the enemy withdrawal into Itri. The other two groups ran into enemy details building a road at the northwest end of Valle Piana. Our troops deployed in the hills on each side of the basin and then trapped the enemy workers. Thereafter the two groups separated, and each proceeded to its objective without delay. The battalion of 75-mm howitzers moved to Il Colle and brought the Itri—Pico road under fire during the afternoon of the 17th.

Our advance to Mount Faggeto put us at the outskirts of the enemy defensive lines about Pico. In the evening of the 17th the goumiers on Faggeto met an infantry battalion which had been trucked to the area to strengthen the German defenses. Though the enemy infantry was supported by tanks, the French mountain troops succeeded in setting fire to several of the tanks and trucks, took many prisoners, and drove the remainder back toward Pico. By dawn of the 18th Mount Faggeto and Mount Le Pezze to the southwest were firmly occupied. Farther advance was hampered by supply difficulties, but the troops of General Guillaume occupied Campodimele on the morning of 19 May. The appearance of enemy self-propelled guns on the highway checked the exploitation by our lightly equipped mountain troops to the north, and the Mountain Corps proceeded to concentrate about Campodimele.

Highway 82 itself was definitely cut by this time. Some patrols had crossed the Itri—Pico road in the vicinity of Mount Vele before noon on 19 May. The battalion of mountain artillery on Il Colle had maintained steady harassing fire on the road, and along its eastern side French troops controlled the hills from Mount Calvo to just north of Campodimele. The entry of II Corps into Itri on the afternoon of the 19th protected the left flank of the FEC. On the right flank other French forces had by this time mopped up the Majo district, captured Ausonia and Esperia, and were in position east of Pico to co-operate with the Mountain Corps in an attack on this pivot of the Hitler Line.

## D. THE ADVANCE ON THE RIGHT FLANK

13-19 MAY

1. *Exploitation North from Mount Majo.* (See Map No. 6.) After taking Mount Majo on the afternoon of 13 May the 2d Moroccan Division had not stopped, for it still had the task of exploiting its breakthrough by pressing down the two ridges to the north. The 5th Moroccan Infantry drove north to Agrifoglio Hill, which it occupied by midnight 13-14 May. By-passing the scant opposition, this regiment pushed along the northwestern ridge to Castellone Hill, the objective of the 8th Moroccan Infantry, and occupied the hill by 0945, 14 May. At 1500 the 5th Moroccan Infantry held Santa Lucia Hill overlooking the river road west of San Giorgio. Four and one-half hours later the 4th Moroccan Infantry, which had advanced down the ridge to the east, was on Cantalupo Hill.

Between these two regiments, moving on the ridges, the 8th Moroccan Infantry advanced along both sides of the Vallemaio—San Giorgio road. Here it met the 818th Mountain Pioneer Battalion and also three companies of the 115th Reconnaissance Battalion, which had come by truck from San Giovanni Incarico to Esperia and on by foot to the Vallemaio valley. Neither unit could stop our advance; in the afternoon the German reconnaissance troops received orders to scatter and make their way to the rear as best they could. Mopping up as it advanced, the 8th Moroccan Infantry was well down the valley by dark and then turned west across the Castellone ridge to the village of Castelnuovo by 0930, 15 May. This move put elements of the 2d Moroccan Division in command of the Ausonia Defile and threatened the retreat of the enemy forces still remaining in front of the 3d Algerian Division at Ausonia.

The speed with which the 2d Moroccan Division was able to push north was due in part to the simultaneous thrust by the 1st Motorized Division along the south bank of the Liri River. During the night of 13-14 May artillery of this division was brought across the Garigliano to positions on the road northeast of La Guardia Hill. Early on the 14th the 3d Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion and the 757th Tank Battalion pushed west with the 22d Motorized Battalion from Sant' Apollinare toward San Giorgio. A small detachment of infantry was left on the lower slopes of Cantalupo Hill until the 1st Battalion, 1st Motorized Brigade, could relieve it after noon. The rest of the advance guard moved rapidly and entered the village of San Giorgio at 1930. This point did not prove to be a center of enemy resistance in itself, but once our troops had entered it they found all the western exits commanded by enemy artillery and antitank fire from the west, including one 88-mm gun firing directly down the road into the village. Throughout the 15th

German antitank guns prevented our advance west from the village. Another group which was to cross the Cantalupo ridge and drive down the Vallemajo valley meanwhile found the Sant'Andrea—Vallemajo track impassable for its medium tanks, but the success of the 2d Moroccan Division in clearing this area and the unopposed entry into San Giorgio made prosecution of this thrust unnecessary.

By dark on the 15th the 2d Moroccan Division and the 1st Motorized Division had mopped up the area north of Mount Majo as far as the Liri. The 5th Moroccan Infantry, extended on the heights about Santa Lucia Hill, met an enemy counterattack late on the 15th which pushed it back temporarily, but early on the 16th our troops regained their ground. Most elements of the 2d Moroccan Division had by this time been relieved by the 1st Motorized Division on the north and by the 3d Algerian Division on the south; the last troops on Santa Lucia Hill, the 5th Moroccan Infantry and the 2d Battalion, 8th Moroccan Infantry, were relieved and moved back to the 2d Moroccan Division reserve areas east of the Gargigliano on the night of 16-17 May. During the 16th the infantry of the 1st Motorized Division silenced the enemy antitank guns beyond San Giorgio, and the division moved west toward Mount d'Oro.

2. *Clearing the North End of the Ausonia Valley.* While the 2d Moroccan Division and the 1st Motorized Division co-operated north of Mount Majo, the 4th Mountain Division and the 3d Algerian Division, the latter under Maj. Gen. de Goislard de Monsabert, cleaned up the area west of Mount Majo past Ausonia. Distinct divisional zones were disregarded in this operation as troops of all units sliced through the enemy defenses in a speedy attack to gain the Ausonia Defile and positions on Mount Fammera for the drive on Esperia.

The 3d Group of Tabors and the 6th Moroccan Infantry under Colonel Bondis led the way up the Coreno—Ausonia road during the early morning of 14 May. This task force did not start out as a single unit, for the 6th Moroccan Infantry had just cleared Mount Ceschito and could not join the 3d Group of Tabors in the Mount Rotondo area without causing considerable delay. Instead, the goumiers headed for Ausonia by themselves, while the infantry regiment backtracked to the north and gradually worked around to Coreno by following the hill crests above the Coreno—Castelforte road. To the rear the 3d Algerian Infantry of the 3d Algerian Division was advancing along the road proper but was slowed considerably by enemy demolitions.

The 6th Moroccan Infantry moved in on Coreno from the east in the afternoon and occupied it without opposition at 1605, the enemy having evacuated the village in the previous night. Meanwhile the 3d Group of Tabors had pushed around to the southwest of Coreno and gained the slopes south of Ausonia about 1600. The 3d Algerian Infantry reached Coreno almost immediately after its capture and

relieved the 6th Moroccan Infantry, which marched rapidly along the road to join the goumiers. After several unsuccessful efforts during the night 14-15 May to enter Ausonia the 3d Group of Tabors by-passed the resistance and moved on west, leaving the small enemy rear guards to the French infantry.

Though Ausonia itself held out until noon of the 15th, the bulk of our forces detoured about it and continued their drives to the north and west. Elements of the 3d Algerian Division came up in the morning, relieved the 6th Moroccan Infantry, and pushed a detachment of armor north to Castelnuovo, which the 8th Moroccan Infantry had taken at 0930. By 1135 the tanks held Castelnuovo and two other villages on the track to San Giorgio. Infantry then consolidated this area while the armor struck north on the main road in an effort to reach the Esperia road junction. A mile northwest of Castelnuovo enemy antitank weapons opened fire from the slopes of La Bastia Hill and stopped the tanks; evidently the Germans had concentrated their rear guards in this area to deny us access to the Esperia road.

After regrouping our armor attacked the enemy positions at 1930 but bogged down quickly under enemy close-range fire. The tanks then withdrew and prepared to attack again at dawn on the 16th. Meanwhile the 3d Algerian Infantry had followed the road west from Ausonia to Selvacava at the base of the Fammera escarpment. This little hamlet was deserted, and the infantry moved north to join the armor and infantry below La Bastia Hill. A fresh attack at daybreak on the 16th silenced the antitank guns and eliminated the enemy garrison on the lower slopes. A holding force was left to contain the German troops higher up the hill, and the rest of the French slipped on by to the north; by 0800 infantry patrols had pushed on to the junction of the San Giorgio and Esperia roads.

In the afternoon the 3d Algerian Infantry moved up to the junction and beat off an attack by the 3d Battalion, 200th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, a fresh unit which was committed in vain for the defense of Esperia. The 2d Battalion, 104th Panzer Grenadier Regiment,, which came up from Fondi to Esperia during the day, suffered heavy losses and was finally dispersed by our artillery. The French thrusts were moving so rapidly and were so numerous that the German command south of the Liri found itself completely unable to cope with the situation.

While the 3d Algerian Division was thus driving north from Ausonia to get in position for the Esperia attack, the 3d Group of Tabors had advanced west. During the night of 14-15 May, before the fall of Ausonia, the goumiers had pushed to the base of the Fammera escarpment, and by 1100, 15 May, elements of this force on horseback had ascended the steep slopes at a small break southwest of Ausonia between Mount Fammera and Mount Chiavica. To their south the main force of the Mountain Corps was at this same time driving up to Mount Castello in preparation for the drive on Revole. During the afternoon the 6th Moroccan

Infantry, relieved at Ausonia, moved west to join the main body of the 3d Group of Tabors at Selvacava, and after dark our troops made their way to the top of the escarpment. During the 16th they drove west below Esperia, brushing aside the 171st Field Replacement Battalion.

3. *The Drive on Esperia and Mount d'Oro.* By the morning of 17 May the forces on the right flank of the FEC were ready to launch their attack on Esperia. The 2d Moroccan Division had mopped up the ridges north of Mount Majo and was now relieved. The 1st Motorized Division, which had pinched it out on the north, lay west of San Giorgio. On the left flank of this division the 3d Algerian Division was in command of the Ausonia—Esperia road junction; in the hills above, the Bondis Group was 2000 yards south of Esperia at dawn and was threatening to encircle the village from the west as the 3d Algerian Division closed in from the east. Additional armor had been freed from mopping up in the Ausonia Valley and joined the division during the night.

For the attack on Esperia the 3d Algerian Division was divided into three groups or task forces, two of infantry and one of armor. The 4th Tunisian Infantry, which had borne the brunt of the Castelforte attack, was in reserve together with the 3d Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion. In addition to the Bondis Group on the south, another group (Louchet Group) had been formed from the 4th Mountain Division to operate below Esperia.

All three groups of the 3d Algerian Division advanced on the 17th along the Ausonia—Esperia road to a point about 1500 yards east of Esperia. Here Colonel Chappuis, commanding two battalions of the 7th Algerian Infantry and a battalion of artillery, turned left over the north slopes of Mount Fammera and headed for Mount del Lago, a commanding point southwest of Esperia. The other groups proceeded toward their objective on the road and advanced cautiously into the town just before noon. The main enemy force had pulled out hastily, leaving only snipers behind. The van of the 3d Algerian Division, with medium tanks in the lead, pursued rapidly in the hope of regaining contact. Just beyond the town it came on a graveyard of German tanks, guns, and vehicles which had been smashed earlier by our Corps artillery, but no opposition was met.

At the point where the road begins to drop down into the Monticelli valley the armor halted to give the accompanying infantry time to check the flanks and catch up. Troops of the 3d Algerian Infantry secured positions on the slopes of Mount d'Oro to the northeast, and the armor moved forward again just before dusk. Suddenly enemy antitank guns opened up from the hills on both sides, from Sant'Oliva to the front, and from the crest of Mount d'Oro. Caught in a trap, our armor beat a hasty retreat toward Esperia, stopping finally behind the cover afforded by a crest just west of the town. On the north side of this mountain the 1st Motorized Division

advance elements had been halted by extensive minefields and by mortar and automatic-weapon fire from Mount d'Oro and the north side of the Liri. The enemy had been discovered, and the period of our easy pursuit was over.

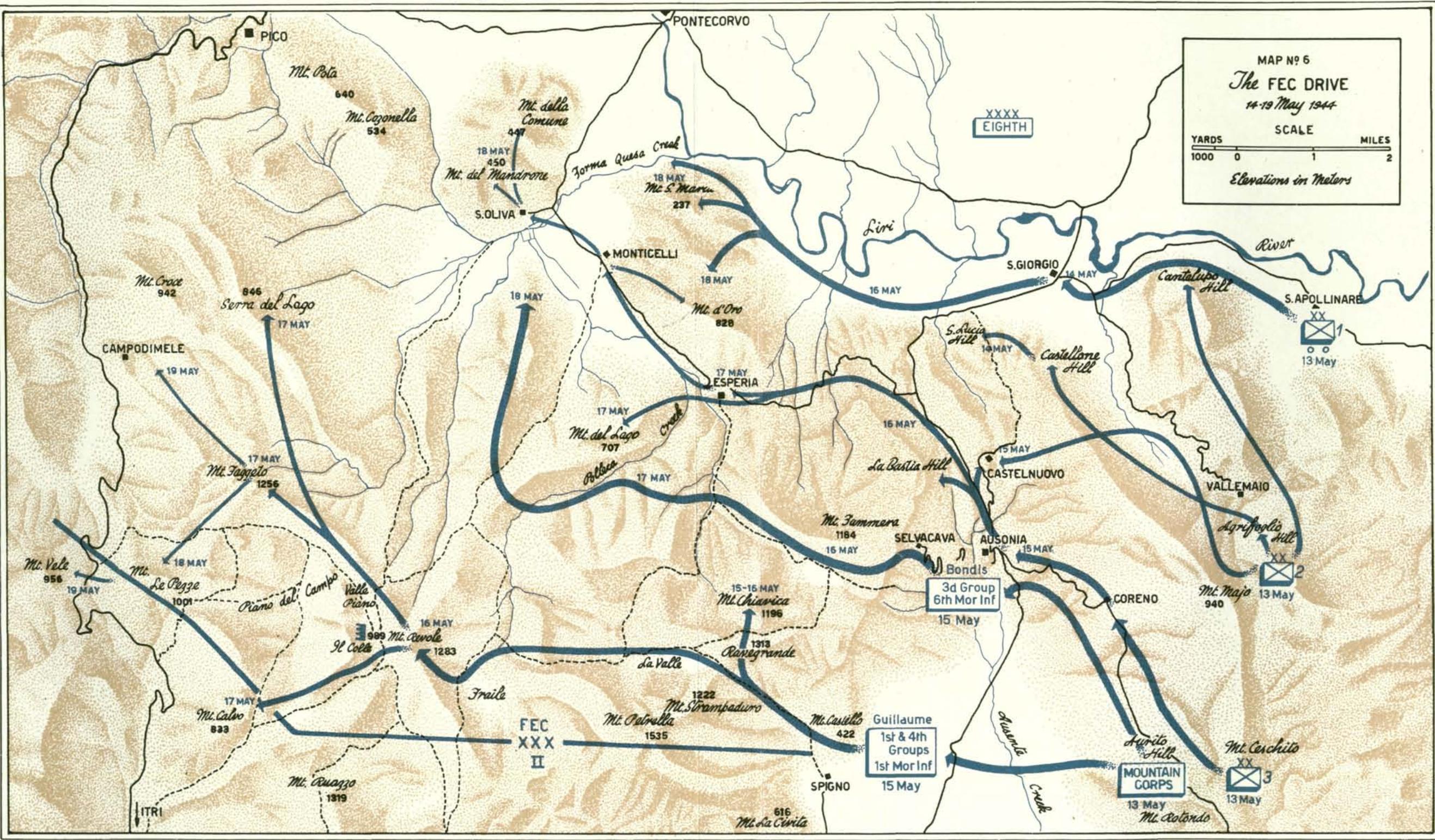
On the 18th our advance met stubborn resistance, but important gains were secured. The 3d Group of Tabors had pushed forward from Mount Fammaera to the hills south of Mount del Lago on the 17th, and curved north by noon of the 18th to the heights directly south of and commanding Sant'Oliva. During the night of 17-18 May part of the 3d Algerian Infantry advanced up Mount d'Oro from the neighborhood of Monticelli and gained the crest by 1030 in conjunction with an attack by the 1st Motorized Division on the two hills to the north. Other elements of the 3d Algerian Infantry cleared Monticelli itself, routing a company of the 1st Battalion, 9th Panzer Grenadier Regiment. This unit belonged to the 26th Panzer Division; its appearance was the first indication that powerful reinforcements had been thrown in the line to stop the French drive on Pico.

After the capture of the valuable terrain feature of Mount d'Oro infantry of the 1st Motorized Division worked forward to the east bank of Forma Quesa Creek by 1400. To their left the 3d Algerian Division pressed on to Sant'Oliva. Enemy resistance grew stronger but seemed to be falling back on Pico. In the rolling swells along the upper reaches of Forma Quesa Creek our troops met steel pillboxes of Cassino fame; some were defended, others were abandoned, but the French came in from the southeast and took most of them on the flank. By 1400 the village of Sant'Oliva was completely cleared; by midnight the infantry pushed patrols up Mount del Mandrone and Mount della Comune. Dawn of the 19th found the enemy rapidly growing more sensitive to our efforts, and the French troops north and west of Sant'Oliva received mortar and artillery fire from enemy emplacements about Mount Leucio to the north.

#### E. *SUMMARY OF THE FEC ATTACK*

On the morning of 19 May the FEC had in line three divisions plus the tabors. The French front extended along the east side of the Itri—Pico road from Mount Calvo to Campodimele, then cut across the mountains to the hill mass west and north of Sant'Oliva, and down the east bank of Forma Quesa Creek to the Liri. The left flank was held by two groups of tabors of the Mountain Corps with two battalions of infantry; in the center were the Bondis Group with one group of tabors and two battalions of infantry, the Louchet Group with five battalions of infantry, and the bulk of the 3d Algerian Division. The 1st Motorized Division on the right

MAP NO 6  
**The FEC DRIVE**  
 14-19 May 1944  
 SCALE  
 YARDS 1000 0 1 2 MILES  
 Elevations in Meters



flank curved about the west and north slopes of Mount d'Oro. Since Eighth Army in the Liri Valley had fallen behind the FEC from the opening days of the attack, the 1st Motorized Division was forced to keep a considerable part of its strength along the south bank of the Liri River and constantly met enemy fire from the north bank.

The rapid advance of the FEC had minimized the difficulties of supply and artillery support. Movement of truck columns up the Castelforte—Ausonia road was limited by the bottleneck at the curves below Castelforte and by the generally poor condition of the road, but the routes Minturno—Ausonia and Sant'Ambrogio—San Giorgio—Esperia were now open. Engineers had thrown additional bridges across the upper reaches of the Garigliano opposite Sant'Ambrogio and had performed yeoman work in repairing or by-passing the numerous demolitions. Air resupply had assisted the Mountain Corps in the most difficult stages of its supply; after 19 May Highway 7 was rapidly opened to Itri, from which point supplies could be brought north on Highway 82.

The light artillery of the 4th Mountain Division had kept up well, and the regular battalions of the other divisions found no difficulty in selecting positions after we had reached Ausonia. Four battalions of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade were out of range on 14 May, but Corps artillery generally moved forward on 14-15 May to positions below Castelforte and west of Sant'Ambrogio. On 17-18 May the Corps battalions again displaced to the vicinity of Ausonia and San Giorgio. By 19 May the only units which had not yet moved were the 985th Field Artillery Battalion (155-mm gun) and the 698th Field Artillery Battalion (240-mm howitzer), and both of these were to move at least in part on 20 May in preparation for the attack on Pico.

The drive by the FEC had been a fluid operation, which cannot be easily schematized. Regimental and even divisional organization had been broken down on occasion; units crossed the paths of each other and not infrequently wound up on the objectives assigned to someone else; considerable pockets of the enemy were by-passed in the drive to reach the principal keypoints. In his critique of our operations Marshal Kesselring noted that:

British and American tactics were again methodical. Local successes were seldom exploited. On the other hand the French, particularly the Moroccans, fought with great élan, and exploited each local success by concentrating immediately all available forces at the weakened point.

By the employment of such tactics the drive of the FEC in the first eight days of the May attack was extraordinarily successful. Opening with its initial capture of

Mount Faito and Cerasola Hill, the 2d Moroccan Division had smashed through to Mount Majo by the evening of 13 May. This penetration brought the collapse of German positions on either side. The 1st Motorized Division had cut north along the hills to Sant'Apollinare and trapped a large force of the enemy; the 4th Mountain Division had carried out two pincers movements, one on Castelforte and the other on Ceschito, to break through the German lines south of Mount Majo.

The action from the 14th was particularly bold. While the 2d Moroccan Division and the 3d Algerian Division concentrated on the Ausonia Defile, the mountain troops had dashed across the Ausonia Valley, up the steep cliffs on the west side, and through the Petrella massif with great rapidity and utter disregard for the safety of their flanks. After reaching the Itri—Pico road these troops had swung north toward Pico and lay ready on 19 May to begin fresh operations against this strongpoint on the Hitler Line. The 3d Algerian Division and the 1st Motorized Division had encircled and then taken Mount d'Oro, annexing Esperia in their stride, and had advanced to the last bastions guarding the eastern approaches to Pico.

The operations of the FEC during the period 11-19 May form one of the most spectacular and most important parts of the entire drive on Rome. Large bodies of troops had been moved through terrain which the Germans deemed impassable and had arrived at their objectives in fighting condition. The Gustav Line had been broken, and the Hitler Line was so outflanked by our dominance of Mount d'Oro and our threat to Pico that it could not long remain tenable. The advance of the FEC south of the Liri was of inestimable value to the British drive up the Liri Valley, and also greatly assisted the progress of II Corps along the coast to the left. Together with II Corps the FEC had by 19 May carried out almost all the operations directed by General Clark in his Field Order No. 6.



*The goumiers move forward in preparation for their drive to Mount Revole.*



*The Fammera escarpment (on the left) towers over the town of Ausonia.*



*A tank passes a ruined village on the north slopes of Mount Cianelli.*



*Santa Maria was a mass of shattered rubble when our troops entered the town.*

## *II Corps Takes Itri*

ON the left flank of Fifth Army our attack of 11 May was launched by II Corps, composed of the 85th and 88th Divisions. On the extreme left, by the sea, our activity was minor. The initial push met immediate success on the right flank; in the center the Americans encountered stiff resistance on the gentle slopes above Minturno, where the enemy automatic weapons had superb fields of fire. For three days the battle swirled in indecision about Santa Maria Infante, San Martino Hill, and the S Ridge. Then the enemy began a hasty retreat along the sea, followed closely by II Corps. By 19 May our rapid pursuit had pushed through Formia and Gaeta into Itri and was still in full swing.

### A. *THE PLANS OF II CORPS*

*See Map No. 7*

I. *The Attack Order.* On 1 May General Keyes issued his attack order. The Corps order dealt only with Phases I and II of the general plan, and divided these into three phases on the Corps level. Both divisions of the Corps were to attack simultaneously, the 85th Division on the left and the 88th Division on the right. Since our left flank was farther forward than our right, the 85th Division would be active in only two of the three Corps phases, while the 88th Division, wheeling westward, had objectives assigned in all three. The main effort of the Corps was thus entrusted to the 88th Division as the more experienced of the two units in the line.

The plan of maneuver consisted essentially of local turning attacks to slug through the defenses of the Gustav Line, with the main weight being exerted in the wedge of hills running north from Minturno to Mount dei Bracchi. If these hills

could be secured, the enemy positions in the lower Ausonia Valley would collapse. In the low, thickly settled ground on our left flank action would be limited; but on the right flank II Corps was to give aid to the FEC by opening up the hills on the south side of the Castelforte road.

In Phase 1 of the Corps order the 85th Division on the left drove for San Martino Hill and for that part of the S Ridge in its zone. It was then to cut the Ausonia—Formia road and organize for defense against counterattacks. On its right the 88th Division was to take the rest of the S Ridge, which entailed the capture of Santa Maria Infante; elements of the division would also capture Hill 413 (Mount Cianelli) to aid the French. The reserve of this division would not be committed without prior approval of II Corps, and would be ready to operate in the zone of the 85th Division to repel counterattacks.

During Phase 2 the 85th Division remained in position and aided the 88th Division by fire. The 88th Division would drive up to Mount dei Bracchi and swing its right flank west through Mount I Cerri and Mount Rotondo, aiming at Spigno. This point, together with Mount La Civita, formed its objective in Phase 3. In addition the 88th Division in the third phase would assist the 85th Division in taking Castellonorato, facilitate the advance of the French into the Petrella massif, and send forces west toward Mount Sant'Angelo. The 85th Division became active again in Phase 3 with the mission of taking Castellonorato and Mount Scauri and continuing the advance west.

In the first two phases armor utilized by the 88th Division would not exceed the equivalent of one battalion; the third phase would begin with a large-scale armored attack in the 85th Division zone. The 36th Division, in reserve south of Mondragone, was to be ready to pass through the 88th Division after the latter had taken Spigno and Mount La Civita, with the mission of capturing Mount Sant'Angelo and advancing west in the mountains to cut the Itri—Pico road. The Corps attack order directed that one regimental combat team of the 36th Division (less its artillery) would be on a six-hour alert after D Day to move to forward assembly areas by motor.

2. *The Plan of Supporting Fires.* Annexes to the Corps field order laid down the plans for artillery and naval support. The artillery available to II Corps, apart from that of the two front-line divisions, consisted of the 77th Field Artillery Group with four battalions, the 36th Field Artillery Group with three battalions, the 36th Division Artillery, and the 6th Field Artillery Group with two battalions. In all, II Corps artillery had directly under its control one battalion of 240-mm howitzers with one 8-inch gun, one battalion of 8-inch howitzers, one battalion of 155-mm guns, one battalion of 4.5-inch guns, four battalions of 155-mm howitzers, and five battalions of 105-mm howitzers.

The 36th Division Artillery was brought up and placed in direct support of the 85th Division and the 6th Field Artillery Group in direct support of the 88th Division. The 631st Field Artillery Battalion (155-mm howitzers) also supported the 88th Division, while the other two 155-mm howitzer battalions in the 77th Field Artillery Group gave general support to the divisional artillery. The long-range weapons were assigned counterbattery missions and harassing and interdiction fire. Additional fire was available from the two pack artillery battalions, three tank destroyer battalions, and the 90-mm guns of the Corps antiaircraft artillery.

As in the FEC, the initial fires of all artillery within II Corps were carefully co-ordinated and their direction closely centralized. A maximum weight and volume of fire at a high rate began at H Hour to secure prompt neutralization of German artillery and to maintain this advantage during the hours of darkness. The counterbattery program, lasting from H Hour to H plus 80, was split into 2 sections. In the first each enemy artillery position was hit by the equivalent of 2 battalion volleys from each of 2 medium battalions—2 24-round volleys, in other words, fired at the maximum practicable rate. This section lasted from H Hour to H plus 50. Then, from H plus 60 to H plus 80, each of the enemy targets received 10 rounds fired at irregular intervals by 1 gun. Missions fired by the 240-mm howitzers against coastal defense guns at Gaeta and also against the 170-mm guns in the vicinity of Itri were scheduled at three rounds each. The entire program could be repeated on call.

The light artillery—16 battalions in all—fired on enemy front-line positions from H Hour to not more than H plus 45 or until our assault troops reached the German lines. Then it shifted to enemy command posts, reserves, and routes of supply. This fire was supported from H plus 60 to H plus 380 by a harassing and interdiction program for Corps artillery as a whole, at a schedule of 40 rounds per hour for the 155-mm howitzers and 10 rounds per hour for the 240-mm howitzers. The latter reached out as far as Highway 7 at Itri and west of Formia. In keeping with the more open terrain in front of II Corps and the lesser weight of Corps artillery the artillery program on the south flank of Fifth Army presented a more scattered picture than that of the FEC.

Further support could be gained for II Corps by naval gunfire. Targets were plotted on the dumps, reserves, and command post of the 94th Grenadier Division at Itri, and a cruiser was available from D Day to D plus 5. Except for 13 May this naval fire was delivered every day on Highway 7 east of Terracina, on heavy gun positions, and on Itri proper. During 15 May, for example, 1119 rounds were fired at 10 naval targets.

## B. THE 88th DIVISION AT SANTA MARIA INFANTE

11-14 MAY

The attack order of the 88th Division assigned the principal missions of the first phase to its two flank regiments. The 350th Infantry, commanded by Col. J. C. Fry, was ordered to break German resistance on the right in the hills southwest of Castelforte. (See Map No. 8.) On the left the 351st Infantry, commanded by Col. Arthur S. Champeny, had the mission of driving the enemy from the village of Santa Maria Infante. In the center of the 88th Division line the 349th Infantry under Lt. Col. Joseph B. Crawford established forward positions on the hills northeast of Tufo to support the attack of the 351st Infantry, but was not to take active part in the attack until its neighboring units on either flank had gained their first objectives. The 631st Field Artillery Battalion and the 6th Field Artillery Group, with the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion attached, were placed in direct support of the divisional artillery. Units attached comprised the 1st Armored Group (less one battalion), the 804th Tank Destroyer Battalion, the 601st Field Artillery Battalion (Pack), and the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron.

1. *Success of the 350th Infantry.* As the artillery barrage began at 2300, 11 May, a Bofors gun started its red tracers ricocheting up the mountain sides in the zone of the 350th Infantry to mark the boundary between the two assault battalions. In the 1st Battalion on the right two companies moved up through the olive groves on the terraced southern slopes of Hill 413, while the third rifle company maneuvered around the north side to strike the village of Ventosa. Forty-six minutes later the height was taken from the 1st Battalion, 194th Grenadier Regiment, in one fierce charge. The opposition was not as stiff as had been expected, but the enemy resisted stubbornly from his concrete pillboxes and rock-lined foxholes until overrun and destroyed. During the night the battalion consolidated its possession. At noon on the following day one platoon occupied the village of Ventosa and took 25 prisoners without a casualty.

The 2d Battalion on the left attacked Hill 316 to the northwest of Hill 413. Despite difficult terrain and enemy artillery, machine-gun, and mortar fire the battalion held its objective and had dug in by daylight against an anticipated counterattack. Just before dawn a strong German force struck the western slopes of the hill. Our artillery and mortars answered the calls for aid, the 2d Battalion covered the enemy with rifle and machine-gun fire, and the Germans were soon fleeing in confusion. Meanwhile Company C, 753d Tank Battalion, attacked through the 3d Battalion along Ausente Creek and overran Ceracoli Hill. Our infantry followed up to consolidate the gain.



The 350th Infantry had secured its initial objectives from the Ausente around to Castelforte, and waited until the French had cleared the north side of the Castelforte road. The regiment then launched an attack on 13 May for its second objective, Mount Rotondo. At 1700 the 1st Battalion jumped off under the cover of intense artillery, tank, and small-arms fire. Opposition was scant, and our troops occupied the hill soon after dark. This acquisition completed the aid which had been requested by the FEC.

2. *The 351st Infantry Battles at Santa Maria.* On the night of 11 May the 351st Infantry attacked north along the ridge which carries the Minturno—Santa Maria road. This ridge falls away on each side in numerous draws and terraced slopes, but to the west it is commanded by the S Ridge, a series of 7 hills extending 1200 yards from Solacciano to Tame. The entire area had an air of desolation even before our attack. The fields were covered with grain, weeds, and wild poppies; the vineyards were unkempt; and the olive trees were broken and shattered by mortar and artillery fire. Every terrain feature and stone house had been utilized by the Germans to establish interlocking bands of fire covering all avenues of approach. On the S Ridge the German garrison consisted of the 1st Battalion, 267th Grenadier Regiment; Santa Maria, which dominated the ridge road from the north, was defended by the 194th Fusilier Battalion.

Since the land east of the road was cut by a wide draw and did not favor attack, the main effort of the 351st Infantry was made by the 2d Battalion up the road itself. On the hills east of the ridge, overlooking the draw, the 1st and 3d Battalions supported the attack by fire; farther east the 349th Infantry moved up and lent further assistance. The Cannon Company, 351st Infantry, fired from positions near Tufo, and a platoon of Company C, 760th Tank Battalion, was on hand to back the thrust. The 2d Battalion itself jumped off from the Minturno cemetery as soon as our artillery concentrations began, with Company F on the west side of the road and Company E on the right.

After some difficulty initially with enemy machine-gun fire, the attacking units moved on to Hills 146 and 150, which our men had aptly named the Tits. Part of Company F advanced rapidly past the Left Tit along the western slopes of the ridge with little opposition except for occasional mortar or artillery fire. At 0300, 12 May, this group reached a culvert on the Santa Maria—Tame road, where it was soon exposed to machine-gun and rifle fire from all sides. Company F by this time had penetrated a mile and one-half into the enemy's defenses. Since both flanks and rear were wide open, the men could only dig in about the culvert and wait until dark for help to come or for a withdrawal to the rest of the regiment.

While Company F was moving toward Tame, Company E had met stiff resistance on the slopes east of the road. Forward elements initially by-passed the first

enemy machine guns and drove across the slopes of the Right Tit to the Spur (Hills 157 and 146). Machine guns in houses on the crest of the Spur stopped our men; the company commander was evacuated for wounds; and several platoon commanders fell before the sweeping machine-gun fire on the south side of the Spur. The attack then stalled until the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Raymond E. Kendall, came up. This officer soon discovered that about 12 machine guns in 3 houses and a bunker on the Spur commanded every approach with overlapping fields of fire. After he had been killed in the attempt to knock out the resistance, the disorganized company dug in at dawn on the south side of the Spur. So far it had had 89 casualties. Company G, which had followed the other two companies of the battalion to deal with by-passed machine guns along the road, came up at this time and joined Company E.

Before daybreak it was clear that the attack of the 2d Battalion had failed, and the 3d Battalion was committed on the west side of the road to operate with Companies E and G in a pincers movement on Santa Maria. For several hours machine-gun fire from Hill 103, just left of the road, held the battalion up, but after daybreak our troops pushed forward toward the hill. The enemy opposition proved to be intense. Eight machine guns in houses and dugouts on the upper slopes of Hill 103 swept every ripple of the ground; even worse, the Germans still held the S Ridge, which had been reported taken by the 338th Infantry, and their machine guns raked our troops from the left flank. The 3rd Battalion pushed forward doggedly but was finally halted just before noon on the west and south slopes of Hill 103. Below it the 1st Battalion, 338th Infantry, was also pinned by the same opposition. Renewal of the attack by the 3d Battalion was planned for 1830 but was postponed until the 338th Infantry could take part.

On the crest and other side of the Santa Maria ridge there was no progress throughout 12 May. The infantry, consisting of Companies E and G, were unable to cross the Spur. Three of the five tanks with the 351st Infantry had been immobilized by mines and artillery fire in the night while mopping up enemy machine guns; another five tanks came up the road during the hazy morning, but within an hour three of them were knocked out between the Tits and the Spur. Later another force of tanks advanced beyond the cemetery and eliminated 20 machine-gun and sniper positions with the aid of the infantry. This attack was halted after an enemy antitank gun in a building along the road had scored direct hits on three tanks. Still another armored attack north from Tufo early in the morning of the 12th failed when the leading tanks were bogged in the muddy terrain.

Supporting fires were heavy on either side. Our tanks, tank destroyers, cannon company howitzers, and artillery blasted the enemy lines hour after hour. During the first day of the attack the 913th Field Artillery Battalion alone expended

4268 rounds on Santa Maria, reducing it to a little Cassino. Meanwhile the enemy battered the 351st Infantry with machine-gun, mortar, and artillery fire. Self-propelled guns from Spigno and heavier caliber guns from Ausonia kept up a deadly fire. Tanks came up to Tame and harassed both the 351st Infantry and the 338th Infantry on the S Ridge; enemy mortars fired unceasingly; and snipers made it worth a man's life to move.

The enemy lines about Company F, still isolated near Tame, grew ever tighter. The supply of ammunition dwindled, and the batteries of the SCR-300, the only means of communication with the regiment, threatened to go dead at any minute. After sunset the Germans finally tried one of their old ruses. Several of the enemy rose up and came forward yelling «Kamerad». When the men of Company F scrambled out of their positions to take the prisoners, the Germans closed in from all sides and wiped out the company. The company commander and over 50 men were captured; a few men escaped by hiding.

Replacements had been brought up after dark for the 351st Infantry, which met a fierce counterattack during the night of 12-13 May. At 1330, 13 May, over 22 FW-190's raided the Minturno—Tremensuoli area. Our attack on the 13th, postponed from dawn, finally jumped off in the afternoon in conjunction with the renewed drive by the 338th Infantry on the S Ridge. The plan of maneuver directed Companies E and G to push up on the right side of the Santa Maria road and the 3d Battalion on the left side. The 1st Battalion, in the draw between the S Ridge and the Santa Maria road, would advance toward Hill 109 on the S Ridge with the further plan of taking Hill 126 and eliminating the enemy resistance in that area.

Though the attack was postponed until 1830, the 2d Battalion did not receive the message and jumped off at 1630. Fighting its way to the top of the Spur, part of the unit was there pinned by machine-gun fire. When the 3d Battalion attacked, it found that the enemy had apparently intercepted a message giving the time of our attack, for a concentration of 300 to 400 rounds of 88-mm fire fell in its zone precisely at 1830. The battalion suffered heavy casualties and made little progress. The 1st Battalion moved in single file up the creek bed below the S Ridge and completed occupation of Hill 109, already partly held by the 338th Infantry, after a battle of several hours to silence the enemy machine guns.

Renewed attack by the 351st Infantry at daylight on 14 May finally gained the regimental objective. The 1st Battalion cleaned up the north end of the S Ridge; assault elements of the 3d Battalion, followed by tanks, reached Santa Maria about 0900 and spent the next two hours rooting the snipers out of the rubble. The main body of the enemy had slipped away during the night, leaving suicide rear guard elements. Santa Maria was ours after 60 hours of fierce fighting.

The battle of the 85th Division for its Phase I objectives had been equally protracted and bloody. Immediately to the left of the 351st Infantry the 338th Infantry under Col. Alfred A. Safay attacked for the S Ridge. (*See Map No. 8.*) In the center of the 85th Division zone the 339th Infantry under Lt. Col. Brookner W. Brady had as its objectives San Martino Hill across Capo d'Acqua Creek and dominating terrain east and north of Scauri. Since all three battalions of the 339th Infantry were to take part in the attack, the 3d Battalion, 337th Infantry, was attached to the regiment as reserve. The remainder of the 337th Infantry, commanded by Col. Oliver W. Hughes, held its lines on the left flank and prepared to assist the other regiments of the division. The initial attack and subsequent advance were to be supported by the 756th Tank Battalion, the 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion, the 2d Chemical Battalion, the 602d Field Artillery Battalion (Pack), and the 5th Mule Group (Italian).

1. *The 338th Infantry on the S Ridge.* The S Ridge, as defined in the fighting of our May drive, is essentially a long nose running in sinuous form southwest from the main hill mass at Tame down to the village of Solacciano. Along its course seven knobs or crests can be distinguished, the highest of which, Hill 131, forms a hilltop about halfway between the two villages. On the east, beyond a narrow creek valley, lies the ridge along which the Minturno—Santa Maria road runs. On the west side is the farm valley of Capo d'Acqua Creek. The entire S Ridge is covered with terraced grain fields, olive groves, vineyards and scattered stone farmhouses. The capture of the ridge was necessary if the 351st Infantry was to reach Santa Maria, for enemy machine guns and riflemen on its slopes could rake any force advancing along the axis of the road. Our possession of the ridge would eliminate this danger and also place our forces in command of the Ausonia—Formia road in the valley to the west.

The only method of attack open to the 338th Infantry was a frontal assault to the north from our positions above Tremensuoli in conjunction with the drive of the 351st Infantry on Santa Maria. The 1st Battalion was directed against Hill 131 and the three points to the north, while the 3d Battalion was sent to take the ridge south of Hill 131 as far as Solacciano. A combat group was organized to operate on the left flank of the regiment and to push across Capo d'Acqua Creek for Cave d'Argilla.

The 1st Battalion attacked promptly at 2300 up the draw between the S Ridge and the Santa Maria ridge, a dangerous route commanded by machine-gun and rifle

positions on both ridges and in houses in Tame and Santa Maria. Initially our artillery kept the enemy under cover, but when the concentrations lifted the Germans scrambled out and manned their machine guns and mortars. The draw became an inferno of flying bullets and shell fragments. One company drove up to Hill 126 just south of Tame, but by daylight it had been pushed back to Hills 103 and 109. Another company fought its way across the crest of Hill 131 after midnight. The enemy rallied from strong positions on the reverse slope and drove the unit back to the foot of the hill, where it dug in and held. As later fighting proved, Hills 126 and 131 were the chief enemy strongpoints on the S Ridge.

The 351st Infantry called for help on its left flank on the morning of the 12th. At 1030 the 1st Battalion, 338th Infantry, again attacked up the draw. The Germans immediately plastered the whole area with mortar shells, and the effort failed. Tanks and tank destroyers came up during the day as far as Hill 109 to hammer 12 enemy tanks in Tame and the enemy defenses on Hill 126; but the enemy machine guns continued to chatter down the draw and across the crests of the hills. Before midnight the assault companies were pulled back from the hilltops and consolidated on the southeast slopes of Hill 131, the south side of Hill 109, and Hill 103—the latter in conjunction with the 3d Battalion, 351st Infantry. The 24 hours of fighting had reduced the 1st Battalion to 350 effectives.

The 3d Battalion, 338th Infantry, likewise had been able to gain only an unsteady footing on the S Ridge. During the night of the initial attack the enemy drove out the one platoon of the battalion which had reached Solacciano; morning found the two assault companies dug in below the village and on the slopes to the south. The 3d Battalion renewed the attack at 1400, 12 May, in co-ordination with an attack by the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, on San Martino Hill in the 339th Infantry zone. A 10-minute concentration by 60 howitzers pinned the 2d Company, 267th Grenadier Regiment, at the outset; then the enemy in Solacciano rose up and fought with fanatical stubbornness. Pillbox after pillbox had to be knocked out with grenades and bazookas, but by 1800 we held two houses in the village. The Germans were then systematically ferreted out of their holes and killed or captured. Shortly after dark a company of the 2d Battalion relieved Company L, reduced to a strength of 20 men. The 3d Battalion, hardly able to muster 200 effectives, dug in at Solacciano.

As the 351st Infantry slowly blasted its way toward Santa Maria, the 1st Battalion, 338th Infantry, attacked Hill 126 before daylight on 13 May. Again the German defenses proved too strong, and the draw deadly. Further plans for an attack in the afternoon called for a drive through Solacciano northeast along the reverse slopes of the S Ridge. At the same time the 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, assaulted Hill 126 from the south. A small task force of 12 tanks and accompanying infantry jumped off from Solacciano at 1630 and within 2 hours drove to Hill

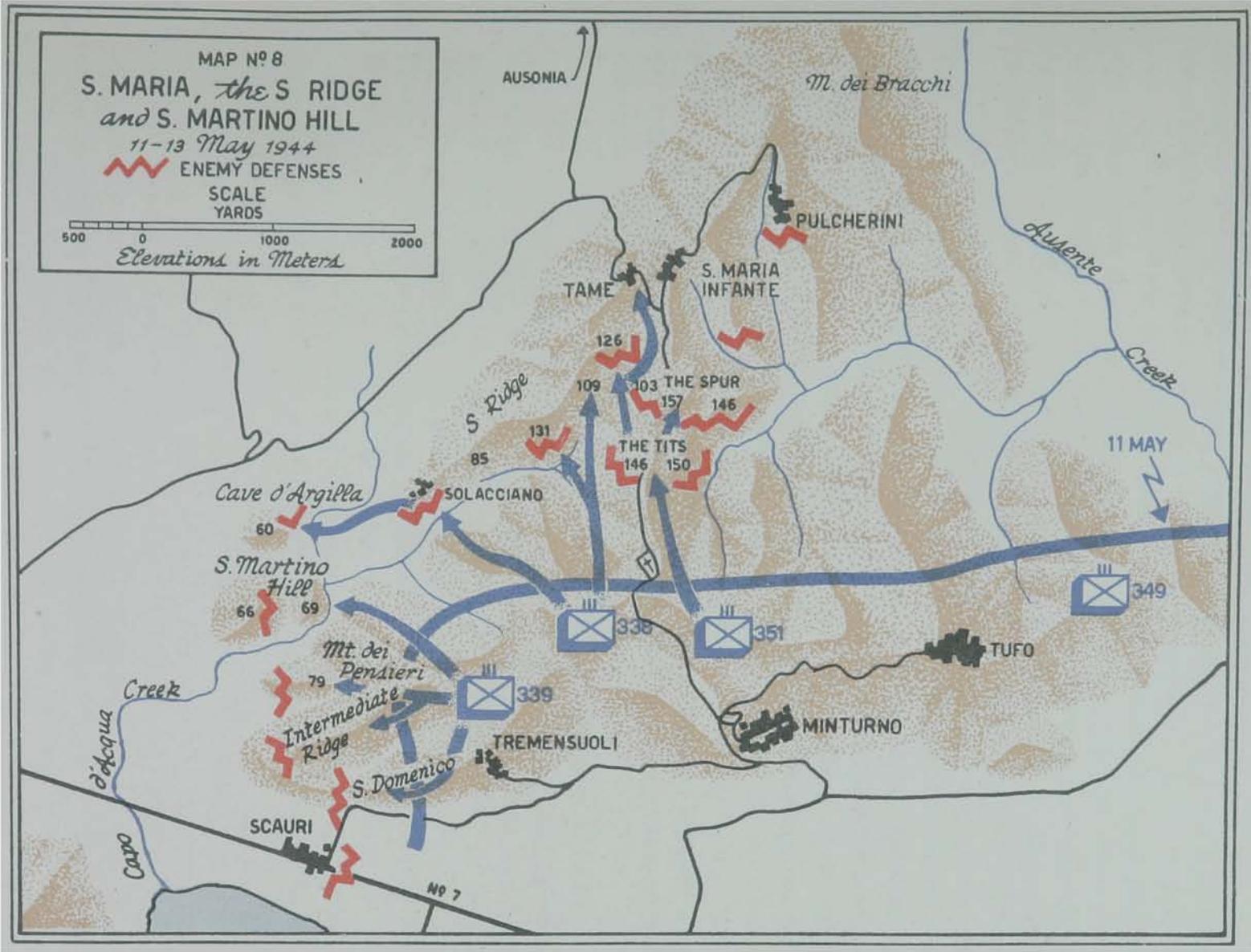
85. Some of the tanks then bogged down in the muddy valley west of the S Ridge; the infantry were stopped; and just before dark an enemy counterattack pushed them back to the south slopes of Hill 85. Reinforcements were immediately rushed up, and our troops held. The attack of the 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, continued after dark but was stopped on Hill 109 by machine-gun fire from Hills 126 and 131.

The 2d Battalion, 338th Infantry, also attacked Cave d'Argilla across Capo d'Acqua Creek on 13 May, for the small connecting force sent out on the night of 11 May had never had a chance to reach its objective. On the morning of the 13th two companies of the 2d Battalion moved down to the creek, but machine-gun fire from the front and from the S Ridge prevented a crossing. The infantry then withdrew under cover of a 45-minute artillery concentration and crossed at San Martino Hill, held by the 339th Infantry. After a fierce battle our men captured Cave d'Argilla and Hill 60 to the south, thus gaining partial control over the Spigno road junction. Both companies had to use every available man and weapon to beat off the immediate counterattacks by an alarmed enemy. Once the Germans fought their way within 25 yards of our positions, but the infantry clung grimly to their foxholes through the sleepless night.

At dark on 13 May the position in the zone of the 338th Infantry was little better than in front of Santa Maria. We held Cave d'Argilla, Solacciano, part of Hill 85, and Hill 109; but the machine guns in the enemy strongpoints on Hills 131 and 126 still laid down their deadly belts of crossfire on the draw and the Santa Maria road. Since the 338th Infantry was nearly exhausted the 351st Infantry took over its positions on the upper part of the S Ridge with the task of clearing Hill 126, and the 338th Infantry concentrated on taking Hill 131.

A co-ordinated attack launched at 0510, 14 May, proved completely successful. The 351st Infantry captured Hill 126 and Santa Maria, and the 338th Infantry cleared the crest of Hill 131. Most of the enemy had pulled out during the night, leaving the reverse slopes of the S Ridge littered with dead. Before noon the 1st Battalion, 338th Infantry, had pushed outposts to the Formia—Ausonia road. Casualties for the entire regiment during the action totalled 55 killed, 365 wounded, and 29 missing.

2. *The Battle of San Martino Hill.* San Martino Hill, the initial objective of the 3d Battalion, 339th Infantry, consists of two gentle swells in the farmland south of Cave d'Argilla. The western swell is Hill 66; the eastern one, Hill 69, drops 120 feet on its east slope to Capo d'Acqua Creek, a swift little stream about 15 feet wide and 3 feet deep. The seizure of these outwardly insignificant points would thrust a dangerous salient into the enemy's defensive line. Success here, moreover, might bring us command of the Spigno road junction and so sever the only lateral supply route between the German forces on the left and right flanks of II Corps.



The artillery concentrations of H Hour were thickened in this area by the mortars of the 2d Chemical Battalion, which poured 1200 rounds on Hill 66 in the first 5 minutes. The 131st Field Artillery Battalion then placed a five-minute concentration on Hill 69 and switched its fire to Hill 66 for ten minutes. Under this cover the assault elements of the 3d Battalion threw their temporary bridge across the creek and dashed up the slopes of Hill 69. The enemy, though surprised, reacted immediately and violently, but within three hours the last German had been killed or captured. Part of our forces then attacked Hill 66 at 0250, 12 May, but here the enemy was too strongly entrenched in bunkers, pillboxes, and fortified houses.

Before daylight the 3d Battalion reorganized on Hill 69 and prepared for enemy counterattacks, which began to come at dawn on the 12th, one after another. Our depleted forces, aided by artillery fire, beat off the first, which was launched from behind Hill 66. Another, supported by a tank, began to form along the river south of Hill 66, but our artillery scored a direct hit on the tank and dispersed the infantry. Rifle and machine-gun fire was exchanged steadily during the morning, but neither side could muster sufficient strength to attack. One company of the 337th Infantry moved up shortly after daylight to reinforce our troops and fought its way into positions on the north side of Hill 69. The 3d Battalion called periodically for artillery support until finally four battalions of artillery poured concentration after concentration on Hill 66 to neutralize enemy bunkers and pillboxes.

In the afternoon of the 12th the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, moved forward to attack through the 3d Battalion. Our artillery opened up at 1400, driving the enemy into the shelter of his defenses; under this cover the new unit was fighting up the slopes of Hill 66 within an hour. Enemy resistance from the 2d Battalion, 267th Grenadier Regiment, was firm, and German artillery fire from Mount Scauri, Formia, and Castellonorato drove our 1st Battalion back to the foot of Hill 66. A second attack, launched late in the afternoon and continued through the dark, finally put our men on the crest of Hill 66 after midnight. They fought off an immediate counterattack and then organized reverse-slope defenses for the inevitable enemy thrusts.

Enemy artillery and mortar fire fell on San Martino Hill during the remainder of the night. The 3d Battalion, 339th Infantry, able to muster no more than 200 effectives, reorganized as one company and held Hill 69; the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, garrisoned Hill 66. The enemy counterattack came at dawn on the 13th, but our co-ordinated fires mowed down the enemy infantry on the west slopes of Hill 66. After this attack was broken, the rest of the day was quiet. Again at midnight on 13-14 May the enemy counterattacked, and again elements reached the crest of Hill 66; but at dawn on 14 May the Germans withdrew.

3. *The Left Flank of II Corps.* The remainder of the 339th Infantry was less fortunate in its operations against the enemy-held hills immediately above Highway 7. The Germans had been engaged in fortifying this area for months, and had developed a strong system of mutually supporting defenses of the usual type. Much of the section is open and relatively level.

The 1st Battalion, 339th Infantry, moved out promptly at 2300 on its mission to contain Scauri and to capture San Domenico Ridge, a low rise southwest of Tremensuoli. Advancing astride the railroad, the forward elements soon encountered intense machine-gun and rifle fire from the ridge and artillery fire from Mount Scauri. The enemy pillboxes on San Domenico were too strong for a frontal attack, and the battalion dug in east of Scauri. During the next three days our troops maintained constant pressure on the enemy with patrols and beat back several enemy attacks, particularly a determined one just before midnight on 12 May.

To the right the 2d Battalion attacked at 2305 for three knobs on the southeast slopes of Mount dei Pensieri. One platoon of Company G gained the crest of Hill 79 before the artillery preparation ceased and fought the next 3 days to eliminate the 15 bunkers on the hill, defended by 2 companies of the 274th Grenadier Regiment. By the morning of 14 May this hill was firmly in our hands. The rest of the battalion drove for the other two knobs farther to the south but was pinned before reaching its objectives. During the 12th our men held their positions, but at 2100 an enemy counterattack in force drove one company back to its original line of departure southwest of Tremensuoli and cut off Company F on the Intermediate Ridge east of Hill 79.

A smoke screen was laid toward daylight of the 13th to aid the withdrawal of this company, but the men were unable to break through the German circle. Reserves were not available for a strong effort to relieve the company, for all three battalions of the 339th Infantry and its reserve battalion from the 337th Infantry were committed elsewhere. Plans were made to send a combat patrol forward the next night with food, water, and ammunition, and some consideration was given to dropping supplies from the air. By evening of the 13th, however, the ammunition of the trapped company was exhausted; just before sunset an observer saw the commanding officer, followed by his men in single file, taken toward Scauri by the Germans. During the night the enemy withdrew in this area also, and many of our wounded were picked up on the 14th on the Intermediate Ridge.

## D. *MOPPING UP THE GUSTAV LINE*

14-15 MAY

1. *The Enemy Withdrawal.* (See Map No. 9.) At dusk on 13 May the two-day battle by II Corps had produced mixed results. On the far right the 350th Infantry had been completely successful. In the center the 351st Infantry and the 338th Infantry still lay before the main German strongpoints at Santa Maria and on the S Ridge. Part of the 339th Infantry had gained San Martino Hill; the rest of the regiment had advanced but little beyond its original line of departure. All units had suffered heavy casualties. During the night the commander of the 94th Grenadier Division issued an order of the day claiming that « in spite of several enemy penetrations into our advance positions, the main field of battle remained in our hands ».

This claim, however, was not entirely correct. The belt of fortifications in front of II Corps had made our attack a slow, nibbling process, but by dusk of 13 May we had achieved important gains. The Spigno road junction was threatened. The Germans had suffered heavy losses, and the pressure of the wide-scale Allied attack prevented any reinforcements to the enemy in front of II Corps. The entry of the French into the Ausonia Valley imposed an added strain on enemy resources which was clearly too great. Before dawn of 14 May the enemy to the front of II Corps withdrew from all his positions in accordance with an order from the German command to retreat to the Dora Line. Even this position became only a temporary halt after the further penetration of the French to Mount Revole and of the 88th Division to the Itri—Pico road; during the period 14-21 May the enemy made no extensive stand in force in the II Corps zone.

2. *The Capture of Spigno and Castellonorato.* On the morning of 14 May Santa Maria Infante fell to the 351st Infantry, and the 88th Division began its advance toward the objectives of Corps Phase 3. The original plans which called for the 349th Infantry to attack up Ausente Creek and then west to Spigno were changed so that the 350th Infantry received the mission of clearing the east bank of the stream. The 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron relieved the 1st Battalion of this regiment on Mount Rotondo during the night, and the 1st and 3d Battalions attacked for Mount I Cerri at 0430, 14 May. A patrol from the 88th Reconnaissance Troop found the height evacuated, so the assault companies drove on across Ausente Creek to San Pietro on the north slopes of Mount dei Bracchi.

This hill was occupied in the morning by the 1st Battalion, 349th Infantry, moving up the hills on the west side of the Ausente. After Santa Maria fell, the battalion turned west from Mount dei Bracchi and advanced to the lower slopes of the north peak of Mount La Civita before dark. In the meantime the 2d and 3d

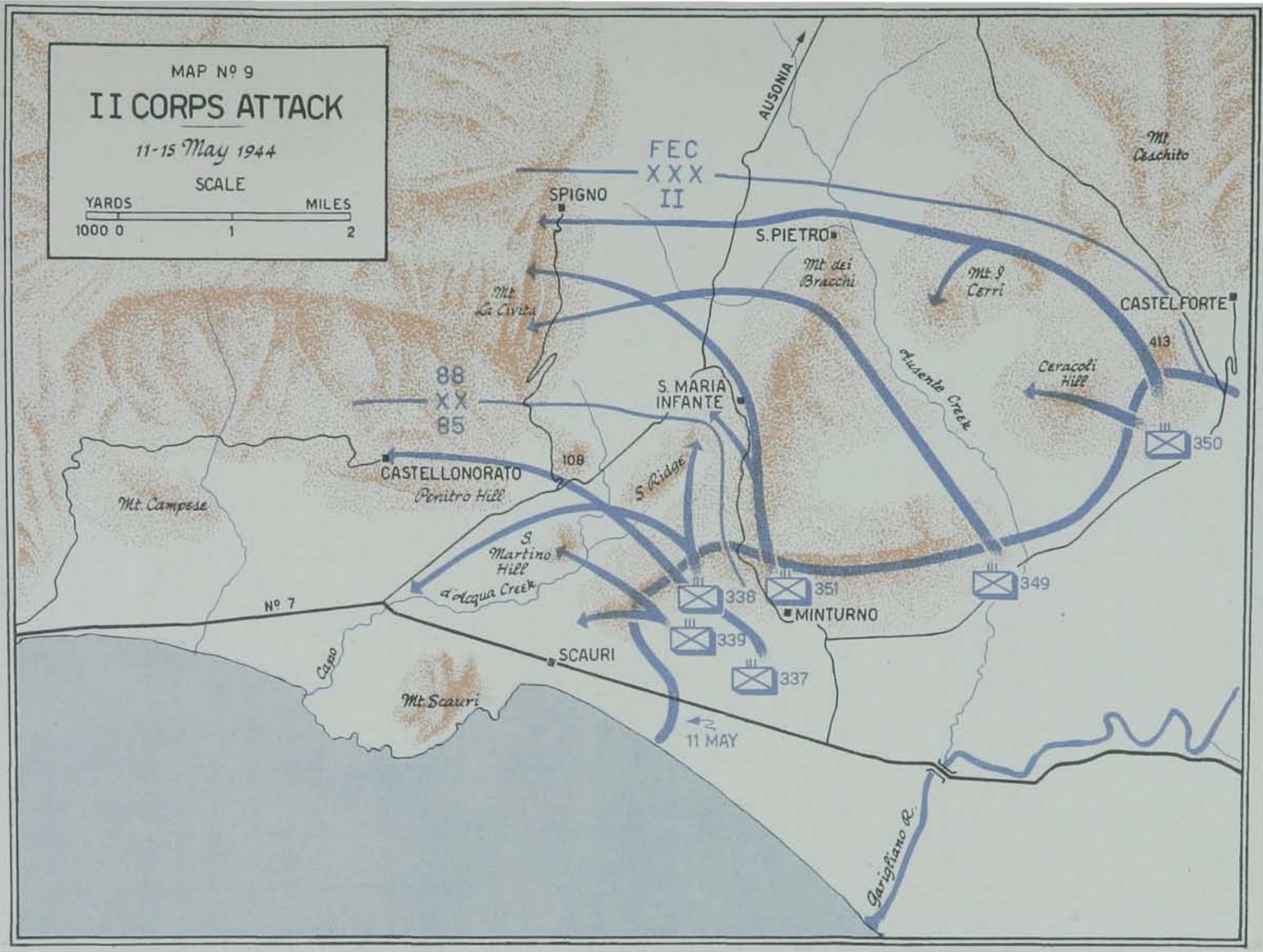
Battalions moved around by Minturno and up the road to Santa Maria to take over the mission of the 351st Infantry. Both battalions attacked west at noon from the S Ridge, with little opposition except for artillery and mortar fire. After dark the 3d Battalion climbed the bare rocky slopes of the south peak of Mount La Civita, caught the enemy off guard, and drove the defenders from the height in confusion. So complete was the disruption of enemy communications that 1 officer and 22 artillerymen from the 194th Artillery Regiment were captured while still firing on our reported positions in the valley. The north peak of the cliff was taken by the 1st and 3d Battalions, 351st Infantry, which had reorganized and attacked across the valley from Santa Maria at 1500.

The next morning, 15 May, both the 349th and 351st Infantry drove on into the mountains. The latter overran a pack artillery battery and killed or captured approximately 100 startled artillerymen. A patrol of the regiment, which went into the rubble pile that had once been Spigno, found that its garrison had fled. By 0730 the 1st Battalion, 350th Infantry, had also reached the town but was relieved at 1800 by the 3d Battalion, 351st Infantry. II Corps thus had firm control of the south shoulder of the Spigno gap, through which the French Mountain Corps poured in the afternoon of the 15th.

Advance in the 85th Division zone was initially entrusted to the 337th Infantry while the 339th Infantry held its positions along the coast and the 338th Infantry reorganized on the S Ridge. At 1500, 14 May, the 2d Battalion, 337th Infantry, attacked through the 338th Infantry toward Hill 108 north of the Spigno road junction. Within two hours the battalion overran part of the enemy positions on the hill, held by the 194th Engineer Battalion fighting as infantry. Patrols were started immediately toward Castellonorato, a village perched around an old hilltop castle to the west.

A local counterattack was repelled during the night, and on the next morning the 3d Battalion came across Capo d'Acqua Creek to join the 2d Battalion in an attack on Castellonorato. The two battalions jumped off at 1500, 15 May, under cover of artillery and tank fire, beat back enemy rear guards around the town and on Penitro Hill to the southeast, and were 400 yards beyond Castellonorato by midnight. Some of our large bag of prisoners reported receiving no supplies for the past two days. The 3d Battalion, 338th Infantry, advanced on the left flank of the 337th Infantry, mopping up the last bunkers of the main German defenses, and reached the junction of Highway 7 and the Ausonia road.

MAP Nº 9  
**II CORPS ATTACK**  
 11-15 May 1944  
 SCALE  
 YARDS 1000 0 1 2  
 MILES



## E. ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS TO ITRI

15-19 MAY

1. *Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 18.* (See Annex No. 1D.) In reviewing the situation on 15 May it was clear that our troops had broken the back of the immediate German resistance in the Ausonia Valley. From prisoner-of-war reports and the abundance of German bodies and equipment strewn across the hills, our command could deduce that the 71st Grenadier Division had almost ceased to exist and that the 94th Grenadier Division was badly crippled. Already the French and American units in Fifth Army had taken over 2200 prisoners. Further opposition in our zone, accordingly, would be much reduced.

General Clark issued verbal orders to the Commanding General, II Corps, on 15 May (confirmed the same day by Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 18) to exploit the success by taking Castellonorato without delay and pushing west to Itri. This latter drive was to be executed by the 88th Division, employed rapidly through the Petrella massif to outflank the German positions of the Dora Line. The 85th Division would not be used west of Mount Campese without Fifth Army approval, and it was contemplated that both this division and II Corps Headquarters might move to the Anzio front by water in the near future. Effective 1200, 16 May, the 85th Division was alerted on 72 hours' notice to begin withdrawal to Naples Staging Area, a movement to be completed in 72 hours. General Keyes was to be ready to turn over to Commanding General, IV Corps, his present zone of action and to move his Corps troops and command elements to Anzio on 24 hours' notice on or after 22 May.

The transfer of II Corps was executed in the next two weeks, although the junction of the southern and beachhead forces on 25 May permitted movement by land instead of water. The strategy behind this plan is clear: to strengthen the forthcoming blow at Anzio by shifting troops no longer needed on the southern front. Other steps in the same direction were also about to be taken with the 36th Division, released from its prospective commitment in the II Corps zone by our overwhelming success, for on the 18th the division received orders to move to Anzio by water beginning the night of 18-19 May. The timing of the transfer of the 85th Division and II Corps remained an important problem for the next few days; the units in question could not be released from the southern front until a clear-cut victory had been achieved, and yet they might be essential to a breakout at Anzio.

2. *Mopping up the Formia Corridor.* (See Map No. 10.) The men of II Corps, having broken the Gustav Line, pressed their advantage against the retreating 94th Grenadier Division and took up the pursuit in earnest on 16 May. Victory

was in the air, and everywhere behind the lines was feverish activity. The trails and roads began to fill up with streams of men, mule trains, trucks, tanks, and tank destroyers moving west. Corps artillery, which had begun displacing forward as early as the night of 13-14 May, was now all in advanced positions and kept leaping battalions and even batteries within battalions to keep its pieces within range of the enemy. Everywhere dust churned up by moving vehicles and marching men rose in clouds of white.

During the night of 15-16 May a directive from II Corps gave first priority on artillery and tank support to the 85th Division, and additional orders attached to the division the 760th Tank Battalion and the 349th Infantry. Our men drove westward along the coast before daylight on 16 May. The 339th Infantry, aided by the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, sent its 1st Battalion into Scauri, while the 3d Battalion passed on through to occupy Mount Scauri. To its right the 1st and 2d Battalion, 338th Infantry, pushed down the Ausonia road to Highway 7 and moved forward to Acquatraversa Creek, thus pinching out the 339th Infantry.

The 337th Infantry, with the 349th Infantry advancing along the mountain slopes to its right, drove west from Castellonorato toward Mount Campese and Maranola. Little resistance was encountered until the 3d Battalion, 337th Infantry, crossed Acquatraversa Creek. As it started up the slopes of Mount Campese without waiting for an artillery preparation, the Germans, who had chosen this elevation for a short delaying action, met our men with intense artillery, machine-gun, and rifle fire. For the night we were forced to take up positions in the valley below.

After dark General Keyes issued his orders for the next day's pursuit. At 0450, 17 May, the 85th Division continued its drive through the Formia corridor against opposition from long-range artillery, snipers, and pockets of rearguard elements. The 338th Infantry, with the 1st Battalion on the left and the 3d Battalion on the right, crossed Acquatraversa Creek on Highway 7 and reached the outskirts of Formia by noon. Strong patrols penetrated the heavily booby-trapped and mined town; other patrols attempted to keep contact with the enemy and covered our engineers, already at work on Highway 7. Occupation of Formia itself was delayed by fire from the enemy coastal defense guns at Gaeta. On the right the 337th Infantry pulverized enemy positions on Mount Campese with an artillery concentration lasting an hour and then drove westwards across the hill to the village of Maranola. By this movement it complied with the Corps order to open the trails leading northwest from Maranola for passage of the 350th Infantry over the mountains to the 88th Division forward elements.

The chase to regain contact continued on 18 May, but we met only small units left behind by the enemy to slow our forces on Highway 7. The 2d Battalion, 338th Infantry, cleared Mount di Mola above Formia, as the 1st Battalion mopped

up the town and advanced onto Mount Conca. From Maranola the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, moved southwest across the mountains and late in the afternoon took up positions on Highway 7 between Formia and Itri to protect the right flank of the 338th Infantry. During the night of 18-19 May the 339th Infantry came up Highway 7. After dawn on the 19th it pushed west in the hills south of the highway and sent its 2d Battalion toward Itri to assist the 349th Infantry in occupying the town. As the 338th Infantry moved on southwest in the hills about Gaeta, its reconnaissance elements entered Gaeta and found the town evacuated.

3. *The Capture of Itri.* The 1st and 3d Battalions, 351st Infantry, were on the slopes above Spigno on the afternoon of 15 May, when the regimental commander received orders to continue the advance to the west. Two native guides were secured, and the regiment set out along the ten miles of steep and rocky mountain slopes between Spigno and its goal at Itri. The 2d Battalion, in reserve at Santa Maria, was alerted and ordered to follow the assault battalions. At 0800, 16 May, the 3d Battalion reached Mount Sant'Angelo, a vast dome 1404 meters high. The men were given a few hours rest, but orders were received by radio at noon to continue on to Mount Ruazzo five miles farther west. The 3d Battalion, followed by the 1st Battalion, moved out immediately over difficult terrain and reached its objective at 1810. Natives of the wild uplands informed the leading elements that 400 Germans had evacuated the area the night before; the handful that remained on the west slopes of the mountain were quickly dispersed by the regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon. The 1st Battalion came up later and occupied Mount Mesole, a mass northeast of Mount Ruazzo.

Our troops had completely outrun their communications, pack trains, and artillery, but were ready to continue the drive on the 17th. At 1300 they moved down the draw on the west slopes of Mount Ruazzo to capture Mount Grande across the Itri—Pico road, but a strong delaying force on the hills west of the Itri valley blocked our attempt to cut off the German withdrawal up Highway 7. Fire from self-propelled guns, tanks, mortars, and snipers was extremely heavy and inflicted severe casualties in the 3d Battalion. Though without artillery support, the battalions of the 351st Infantry reorganized and attacked again after dark, but were stopped by tanks along the Itri—Pico road.

Throughout the 18th the battalions were forced to remain on the defensive under intense artillery fire. The pack trains struggling across the mountains had not yet reached the regiment, and supplies of ammunition, rations, and water were critically low. Welcome relief came at 1700 in the form of fire from the 240-mm howitzers of the 697th Field Artillery Battalion, which effectively silenced the German tanks. The 601st Field Artillery Battalion (Pack) arrived and added its close support, and the 2d Battalion finally caught up with the regiment.

The 350th Infantry (less one battalion) had moved in two convoys to Trivio in the late afternoon of the 17th, advanced to Maranola on foot by 1815, and then trudged across the hills to positions south of the 351st Infantry. On the morning of the 19th the 351st Infantry launched a final attack on Mount Grande under the fire of the 350th Infantry. The 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, moved out at 0200 to make a wide swing to the right and strike Mount Grande from the northeast. Reaching the Itri—Pico road at daybreak, advance elements wiped out one machine-gun nest and speedily occupied the north half of the regimental objective. The 3d Battalion drove straight across the highway at daylight and took the south half of the mountain. Opposition was slight, for the Germans had withdrawn.

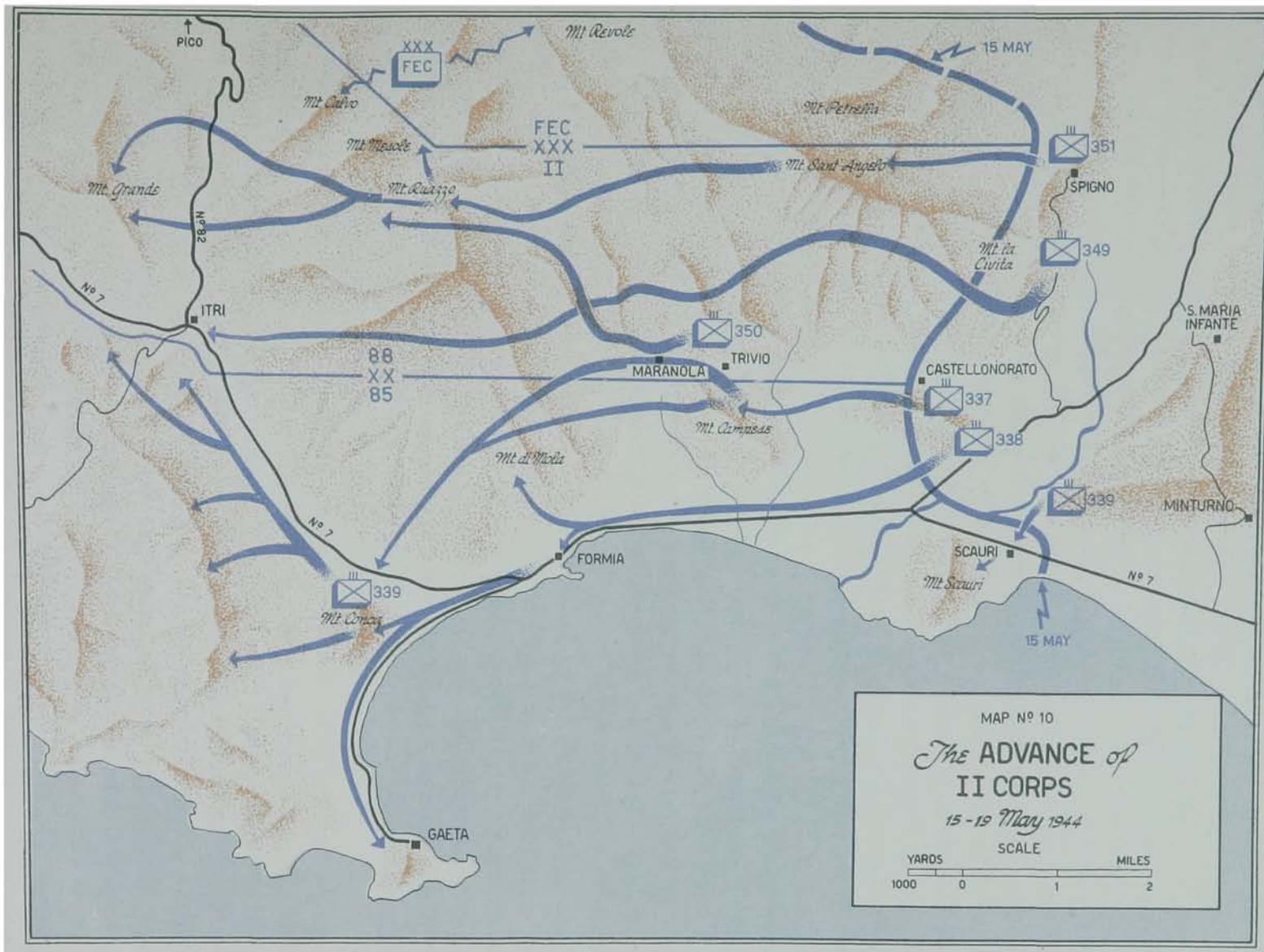
During the morning a pack train arrived after a 14-hour trip from Spigno, and the men of the 351st Infantry received their first supplies of food, water, and ammunition since they entered the mountains. To their south the 349th Infantry, which had reverted to control of the 88th Division on the afternoon of the 18th, made a forced march in column of battalions across the wild and rugged mountains. Shortly after a patrol of the 351st Infantry had taken the last German stragglers in Itri the 349th Infantry entered the town.

The brief German stand for Itri had been carried out by a miscellaneous group of units. West of Maranola our troops had met the 620th Ost Battalion, a mixture of Russian ex-prisoners and German non-commissioned and commissioned officers. This unit had failed to stand up under our drive. Elements of the 1st and 3d Battalions, 104th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, were also encountered in the Itri area, and on the 19th we crushed a company formed from the supply personnel of the 94th Grenadier Division. With Itri and Mount Grande in our hands, the Germans were forced to fall back on Fondi. In eight days II Corps had completed the mission assigned to it by the Fifth Army field order for the attack.

## F. *EIGHTH ARMY IN THE LIRI VALLEY*

11-19 MAY

By 19 May the general line of the Allied forces in Italy had assumed the shape which it retained for the next two months: a slanting front with the left flank always forward of the center, and this in turn ahead of the right flank. Our troops on the Adriatic and in the central mountains were so weak that they could only follow up the enemy whenever he retreated. The main bulk of Eighth Army, fighting across the streams in the Liri Valley, was slowed considerably. As a result the right flank of Fifth Army was exposed after the first few days of the attack and remained exposed during the subsequent push past Rome.



Eighth Army, which completed its regrouping well before 11 May, received substantial reinforcements in the form of the 8 Indian Infantry Division, the 6 South African Armoured Division, and miscellaneous armored and motorized brigades. On D Day the front from the Liri River to the Adriatic was held by four corps. One of these, 5<sup>1</sup> Corps on the right flank, was an independent formation under AAI and consisted only of the 4 and 10 Indian Infantry Divisions. The other three were under Eighth Army. 10 Corps, with the 2 New Zealand Infantry Division and the 1 Italian Motorized Group, held the hills above Atina. 2 Polish Corps had the 3 Carpathian Infantry Division and the 5 Kresowa Infantry Division just north of Cassino. 13 Corps held the remainder of the front along the Rapido River with the British 4 Infantry Division and the 8 Indian Infantry Division on the line and the British 78 Infantry Division and the British 6 Armoured Division in reserve. 1 Canadian Corps, composed of the 5 Canadian Armoured Division and the 1 Canadian Infantry Division, lay to the rear. Army reserve consisted of the 6 South African Armoured Division.

Most of the units which were to take part in the attack moved into the lines as late and as secretly as possible, for here too the intention was to overwhelm the enemy with unexpected concentrations. The plan of Eighth Army called for 10 Corps to demonstrate in order to lead the enemy to think that it would attack toward Atina. (*See Map No. 16.*) The Polish Corps initially would commit both divisions to outflank the Abbey, cut Highway 6, and after seizure of the Abbey drive in the direction of Piedimonte. This maneuver was designed to assist 13 Corps, which would force a crossing of the Rapido with two divisions and move swiftly up the Liri Valley. 1 Canadian Corps was to be used either to assist or to pass through 13 Corps, depending on the situation. Our forces in Cassino proper were to remain on the defensive. The strategy remained essentially the same as in the initial Fifth Army attack of January 1944, but exactly twice the force was employed at the outset and five more divisions were available to reinforce the thrusts.

The attacks by the Polish Corps were brave and costly. The first rush secured Phantom Ridge, the spur of Mount Castellone running southeast from Hill 706 to Albaneta Farm, and also Points 569 and 593. Repeated German counterattacks finally drove the Poles back in the afternoon of 12 May, and on the following day our units reorganized in their initial positions. For the next three days the Polish Corps, weakened by extremely heavy casualties, remained quiet. During the night of 16-17 May it moved forward and reoccupied Phantom Ridge, and took Point 593 in the general Eighth Army attack on 17 May. By this time the last flickers of German resistance above Cassino were spent. On 18 May the 5 Kresowa Division continued to mop up the high ground north of Highway 6, and the 3 Carpathian Division took the Abbey. Cassino fell to the British on this day, and the Poles

turned west along the hills. Patrols reached Santa Lucia and Piedimonte on the 19th but were unable to hold the latter point, which formed the northern anchor of the Hitler Line.

The crossing of the Rapido River by 13 Corps was more successful than the first Polish drive. During the initial attack elements of two divisions planted themselves firmly on the west bank of the stream, the British 4 Division on the north and the 8 Indian Division on the south. Bridging immediately south of Cassino was delayed by enemy machine-gun and artillery fire, but the Indians had erected two Class 30 bridges below Cesa Martino Creek by the afternoon of 12 May. At this time units of the division were in the outskirts of Sant'Angelo in Teodice, and three squadrons of tanks had made a sortie a mile to the west.

Casualties of 13 Corps were light on the first day but mounted heavily thereafter as the enemy fought desperately to limit our bridgehead. By the morning of 14 May over 500 prisoners had passed through the Corps cages. Sant'Angelo was cleared in the night of 13-14 May; on the following day the 78 Division began crossing the Rapido. Progress improved on 15 May with seven bridges in operation and strong elements west of the river. A brigade of the 78 Division passed through the left flank of the 4 Division and cut the Pignataro road by noon. During the night the 8 Indian Division took Pignataro itself, and on the following day its left flank proceeded along the Liri to a point opposite Cantalupo Hill. By now the van of the French 1st Motorized Division south of the river had passed San Giorgio.

By the evening of 16 May 13 Corps held a bridgehead about 2 miles deep at a cost of 4056 killed, wounded, and missing. A general attack was launched along the Eighth Army front after daybreak on 17 May. The 1 Canadian Infantry Division passed through the Indians on the left flank and advanced to a point north of San Giorgio; the 78 Division pushed west below Highway 6; and the 4 Division swung north to cut the highway below the Abbey. With the Poles on the high ground to the north, the German position in Cassino was hopeless, and the majority of the garrison evacuated its pillboxes. Troops of the 4 Division took the mine-studded rubble of Cassino at 1300, 18 May.

The fall of Cassino marked the end of the Gustav Line in the Liri Valley. 13 Corps had pushed through its main bastions in the fighting of the previous week, and the enemy had also to reckon with the fact that the French held the high ground south of the Liri River as far as Pontecorvo. Six miles of the German flank along the river thus lay exposed to the French fire. Accordingly the German High Command ordered a general retreat in the Liri Valley to the Hitler Line from Pontecorvo to Piedimonte. Reconnaissance elements of the 78 Division darted into the outskirts of Aquino on 18 May, and the Canadians kept pace on the left flank. Throughout the 18th and 19th the infantry of Eighth Army moved up to the front

of the Hitler Line; behind them the British 6 Armoured Division concentrated north of Pignataro and the 5 Canadian Armoured Division finished crossing the Rapido. Allied troops now stood everywhere before the second German defensive line.

G. *THE ENEMY REACTION TO OUR ATTACK*

1. *Tactical Surprise.* Though the individual German soldiers fought bravely against our onslaught, the enemy reaction as a whole was one of complete surprise. [The Allied plan of deception had been successful in every aspect, and the noise of heavy motor movements behind our lines during the week prior to our attack was misinterpreted by enemy observers as the relief of front-line units by reserves. Fate itself seemed to delude the Germans: one Moroccan rifleman deserted to the enemy the night of 10-11 May and revealed that we would launch a big attack the following night; but his statements were not credited. The commander of XIV Panzer Corps had for some reason picked 2400, 24 May, as the earliest possible date for our offensive and so informed his troops in an order urging every man to be a « Cassino fighter ».

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The initial surprise due to the timing of our attack was increased by the violence and accuracy of our artillery fire. Prisoners agreed that their command knew only the locations of our artillery which had previously fired. The continuous daylight smoke screen masked final movements of our guns into position, and our customary mortar fire on enemy artillery observation posts forced the observers to remain under cover. The effectiveness of our H Hour concentrations was increased by our exact knowledge of German positions, by the accurate, massive, and speedy shelling, and by the wider bursting radius of shells hitting on the rocky terrain. Round-the-clock firing on our part further heightened German demoralization.

The initial bombardment and subsequent fire were devastating to the enemy. Intercepted messages and prisoner reports indicated that the German communications were disrupted. Telephone lines were knocked out, and wiremen could not repair the gaps in the continuous shelling; command posts themselves were neutralized in many instances. The relative lightness of German counterbattery and harassing fires was due partly to the heavy damage to the enemy artillery, partly to the shortage in artillery ammunition and to fear of our retaliation. Since the guns of the two infantry divisions were largely horse-drawn, their mobility was reduced, and the curtain of fire on enemy rear routes impeded the withdrawal of the artillery after our breakthrough. As a result the Germans were forced to rely largely on self-propelled guns and tanks for artillery support.

The evaluation by Marshal Kesselring of the first week of our attack furnishes clear illumination of the German difficulties as our drive progressed. (*See Annex No. 2D.*) Time and time again these remarks stress the fact that movement by day and by night behind the German lines was close to impossible. Antitank weapons must be emplaced, it is stated, in their final positions before the attack takes place, for « mobile reserves, which proved so effective on the eastern front, result in heavy losses and cannot be used in combat against the Anglo-Americans with their great superiority in artillery ». Even when emplaced, guns could not open fire until the target was very close on penalty of being put out of commission immediately by our concentrated fire.

Likewise, infantry reserves were necessarily kept very close to endangered sectors, for our aerial artillery observation and general aerial superiority made troop movements in the day very costly. If such movements were absolutely necessary, it was recommended that the troops be split into small groups. The supply of front-line units was hampered by our interdiction of the narrow passes and bridges behind the lines; at some points the last five to six miles were covered by mules and carriers, with consequent loss of time.

Most surprising of all is the confession that the German High Command, which had scored so many of its successes in the past by attacking in « impassable terrain », was caught in the same trap by our drive. Kesselring noted that German strongpoints were by-passed as widely as possible. « On these occasions the enemy penetrated often through mountainous terrain, which had previously been considered impassable ». The performance of our tanks and vehicles in such terrain was astoundingly good, and the fact that they frequently surprised the enemy brought the recommendation that close antitank weapons be kept ready even in sectors where the employment of German tanks seemed impossible.

2. *Strategic Surprise.* Early in June our troops captured the greater part of the intelligence files of the German Fourteenth Army. Among the items was the intelligence map for 12 May, which indicated the German knowledge of our positions and thus part of the basis for the enemy dispositions. The well-nigh incredible misinformation of the German intelligence staff helps to show why the German High Command in Italy was caught flatfooted on the higher levels of planning.

The enemy underestimated our strength in the area of the main attack by no less than seven divisions. The 85th and 88th Divisions were correctly placed, but their command (II Corps) was unknown. Only one of the four French divisions had been identified in the line. In the British sector the 4 and 78 Divisions were indicated, though 13 Corps Headquarters was still listed at Termoli on the Adriatic coast; the presence of the 8 Indian Division and the 6 Armoured Division was not suspected. Only the 5 Kresowa Division of the Polish Corps was placed forward,

but to make up for this error the 3 and 7 Polish Infantry Divisions and the 2 Polish Armoured Division were given in reserve. In addition to the creation of two Polish units not even in Italy, the German intelligence had also manufactured a British 18 Division in our rear areas. 5 and 10 Corps were located correctly, but their headquarters were misplaced. German methods of radio location put the headquarters of Eighth Army on the wrong (east) side of the Matese Mountains and AAI Headquarters at Naples instead of Caserta.

As a result of faulty locations and undervaluation of our front-line strength, the Germans believed we had much larger reserves in the rear. The 3d Algerian Division was put at Salerno, and the 36th Division was reported to have practiced landing exercises at Pozzuoli on 7 May with armored formations. The German High Command seems to have drawn the obvious conclusion that our drive on the southern front was a diversion and that we intended again to land in his rear. This fear had exercised the German generals ever since our Salerno landings, and had certainly been reinforced by our thrust at Anzio in January.

To meet this threat the minimum number of enemy divisions was in the line on 11 May, and the reserve divisions were disposed largely along the west coast around Anzio and to the north of the Tiber. By the time the Germans decided that their fears of a landing were groundless, our attack had progressed so far that the reserves were drawn in and destroyed piecemeal. As an intelligence summary by AAI remarked:

The evidence made available by the capture of the intelligence documents of the German Fourteenth Army shows that the Allies went into battle on 11 May against an enemy almost entirely blinded by the fog of war. Misled as to where the main weight of our attack was to fall, he had placed his reserves where we wanted them, far away from the points of attack. From these mistakes he was never to recover and from then on he always found himself a move behind his opponent.

3. *Enemy Activity, 11-19 May.* The intelligence files just mentioned reveal that all four French divisions had been identified by 17 May through prisoners and radio intercepts. By 23 May all units on the Allied front were known, though German intelligence was still manufacturing new divisions. Even before their information was complete, however, the Germans had taken steps to remedy the situation to the best of their ability.

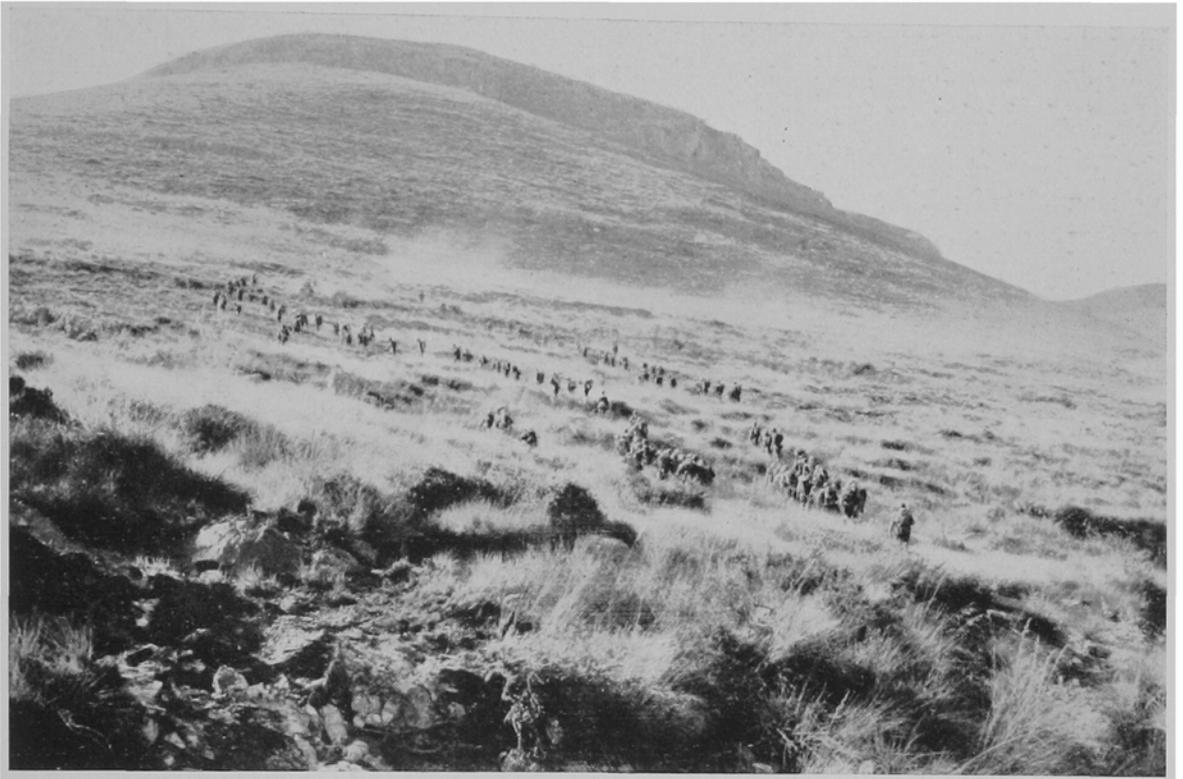
The Gustav Line had been broken by the FEC within 24 hours of the opening of the offensive, and within another day the 71st Grenadier Division was eliminated as an organized fighting force. The important north-south road from San Giorgio

to Highway 7 was irrevocably cut on the 15th. This penetration, coupled with the collapse of the 71st Grenadier Division, seriously compromised the position of the 94th Grenadier Division, which had put up a stiff fight for Santa Maria Infante. The division had to withdraw as the far element in a vast line pivoting back from Cassino, and withdrawal at the end of the whip was a mission which the 94th Grenadier Division, with its horse-drawn equipment, was ill qualified to fulfill. The 276th Grenadier Regiment was committed to cover the disengagement, and both the 1st and 4d Battalions, 104th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, played brief supporting parts about Itri; but the 94th Grenadier Division was steadily disintegrating as it relinquished Formia, Gaeta, and Itri.

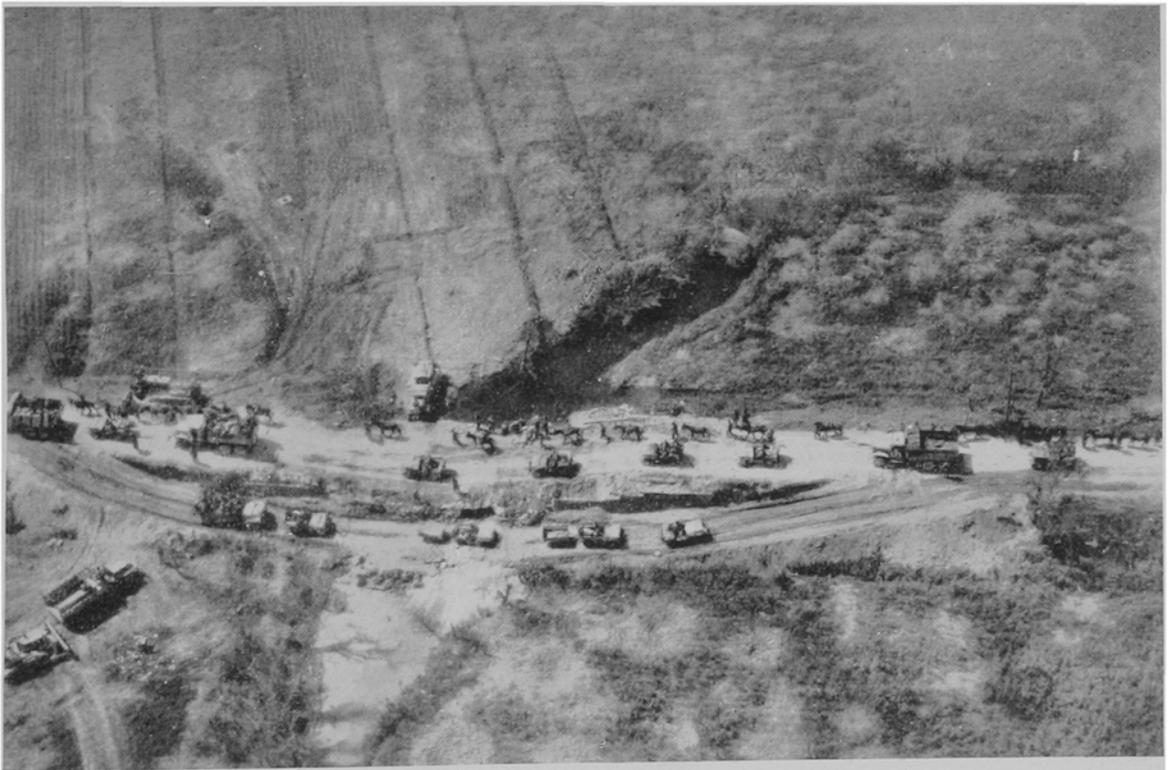
Meanwhile the gap left by the 71st Grenadier Division had to be filled if the Adolf Hitler Line were to be of any use to the forces in the Liri Valley, already backing to this second defensive line under stern pressure from Eighth Army. Various reconnaissance battalions, engineer troops, and the like were tossed into the line in front of the French from 13 May on, but the small increments fell swiftly to our onrush. The 90th Panzer Grenadier Division, the only reserve of Tenth Army, was required in the valley to help the formations in front of Eighth Army.

In the face of this combination of emergencies the enemy command detached the 200th Panzer Grenadier Regiment from the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division and threw it in south of the Liri to counterattack from the hills dominating the approaches to Esperia. The regiment was committed piecemeal, without opportunity for orientation or preparation of positions, and was easily overpowered. After the fall of Esperia on 17 May the French pressed on toward the southern anchor of the Hitler Line and threatened to cut off the retreat of the enemy forces in the Liri Valley. With so much at stake, the German High Command had no alternative but to summon the 26th Panzer Division from Sezze to stop the French. On 18 May our troops met its 9th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, and on the following day the veteran German division began the defense of Pico.

From the German point of view the situation was not yet lost on 19 May, but it was gravely critical. The right flank by the sea was reeling back under the pressure of two strong American divisions; the French penetration had not been stopped; and the German ability to hold the Hitler Line from Pico to Piedimonte was certainly in question. The feeble Luftwaffe had done its best by attacking the Rapido bridges on the night of the 13th, Naples on the morning of the 14th, and the bridges over the Garigliano and Rapido on the nights of the 15th and 17th; but the attacking planes were too few—varying from 10 to 30 per night—to do any serious damage. Our communications were unimpaired, and the enemy could not stop our preparations to attack the Hitler Line.



*Infantry of the 38th Division climb the slopes of Mount La Civita.*



*As the Germans fell back, our vehicles filled the roads in pursuit.*



*Enemy rearguard action delayed us briefly in the hills above Terracina.*



*After the fall of Terracina II Corps drove on toward the beachhead.*

# CHAPTER V \* \* \* \* \*

## *Junction with the Beachhead*

### A. *NEW PLANS*

FIFTH Army had by 19 May essentially completed the mission which General Clark assigned it in Field Order No. 6. Our front lay along the Itri--Pico road as far north as Campodimele; the right flank had pushed through the Ausonia Defile and was so far ahead of Eighth Army that it threatened the enemy in the Liri Valley from the rear. II Corps still had the 85th and 88th Divisions in the line but had not been forced to request the commitment of the 36th Division. The FEC had employed all four of its divisions; on 19 May the tabors, the 4th Mountain Division, the 3d Algerian Division, and the 1st Motorized Division were engaged, and the 2d Moroccan Division was resting in Corps reserve. To our front the badly disorganized German forces were withdrawing into the Hitler Line, but the German High Command had indicated its opinion of that defensive belt by hastily removing the name « Hitler ».

Now that our forces were pressing beyond the objectives of Field Order No. 6, fresh instructions were necessary and were given on 18 May in Operations Instruction No. 19 (*See Annex No. 1E*), together with supplementary oral orders to the corps commanders. These orders carried Fifth Army forward for the next few days, while a major decision in strategy was being made by General Alexander in conference with General Clark. The problem in question was that of the direction in which the Fifth Army forces on the southern front should attack after breaching the Hitler Line: northwest toward the beachhead, or more northward toward Ceprano and Frosinone.

In his initial plans General Alexander had considered directing Fifth Army on the latter objectives. A radio message was received from AAI on 18 May, ordering Fifth Army to be prepared to change the axis of its advance to the north toward Ceprano and cut off the withdrawal on Highway 6 of the enemy in front of Eighth Army. This change was to take place if Eighth Army were not able to draw

abreast of us by the time we had reached and taken Pico. If Eighth Army continued to meet the stubborn resistance it had encountered through 16 May, assistance from Fifth Army would be necessary. Furthermore, the stubbornness of German opposition in the Liri Valley, if continued, offered a possibility of trapping considerable bodies of the enemy before Eighth Army.

Operations Instruction No. 19 of 18 May accordingly ordered both the FEC and II Corps to gain their final objectives and consolidate on the Mount Grande--Pico line. (*See Map No. 11.*) The FEC would take Pico and then be prepared to advance to the northwest to cut Highway 6 in the vicinity of Ceprano or to advance west to secure the Siserno hill mass. II Corps would take Fondi and thereafter be ready to swing northwest on the Fondi—Lenola—Castro dei Volsci axis, or to continue west toward Terracina and the Ausoni Mountains. Use of the 85th Division by II Corps was still restricted in view of its probable movement by water to the beachhead, and the main bulk of the division was not to be employed west of Formia without Fifth Army approval. One regimental combat team might be used to mop up the Itri—Gaeta—Sperlonga triangle.

Further paragraphs of the operations instruction directed the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion to prepare plans for a drop in the Ausoni Mountains to facilitate the advance of II Corps toward Terracina. The 36th Division was also alerted to move to the beachhead on eight hours' notice. This shift was actually ordered on the 18th, but too late for all the first lift, the division artillery, to close in the Posuoli staging area in time. Only two LST's, accordingly, left on the 18th, rather than six; but the delay was made up by the loading of ten LST's on the 19th. All combat elements of the division closed at Anzio by the morning of 22 May. Separate orders on 19-21 May alerted much of the corps artillery in Fifth Army and other units to follow by water, but these movements were first delayed and then finally cancelled.

Operations Instruction No. 19 thus left uncertain the eventual employment of Fifth Army forces on the southern front. A decision on this point was reached in the next few days. Further consideration of the general strategic picture indicated that Eighth Army probably would be successful in breaking the Hitler Line without the assistance of both II Corps and the FEC. As late as 23 May the FEC was still prepared to strike toward Ceprano if the Eighth Army attack of that date did not smash the Hitler Line, but II Corps had begun by 21 May to devote its energies to opening up Highway 7 through Terracina. The success of the attack by Eighth Army on 23 May released the full strength of the FEC for a drive west toward the Siserno hill mass.

The decision to direct II Corps on Terracina was largely motivated by reasons of logistics. Ever since issuing Operations Instruction No. 18 on 15 May, General

Clark had planned to transfer part or all of II Corps to the beachhead to reinforce the attack of VI Corps. That order had contemplated movement by water, but the shortage of landing craft interposed serious difficulties. The transfer of the 36th Division had required four days. The shift of the 85th Division would take anywhere up to a week, and in addition transport would have to be provided for a number of battalions of corps artillery, hospitals, and other service units. To assemble a considerable part of II Corps at Anzio by water might require until the early days of June. The supply needs of the enlarged beachhead force would task our water transport even further.

The alternative was to continue the attack of II Corps up Highway 7 to open a land route to the beachhead, and so move troops and supplies by land. The disintegration of the German forces in front of Fifth Army, which had permitted the original plan to shift II Corps to Anzio, had proceeded at an increased rate after 15 May. By the 20th it was certain that the enemy could not make a stand short of Terracina; without substantial reinforcements, the Germans could hardly stop even there. Accordingly General Clark released the 85th Division to II Corps for full employment with the instructions that II Corps drive through Terracina and open up Highway 7 to the beachhead with the utmost rapidity.

## B. *II CORPS FULFILLS ITS MISSION*

20-25 MAY

I. *Plans and Terrain.* (See Map No. II.) As soon as II Corps had reached Itri, General Keyes set a fresh objective at the line running south from Mount Passignano through Fondi and along the western end of the Gaeta hill mass to Sperlonga. Before this order could be executed, another directive was issued for a more ambitious project: to cut the Sezze—Frosinone road with the maximum speed. The 88th Division was to drive across the hills northwest of Fondi toward Rocca-gorga while the 85th Division moved on its left flank through Monte San Biagio, Sonnino, and Priverno toward Sezze. The 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and elements of the 85th Division were to smash through the Terracina bottleneck and push without delay into the Pontine Marshes beyond the town.

On 19 May General Clark issued Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 20. (See Annex No. 1F) to the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion. This implemented the directive in Operations Instruction No. 19 by ordering the battalion to be ready to drop on 24 hours' notice at any time after 0500, 22 May, in the vicinity of the railroad tunnel (Galleria di Monte Orso) north of Terracina. The mission of the battalion, after establishing a firm base and gaining communication with II

Corps, was to carry out Corps orders to secure the hills above Terracina and to operate against the rear of any enemy forces delaying our capture of Terracina.

The area facing II Corps was a series of high mountains, deep gorges, river valleys, and flooded coastal plains. The sector varied in width from 10 to 20 miles between the irregular coast line and the Corps boundary; from Itri to Sezze the distance across the mountains was 30 miles. To the south of Itri a hilly area about four miles wide and ten miles long runs northwest along the sea to Sperlonga. These hills fall away to the west into a triangle of coastal marshes stretching eight miles to Terracina, a town situated at the end of a high spur that extends down to the sea. Beyond Terracina are the broad Pontine Marshes stretching 30 miles to Cisterna. The area on the north of Highway 7 is a mass of high and precipitous mountains, practically devoid of useful trails or roads, extending to Roccagorga and beyond toward Rome. The only road of any consequence along the axis of advance was Highway 7, from which several lateral routes led across the mountains to the Liri Valley.

The defensive line which II Corps would hit in this drive was the much-publicized Adolf Hitler Line, prepared by the Germans to serve as a second defense if the Gustav Line were breached. This series of fortified positions, somewhat similar to the Gustav and Winter Lines, started on the coast at Terracina, swung northeast along the mountain slopes to Fondi, and continued across the mountains to Pico and the Liri Valley. Labor battalions and impressed Italian civilians had been working for months on the pillboxes, bunkers, gun positions, road blocks, minefields, and tank traps in this sector. All evidence indicated that the Germans would try to make a stand on this line.

2. *The 88th Division on the Right Flank.* At dark on 19 May the 351st Infantry held Mount Grande north of Itri; the 349th Infantry lay in the town proper; and the 350th Infantry was just to the east. At 0100, 20 May, the 349th Infantry moved northwest from Itri in column of battalions with the mission of driving rapidly up Highway 7 to strike the main body of the retreating German forces and to capture Fondi. The exact location and strength of the enemy were unknown, but prisoners had indicated that two battalions each of the 267th Grenadier Regiment and 276th Grenadier Regiment had fallen back to Fondi. Both regiments had been badly battered in the fierce fighting of the past 8 days, and 1 battalion of the 267th Grenadier Regiment was reported to have been reduced to 40 men.

The advance of the 349th Infantry continued rapidly throughout the early morning without incident, except for intermittent artillery fire. The leading battalion stopped every two hours and was passed through by the succeeding battalions in order to give the men brief periods of rest. Behind the regiment came the 350th Infantry, and on each side other troops held the hills covering the first stage

of the advance. Ahead of the infantry the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron under Lt. Col. Charles A. Ellis ranged out over the Fondi plain, but one troop which entered Fondi was forced out by the enemy.

After daylight the 1st Battalion, 349th Infantry, turned right into the hills along the north side of Highway 7 while the rest of the regiment continued up the road. The 3d Battalion in the lead began to encounter intense artillery fire and opposition from snipers and machine guns just before noon about two miles east of Fondi. The advance guard pushed on aggressively but soon met stiffer resistance, and the leading company was forced to deploy in the face of fire from 88-mm guns, tanks, and self-propelled artillery. The battalion commander decided to attack immediately, though his supporting armor was held up by demolitions and tank obstacles. One company moved to the left and charged from the flank as the advance guard made a frontal assault; the two companies then closed in on the town with a rush, destroying a light tank and a self-propelled gun. By 1600 the 3d Battalion had knocked out the machine-gun nests and had routed the snipers in Fondi; the remainder of the enemy rear guard, the 3d Battalion, 274th Grenadier Regiment, withdrew north toward Lenola after the main German forces.

Our reinforcements now began to stream up Highway 7, so that late in the afternoon the road from Itri to Fondi was filled with trucks, armor, and artillery and both sides were lined with marching troops. While the 85th Division moved forward in preparation for the attack on Terracina, the 88th Division drove northwest across the mountains. The 349th Infantry scaled the heights of Mount Passignano behind Fondi late on the 20th, left it to the 351st Infantry on the 21st, and pushed on to capture Cima del Monte after a sharp engagement with German machine gunners and riflemen. The 2d Battalion then went around the south side of this height and occupied Mount Monsicardi on the 22d. To its west the 350th Infantry came up from Fondi and broke through stiff resistance to occupy Mount Calvo on the 21st, netting 110 prisoners in the attack. On the following day the 350th Infantry pushed on northwest toward Roccasecca.

While the other two regiments of the division had been gaining Fondi and then the heights commanding the south side of the Lenola—Vallecorsa road, the 351st Infantry moved forward from Mount Grande. On the 20th the 2d Battalion started up Highway 82 for Mount Vele but found the French already in the area, so it turned west and joined the 3d Battalion on Mount Passignano on the 21st. The 1st Battalion marched north during the night of 20-21 May and occupied Mount Valletonda after a brisk battle with a German force guarding the Fondi—Lenola road. On the 22d the 3d Battalion drove from Mount Passignano to Mount Chia-vino on the north side of the Lenola—Vallecorsa road.

Significant gains had been made on 20-22 May by the 88th Division. Its dash and aggressiveness prevented the enemy from getting set in the Hitler Line, and did not give him time to bring up sufficient reinforcements to stem the tide. The mountain positions which our troops had gained north and northwest of Fondi protected the displacement forward of Corps artillery and also the attack by the 85th Division on the stubborn enemy garrison at Terracina. By this time II Corps and the FEC were again in contact; indeed, the 88th Division had drawn well ahead of the French left flank, which was driving toward Vallecorsa against heavy rearguard action. II Corps accordingly ordered the division to hold and improve its gains, while pushing an advance guard northwest to Roccasecca dei Volsci. The 350th Infantry reached this point on 23 May.

3. *Approach to Terracina.* On 20 May the 85th Division continued to clear the hills south of Highway 7 between Sperlonga and Gaeta. The following day the 1st Battalion, 338th Infantry, turned itself on Corps order into nautical infantry by embarking at Gaeta in Dukws and sailing 11 miles along the coast to Sperlonga. The landing was unopposed, and the battalion captured much enemy equipment. To the north the 337th Infantry drove on 21 May across the Fondi plain to the hills above Terracina. The 2d Battalion took the hamlet of Monte San Biagio and continued on to Mount Copiccio; the 3d Battalion accompanied it on the right; and the 1st Battalion struck directly at Terracina.

This first attempt to take the Corps objective followed Highway 7, which turns southwest from Fondi along the foot of the mountains. The land on the left is low and marshy, and the road runs for several miles through a narrow corridor between the hills and Lake Fondi. The mountains come down to the sea at Terracina in a high, finger-like ridge, on the slopes of which the older part of the town is built; the road itself runs on a narrow strip less than 100 yards wide between the cliffs and the sea. Every avenue of approach to the town is dominated by the mountains, but our recent experience offered some hope that one rush might seize the point.

The 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, preceded by elements of the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and reinforced with a company each of tanks and tank destroyers, drove down Highway 7 during 21 May. The battalion was slowed as it approached Mount Giusto by mortar and machine-gun fire from the right flank, but it pressed on toward Terracina. Patrols of the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron which reached the town were driven back; by 0230 on the next morning advance elements of the infantry had fought their way to points within a mile of the town, but were forced to retreat to Mount Croce under deadly German automatic-weapon fire.

The stiff enemy resistance was quickly explained when the first prisoners revealed that the 15th and 71st Panzer Grenadier Regiments of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division had been brought down from north of Rome and were now facing the 85th Division. The German High Command had thus committed one more of its few veteran reserve divisions. Unlike the 26th Panzer Division, which had been able to reach the Pico battle in time to slow the FEC materially, the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division arrived too late after its long march to prevent us from getting a foothold in the hills north of Terracina. As a result its stand was hopeless from the beginning, though the struggle to oust it from Terracina town was to last another two days.

4. *The Fall of Terracina.* The news of enemy reinforcements clearly necessitated a heavier attack on our part, for which preparations were made through the night of 21-22 May and on the following morning. The bulk of the Corps artillery had moved forward on the 21st to positions south of Fondi; on the 22d the other battalions displaced to the same area, and some pieces were advanced even closer to the front lines. The 240-mm howitzers of Battery A, 698th Field Artillery Battalion, thus went into position directly below Monte San Biagio, together with the 8-inch gun attached to the battalion. From this location the 8-inch gun could fire on Sezze, which was also reached by the 8-inch guns at the Anzio beachhead. The 105-mm howitzers of the 6th Field Artillery Group fired from positions below Mount Giusto and thus gave close support to the 85th Division Artillery.

At daylight on the 22d the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, discovered that German troops had infiltrated into its positions on Mount Croce. Withdrawal was immediately necessary, and the mountain was soon bristling with enemy machine guns. The 3d Battalion rushed up and together with the 1st Battalion on the left jumped off at 1530 to drive over Mount Croce and down the south slopes into Terracina. This battle went on throughout the afternoon with the 1st Battalion bearing the brunt of the effort. Our men had to fight for every inch of the rocky terrain, pressing forward in short rushes or crawling from boulder to boulder to wipe out snipers and machine-gun nests one by one. Mortar and artillery fire from behind Terracina was intense, and the enemy resisted fanatically, often holding out until his positions were overrun and he was killed manning his gun. By dark our advance elements were over the mountain and were forcing their way down the slopes toward the cemetery a mile north of the town. The 1st Battalion, having fought for 36 hours without rest, was too exhausted to continue.

Some consideration had been given to sending one or three battalions of the 338th Infantry in Dukws from Sperlonga to attack Terracina from the east, but the strength of the enemy and the opening of Highway 7 almost to the town made this operation impracticable. Instead, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 338th Infantry,

were directed to attack across Mount Santo Stefano with the mission of seizing Mount Leano and blocking Highway 7 behind Terracina. This flanking movement, if successful, would cut the main escape route of the German garrison in the town.

The 3d Battalion, however, was forced to make a detour as a result of events at the railroad tunnel to the north. A company of the 337th Infantry had been sent to block the east end of the tunnel and had arrived just in time to catch elements of the 1st Battalion, 71st Panzer Grenadier Regiment, debouching from its mouth. Accurate rifle and machine-gun fire scattered the enemy in confusion, and the company rounded up about 50 prisoners. The 3d Battalion, 338th Infantry, came up to reinforce our guard; bombers were dispatched to smash the western entrance; and tank destroyers came up to fire more than 50 rounds point-blank into the mouth of the tunnel.

At 1330, 22 May, General Keyes requested the prearranged drop by the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion before dark to block the west end of the tunnel, but the mission could not be executed until the morning of the 23d. Progress of the 337th Infantry on Mount Croce during the rest of the 22d made the drop unnecessary, and a new plan for the employment of the paratroopers, Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 22 (*See Annex No. 1H*), was issued at that time. This plan contemplated either of two drops in the mountains above the Pontine Marshes; again, as it turned out, neither drop was necessary.

The action of the railroad tunnel prevented the 338th Infantry from launching its attack until 0600, 23 May. Two hours later the 2d Battalion, 337th Infantry, which had relieved the 1st Battalion, attacked with the 3d Battalion and the 760th Tank Battalion down the slopes of Mount Croce toward Terracina. The enemy resistance was as fierce as ever; mortar and artillery fire, rockets, machine-gun and rifle fire from stone houses and pillboxes swept the slopes constantly. Extremely rugged terrain and mud from the recent rains impeded the progress of both infantry and armor. By the middle of the morning, nevertheless, the 2d Battalion was almost to the cemetery; in another 4 hours it was 100 yards beyond. Crawling and infiltrating forward, the men of the 2d and 3d Battalions were at the outskirts of Terracina by midnight.

The enemy stand for Terracina was almost over. The 337 Infantry was at the entrance to the town, and the 338th Infantry was making good progress toward Mount Leano. Farther away, other movements of our troops were drawing a noose about not only the garrison of Terracina but also all the German troops in the Pontine Marshes. The 339th Infantry had moved along Highway 7 from Fondi in the night of 21-22 May, halted for the 22d at the edge of the mountains, and on the 23d advanced over extremely rugged terrain to capture Sonnino. The 1st Battalion seized the hills to the left, and the 2d Battalion those to the right of

the objective; then the 3d Battalion passed through the center and assailed the town at 1830. In 45 minutes the surprised garrison from the 3d Battalion, 15th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, was in full rout with its commander in our hands, and our troops stood at a point threatening the enemy escape route through Priverno. Even more dangerous was the beginning of the beachhead offensive on 23 May, aimed at cutting Highway 7 near Cisterna and then Highway 6 near Valmontone. Our initial successes in this push forced the enemy before II Corps into a race to clear out of the Lepini Mountains before his escape route was barred at Valmontone. During the night of 23-24 May the 2d Battalion, 15th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, and the 103d Reconnaissance Battalion evacuated Terracina; thereafter II Corps action again became the pursuit of a fleeing enemy.

5. *Driving up the Pontine Marshes.* Our attack on Terracina had been pressed relentlessly, for much depended on its successful and speedy conclusion. If II Corps were held up before the town beyond a certain point, its subsequent transfer to the Anzio beachhead would be delayed, and the success of our drive on Rome might thereby be imperiled. Spurred on by imperative orders, the 85th Division had smashed through the bottleneck in good time; before dawn on the 24th patrols of the 337th Infantry entered the town and reported the enemy withdrawal. The three battalions of the regiment closed in speedily while the 338th Infantry advanced to Mount Leano. By 0800, 24 May, Terracina was completely in our hands.

Orders from General Keyes had already directed the Corps to seize the line of the Amaseno River, covering itself on the right on the ridge running down to Roccasecca; units were then to reorganize and prepare for farther advance about 26 May, except for those reconnaissance elements which were to open up the road to the beachhead. Engineers entered Terracina with the infantry and hastily bulldozed a path. The first units pushed through were some artillery batteries to protect farther advance; then about 1000 the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, with the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron attached, cleared the town to fan out on all roads in the Pontine Marshes in the race to Anzio. Delay was caused chiefly by heavy demolitions, for the enemy had already evacuated this sector. Our engineers worked feverishly to by-pass all obstacles, and cub planes which reconnoitered the routes of advance reported that Italian civilians were assisting us by filling craters ahead of our troops.

As the van of II Corps pushed north throughout the night, other forces were preparing to move south from the beachhead. By Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 23, 24 May (*See Annex No. 1J*), General Clark relieved the 36th Engineer Combat Regiment, with its present attachments, from VI Corps and ordered it to be ready to break out via Littoria. At 2145, 24 May, the 36th Engineers under Col. Thomas H. Stanley received orders to put its plans into execution. The Brett

Force, composed of the 1st Battalion, 36th Engineers, tank destroyers, and elements of the reconnaissance unit of the British 1 Division, moved out at 0305, 25 May. After daylight on the 25th the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron made contact at a number of points below Borgo Grappa with the Brett Force, beginning at 0731 and culminating at 1020 when a party under General Clark officially met the southern forces.

Two weeks after D Day on the southern front the two sections of Fifth Army had joined. The isolated Anzio beachhead, the maintenance of which had been one of the most heroic stories of the Fifth Army campaign in Italy, had existed 125 days. Highway 7 was opened immediately, and supplies began to flow from the southern dumps to support the drive on Rome. The shift of II Corps, however, was delayed until the FEC could pull up on its right flank. For the next few days the 85th Division continued to garrison the area about Sonnino, while the 88th Division held the long ridge from Mount Monsicardi northwest to Roccasecca.

### C. *THE FEC DRIVE THROUGH PICO*

20-25 MAY

1. *Plans for the Pico Operation.* (See Map No. 11.) A main objective of Fifth Army from the beginning of the offensive was the town of Pico, at the junction of roads from Pontecorvo, Ceprano, and Itri. By the afternoon of 19 May the FEC front formed a quarter circle around the Pico area, extending from Mounts della Comune and del Mandrone on the east of Pico to Serra del Lago and Campodimele on the south. Three divisions were in the line: the 1st Motorized Division on the right below Pontecorvo; the 3d Algerian Division in the center, west of Sant'Oliva; and the 4th Mountain Division in the hills to the left. The tabors of the Mountain Corps held the extreme left about Campodimele.

The FEC was thus in position to launch concentric drives on the objective from east and south. Plans had been laid as early as 17 May, and much of the French operations during 17-19 May had been executed in accordance with these plans. The Pico drive was so directed by General Juin as to keep his forces striking at several objectives, but also to permit the concentration of all his forces on the Pico area if necessary. The operations of the FEC were further complicated by the provision of Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 19 that the French would be prepared to drive after the capture of Pico either north on Ceprano or west toward the Siserno hill mass, depending on the progress of Eighth Army.

Primary responsibility for taking Pico was assigned to the 3d Algerian Division, already pushing west on the Esperia—Sant'Oliva axis, but the division was

warned that it might also have Ceprano as its next objective. Accordingly the division commander, General de Monsabert, divided his forces into three groups with appropriate missions. The first, composed of the 3d Algerian Infantry and attached units, already held Mounts della Comune and del Mandrone. This Linares Group was to block the eastern approaches to Pico by cutting the Pico—Pontecorvo road and taking Mount Leucio; its attached tanks and tank destroyers were to prevent any movement of enemy armor into the area.

The second group under Colonel Chappuis consisted of the 7th Algerian Infantry, a company of chemical mortars, and a battalion of 105-mm howitzers, with the mission of taking Pico and the hills to the east and west thereof as speedily as possible. The third force, the Bonjour Group, was composed of the 755th Tank Battalion (less one company of medium tanks), six self-propelled 105-mm howitzers, an engineer company, and those elements of the 4th Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion not assigned to Colonel Linares. This group was to pass through Pico after the 7th Algerian Infantry had taken the town and move rapidly to San Giovanni Incarico and Ceprano; it would then be ready to push on toward Frosinone and Arce. In the event that Pico did not fall at the first attack, Colonel Bonjour was directed to aid Colonel Chappuis in securing that point.

While the 3d Algerian Division blocked the east, secured Pico, and pressed on toward Ceprano, the 1st Motorized Division would provide protection to the right flank by advancing along the Liri River until such time as Eighth Army came abreast of the 3d Algerian Division. Then the 1st Motorized Division would pass to Corps reserve. On the left flank the 4th Mountain Division and the groups of tabors would guard the 3d Algerian Division attack on Pico; this Mountain Corps was also assigned the mission of gaining an initial foothold on the Pastena and Lenola roads in preparation for a possible advance westward to the Siserno hill mass. Elements of the 756th Tank Battalion, which was attached to the FEC on 19 May, moved up through Itri and set to work with tank destroyers, reconnaissance troops, and engineers attached to clear the enemy self-propelled guns on the Itri—Pico road and to spearhead the drive along the road from Campodimele to Pico.

The bulk of the Corps artillery had moved on 17-18 May to positions in the vicinity of San Giorgio and Ausonia. During 19-21 May a number of battalions again displaced forward to the Sant'Oliva—Monticelli area and the open ground east of Mount d'Oro. One 240-mm howitzer was advanced to the northeast slopes of this peak on the 20th. From these positions the 13th Field Artillery Brigade was able to render efficient support to the Pico attack, but movement forward thereafter became difficult as the roads grew clogged with supply columns.

The plans of the FEC were carefully made, for the operation against Pico was a major one. With the Gustav Line broken and the FEC threatening the Hitler

Line, the enemy had issued an order at 1800, 19 May, to all his troops remaining in the area south of the Liri and east of Pico to fall back to the Pico—Pontecorvo line. To back up these scattered remnants the bulk of the veteran 26th Panzer Division was already in position under stringent orders to hold on to Pico as long as possible. The enemy's only hope now was to salvage the remnants of the German Tenth Army in the south for a stand on the Velletri—Avezzano line, but to gain time for such a withdrawal the main enemy forces in the Liri Valley had to make a temporary stand on the Hitler Line. If they were to hold at all, it was vital to delay the French below the Liri River. German opposition accordingly proved much more severe before the FEC than before II Corps.

2. *Smashing the Outer Defenses of Pico.* During the afternoon of 19 May elements of the 7th Algerian Infantry eliminated two pockets of enemy resistance in the hills south of Sant'Oliva which commanded the mouth of the valley between Mount del Mandrone and Mount Cozonella. The garrison of these posts retreated west in fairly good order and attempted to blast their way out by attacking the 4th Mountain Division troops on Serra del Lago. This attack was crushed, and the enemy was wiped out. The Mountain Corps, however, made no advance, for the enemy self-propelled guns on the road just north of Campodimele prevented the tabors which had seized the village in the morning from pushing on to the northwest. Off on the right flank of the FEC attempts by the 1st Motorized Division during the afternoon of the 19th to advance beyond Forma Quesa Creek were met by heavy fire from enemy tanks in the Mount Leucio area as soon as our armor and infantry moved around the shoulder of Mount della Comune. Air missions were requested against this opposition, but poor flying conditions prevented the desired support.

On the morning of the 20th the 7th Algerian Infantry tried to cross the valley of Forma di Sant'Oliva Creek from Mount della Comune with the objective of seizing the crest of Mount Pota above Pico. When intense fire from the enemy positions on Mount Leucio plastered the valley and prevented our advance, this effort was temporarily halted until Mount Leucio was taken. The 3d Algerian Infantry made considerable progress against very heavy opposition in the morning and by mid-afternoon held Mount Leucio together with the Pico—Pontecorvo road at a point due north of Mount della Comune. A battalion of the 4th Tunisian Infantry on its left cut the road at the base of Mount Leucio.

The 7th Algerian Infantry then surged west across the valley of Forma di Sant'Oliva Creek and battered down stubborn enemy resistance from the 334th Fusilier Battalion to gain the crest of Mounts Cozonella and Pota before dark. Heavy fire from Pico halted this push, but patrols were sent down the west slopes of

Mount Pota toward the town. Under cover of darkness the first French troops to reach Pico began to feel out the enemy defenses in the town.

To their left the Guillaume Group of the Mountain Corps, composed of the 4th Group of Tabors (plus one tabor of the 1st Group), the 1st Moroccan Infantry (less one battalion), and a battalion of the 69th Algerian Artillery Regiment, drove north on the 20th from Campodimele. The route chosen followed the hills, for enemy opposition on the road was still too strong for the lightly equipped mountain troops. The attack went well though the enemy infantry in the hills fought hard, and by dusk the group held Mount Croce and Mount Fontanino. The Bondis Group, still composed of the 3d Group of Tabors, the 2d Moroccan Infantry (less one battalion), one battalion of the 1st Moroccan Infantry, and one battalion of the 69th Algerian Artillery Regiment, moved north from Serra del Lago to speed the drive; a patrol from this group was reported just south of Pico shortly after dark. The Cherièrè Group, formed from the 1st Group of Tabors (less one tabor), the 6th Moroccan Infantry (less one battalion), and a battalion of artillery, crossed the Itri—Pico road and made preliminary demonstrations toward Lenola.

The net had been closed tightly around Pico from east and south on 20 May, and the outer defenses to this communications center were broken. The main aim of the Pico operation had been accomplished, for the enemy had been deprived of the use of the Pico—Pontecorvo road. The German forces in the Liri Valley had lost another escape route; furthermore, the French now held Mount Leucio, the only dominant terrain feature along the river between San Giovanni and Pontecorvo. For our further advance, however, it was necessary to drive the enemy completely out of Pico itself.

3. *The First Battle for Pico.* At 0640, 21 May, the 1st Motorized Division occupied Mount Marrone, a small hill a few hundred yards west of Pontecorvo. Other elements of the division moved north past Mount Leucio almost to San Giovanni Incarico by noon. On the left of the FEC front the Guillaume Group turned west from Mount Croce and crossed the Itri—Pico road under support from the armored group, which had made its way north from Itri. A force was sent toward Lenola, and the hills which dominated the town from the east and south were seized against relatively light opposition. This advance was aided both by the simultaneous drive of the 88th Division into the hills above Fondi and by the previous activities of the Cherièrè Group east of Lenola.

In the center the 3d Algerian Division was poised on Mounts Pota, Cozonella, and Leucio for the drive into Pico. Before the patrols which had been sent to investigate the Pico defenses had all reported back, the 7th Algerian Infantry raced down the north slopes of Mount Pota, crossed the Pico—Pontecorvo road under fire from enemy guns in the eastern outskirts of the town, and entered the orchards

on Campo dei Morti east of Pico. By noon these slopes were mopped up despite heavy enemy fire. Other troops attempted to descend into Pico itself against fierce enemy resistance which threatened to produce a counterattack with artillery and armored support. One infantry company continued on through the heavy fire and gained the first houses in the town by 1635, but lost contact to the rear. . Another company pushed on behind it and regained touch with the leading elements at 1830.

Though the French forces had seemingly gained a foothold in the outskirts of Pico at the approach of dusk, the enemy resistance had not slackened, and the battle was far from over on the front of the FEC. Off to the northeast an enemy force of 50 tanks moving along the north bank of the Liri toward Pontecorvo opened fire at 1430 on the 1st Brigade, 1st Motorized Division, as it fanned out over the valley floor. The artillery of the division and of the Canadian Corps put down heavy concentrations which forced the tanks to withdraw; fighter-bombers summoned to the scene continued the attack and inflicted some damage. The enemy, however, was not daunted. Under cover of dusk ten enemy tanks and a battalion of infantry moved southeast along the Liri and at 1830 struck the extended point of the 1st Brigade, which had reached the area just south of San Giovanni. The fierceness of the assault forced our troops to give way, and the battle rolled slowly south in the gathering darkness. The French troops, spread out between Mount Leucio and Pontecorvo, fought bravely, as the enemy tanks stabbed relentlessly at their loose formations on the gently rolling floor of the Liri Valley. Four times the leading companies of the 1st Brigade counterattacked in an effort to stabilize the line; three times they failed, but finally about midnight a line was established between Mount Leucio and Mount Marrone and was held firmly under nebelwerfer and 88-mm fire.

Another force of 20 enemy tanks supported by infantry appeared at 2330 just west of Mount Leucio, attacked the 7th Algerian Infantry elements on Campo dei Morti, and pushed them back toward Mount Pota. At Pico a force of 22 tanks, including at least 2 Tiger tanks, attacked the 2 infantry companies in the outskirts of the town. All these thrusts, aimed at blunting the FEC drive, were determined; and everywhere the French had to yield ground. Nevertheless, we still held Mount Leucio and thus a grasp on the Pico—Pontecorvo road. At Pico the infantry fought vigorously to maintain the foothold established in the afternoon; finally about midnight the tanks of the Bonjour Group drove in to the south of Pico and forced the enemy armor to stop its attack.

4. *The Second Battle for Pico.* After the enemy tanks had been driven back, the two companies of the 7th Algerian Infantry in the outskirts of the town were withdrawn under threat of encirclement. Early the next morning, 22 May, the regiment reported indications of an enemy withdrawal and again pressed forward

to Campo dei Morti and the south side of Pico. At 1130 the regiment broke into the town from the east. The Chèrrière Group of the Mountain Corps, freed from its holding mission east of Lenola by the advance of the Guillaume Group, moved north along the Itri—Pico road and entered the western edge of Pico about noon. Together the two units proceeded to mop up the remainder of the German garrison, which had been greatly weakened by the withdrawal of the enemy tanks. The Bonjour Group of armor, which had taken part in beating off the counterattack during the night, did not participate in the street fighting, but gave supporting fire from the hills to the south. By 1540 Pico was definitely in the hands of the FEC.

On the left the Mountain Corps had continued its attack on Lenola during the day against mounting resistance. The Guillaume Group already controlled the heights to the east and south of the village and gained contact with II Corps at the road junction just south of Lenola, thus linking up the Fifth Army front in this area for the first time. The armored group operating on the Itri—Pico road with the Mountain Corps destroyed the enemy self-propelled guns at the Lenola—Pico road junction during the morning. When his flanks had been secured by these actions, General Guillaume began his attack in the early afternoon. Before dusk the heights north of Lenola had been taken; by 1900 the village itself was in our hands with 250 prisoners. The majority of the garrison from the 2d Battalion, 276th Grenadier Regiment, and other units, had surrendered after a bitter fight, for the 88th Division had cut its escape route to Vallecorsa by occupying Mount Chia-vino and Cima del Monte.

5. *Exploitation to the West and North.* The battle for Pico was essentially completed by dark of 22 May. Though the area had not yet been entirely cleared of its stubborn defenders, the key points were in our hands, and the FEC line ran from Lenola northeast through the hills west of Pico to Mount Leucio. This advance placed French troops behind the Hitler Line and marked the collapse of that defensive position; the 26th Panzer Division had withdrawn to the northwest, and the forces before Eighth Army in the Liri Valley were already beginning to pull out.

At a conference on 22 May between General Clark and General Juin, the plans for the opening of the next phase of the Allied offensive were discussed. VI Corps was to begin its attack to break out of the beachhead at 0630 on the following day. Eighth Army would launch its drive through the Hitler Line at the same time. In order to prevent the enemy from withdrawing forces from the southern front and to maintain pressure on the enemy in the Liri Valley, the FEC was directed to attack toward Ceprano and Castro dei Volsci at 0600, 23 May. The full striking power of the French forces was to be used to gain the objectives as quickly as possible.

Detailed plans for the FEC ordered the Mountain Corps to continue on the left flank, driving in a northwesterly direction toward Castro dei Volsci from the Lenola area. The armored group would move up the road, supported by an infantry group in the mountains on either side. The Bondis Group would push west through the mountains from its positions near Pico, covering the right flank of the Mountain Corps and the left flank of the 2d Moroccan Division. The latter division had been moved to the Sant' Oliva area on 21-22 May, and was committed in the attack of the 23d to take up the drive on the Pastena road. The 3d Algerian Division remained in the line to its right to advance frontally on San Giovanni, Falvaterra, and Ceprano. This operation would pinch out the 1st Motorized Division, which was to guard the right flank of the FEC along the Liri River until Eighth Army drew abreast of the 3d Algerian Division. The guard of Mount Leucio and the hills east of Pico was also turned over to the 1st Motorized Division, which finally passed into Corps reserve on 25 May.

Because the breakout from Anzio required all available air support, the Corps artillery was the only means available to back up the FEC attack. Concentrated fire on the road net in the area San Giovanni—Ceprano—Pastena—Castro dei Volsci—Vallecorsa was to be supplied by the Corps battalions already in the Sant'Oliva—Monticelli region, and those units which were still in the rear were brought up to reinforce the fires. Since some aid was also to be given the Canadians on our right flank, the 17th Field Artillery Group and the 995th Field Artillery Battalion swung their guns north to place concentrations on the Hitler Line above Pontecorvo.

Our advance on the first day of the new attack was very scant. On the left the Mountain Corps relieved the 88th Division on Mount Chiavino and gained Mount Pizzuto to the southwest of Vallecorsa, but the armored group was held south of the village by enemy demolitions. Though the 8th Moroccan Infantry of the 2d Moroccan Division secured a foothold in the heights south of Pastena after heavy fighting, other elements of the division moving up from Sant'Oliva to Pico were stopped by a small pocket of enemy troops well emplaced at the southeastern entrance to Pico. A Tiger tank came to the assistance of the enemy troops from somewhere in the rubble of the town, and it was almost noon before the opposition was liquidated. Then the group pushed west on the Pastena road, but was halted west of Mount Palinferno by enemy fire from Pastena.

Before any considerable progress had been made by the 3d Algerian Division in its drive on Ceprano, a heavy enemy counterattack coming from the north pinned the advance guard in the northeastern outskirts of Pico and kept it there until dark. Another counterattack forced the 7th Algerian Infantry off Mount Palinferno. Fresh enemy troops, consisting this time of the 755th and 756th Grenadier Regiments from the Adriatic, had again appeared on our front and had apparently



received the sacrifice mission of holding the FEC until the Hitler Line in the Liri Valley could be evacuated.

Failure to break through on the first day did not deter the French, and our forces continued the attack on the 24th. The offensive was now split more definitely into two drives, one north toward Ceprano and the other northwest into the area between Castro dei Volsci and Amaseno. Since the success of Eighth Army in the first day of its attack against the Hitler Line permitted the FEC to swing more of its forces to the northwest, our progress improved markedly. The 1st Group of Tabors on Mount Pizzuto was counterattacked at noon on the 24th and lost the crest, but the 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, pushed northwest from Mount Monsicardi and helped the goumiers regain the summit.

The main center of resistance in this area now became Vallecorsa, from which the enemy launched small counterattacks in profusion. To eliminate this irritating activity the armored group and goumiers from the east pushed into the village by 1720. During the night an armor and infantry battle raged inside the village, and our troops were expelled several times. Since the bulk of the FEC artillery was out of range, the 77th Field Artillery Group of the II Corps artillery in positions about Fondi put down heavy concentrations on the morning of the 25th, and the FEC gained final possession of the point. From Vallecorsa the Mountain Corps turned west across the mountains to Amaseno and north to Castro dei Volsci. On the right the 3d Algerian Division had not fared so well on 24 May, for strong enemy forces centered at San Giovanni repeatedly counterattacked the French infantry and armor. Pastena likewise held out, but Mount Palinferno was retaken by the 7th Algerian Infantry. On the 25th our progress improved, and as darkness fell advance elements of the 3d Algerian Division entered San Giovanni.

Thereafter the German battle became only a delaying action in front of the FEC, designed to hold open the routes of escape for the enemy in front of II Corps on the west and Eighth Army on the east. During the Pico battle the German High Command had made vigorous efforts to prevent the French from advancing through the Hitler Line and the hills beyond, and had by its reinforcements indicated its view of the importance of the French drive. The 26th Panzer Division had made the Pico stand, and had been completely defeated. Two regiments of the 334th Grenadier Division had been brought from the Adriatic to San Giovanni Incarico, and now too were retreating. Again the FEC had fulfilled the mission assigned to it. Though its success this time had little influence on the actual progress of II Corps except insofar as the American divisions could not be transferred to the beachhead until the French were up, the French penetration was of marked importance in facilitating the advance of Eighth Army in the Liri Valley.

## D. THE EIGHTH ARMY ATTACK ON THE HITLER LINE

19-25 MAY

The activity of Eighth Army during the period 19-25 May consisted of preparing and then delivering an attack against that part of the Hitler Line which lay between Pontecorvo and Piedimonte. (*See Map No. 16.*) In the previous week 13 Corps had broken the Gustav Line and had taken Cassino while the Polish Corps on the right had occupied Monastery Hill. By the 19th 1 Canadian Corps had come into the line on the left just east of Pontecorvo, 13 Corps held the north side of the Liri Valley east of Aquino, and the Polish Corps lay at the outskirts of Piedimonte.

The next three days were spent in preparation for the attack on the steel and concrete fortifications of the Hitler Line, which were almost continuous across the rolling, stream-cut Liri Valley. At first it appeared that the Germans intended to put up a stout battle. Enemy armored units which had lost their tanks became infantry, service and other rear elements were pressed into the line, and reinforcements were brought up. The movements of Eighth Army were delayed by heavy rains on 19-21 May; during this period minor attacks were launched along the line to explore the enemy defenses, and the Poles fought an indecisive battle to take Piedimonte, the northern anchor of the Hitler Line.

When Eighth Army was finally ready to launch its attack, it discovered that the enemy was retreating. On the 21st the Germans had failed to retake the vital point of Mount Leucio, and on the 22d the French capture of Pico threatened to trap all the enemy forces; accordingly the German High Command issued orders for a withdrawal all along the front to the Valmontone—Avezzano line. The Eighth Army attack jumped off at 0630, 23 May, and made rapid progress. During the morning the Canadians cut the Pontecorvo—Aquino road midway between the two towns, and fresh troops widened the breach that evening against heavy rearguard action.

On the following morning the 5 Canadian Armoured Division passed through the infantry to exploit the success. The leading tanks were at the Melfa River by 1600, 24 May, and other elements were fanning out to the north in an effort to cut off the enemy in Aquino and Piedimonte. These rearguards, however, slipped out in the night of 24-25 May. On the 25th the Canadians crossed the Melfa, the Poles entered Piedimonte, and Eighth Army swung into the pursuit of a retreating enemy. The price of its success to 0600, 25 May, had been for 13 Corps 791 killed, 3910 wounded, and 523 missing; for I Canadian Corps 172 killed, 729 wounded, and 57 missing: a total for both corps of 6182 casualties since D Day.

## E. SUPPLY OF THE FIFTH ARMY ATTACK

By 25 May the ever increasing speed of the Fifth Army advance was imposing its natural burdens on the supply system. These strains had largely been foreseen, and steps taken to counteract them; at no time were the operations of Fifth Army or its subordinate units seriously hampered by difficulties in supply. The most critical problem, that of supporting the French Mountain Corps in its drive across the Petrella massif, was partly solved by the aerial drop.

During the first phase of the attack the existing installations of Fifth Army situated to the east of Mount Massico proved sufficient to meet all demands. After 16 May the more rapid advance began to entail long hauls from the Army dumps, and new facilities were opened along Highway 7, the main supply route. Ordnance led the way with two new ammunition supply points west of Mount Massico on the 16th; on the 20th two more were opened, one south of Ausonia for the FEC and the other west of San Martino Hill for II Corps. On the 22d, when our troops were still battling for Terracina, a forward ammunition point was established along Highway 7 halfway between Itri and Fondi.

This district, together with the area immediately about Itri, was utilized by several other services. Truckheads for Class I and Class III supplies were opened west of Itri on the 22d; the following day a subdepot for quartermaster Class II and IV issue was established in the same region. The 95th Evacuation Hospital, together with an Army dump for medical Class II and IV supplies, moved north of Itri on 24 May. In the western outskirts of the town the 3005th Quartermaster Bakery Company set up on 27 May.

Supply bases for the FEC were pushed up more slowly, for the terrain and roads were less favorable. Class I truckheads were set up at Sant'Andrea and below Castelforte on the 20th; three days later another opened at the Esperia—Ausonia road junction. Two of the French hospitals moved to the vicinity of Castelforte, one on either side of the Garigliano, on the 20th, and the third shifted to a position north of Ausonia on the 24th. Throughout the drive the area for which the FEC was responsible remained much larger than that of II Corps, for the north flank of the French was always open. On 20 May Fifth Army took over all areas east of and including, the Garigliano River from both corps. The following day the boundary between II Corps and Army was advanced to a line running from the junction of Highway 7 and the Ausonia road north to Spigno; on the 24th the Army boundary was again moved forward to the line Sperlonga—Itri—Mount Vele—Spigno. These shifts still left the FEC in charge of all the area from Mount Majo west.

The junction with the beachhead and the opening of Highway 7 all the way from the Garigliano to Cisterna obviated the establishment of further supply points

in any great numbers, for II Corps troops could draw on the extensive dumps which had already been built up at Anzio. The junction, however, together with the subsequent shift of II Corps to the Anzio area placed new burdens on the engineers and on the quartermaster truck companies. The supply lines of the FEC grew ever longer along the mediocre roads south of the Liri; moreover, II Corps and VI Corps both could not be sustained indefinitely from the Anzio dumps. As a result the engineers repaired and kept in operation as many land routes from the south as possible, and all transportation available was pressed into the task of moving units and supplies from the southern front over these routes.

The work of the engineers after D Day had consisted initially of throwing additional bridges across the Garigliano, one Class 40 bridge in the II Corps zone and two Class 40 bridges in the FEC zone. In addition, Tiger Bridge had been strengthened to Class 30, and three assault bridges were constructed for the movement of men and mules. Thereafter a good deal of by-passing and some improvement of trails into roads for jeeps, tanks, and 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-ton trucks were required at the lower end of the Ausonia Valley, but from 16 May on the efforts of the engineers were thrown primarily into opening up Highway 7 and the Ausonia—Esperia—Pico route.

On Highway 7 the 337th Engineer General Service Regiment constructed a permanent bridge over the Garigliano. The 19th Engineer Combat Regiment and then the 343d Engineer General Service Regiment carried out most of the work as far as the Bailey bridge south of Itri, which involved chiefly some by-passing in Formia and the filling of craters. The Itri bridge and the road beyond to Terracina were initially the responsibility of the 310th Engineer Combat Battalion of the 85th Division, which then turned them over to the 19th Engineers. To reduce the load on Highway 7 the 48th and 235th Engineer Combat Battalions opened an additional route which cut off Highway 7 east of Fondi and ran down to the sea. At Terracina the Corps engineers worked so close to the infantry that a sudden reversal of the battle on 22 May forced the crews of two D-7 dozers to abandon their vehicles temporarily. On the morning of the 24th the 85th Division engineers and Company D, 19th Engineers, drove through the town and up Highway 7. Beyond the town all engineer units available were pressed into the work of repairing three routes up the Pontine Marshes; these troops labored night and day to open the roads and keep them in shape under the heavy traffic. The streams and canals fortunately were low, and the German attempts to flood the marshes had been only partially successful. Some by-passing, a little bridging, and a good deal of filling were necessary.

As soon as Highway 7 and the supplementary routes were opened to the beach-head, a constant stream of units and supplies began to move up from the south front to Anzio. With some aid from the water route, the bulk of the Fifth Army units had shifted north by the first days of June, and long motor columns brought

up the supplies in the southern dumps. Regularly 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-ton trucks were loaded to 4 tons, and convoys rolled night and day in a 24-hour turnaround. Strict road supervision was necessary, and movement through the bottleneck at Terracina was severely controlled. Even after our entry into Rome the hauling went on, but eventually the supplies which remained in the south were turned over to PBS. The base moved them back to Naples and shipped them up by water to Anzio Port, operation of which was turned over by the Army to PBS at midnight on 31 May.

This long-distance transportation and most of the supply within Fifth Army after D Day was carried out by trucks. The railroad was extended north only slowly from Sessa, for Eighth Army had priority on repair of the line in the Liri Valley. After the gasoline pipeline had been extended to Terracina, well behind our advance, it was taken up and used for our drive north from Rome. In addition to trucks, aerial resupply was used on a few occasions. Various units of Fifth Army also had recourse once more to their friends of the winter campaign, the mule companies. The French Mountain Corps relied heavily on its animals, and the divisions of II Corps were forced to use mule trains extensively during their drive over the mountains northwest of Fondi.



*Opening the vital routes to Anzio across the flooded Pontine Marshes.*



*General Clark greets an officer from the southern front, 25 May 1944.*



*Our armor gathers to spearhead the breakout from the Anzio beachhead.*



*An M-4 tank of the 1st Armored Division slid off the road into a crater.*

## *VI Corps Breaks Through at Cisterna*

THE rapid success of the Fifth Army troops on the southern front had made the junction with the beachhead inevitable several days before the actual meeting on the morning of 25 May. The time had come for the forces at Anzio to begin their part of the operation, and on 23 May VI Corps on Army order initiated the second major phase of the Fifth Army drive on Rome. This new offensive, which was aimed first at breaking the German defenses before Cisterna, rapidly became the main effort of Fifth Army.

### A. *THE ANZIO BEACHHEAD*

*See Map No. 12*

1. *Our Situation.* By the beginning of March our troops had halted the fierce enemy counterattacks on the Anzio beachhead, and our positions were stabilized along the general line which they retained for the next two and one-half months. Minor fluctuations in the actual front were produced by successful small-unit actions on the part of our troops or the enemy, but each side had a main line of resistance which it defended strongly. On 22 May our front ran from the sea on the west along the ridge south of the Moletta River to the Albano road. Then it curved northeast about the Factory to Carano, followed Carano Creek a short distance and cut southeast parallel to the Campoleone—Cisterna railroad. At the Mussolini Canal our line turned southwest and followed the canal to the sea. This beachhead perimeter was garrisoned from left to right by the 5, 1, 45th, and 34th Divisions and the 36th Engineers.

Reserves and supplies at the Anzio beachhead were steadily built up during the first half of May. The 3d Division, which had been relieved in the line by the 45th Division at the beginning of the month, lay in reserve on the eastern flank.

With the arrival of Combat Command B at the beachhead by small increments during 26 April-7 May the 1st Armored Division was complete. The success of the drive on the southern front released the 36th Division, which moved up in large convoys on four nights, closing east of Nettuno the morning of 22 May. To meet the additional demands on transportation if the beachhead situation again became fluid, several truck companies were transferred to Anzio before the attack, and the balance of divisional transportation also arrived before or during the early stages of the drive. Stocks of ammunition at Anzio, always large to safeguard against a spell of bad weather, were further increased; by the end of the first few days of May a 30-day reserve in all supplies had been placed on the beachhead, in addition to the regular 10-day operating level.

For almost two weeks after the jump-off on the southern front activity at the beachhead remained much the same as it had been throughout all of April. By day our troops remained in their dugouts, asleep or resting, while sentries stood guard. At night the regular routine of trench life began anew, and a usual number of patrols went out to explore enemy positions. Our artillery harassed the enemy; in return enemy artillery continued to search out our rear areas, though on a reduced scale. Enemy air activity also decreased, as the Germans diverted their weak air force to the Garigliano River bridges. Despite the outwardly normal tenor of life the troops and commanders at the beachhead were making their final preparations. Training of units in tank-infantry co-operation was intensified. Tank crews received instruction in the techniques of artillery support. Artillery battalions dug new positions and dumped initial supplies of ammunition. Further reconnaissance and aerial photography flights continued to improve our knowledge of German positions and compensated in large part for our lack of good terrestrial observation.

Along with the training and planning went an inculcation of the offensive spirit in soldiers who had long been on the defensive. Our commanders realized that it is not easy to lead men accustomed to the shelter of a foxhole forward through enemy fires, and the beachhead attack illustrated several difficulties in the switch from defense to offense. Nonetheless, the attention paid to the psychological problem involved in the attack was highly successful, and our troops displayed an aggressive attitude throughout the bitter fighting that followed.

2. *The Enemy Situation.* During the first three weeks in May the enemy remained even more quiet than during the previous month, presumably hoarding his men and ammunition for the impending attack. His corps artillery shifted to the northwest section of the beachhead, but his front-line garrison remained much the same as previously. On 22 May five divisions held the enemy perimeter. The 4th Parachute Division garrisoned the coastal sector north of the Moletta, with the 65th Grenadier Division on its east astride the Albano road. The 3d Panzer

Grenadier Division with the Infantry Lehr Regiment under its command held the sector to Carano Creek. Before Cisterna lay the 362d Grenadier Division; the eastern flank was still the responsibility of the 715th Light Division with the 1028th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, the 7th GAF Battalion, and Italian troops under its command.

None of these units was up to strength, for the losses of the German divisions in the February attacks had never been fully repaired. Our G-2 estimates indicated that 8 enemy battalions with a total strength of 1800 men were in front of our main attack at Cisterna. In local reserve were 6 battalions, totalling about 1400 men. Enemy armor around the beachhead was assessed at about 220 tanks.

Behind the five German divisions in the front lines lay almost nothing. Confronted by our breakthrough in the south, the German High Command had had no recourse but to strip its beachhead lines of its reserves and in two cases actually to remove units from the front-line divisions. The 26th Panzer Division had moved from the Sezze area by 18 May to oppose the French at Pico; two days later the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division from Lake Bracciano had gone into the line at Terracina. In addition, the 1027th Panzer Grenadier Regiment and two battalions of the 8th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (3d Panzer Grenadier Division) were withdrawn directly from the beachhead garrison to fill the gap in the Lepini Mountains. The nearest strategic reserves were the 92d Grenadier Division, forming at Civitavecchia, and the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division near Leghorn.

Nevertheless, the forces remaining in front of VI Corps held a strong position, for the enemy had devoted much attention to the construction of defensive fortifications. Near Cisterna the forward enemy line, which was 300 to 1000 yards distant from our positions, consisted of a series of platoon defenses about 300 yards apart. Each contained four to eight machine guns laid to fire a few inches above the ground, and each was covered by the adjacent strongpoints. Between the platoon positions were small outposts for a squad or less. The system of wiring was fairly complete, especially in the vicinity of the strongpoints; tank approaches were mined; and antipersonnel mines covered the avenues of infantry attack. Behind the forward line at a distance of 500 to 1000 yards lay the reserve companies, protected in dugouts along wadis or ditches. As far back as the railroad embankment a dense system of weapons pits and gun positions covered the ground. In this area some trenches ran at right angles to Highway 7 and cut across it to protect the southeastern approaches to Cisterna in the event that the enemy decided to swing back his east flank out of Littoria.

When defenses of this type, drawn in depth about our perimeter, had taken their toll of the attackers, the enemy could fall back to other defensive works,

particularly on the line Lanuvio—Velletri—Valmontone. Nevertheless, our troops found, as they advanced through the German positions, that though the enemy had done enough work to make our progress costly he had nowhere finished his labors. Near Cisterna communication trenches often proved to be dummies one to two feet deep, intended merely to make us think that the positions were stronger than they actually were. Similarly the defensive lines to the rear of the front usually consisted of nothing more than dugouts, command posts, and occasionally trenches, with the result that the enemy troops retreating before our drive had hastily to dig their own foxholes and weapons emplacements on each line. Steel fortifications of the Cassino type did not make their appearance anywhere in the beachhead, and only a few concrete works were found in the Lanuvio line.

3. *The Terrain of the Beachhead Attack.* Wherever our troops attacked at Anzio, they attacked uphill. The resulting advantages to the enemy in supply, observation, and siting of weapons need scarcely be stated. Though the slopes were gentler in the beachhead than in the areas of previous Fifth Army operations, our troops still met the universal characteristics of Italian geography: ravines, valleys, and commanding hills held by the enemy.

Two principal hill masses, each seven miles from the beachhead perimeter, dominated the scene of the Anzio offensive. One of these extends from Mount Arrestino south of Cori up to the hills at Artena and forms the northwestern end of the Lepini Mountains, through which the FEC and II Corps were fighting. The other lies to the west and comprises Colli Laziali. Between the two is a valley over three miles wide, running north from Cisterna to the upper end of the Liri—Sacco Valley at Valmontone. At Cisterna the ground is fairly open and level, favoring tank employment; then as one moves north below Cori and Velletri scattered patches of trees appear amid vineyards, and wide but steep-sided ravines have been cut by the streams running generally south. North of the road junction at Giulianello are again long open swells covered with wheat, but between Artena and Valmontone the ravines reappear.

The hills which bound this valley are entirely different in character. Those to the east, by Cori, have a fair growth of trees, chiefly olive, on their lower slopes but at the top are bare or covered with scrub brush. Though these last fringes of the Lepini Mountains are lower than Colli Laziali, they are steeper, especially in the vicinity of Mount Arrestino; and no roads lead through them. The eastern slopes of Colli Laziali on the other hand are covered in general by heavy timber. Within the rim of the ancient volcano are open fields and other forest-covered hills, while the whole district is well served by a good network of roads.

From the southern slopes of Colli Laziali ridges which represent old lava streams run down past Velletri, Lanuvio, and Albano into the Anzio plain. Just

south of the Albano—Velletri railroad these ridges are slightly over 200 meters in elevation. Their sides are sometimes steep and scrub-covered while the crests are given over to wheat fields. Most of the houses in this area lie by the railroad and Highway 7, where settlement is almost continuous.

Below the hills and ridges stretch the rolling, open wheat fields of the Anzio plain, an area well suited to tank action. West of the Albano road the plain gives way to a series of twisted wadis through which the streams from Ariccia, Campoleone Station, and the Factory make their way in a southwesterly direction to the sea. Over on the eastern flank of the beachhead the rolling country sinks into the Pontine Marshes; here the ground is flat and intersected by a lacework of canals.

The area over which our troops fought in the Anzio offensive is very well covered by roads. Two of the great routes of Italy lead through the area to Rome: Highway 6 at the north end of the district through Valmontone; and Highway 7 running northeast through Cisterna to Velletri and along the southern slopes of Colli Laziali past Albano. Of the other roads, which connect the towns of the area, the most important in our operations were the network between Cisterna and the Albano road, and the routes branching off the Cisterna—Cori—Giulianello—Artena—Valmontone crosstie between Highways 6 and 7. The extensive network of roads facilitated the supply of our troops and largely made possible the swift shifts of entire divisions during the Anzio attack.

## B. *PLANS FOR THE ATTACK*

*See Map No. 12*

When the Allied forces on the south broke through the Gustav Line and the German Tenth Army began to retreat, the time for the beachhead offensive drew close. Two of the chief problems involved in launching that thrust were its direction and the best timing for its initiation. As to the former problem, three possibilities presented themselves. VI Corps could attack: 1) southeast toward Sezze and Terracina to join up with II Corps; 2) north toward Cisterna and Valmontone to cut Highway 6 behind the enemy; 3) northwest toward Albano to break the Lanuvio—Velletri—Valmontone line at its left extremity.

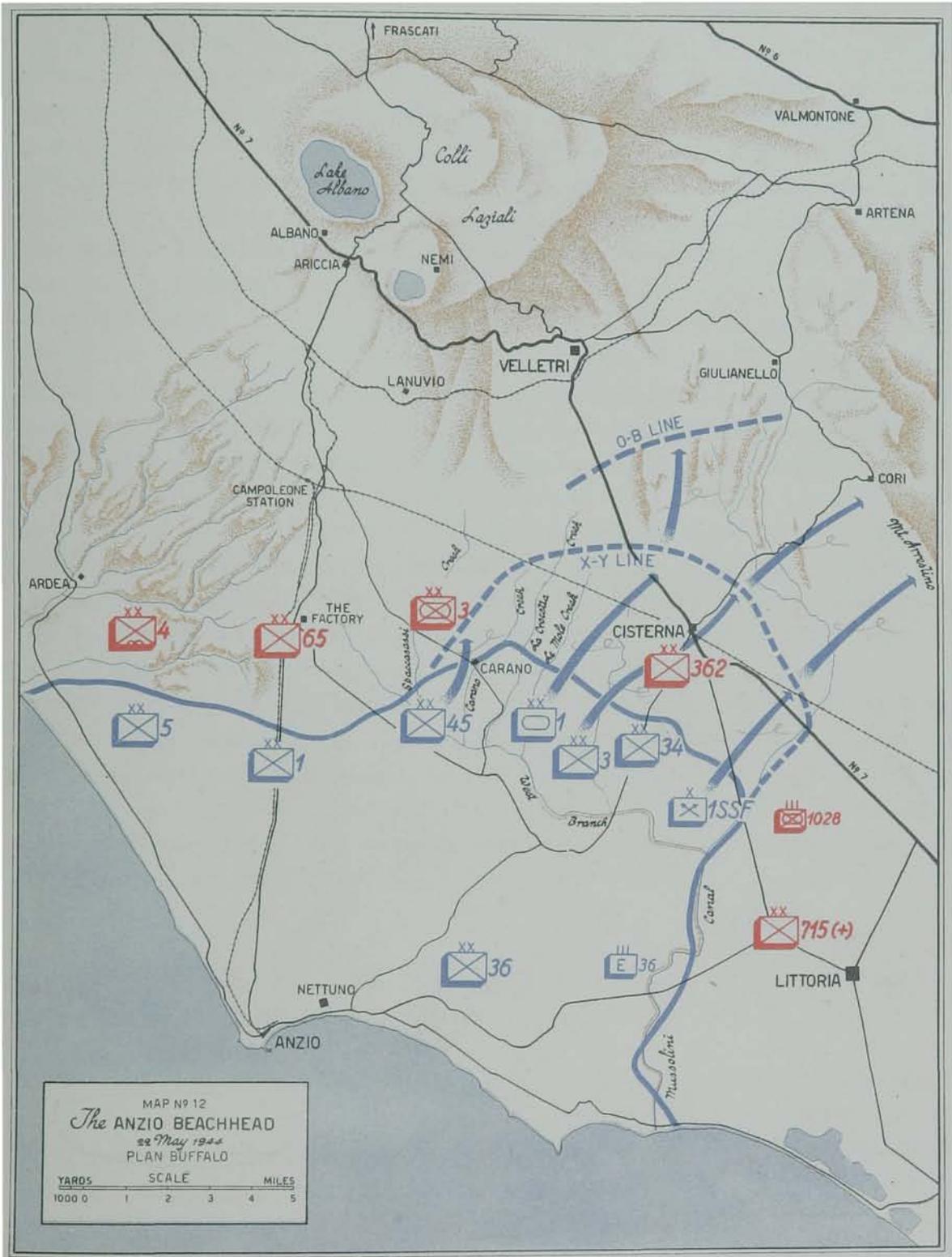
Each of these possibilities was attended by advantages and disadvantages. Junction with II Corps was desirable, but the May drive proved that action by VI Corps was not necessary to secure that junction. Even in the planning stage, the fact that the beachhead garrison might be capable of only one attack made this objective appear of limited value. Driving through to Valmontone might cut off the enemy retreat but would produce a dangerous salient, dominated by enemy positions

in the vicinity of Velletri. Moreover, the enemy would still have escape routes north of Valmontone through Palestrina and Subiaco. A push northwest through the Factory and Lanuvio had the great merit of breaking the main enemy defense line but the concomitant disadvantage of attacking the enemy at his strongest point.

The decision reached by General Alexander in consultation with General Clark and embodied in AAI Operation Order No. 1 of 5 May was to direct the VI Corps attack on Valmontone. This drive would present a positive threat to the enemy in the Liri Valley and should thus encourage his withdrawal. Penetration toward Valmontone would also open up the Velletri—Valmontone line to our assault all along its course; in the fighting to follow, this broadening of the base of attack on Colli Laziali actually proved very valuable.

To provide flexibility and to conceal our real intentions until the very last, the staff of VI Corps prepared detailed plans for all three possibilities. The titles of these plans indicated in brief the character of each operation. Plan Grasshopper, the easiest of the three, called for an attack to seize and hold the high ground in the vicinity of Sezze, with farther advance toward Frosinone or Terracina dependent upon the situation. In Plan Turtle the attack would be launched on the left to reduce the Factory salient and continue north and northwest to breach the right flank of the enemy main defensive line. The third plan, which was actually carried out, was that of the Cisterna drive of Plan Buffalo, embodied in VI Corps Field Order No. 26, issued on 6 May and revised on 19 May (See Annex No. 11). This plan called for VI Corps to establish a firm base on the X—Y line, a line curving about Cisterna on the north and east about two miles distant from the town. Then our troops were to seize the high ground in the vicinity of Cori and be prepared to continue the attack toward Artena with the final objective of cutting Highway 6 near Valmontone. Operations to seize the first objectives were divided into two separate phases.

In Phase 1 the 34th Division held its lines below Cisterna and prepared gaps in the minefields through which the 1st Armored Division, the 3d Division, and the 1st Special Service Force would attack. The 1st Armored Division, with the 135th Infantry attached, would secure the X—Y line in its sector and thereby cut Highway 7 north of Cisterna. It would assist the 3d Division and push aggressive armored reconnaissance toward Giulianello, Velletri, and Campoleone. The 3d Division objectives were La Villa, Cisterna, and the X—Y line beyond the latter town. On the right flank the 1st Special Service Force was to reach the X—Y line just east of Highway 7 and hold the enemy southeast of the Mussolini Canal. These three main attacks were thus designed to cut Highway 7 north and south of Cisterna while the 3d Division took Cisterna itself. The 45th Division was ordered to expand the left flank of the penetration by pushing its line up Carano Creek to the railroad.



Together with the British 1 and 5 Divisions, it would patrol vigorously to prevent the withdrawal of enemy reserves on the west side of the beachhead.

In Phase 2 the 36th Division was to pass through the 3d Division beyond Cisterna and continue the attack through Cori. The 1st Special Service Force on the right would advance to Mount Arrestina, and the 1st Armored Division would swing north to gain the O—B line running across the valley below Velletri. The armor was then to hold the enemy north of this line and prepare with the 3d and 36th Divisions to continue the attack on Artena. The 1st Special Service Force might also continue the advance from Mount Arrestino in the direction of Montelanico—Segni to cut Highway 6 while the 34th Division held the enemy southeast of the Mussolini Canal.

Annexes to the field order dealt with support by air, artillery, and naval gunfire; and lower units prepared very detailed plans of infantry action, artillery support, and tank operations. This was to be the final attack at the Anzio beachhead, and every effort was taken to ensure its success. Enemy opposition was expected to be severe; in particular, an armored counterattack by the 26th Panzer Division was expected from the direction of Velletri, and precautions were taken by our units on the left flank of the proposed penetration to meet the enemy tank thrust.

The VI Corps attack was to be exclusively American, at least in the beginning, for the British had only a holding role. On 24 April AAI had informed us that the two British divisions were not to be used north of the Tiber by Fifth Army and would revert to AAI after the capture of Rome. These directions were the result of difficulty in replacements. By Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 21, 22 May (*See Annex No. 1G*), both units were placed under Army control effective at 1800 the same day. Just before the attack General Clark moved to the beachhead and established his advanced command post at Anzio in order personally to direct Fifth Army's attack on Rome.

## C. *BREAKING OUT OF THE BEACHHEAD*

23-25 MAY

1. *The Last Preparations for the Attack.* Beginning on 13 May, the artillery of VI Corps embarked on a schedule of firing intended to uncover enemy defensive fires and to mislead the enemy as to the time of our attack. For 15 minutes of each 24 hours the artillery of all units, reinforced by the supporting weapons of infantry units, fired heavy concentrations on the German lines and gun positions. Some of the first shoots tricked the enemy into laying down all his final defensive fires, and our observers thus gained valuable information. The time of our barrage was

changed daily and brought to light the interesting information that the enemy was most alarmed during the night and at dawn.

On 19 May General Truscott, the Corps commander, ordered concentrations for the attack. Preliminary moves were carried out during the night, as part of the Corps and divisional artillery shifted forward to previously prepared positions. In front of the 34th Division the 109th Engineer Battalion began to construct by-passes and to gap the minefields. On the morning of the 20th the 1st Battalion, 133d Infantry, made a successful surprise raid to secure a bridgehead across Cisterna Creek as the line of departure for the 1st Special Service Force.

That afternoon VI Corps ordered a delay of 24 hours in D Day, thereby putting it off to the 22d, and cancelled all moves for the night of 20-21 May. This order followed a decision by higher authority that the attacks on the southern front had not yet progressed to the desired point. Terracina still remained in enemy hands, and Eighth Army was preparing for its attack on the Hitler Line. Final concentrations at the beachhead accordingly took place on the night of 21-22 May. The tanks of the 1st Armored Division rumbled up to their initial defilade positions, and the infantry gathered in their assembly areas behind the 34th Division. The 36th Division Artillery displaced forward, and the rest of the artillery completed its movements. Again, however, the attack had been postponed a day for complete co-ordination with the FEC attack toward Ceprano and the Eighth Army assault on the Hitler Line. All through the 22d the assault elements remained in concealment, but in the evening H Hour was definitely set at 0630, 23 May.

While the engineers completed the gapping of the minefields below Cisterna, the British divisions engaged in deceptive measures on the left flank to divert enemy attention. In the 1 Division sector elements of the 3 Brigade launched a small attack at 2030, 22 May, on the west side of the Albano road. Enemy machine-gun fire was heavy, and our troops made only a slight gain. At 0215, 23 May, the 5 Division Artillery began extensive preparations on the lower Moletta. Two hours later units of the 17 Brigade attacked toward L'Americano, supported by tanks after daylight. The enemy reacted so strongly that the British withdrew to their previous positions during the following night.

2. *The First Day of the Attack.* (See Map No. 13.) At daybreak on 23 May (0538) the front of the 45th and 34th Divisions remained quiet. A light drizzle began, and the enemy relaxed after another vigilant night. Posting their sentries, the Germans huddled in dugouts for a morning nap. At 0545 our artillery began what appeared at first to be another of its irritating, but usual shoots. This time, however, both duration and intensity were far beyond previous experience. At 0625 light bombers bombed in the vicinity of Cisterna, while three groups of fighter-bombers strafed the wadi area south of the town. Five minutes later the artillery

stopped. Immediately thereafter our tanks loomed up in the smoke all along the front, and behind them came swarms of infantry.

Complete surprise had been achieved. Men of the 180th Infantry had to pry their opponents, often partially clothed, out of the dugouts; below Cisterna the enemy at first thought we were launching another small daytime sortie. Our artillery preparation, the most intensive thus far at the beachhead, had searched out the command posts, assembly areas, and dumps which we had carefully located in the previous weeks, with the result that enemy communications and supply lines were severely damaged. Enemy artillery fire was slow to start and was hampered by a day-long haze limiting German observation from the dominating hill masses. Though the enemy recovered quickly and put up a strong fight, he never could make up for the initial disorganization, and counterattacks remained local in character.

The 45th Division under Maj. Gen. William W. Eagles attacked on the left for limited objectives, to hold the shoulder of the main penetration. While the 179th Infantry under Lt. Col. Preston J. Murphy made a demonstration on the extreme left, the 180th Infantry under Col. Robert L. Dulaney proceeded to neutralize 2 houses 1500 yards northwest of Carano and to organize the ground in the vicinity. The 2d Battalion moved up through the artillery preparation and secured its initial objectives quickly. One company was then held up by small-arms and machine-gun fire from an enemy strongpoint situated in four houses along the Carano road. Tanks of Company C, 191st Tank Battalion, came up and fired point-blank at the houses, knocking out the resistance so the infantry could proceed. The value of the intensive tank-infantry training of the previous weeks showed itself in this small action, for the infantry often ran up to the tanks and pointed out a target or indicated it by tracers. By the middle of the afternoon the battalion held its final objectives and dug in. It had taken prisoners or killed a large part of the 3d Battalion, 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, and had captured the battalion command post with radios and documents.

To the right of the 180th Infantry the 157th Infantry under Col. John H. Church attacked with two battalions abreast for deeper objectives. The 1st Battalion on the left jumped off at 0625 and held a line north of the Carano road by dark. The 3d Battalion, moving up the west bank of Carano Creek, occupied Hill 94 just short of the railroad about noon, with its three rifle companies strung out along the creek. At 1420 the forward artillery observer reported six to eight tanks moving in on the center of the line. Fifteen minutes later the number had grown to 24 Mark VI's, and in the next few minutes the tanks, unsupported by infantry, had driven our northernmost company back into the creek bed. The tanks pushed through almost to the creek, cutting the battalion in two and firing on the rear of the 1st Battalion. Tank destroyers hurried to the scene of action; the 3d Battalion,

13th Armored Regiment, moved up from 1st Armored Division reserve to stem a breakthrough; and heavy artillery fire, including that of 8-inch howitzers, was placed on the enemy tanks. Nine were claimed destroyed, and the rest retreated. By dark the 3d Battalion, 157th Infantry, had reformed its lines and dug in up to the railroad.

Having gained its objectives, the 45th Division held its new lines for the next two days. At dusk on 24 May a reinforced enemy battalion supported by tanks moved south along the west bank of Carano Creek and attacked the right flank of the 2d Battalion, 180th Infantry, on the Carano road. Under the cover of heavy mortar and artillery fire the enemy infantry crawled through the tall wheat and were within 100 yards of our position before being discovered. The Germans then showered our men with grenades and rushed the front lines. Hand-to-hand fighting ensued here and on the left flank of the battalion, where an enemy company also attacked. Eight battalions of artillery placed their fire on the enemy, and our machine guns and mortars fired so rapidly that several barrels and tubes were burned out. At the end of the attack the enemy had made a slight penetration on the left flank, but our infantry regained their positions after midnight. Patrols found that the enemy had withdrawn from the immediate front of the division.

While the 45th Division was winning and holding its objectives, the main bulk of VI Corps hammered on the Cisterna line, held by the 362d Grenadier Division and the 1028th Panzer Grenadier Regiment. On the morning of 23 May three distinct thrusts passed through the 34th Division in this area: the 1st Armored Division to the north, the 1st Special Service Force to the south, and the 3d Division in the middle. The objective, Cisterna, lay about two miles from our line of departure.

The 1st Armored Division under Maj. Gen. Ernest N. Harmon attacked with Combat Command A (1st Armored Regiment and 135th Infantry) on the left and Combat Command B (13th Armored Regiment and 6th Armored Infantry) on the right. The division reserve under Col. Hamilton H. Howze comprised the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry; the 3d Battalion, 135th Infantry; and the 3d Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment. Snakes, each consisting of a metal casing 400 feet long heavily charged with explosive, had been previously constructed at night in wadis of the area and camouflaged until use. Though the light rain on the morning of the 23d caused some trouble in getting the assembled snakes out of the ditches onto level ground, six of the snakes were pushed into the minefields in the Combat Command A zone near three enemy strongpoints. Here they blew gaps which threw the enemy into panic and permitted the rapid advance of our tanks.

Columns of medium tanks led the way, followed by waves of infantry from the 135th Infantry and by light tanks. When the enemy recovered, single soldiers tried to run up and throw hand grenades into the open turrets, but the machine guns

of the tanks stopped them and Combat Command A under Col. Maurice W. Daniel made rapid progress. By the middle of the afternoon it had gained the railroad; by dark the line of the infantry was 500 yards beyond the railroad, where the tanks and infantry halted for the night. The 135th Infantry alone had taken over 300 prisoners. Combat Command B under Brig. Gen. Frank A. Allen, Jr., on the right was held up by minefields until the engineers had cleared gaps in the late morning; then it too advanced to the railroad at some points, with its right on Femminamorta Creek. The infantry outposted the tanks during the night, and hasty repairs were made on damaged armor. Our losses had been 11 M4's knocked out, 44 M4's damaged, and 8 M10's damaged. The antitank opposition had consisted mostly of mines, though some enemy tanks were encountered.

The 1st Special Service Force, under Brig. Gen. Robert T. Frederick on the far right of the penetration, attacked on the morning of the 23d with its 1st Regiment (1st Battalion, 2d Regiment, attached) in the lead, and the 1st Battalion, 133d Infantry, following in close support. The 3d Regiment protected the rear and east flank along the Mussolini Canal, while the 2d Regiment remained in reserve. The spearhead of this attack broke through enemy resistance of small arms and machine guns and reached the railroad beyond Highway 7 at noon. Here it met a counterattack by enemy infantry and 12 Mark VI's of the 508th Panzer Battalion from the southeast. The tanks moved across the canal and knocked out the few tank destroyers and tanks in our forward waves; then they pushed our infantry, which was short of ammunition, some 800 yards back to the southwest of Highway 7. One company of the 1st Regiment was cut off and destroyed. During the night the 1st Battalion, 133d Infantry, relieved the 1st Special Service Force and outposted as far north as the highway itself. The 100th Battalion also moved up and took over the guard of the right flank along the Mussolini Canal.

Opposition in front of the 3d Division under Maj. Gen. John W. O'Daniel, attacking between the 1st Armored Division and the 1st Special Service Force, was the most stubborn met by any of our troops on the 23d. Artillery support for the division was particularly intense; and our 8-inch and 240-mm howitzers shelled Cisterna for two hours. At the beginning of the attack the 751st Tank Battalion and the 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion passed from the 34th Division to the 3d Division, one company each of tanks and tank destroyers being attached to each infantry regiment.

All three regiments attacked with two battalions abreast, the 7th Infantry under Col. Wiley H. Omohundro in the center, the 15th Infantry under Col. Richard G. Thomas, Jr., on the south, and the 30th Infantry under Col. Lionel C. McGarr on the north, with the Ponte Rotto and Isola Bella roads as the axes of advance. The 3d Battalion, 30th Infantry, took Ponte Rotto, while the 2d Battalion advances on

its left began. In the 7th Infantry zone the 3d Battalion pushed forward on the left of the Isola Bella road, and men of the 2d Battalion crept and crawled behind rolling artillery fire up the road itself under heavy small-arms and machine-gun fire from the houses on either side. By midnight the 2d Battalion had advanced 1500 yards and reorganized to continue the attack on the following day. The 3d Battalion swung north after dark and gained the Ponte Rotto road against stiff resistance from seven enemy tanks and infantry. Company A, 751st Tank Battalion, which supported this regiment, lost six tanks on mines, one to antitank fire, and one through mechanical difficulties. On the right of the division the 15th Infantry had by dark gained half the distance between its line of departure and Highway 7. The attack here also continued after dark to secure the maximum gains before the enemy could reorganize, and during the night the 3d and 2d Battalions both reached Highway 7 south of Cisterna.

The first day of the Anzio attack had been extremely successful. Units everywhere had gained their first objectives, though on the extreme right flank our troops had not been able to hold their gains. Extraordinarily large numbers of the 362d Grenadier Division were willing to surrender when encircled or seriously threatened. Our total of prisoners for the day ran almost 1500, half of them taken in the aggressive drive by the 3d Division. This unit had the heaviest casualties on our side with a total of 950 killed, wounded, and missing. Losses of our armor and tank destroyers ran about 100, most of them easily repairable; 22 enemy tanks and self-propelled guns were claimed destroyed. German artillery fire had been relatively light, and enemy aircraft had presented no problem at all. During the day our air force put 110 fighters, 300 fighter-bombers, 60 light bombers, and 216 heavy bombers over the beachhead and vicinity. Despite poor weather enemy artillery positions and bivouac areas were well covered.

3. *Encircling Cisterna.* The attack began again at 0530, 24 May, after a 30-minute artillery preparation. The 1st Armored Division Artillery had been pushed well forward during the night and gave good support to the armor, which jumped off at H Hour. Though the enemy had rushed a large part of his scanty supply of antitank guns to the area, both combat commands broke through the German positions and crossed Highway 7 north of Cisterna before noon. Combat Command B then drove across the valley toward Cori against steadily weakening opposition. Confirming the prediction made by prisoners before the attack, the Germans surrendered in large numbers to our tanks when the mine and antitank gun barriers had been smashed. By dark the leading elements of Combat Command B had reached the Cisterna—Cori road, but the main body halted for the night short of this objective.

Combat Command A turned northwest upon reaching the highway to expand the left side of the penetration. As it moved up toward Velletri, German resistance steadily stiffened. The enemy infantry operated as snipers to delay the tanks and infantry; and vineyards and high cornstalks impeded the tankers' observation. The medium tanks started out in the lead but found the going difficult. The light tanks then passed through with the infantry and struggled forward against small enemy counterattacks all along the line. The 1st Battalion, 135th Infantry, acting as pivot on the left flank with Company C, 1st Armored Regiment, made only a small gain; on the right flank the 3d Battalion, 135th Infantry, and Company A, 1st Armored Regiment, pushed up about a mile under heavy artillery and mortar fire.

While Combat Command B had swept on as the north arm of the wide pincers about Cisterna, the 133d Infantry advanced as the south arm. This regiment completed its relief of the 1st Special Service Force at 0300, 24 May, and attacked at 1715 in column of battalions. Companies B and C moved forward as ordered and secured the railroad beyond Highway 7 at dark. The enemy was bent on holding open his route of withdrawal from the Littoria sector, but the two enemy infantry companies which counterattacked up the railroad from the southeast were stopped by our artillery and chemical mortars of the 84th Chemical Battalion. During the night the 3d Battalion, 133d Infantry, passed through the 1st Battalion, and took up positions along the Mussolini Canal for two miles beyond the railroad to protect the renewed drive by the 1st Special Service Force on 25 May.

In the immediate vicinity of Cisterna the enemy garrison held out more stubbornly on the 24th, but it could not prevent the arms of the small pincers from closing about it. On the left the 30th Infantry attacked north past La Villa up Femminamorta Creek and then swung east to place its 2d Battalion on Highway 7. The 3d Battalion passed through and advanced after dark on the south flank of Combat Command B almost to the Cori—Cisterna road. The 15th Infantry had consolidated its hold on Highway 7 below Cisterna by the morning of the 24th and used its 1st Battalion to attack on the right of the regiment toward the patch of woods a mile northeast of the highway. Against heavy resistance the 1st Battalion gained its objective by dusk; on its left the 2d Battalion had moved to the railroad just south of Cisterna. While the other two regiments of the division were drawing the noose tighter, the 7th Infantry attacked to gain positions for the final assault on Cisterna. The 1st Battalion passed through the 3d Battalion and took La Villa. Then it cut Highway 7 in its zone, while the 2d Battalion advanced to the southwest side of the town. The 3d Battalion thereupon moved up behind the 1st Battalion to the northwest side of Cisterna and prepared to storm the objective. Evening of the 24th thus saw two regiments of the 3d Division on either side

of and past the division objective while the third had closed in on the west side. On the flanks of the division Combat Command B had driven its spearhead well toward Cori, and the 133d Infantry had moved on up the Mussolini Canal. Combat Command A, pivoting on its left, was developing a strong enemy position at Velletri but had pushed its right flank far enough up Highway 7 to check any enemy counterattack from this direction. The enemy actually could not muster strength enough for such a thrust, and German counterattacks on the 24th were generally weaker than on the 23d. The whole Cisterna position was doomed.

Through the night of 24-25 May movements were heavy behind our front. The 1st Special Service Force moved up on the south behind the 133d Infantry, ready to pass through it at dawn and strike for Mount Arrestino. On the north of Cisterna a gap between Combat Command A and Combat Command B was developing as each unit continued on its own axis of advance. The 168th Infantry, which had assembled in Corps reserve on the evening of the 23d, relieved the 6th Armored Infantry east of Highway 7 during the night on a line extending east of the 135th Infantry. At 0630, 25 May, the 34th Division under Maj. Gen. Charles W. Ryder took command of a five-mile front north of Cisterna behind the 1st Armored Division with the 135th Infantry under Lt. Col. Harry W. Sweeting, Jr., on the left of Highway 7 and the 168th Infantry under Col. Mark M. Boatner, Jr., on the right. The presence of this solid block protected the forces about Cisterna from the threat of an armored counterattack on the north and permitted the armor to move more freely in exploiting the German collapse below Cori. The 133d Infantry under Col. William Schildroth passed at 0530, 25 May, to Corps control until the situation southeast of Cisterna had been cleared up.

On the extreme right flank of VI Corps the 36th Engineers had remained quiet during 23 May. On the following day General Clark relieved VI Corps of the task of establishing contact with the southern front, and on Army order the engineers prepared task forces to assist in that junction. These forces moved out during the night of 24-25 May. Considerable parts of Corps artillery also displaced forward during the night to areas south and west of Isola Bella to support the continuation of the main attack.

4. *The Fall of Cisterna and Cori.* By the morning of 25 May the enemy situation in the Cisterna area was chaotic. In the rubble of Cisterna itself some remnants of the 362d Grenadier Division held tenaciously; below Velletri paratroopers put up a good fight; but everywhere else on the German left flank the scene was one of hurried retreat, partly toward Velletri, partly toward Valmontone, with some elements of the 715th Light Division assembling at Norma. At the same time the German command was throwing in the 1060th Grenadier Regiment (92d Grenadier Division) and the Hermann Goering Reconnaissance Battalion to stop our

thrust toward Valmontone, and vehicles of these units were moving past Giulianello toward Cori against the heavy current in the other direction. So dangerous was the situation that the enemy motor movements continued in daylight of the 25th.

Our air force reported heavy traffic on the Cori—Giulianello and Giulianello—Valmontone roads early in the morning. By afternoon this movement was estimated at over 600 vehicles, and our fighters and fighter-bombers went to work on the tempting opportunity. All through the afternoon the forward ground controller of XII Tactical Air Command at the beachhead diverted flights from their missions against enemy artillery and sent them over the enemy motor columns. By dusk the air force had scored one of its most resounding triumphs in direct support of ground operations thus far in the Italian campaign. First our pilots jammed traffic by bombing; then they strafed the resulting concentrations of up to 200 vehicles. The 324th Fighter Group (P-40) in 128 sorties claimed 188 M/T destroyed and 77 damaged. The 27th Fighter Bomber Group (P-40 and P-47) in 103 sorties reported 58 destroyed and 66 damaged. In 86 sorties by the 86th Fighter Bomber Group (P-40 and A-36) 233 M/T were claimed destroyed and 276 damaged. The Kittyhawks and Mustangs of 239 Wing, which also operated against choice road targets in the Avezzano area, listed a total of 67 destroyed and 39 damaged. These four groups had dropped bombs above Cisterna and at Avezzano as follows: 31 260-pounders; 60 20-pounders; 30 100-pounders; 751 500-pounders; 22 1000-pounders. Four of our aircraft had been lost to flak, and 23 were damaged. The total reported by VI Corps for the activities of the air force on 25 May was 645 M/T destroyed and 446 damaged. The essential accuracy of these figures was proved in the next week as our troops moved up to Valmontone, for the roads were littered with the burned, twisted wrecks of tanks, self-propelled guns, trucks, command cars, personnel carriers—a vast graveyard off all types of German transport. One company alone of the 10th Engineer Battalion pushed 150 wrecks off the road from a point 1½ miles southwest of Cori around through Cori to Giulianello.

Smitten by our air force from above and smashed by our artillery, armor, and infantry on front and flanks, the enemy broke in the Cisterna area on 25 May. In the zone of Combat Command B the 13th Armored Regiment (less Company D) under Colonel Howze was given the mission of exploiting the collapse. The tanks moved forward rapidly with the self-propelled artillery in close support, leaving a battalion of infantry to follow up as closely as it could. By early afternoon the 3d Battalion had reached the Cori—Giulianello road below Giulianello. The armor then halted and waited for the infantry. Company A, 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, rushed on north to cut the Giulianello—Velletri road just west of Giulianello; the 1st Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment, with infantry behind, pressed after it up the wooded draws. Over on the right flank the 3d Regiment, 1st Special

Service Force, jumped off at 0530 for Mount Arrestino and secured its goal before dusk. In the center the 30th Infantry and 15th Infantry completed their encirclement of Cisterna; then each regiment left a battalion behind to guard the eastern exits of the town and moved on toward Cori. Elements of the 3d Reconnaissance Troop entered Cori in the afternoon, and the infantry pulled up onto the slopes east and south of the town by dark. Here they met the 1060th Grenadier Regiment and the Hermann Goering Reconnaissance Battalion. These units had been heavily hit by our air force before they reached the scene of action and were committed hastily in the evening below Cori without reconnaissance or liaison. Neither delayed us for long, and the survivors reeled back in complete defeat with the rest of the fleeing enemy.

At Cisterna and Velletri alone did the enemy resist strongly. The Combat Command A attack on Velletri on the 25th was halted by enemy antitank fire and by Mark V tanks, and several enemy counterattacks forced the command to go on the defensive. At Cisterna the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, pressed into the town on the morning of the 25th, supported by the 2d Battalion on the west and the 1st Battalion on the north. The fight quickly became a house-to-house battle in which the Germans used each battered building and each room as a pillbox. Even after our men had cleared an area, the Germans infiltrated on our rear from the catacombs of the town, and the enemy garrison inflicted heavy casualties on our 3d Battalion in vain efforts to break out of our ring. All through the afternoon the mopping up went on; by 1900 the survivors, including the commanding officer of the 956th Grenadier Regiment, capitulated. Tank dozers of the 16th Armored Engineer Battalion moved in immediately and opened Highway 7 for two-way traffic by dark.

Cisterna, Cori, and Mount Arrestino—the first objectives of Operation Buffalo—were all in our hands by the evening of 25 May. Here as on the southern front our victory had been quicker, less expensive, and more devastating to the enemy than had been hoped. Though the 3d Division and the 1st Armored Division had suffered considerable casualties in men and armor, they yet remained effective fighting forces after taking the objectives of both Phase I and Phase II of the original attack order. It had not even been necessary to commit our reserves as planned.

Enemy resistance in the Cisterna—Valmontone corridor had collapsed. The 362d Grenadier Division had lost the bulk of its front-line troops; the remainder split into two groups withdrawing respectively on Velletri and Ardena without contact. The 715th Light Division on the east had pulled out hastily, partly by Norma and partly by Cori. The elements which took the latter road were smashed by our air force, and the rest of the division was so disorganized as to be of little use in the next two weeks. By noon of 25 May 2640 prisoners had passed through the Army cages at Anzio. Thus far our attack was a superb success.

# CHAPTER VII \* \* \* \* \*

## *Expansion of the Beachhead Attack*

### A. PLANS AND MOVEMENTS

25 MAY

EARLY on 26 May General Clark issued Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 24 (*See Annex No. 1K*), which confirmed verbal orders given shortly before midnight on the 25th. This directive began as follows:

The enemy forces opposing the beachhead offensive in the Cisterna—Cori area have been decisively defeated. The beachhead and main Fifth Army forces have joined. The overwhelming success of the current battle makes it possible to continue Operation Buffalo with powerful forces and to launch a new attack along the most direct route to Rome.

VI Corps was therefore ordered to attack not later than 1200, 26 May, to seize initially the line Lanuvio—Campoleone Station. The boundary between VI Corps and the British 1 Division was shifted north so as to place the Factory in the British zone. At about the same time Fifth Army took over the right flank along the Mussolini Canal together with the rear areas about Anzio and Nettuno.

In brief terms VI Corps was thus ordered to attack below Colli Laziali and break the southwestern anchor of the last German defense line before Rome. At the same time it was to continue the drive east of Colli Laziali to cut Highway 6 at Valmontone. The brilliance and daring of this order, which shifted the axis of main attack, are equalled only by the speed in its execution. Early on 25 May members of the Fifth Army staff discussed such a shift with General Truscott, Corps commander, and had decided that the new attack would be feasible on the morning of 27 May. A preparatory order on this basis was issued at 1815, 25 May, by VI Corps. As the day progressed, however, the demoralization of the enemy in the

Cisterna—Cori district became ever more apparent, and the 45th Division reported withdrawals on its front. The Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division, the last dependable reserve of the German High Command, was coming up, but preliminary indications suggested that it would be utilized in the Valmontone area. The enemy forces southwest of Velletri could expect no substantial reinforcements.

In the evening General Clark decided to attack toward Lanuvio on 26 May. At 2300 the division commanders met at VI Corps Headquarters to receive the Corps order. Twelve hours later the attack was under way. During that brief period the major elements of 2 divisions were shifted by foot and motor on crossing paths over a distance varying from 4 to 15 miles; Corps artillery displaced to support the new drive; orders and reconnaissance were initiated and completed by all echelons from Corps to battalions. Fifth Army again caught the enemy flatfooted by its swift exploitation of his weaknesses.

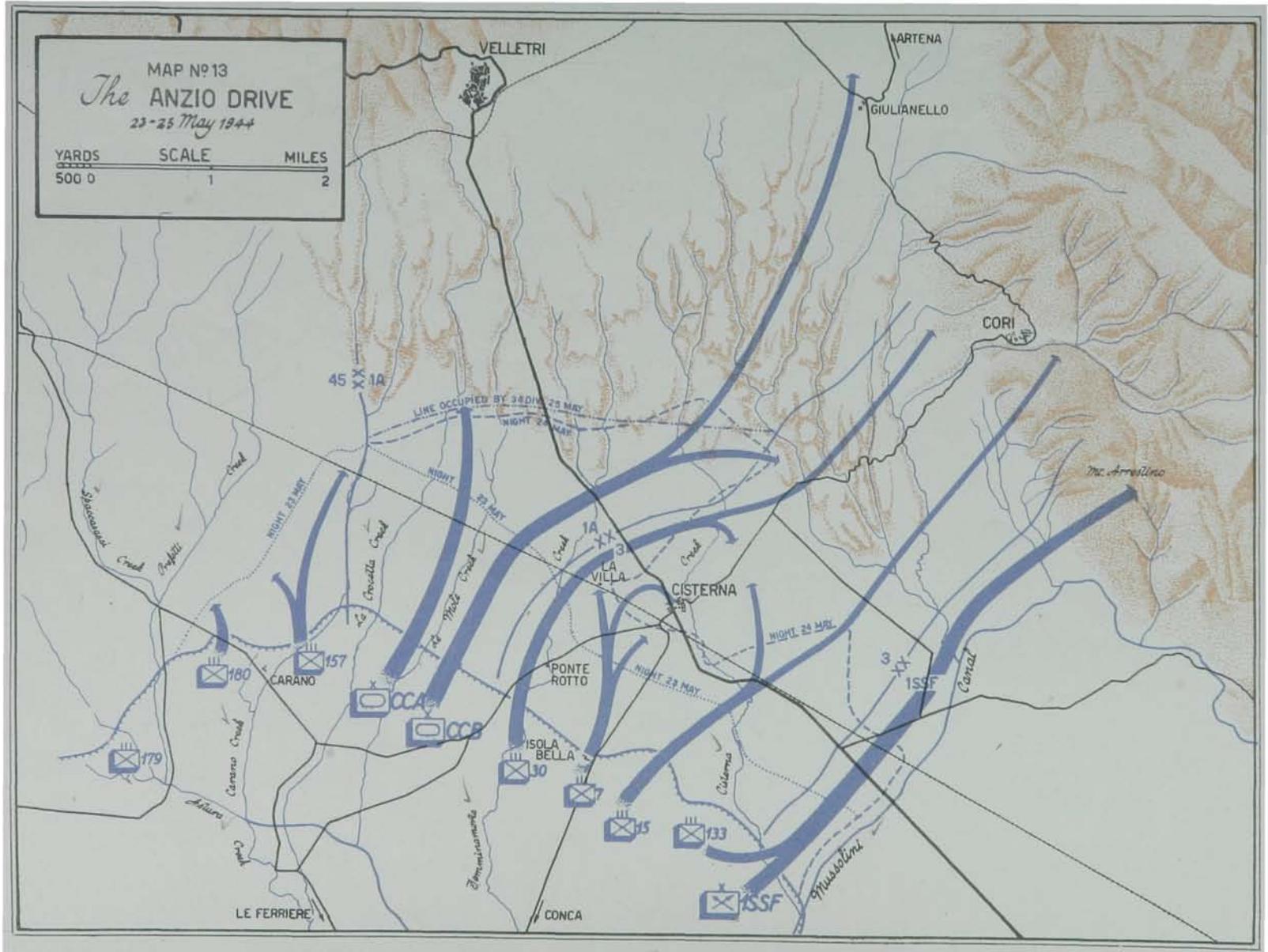
The Corps attack order directed the 3d Division to continue on its previous mission of driving north to Valmontone and Highway 6. The 1st Special Service Force and elements of the 1st Armored Division were attached to this unit to protect its right flank in the hills above Cori and its left flank in the open ground north of Giulianello. In the main offensive the 34th and 45th Divisions would push west below Velletri, the 45th Division on the left toward Campoleone Station and the 34th Division toward Lanuvio. Both combat commands of the 1st Armored Division would concentrate on Velletri from south and southeast. The provision of Operation Buffalo which called for the 36th Division to pass through the 3d Division had already been scrapped, and the 36th Division was ordered instead to come up southeast of Velletri to plug the gap between the Lanuvio and Valmontone drives.

This order required extensive shifts in troop dispositions. Some of these movements were already in progress under the plan to attack on 27 May; others were speeded by the new order. Units of the 45th Division, which had held their gains east of the Factory, were essentially in position except for the 179th Infantry, still in line on the south flank. This regiment was relieved at 0510, 26 May, by the 18 Brigade of the 1 Division and moved to divisional reserve. The 645th Tank Destroyer Battalion (less Companies A and B) reverted from the 1st Special Service Force to the 45th Division; tank support consisted of Companies B and C, 191st Tank Battalion.

The 34th Division, which was to attack with two regiments abreast through the lines of the 135th Infantry, was widely scattered at dusk on 25 May. The 135th Infantry, west of Highway 7, was supporting Combat Command A; on the east of the highway the 168th Infantry held positions to block the gap between Combat Command A and Combat Command B. The third regiment of the division, the

MAP Nº 13  
*The* ANZIO DRIVE  
23-25 May 1944

YARDS SCALE MILES  
500 0 1 2



133d Infantry, lay along the Mussolini Canal under Corps control, backing the 1st Special Service Force and patrolling in the direction of Littoria. At 1530 this regiment had been relieved by the 100th Battalion and the 34th Reconnaissance Troop and reverted to division control in accordance with prior instructions. After assembling south of Highway 7, it moved by truck to the division area on a circuitous route to avoid the bottleneck of Cisterna. From its detrucking point the regiment marched three miles to an assembly area near the Campoleone—Cisterna railroad, where it closed at 0415, 26 May. It then proceeded immediately to a forward assembly area on the left flank of the 135th Infantry.

The 135th Infantry and the 168th Infantry had been ordered on the afternoon of the 25th to attack at 2100 to secure an east-west line running due west of Cori. Shortly after the attack had begun, the 135th Infantry received further orders to halt its advance and dig in. After midnight the 3d Battalion was attached to the 1st Armored Division for action with Combat Command A, and the remainder of the regiment prepared to regroup in assembly areas after the new drive had passed through its lines.

The order to cease the attack did not reach the 168th Infantry until it had gained its objectives about 0200, 26 May, and the unit was further delayed thereafter in waiting for the 143d Infantry to relieve it. Since this regiment had received new orders, the 168th Infantry left its positions unguarded at 0400 and proceeded to an assembly area on the right flank of the 135th Infantry. Together with the 133d Infantry on its left, the 168th Infantry was ready for the attack at 1100, 26 May. The complete division order for the attack had been issued at 0400, and regimental orders followed shortly after daybreak (0536). Companies A and D, 191st Tank Battalion; the 84th Chemical Battalion; and the 894th Tank Destroyer Battalion were attached to the 34th Division, which released the 805th Tank Destroyer Battalion to the 36th Division.

On the right flank of the 34th Division the 1st Armored Division united its efforts in a drive on Velletri. Combat Command A was already in position on Highway 7; during the night Combat Command B moved to its right flank to threaten the town from the east. Inasmuch as two battalions of the 13th Armored Regiment rejoined Combat Command B, armored protection for the 3d Division was achieved by forming Task Force Howze and attaching it to that unit. This task force, consisting of the 3d Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment; the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry; the 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion; and supporting units, remained a distinct entity throughout the rest of the drive on Rome, though its composition varied from time to time.

The proposed advance of the 34th Division to the northwest and the shift in the 1st Armored Division axis of attack again created a large gap in our lines north

of Cisterna, which was plugged by the 36th Division under the command of Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker. In accordance with orders to relieve the 168th Infantry, the 143d Infantry under Col. Paul D. Adams proceeded by truck north of Cisterna in the evening of 25 May. Then, after receiving new orders to block Highway 7 three miles north of Cisterna, it moved out by foot at 0300, 26 May, and held its new positions by 0630. The 141st Infantry under Col. John W. Harmony came up after dark on the 25th, left its detrucking point at 0230, and fanned out on a north-south line on the right flank of the 143d Infantry by 0900. The 142d Infantry under Col. George C. Lynch marched forward ten miles during daylight of the 26th and went into reserve positions to the right rear of the 141st Infantry. Since the armored threat on the front of the 36th Division was considered especially grave, the division received heavy reinforcements of tanks and tank destroyers. The 805th Tank Destroyer Battalion was obtained from the 34th Division, the 636th Tank Destroyer Battalion from the 1st Armored Division and the 1st Special Service Force; and Companies A and D, 751st Tank Battalion, from the 3d Division.

## B. *ACTION ON THE RIGHT FLANK OF VI CORPS*

26-30 MAY

1. *The 3d Division Drive to Artena.* (See Map No. 15.) The broadened attack of VI Corps began at 1100, 26 May. While the 34th and 45th Divisions swung west below Colli Laziali, the 3d Division continued its exploitation of the breakthrough at Cisterna. In this operation it was assisted by the 1st Special Service Force on the right and by Task Force Howze on the left.

After a brief rest in the morning the 3d Division moved out promptly at 1100 behind its reconnaissance troop and the armor of Task Force Howze. By evening the advance elements reached the high ground south and west of Artena. The 7th Infantry marched from Cisterna to the railroad below Cori and advanced along the railroad to Giulianello. From that point it proceeded north across the wheat fields and took up positions for the night on the bare hills southwest of Artena. The 30th Infantry wiped out an estimated company of infantry between Cori and Giulianello, then moved astride the Velletri—Giulianello road to ward off any enemy thrust from Velletri. After dark the 1st Battalion of the regiment climbed up to Rocca Massima, where it captured an entire German infantry company. The 15th Infantry advanced to Giulianello and prepared to attack Artena on the following day. In Task Force Howze one company of tanks cut the Velletri—Valmontone road, and the other two companies pushed close to Highway 6 but withdrew on orders from General O'Daniel, division commander. Enemy opposition everywhere

had been scattered and light; our own aircraft had caused some casualties by strafing the marching columns.

Tentative efforts of Task Force Howze on the 27th to reach Highway 6 met heavy fire from self-propelled guns, and the force remained west of Artena with the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, astride the railroad, backed by the armor. The 1st Special Service Force advanced in the morning along the hills to the crest above Artena, and by noon emplaced pack howitzers of the 463d Field Artillery Battalion to fire on enemy traffic to the east and southeast. Capture of the town itself was assigned to the 15th Infantry, which had shuttled up by truck during the night to the near vicinity. The 2d Battalion, aided by tanks and tank destroyers, entered Artena from the northwest shortly after noon and had finished mopping up the considerable enemy resistance by 1520.

The 3d Division then assumed an all-around defensive position to protect its gains. The 1st Special Service Force on the right moved down into the town and held the right flank. To its left the 15th Infantry dug in north of the Artena—Cori road, with the 7th Infantry to its rear on the western slopes of the hills and Task Force Howze to its front along the railroad. The 30th Infantry remained at Giulianello to guard the flank and keep open the division route of supply. The 9th and 10th Field Artillery Battalions and the 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion displaced north of Giulianello to support the infantry. Together with our 240-mm howitzers and 8-inch guns, the artillery occasionally directed fire at promising targets on Highway 6 in the vicinity of Valmontone.

Having secured a vantage point from which he had essentially cut Highway 6 as a German escape route, General O'Daniel prepared to push on and take actual possession of the highway. This plan, however, could not be executed with the forces at his disposal, for the bulk of the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division had by this time run the gauntlet of our strafing and bombing and had been thrown into the Valmontone sector to check our advance. Since the main enemy forces in the Liri Valley, retreating as rapidly as possible through Subiaco and Palestrina, needed another few days to clear completely out of the threatened trap, the High Command committed its last strong reserve in the Valmontone area. About this block it assembled the scraps of the 715th Light Division and other units retreating before the French.

Though Marshal Kesselring by this action abandoned the Lanuvio sector to its own meager garrison, he was able to stop the 3d Division in the period 27-30 May. At 1930, 27 May, the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division launched two stiff counterattacks with infantry and tanks. The first of these came south along the Valmontone road; the second centered about the road block which Task Force Howze had established at the crossing of the railroad and the Artena—Velletri

road. The latter attack drove our forces back, but on the following morning the armored infantry regained the road block. During the 28th our forces were content to improve their defenses and to patrol vigorously in order to determine the enemy strength. Again at dusk enemy infantry and Mark VI tanks pushed down the Valmontone road. The 1st Special Service Force, which had moved forward from Artena, repelled this attack and also stopped another thrust in the early hours of 30 May.

Late on 28 May the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, followed on the 29th by the 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalion, withdrew from Task Force Howze and rejoined the 1st Armored Division. The remainder of the task force was placed in 3d Division reserve, and the infantry regiments pushed forward to fill the gap and expand their defensive perimeter. By noon of the 29th our line ran along the railroad from the Valmontone road around to the Giulianello—Velletri road and was held from right to left by the 1st Special Service Force, the 7th Infantry, and the 30th Infantry, with the 15th Infantry in reserve. The 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron had moved up on the right to patrol the hills between the 3d Division and the FEC.

By this bold action to threaten the enemy's communications in the Liri Valley Fifth Army had risked exposing the right flank of its beachhead front, pending the arrival of the FEC, which was moving at that time northwards over the rugged Lepini Mountains. One enemy division was facing this exposed flank. This risk was calculated very closely in view of the Army's lack of reserves; at this time every infantry battalion was committed to action, either in the line or in local reserve. The prize was worth the gamble, especially in view of the enemy's disorganization and the vulnerability of his vital Liri Valley supply line.

At 1400, 29 May, II Corps assumed command of the zone east of the line Frascati—Lake Giulianello, including the 3d Division with its attached forces. At 2200 the same day the 337th Infantry closed in the Rocca Massima—Giulianello area. The following day the 338th Infantry and the 760th Tank Battalion came up from the south, and the 85th Division Artillery closed in the new II Corps zone. The shift of II Corps Headquarters and part of its troops from the south presaged the imminent resumption of the offensive east of Colli Laziali.

2. *The 36th Division Holds Below Velletri.* Well to the left of the 3d Division the 1st Armored Division had on 26 May driven toward Velletri across close, broken country ill suited for armor. Enemy resistance here had been heavy and had stopped our attack south and east of the town on a heavy, hasty minefield backed by antitank guns and by the fanatical defense of the German paratroopers. During the night of 26-27 May the 1st Armored Division went into reserve for maintenance.

The 36th Division, which relieved the armor, took over the mission of guarding the area between the 3d and 34th Divisions and keeping pressure on Velletri without becoming too heavily engaged. The 143d Infantry advanced its lines to consolidate the gains of the 26th, and the 36th Reconnaissance Troop initially patrolled the three-mile gap between the 143d Infantry and the 30th Infantry. On the afternoon of 27 May the 141st Infantry was committed northeast of Velletri to close this gap.

For the next few days this regiment advanced slowly behind strong combat patrols. During 28 May it reached the railroad embankment and laid plans to attack toward Velletri; after a stiff counterattack on the left flank these plans were abandoned, and the regiment continued northwest on the path of least resistance. On the 29th the 1st Battalion pushed to the Velletri—Artena road; the next day the 3d Battalion expanded the salient toward Velletri. Opposition in this area was light, for the main line of the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division reached from Valmontone only as far as Lariano. The paratroopers at Velletri were content to maintain their control of the area immediately about that town, and were primarily interested in the struggle about Lanuvio.

### C. THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF THE DRIVE TOWARD LANUVIO

26-27 MAY

I. *The Action of 26 May.* (See Map No. 15.) The VI Corps order for the new attack on 26 May set H Hour at 1000. Shortly before this time the attack was delayed one hour to permit completion of last details by all units, and the 34th and 45th Divisions actually jumped off at 1100 in their drive toward Lanuvio and Campoleone Station. The British units below the Factory held firm on the 26th; the 1st Armored Division on the right flank of the attack put pressure on the Velletri positions to assist the 34th Division. Heavy artillery support, comprising 228 pieces in addition to division artillery, laid down heavy fires in the 30-minute preparation. The 240-mm howitzers and 155-mm guns were directed by Air Observation Posts on stone structures concealing enemy guns and installations; 64 90-mm guns of 4 battalions in the 35th Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade massed their fire on area targets; even 2 40-mm Bofors of the 106th Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion fired on terrestrial targets for the first time since the beachhead was established.

The first day of the attack met only spotty resistance from enemy infantry rear guards in scattered strongpoints, coupled with long-range machine-gun fire and some opposition from tanks and self-propelled guns. The character of the enemy resistance indicated that he was falling back to the Lanuvio line, and our

progress was rapid. In the left half of the 34th Division zone the 133d Infantry advanced with the 3d and 2d Battalions abreast, the left flank of the 3d Battalion guiding about 1200 yards north of the railroad. At 1550 the regiment was halted after a gain of a mile and one-half until the 168th Infantry could clean up opposition on the right flank.

The 168th Infantry advanced in column of battalions, maintaining depth and antitank protection on its exposed right flank. The 1st Battalion in the lead ran into some opposition at Hill 158 west of the east fork of Carano Creek. Enemy machine guns in the houses to the west also caused some trouble, but by late afternoon the regiment had removed the opposition and continued the advance to the main course of Carano Creek where it halted for the night. The 133d Infantry, while waiting for the 168th Infantry and for tanks from the 191st Tank Battalion, fed and rested its men, and jumped off again at 2100 for its second objective, the stream junction on Prefetti Creek. Advance elements reached this point after midnight, but the bulk of the regiment halted for a brief rest on the ridge line just to the east.

To the left of the 133d Infantry the 157th Infantry had made even greater progress, with the result that both of its flanks remained open throughout the day and night of the 26th. This regiment, on the right of the 45th Division, attacked south of the railroad with the 2d Battalion in the lead, followed by the other two battalions in column. Enemy opposition consisted chiefly of harassing artillery fire. Scattered machine-gun and mortar fire on the right flank of the regiment was partially eliminated by the night attack of the 133d Infantry.

The 180th Infantry on the left flank of the 45th Division met the most stubborn resistance encountered by our infantry on 26 May. Attacking over the rolling wheat fields east of the Factory, the 2d and 3d Battalions found the enemy entrenched in the prepared defenses of the Factory area. Machine-gun crossfire harassed our advance, and heavy artillery concentrations were combined with direct tank fire on the infantry. The 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry, on the left followed our artillery preparation closely and jumped into Spaccasassi Creek, its limited objective, before the enemy could get organized. Here the 2d Company, Infantry Lehr Regiment, was captured intact. The 2d and 3d Battalions on the north, however, were pinned down on the flat ground for two hours until tanks of Company C, 191st Tank Battalion, could be pushed forward. Then the enemy resistance finally broke, and our troops captured 171 prisoners from the 2d Battalion, 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, including the battalion commander and 3 of his staff. Except for the 8th Company this battalion was wiped out, and the 180th Infantry advanced across Prefetti Creek before dark.

On the first day of the attack our troops had advanced about a mile and one-half along the entire front. Co-ordination between units had not been completely successful, but this was to be expected when troops were committed on unfamiliar terrain after rapid night movements. The 133d Infantry and the 168th Infantry, for instance, had poor liaison throughout the 26th and did not establish firm contact until almost midnight. As a result of the fact that the boundary between the 34th and 45th Division, set at the railroad in the Corps order, was not the same as that agreed upon by the two divisional commanders, there was a gap of almost a mile north of the railroad. For the next two days scattered enemy forces in this gap harassed the right flank of the 45th Division. The 45th Reconnaissance Troop and then the 34th Reconnaissance Troop were placed in the area but did not succeed in controlling it thoroughly. On the right flank of the 34th Division the Reconnaissance Company, 894th Tank Destroyer Battalion, was employed to maintain contact with an aggressive task force from the 143d Infantry below Velletri; here less trouble was met.

2. *The Action of 27 May.* After a quiet night the 34th and 45th Divisions renewed the attack on the morning of 27 May. The enemy had again withdrawn, leaving a screen of automatic weapons backed by roving tanks. On the right of the 34th Division zone the 3d Battalion, 168th Infantry, passed through the 1st Battalion and continued the attack at 0530 with the 2d Battalion on its right. After an uninterrupted advance of 1500 yards the battalion reached the ridge beyond the east fork of Prefetti Creek, where it halted temporarily. The 133d Infantry renewed its drive at 0930 and met little opposition until afternoon. Four enemy tanks and a platoon of enemy infantry on Hill 173 just east of Presciano Creek then slowed our advance, and it became apparent that this position was part of a strong outpost line running south from Gennaro Hill across the entire front of the 34th Division. (*See Map No. 14.*)

Bounded on the west by Presciano Creek and on the east by Prefetti Creek, the ridge was too narrow for an extended defense, but it afforded a good delaying position and had the further advantage of running at an abrupt angle to the enemy main line of resistance. The 133d Infantry placed the 1st Battalion in the center of its line, and at 1900 the two forward regiments of the 34th Division began a co-ordinated attack against the enemy line. By dark they had advanced to the lower slopes of the ridge where they dug in and held through the night. An enemy counterattack of 200 men and 6 tanks, which hit the right flank of the 133d Infantry at 2020, was repelled by our artillery. Two enemy tanks were burned, and one direct hit smashed an enemy truck filled with infantry.

The attack of the 45th Division on the 27th met spotty resistance from the Infantry Lehr Regiment. (*See Map No. 15.*) The 157th Infantry and the 180th Infantry both attacked at 0615 after a 15-minute artillery preparation and progressed

easily throughout the morning. At noon direct tank and machine-gun fire from a knoll north of the railroad pinned the right flank of the 157th Infantry. The 2d Battalion swung north to clear out this opposition in co-operation with tank destroyers from the 34th Division and occupied the knoll in the afternoon. The 3d Battalion moved up from reserve and took its place in the advance, crossing Pre-sciano Creek before dark.

The 2d and 3d Battalions, 180th Infantry, were likewise pinned at noon by fire from enemy tanks, located in the woods northeast of the Factory. Our own tanks and tank destroyers had been held up by blown bridges during the night, but at noon on the 27th a bridge was thrown across Spaccasassi Creek on the Carano road. Company C, 191st Tank Battalion, then moved up west of the creek and made a thrust into the woods which had sheltered the enemy tanks. Since the German armor had discreetly vanished, our infantry were able to work their way forward through the antipersonnel minefields to Spaccasassi Creek by dark.

Thus far the 34th and 45th Divisions had met chiefly long-range fire covering the enemy withdrawal. We were now less than two miles from our objectives at Lanuvio and Campoleone Station. Though the enemy could not afford to yield more ground on his left flank at Lanuvio, his ability to hold his main line of resistance appeared dubious; for the forces available to the German command consisted only of the 65th Grenadier Division with elements of the 3d Panzer Grenadier Division and 4th Parachute Division and scattered remnants of the 362d Grenadier Division. The 1st Armored Division accordingly was alerted to be ready to attack through the 45th Division on 28 May. The 2d Battalion, 135th Infantry, was attached to the armor, and the 142d Infantry in 36th Division reserve was also ordered to be ready to move by truck behind the tanks, in the event that the 1st Armored Division secured a breakthrough.

#### D. *ENEMY RESISTANCE STIFFENS*

28-30 MAY

During the next three days that breakthrough was not achieved. Though the Germans had no solid, organized block of troops on which to base their resistance, they combined the broken units available into battle groups, patched the gaps with Alarm Companies hastily formed from rear echelon personnel, and stiffened weak spots with a dash of paratroopers from their less threatened right flank in front of the British. The ingenuity and craft of the Germans in defense were rarely better demonstrated than in the battle of Lanuvio. Since our right flank was already pressed up against the main German defensive line, our progress on 28-30 May con-

sisted of a great wheeling movement with the 34th Division as pivot. As each unit to the left in turn came up against the German defenses, it was stopped, with the result that the forward motion of our drive kept shifting farther and farther to the left. Here the 45th Division, aided from the 29th by the 1st Armored Division, pushed first west, then slowly northwest toward Albano; on the right the infantry battalions of the 34th Division surged up vainly day after day against the enemy strongpoints east of Lanuvio.

1. *Attacks by the 34th Division.* (See Map No. 14.) In the 34th Division zone the enemy main line of resistance ran immediately south of the railroad and was based on the defensive works which had been prepared in the previous months. For the most part these works were limited to deep connecting trenches, dugouts in the sides of banks, and command post installations; all else was added by the troops as they fought. Under such conditions barbed wire and mines were rare, but the German skill in siting automatic weapons remained as great as ever. Self-propelled guns and tanks roamed the good road network leading south from Highway 7, firing sometimes from south of the railroad, sometimes from the slopes above the tracks. The commanding nose on which the town of Lanuvio is situated was a favorite spot for these weapons and also for machine guns delivering long-range fire.

On the right the 168th Infantry faced two particularly nasty strongpoints: Gennaro Hill and Villa Crocetta on the crest of Hill 209. As our troops approached either point, they had to cross open wheat fields on the neighboring hills, then make their way across the draws formed by the tributaries of Presciano Creek, and finally attack up steep slopes to their objectives. The German line was marked by a trench five to six feet deep which ran across Hill 209 and on past the southern slopes of Gennaro Hill. Based on this trench and its accompanying dugouts, machine guns were emplaced to command the draws, and mortars were located in close support. At Hill 209 the enemy also had wire nooses, trip wire, and single-strand barbed wire to break the impact of our charge.

During the night of 27-28 May the Germans abandoned the lower reaches of their outpost line, on which they had delayed us the previous day, and retreated to their final positions. On our right flank the 2d Battalion, 168th Infantry, advanced on the 28th to the draw on the upper reaches of Prefetti Creek and turned north toward Gennaro Hill. In the middle of the morning its attack was disorganized by artillery fire, but in the afternoon the battalion regrouped and pushed through grazing fire from enemy machine guns, sited along the railroad, up to the south slopes of Gennaro Hill. Here it held for the night.

The 1st Battalion swung west through the 3d Battalion and across Prefetti Creek below Gennaro Hill. Company A on the left secured Hill 203 southeast of Villa Crocetta under heavy machine-gun, sniper, and mortar fire, and Company C

on the right put elements on Hill 209, only to have them driven off by friendly artillery fire. The enemy garrison of the hill at this time was estimated at 12 to 15 men. After reorganizing in the afternoon the 1st Battalion moved down the northwest slopes of Hill 203 at 1800 in skirmish line. The enemy now had been reinforced and was waiting. Company A was pinned immediately on the forward, open slopes of the hill. One platoon of Company C was stopped in the draw short of Hill 209 by machine-gun and mortar fire from the head of the ravine. Another platoon, led by a Browning automatic rifleman firing from his hip, made its way across the draw and advanced up Hill 209 through a curtain of machine-gun fire, which halted it temporarily south and east of the Villa. Since higher headquarters, unaware of this success, placed a five-minute artillery preparation on the hill, the platoon withdrew, and the 1st Battalion reorganized for the night on Hill 203.

On 29 May the two battalions of the 168th Infantry attacked again for their respective objectives after a 30-minute artillery preparation. In the 2d Battalion all three rifle companies advanced abreast at 0530. Company E on the right was held up southeast of Gennaro Hill by the fire of three tanks and one self-propelled gun on the road east of the hill, but the other two companies pushed on despite their open flanks. Company F clambered up the wadi west of the hill almost to the railroad, then cut east to take the crest of Gennaro Hill; Company G moved up the road to the west of the wadi. At 1445 a small group from Company F fell back on Company G, reporting that the enemy had counterattacked through the grapevines on the east side of the hill. At the same time another part of the enemy moved south around the end of the hill and cut off both companies. Company G first counterattacked Gennaro Hill through enemy grenades and small-arms fire, but a mortar barrage forced it back from the crest. Then both companies broke through the enemy and retreated down the ravine where they met the 3d Battalion, moving up to rescue them. Further attack by the 3d Battalion was called off, and both battalions consolidated positions below the hill.

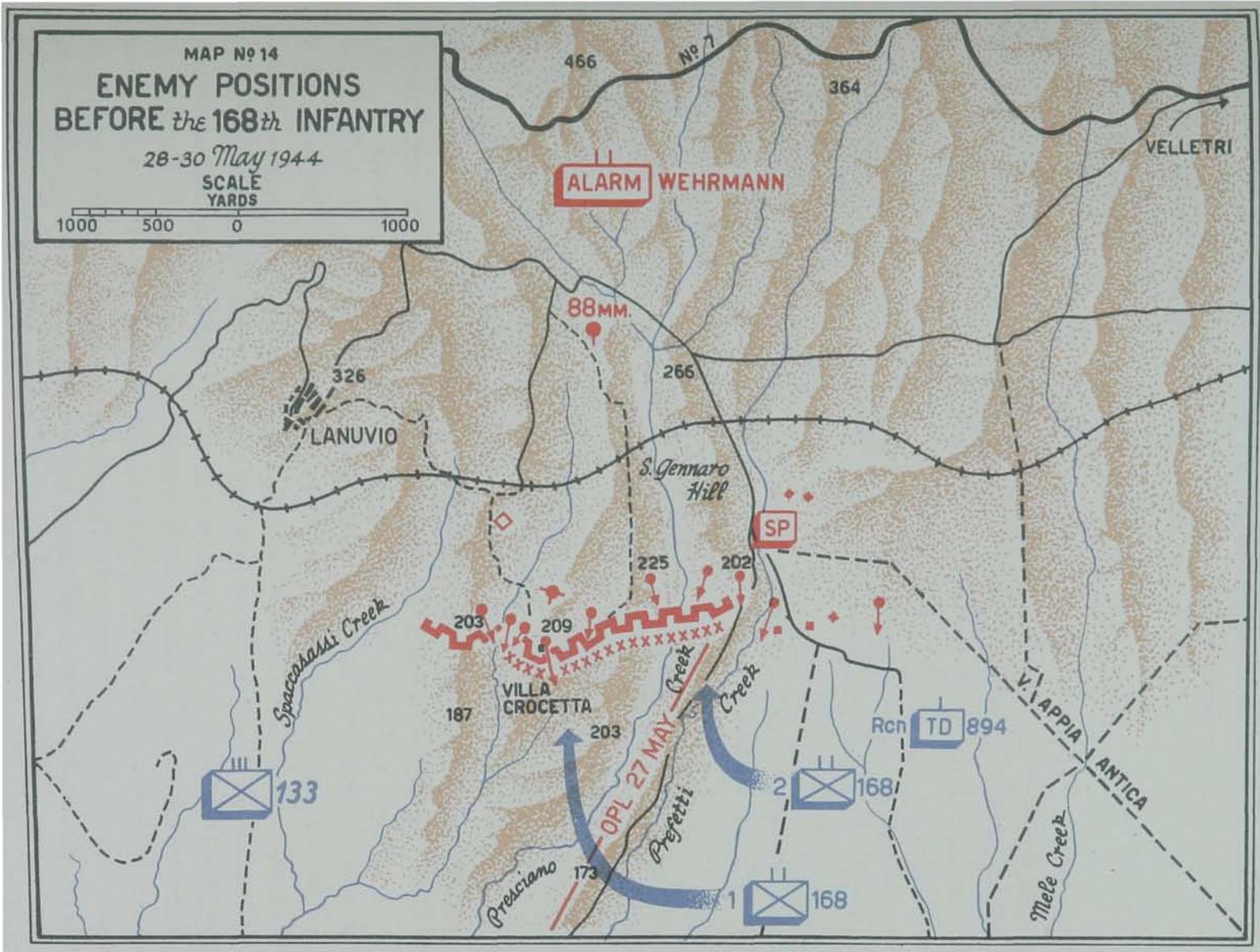
The story of the 1st Battalion at Villa Crocetta on the 29th was the same record of a near-success. In the morning our men started off at 0600, crawling through the wheat fields on the forward slopes of Hills 203 and 216 while enemy machine-gun fire clipped the stalks above their heads. At the draw south and east of the Villa they were stopped by deadly belts of machine-gun fire, coupled with accurate mortar concentrations. For the new attack in the afternoon four tank destroyers and three light tanks were procured. The scheme of maneuver called for the tanks with Company B of the infantry to move up left of the Villa across a second Hill 203 and then take the Villa from the west side; when the armor appeared on Hill 209, Companies A and C would attack from their present positions to the southeast of the Villa.

MAP No 14  
**ENEMY POSITIONS**  
BEFORE *the* 168th INFANTRY

28-30 May 1944

SCALE  
YARDS

1000 500 0 1000



Company B secured Hill 203 as planned, left a garrison of six men with a Browning automatic rifle, and followed the armor east down the slopes and across the draw toward the objective. The enemy then counterattacked our small holding force and regained the commanding ground, from which he set up machine guns to fire into the rear of Company B. Nevertheless, the company reached the Villa with 3 tank destroyers and 2 tanks and cleared the houses of about 100 Germans, who ran off to the northeast, some dropping their weapons in their haste. Before the 20 men from Company B who had gained the hill could organize their positions, an estimated enemy company with fixed bayonets, supported by 4 tanks, counterattacked up the east side of the hill, and our troops hastily retreated from the Villa. Companies A and C had not seen the armor until late and did not then move.

At dark on 29 May the lines of the 168th Infantry were approximately the same as on the morning of 28 May. Both battalions had gained their objectives and then had lost them to superior forces of the enemy; after the two days' fighting both units were exhausted. On the morning of the 30th one more attempt was made on the Villa by a task force composed of Company L and six tank destroyers. The tank destroyers worked their way very slowly up the draw southwest of the Villa while the infantry took and lost the forward slopes of the second Hill 203. The two leading tank destroyers attacked Hill 209 by themselves. One M10 was immediately immobilized, but the other advanced so close to the enemy trench that it was showered with potato masher grenades. It then withdrew down the hill, and the attack on the Villa ended for the time being.

To the left of the 168th Infantry the 133d Infantry had been able to push forward a little more before it ran up against the main German defenses, but thereafter neither it nor the 135th Infantry was able to make any headway. On 28 May the 133d Infantry moved forward at 0530, all three battalions abreast. The 3d Battalion on the left and the 1st Battalion in the center proceeded without much difficulty across Presciano Creek and swung west toward Lanuvio. The 2d Battalion on the right was held up by opposition to the front and from the right flank at Villa Crocetta. After directing tank and tank destroyer fire on the Villa, the battalion was able to move on in the late evening to take Hill 187 southwest of the Villa.

During the 29th the 133d Infantry made repeated efforts to reach the railroad southeast of Lanuvio. The 2d Battalion advanced to within 200 yards of the objective in the morning under enemy machine-gun fire from the Lanuvio ridge; armored cars of the 34th Reconnaissance Troop, operating on the left flank in front of the 3d Battalion, made some progress through heavy machine-gun and mortar fire, but the infantry were unable to follow. The 2d Battalion on the right was hit by a counterattack; then, as it pulled back to guard its exposed right flank, the enemy

also counterattacked the 3d Battalion. The whole regiment formed a new defensive line running northeast-southwest 1500 yards below Lanuvio.

At 1900, 29 May, our men attacked again after a 15-minute artillery preparation to secure the railroad as a line of departure for the 135th Infantry on the following day. Once more the 2d Battalion made the greatest gain, but the regiment could not reach its goal. After the 2d Battalion had pulled back 400 yards, the regiment dug in. Casualties and missing in the 34th Division during 29 May were 270, almost twice the total for the previous day; Company A, 191st Tank Battalion, supporting the 133d Infantry, had only 5 tanks left in operation. During the night of 29-30 May the bitter defense by the remnants of the 362d Grenadier Division in the Villa Crocetta—Gennaro area and by the paratroopers from the 12th Parachute Regiment at Lanuvio received some air support when nine scattered enemy aircraft strafed the roads in rear of the 34th and 45th Divisions.

General Ryder, division commander, committed the 135th Infantry (less the 2d Battalion) on the 30th to attack on a narrow front west of the 133d Infantry. The 1st and 3d Battalions, moving out abreast at 0630, pushed slowly over open terrain covered by well sited machine guns, mortars, and self-propelled guns. Heavy smoke screens were laid on the Lanuvio ridge to aid the attack, and the 133d Infantry supported the advance by fire. By noon the 3d Battalion on the left had captured a small enemy strongpoint. Farther progress was impossible, and the regiment dug in southwest of the town.

2. *Attacks by the 45th Division and the 1st Armored Division.* (See Map No. 15.) While the 34th Division had been battering at the railroad line, the troops on its left had followed up the enemy withdrawal to his main line of resistance. On 28 May the 1st Battalion, 11th Parachute Regiment, covered the German retreat from a well organized position at Campoleone Station. The 3d Battalion, 157th Infantry, on the north advanced at 0705 from its positions on the west bank of Presciano Creek. By the middle of the morning the battalion was pinned on the west bank of Spaccasassi Creek, the next stream to the west, by heavy machine-gun, mortar, and artillery fire from the vicinity of Campoleone Station and from an enemy strongpoint north of the railroad. The six tanks remaining in Company B, 191st Tank Battalion, were unable to cross the creek under direct antitank fire.

Four tank destroyers, followed by the tanks, were then sent around through the 180th Infantry zone to the Carano road and moved up the road west of Spaccasassi Creek. Assisted by their fire and also by a company of the 1st Battalion thrown in on its left flank, the 3d Battalion renewed its push and reached the railroad west of the Albano road in the late afternoon. Here it received fire from 170-mm guns and self-propelled guns, then at 2000 a heavy artillery preparation preceding an enemy attack from the north down Spaccasassi Creek. The tanks

supporting the 3d Battalion were short of ammunition, and the infantry were threatened by small enemy groups infiltrating to their rear, so our men fell back to the creek and dug in for the night. The battalion had suffered heavy casualties.

The constant threats to the right flank of the 45th Division on 27-28 May had shown that the gap along the railroad between the 34th and 45th Divisions must be plugged. The 2d Battalion, 179th Infantry, reverted from 157th Infantry reserve to its parent unit on the afternoon of the 28th and moved up on the right of the division to fill the gap by attacking toward the Albano road north of Campoleone Station. By dusk it had reached its line of departure on Spaccasassi Creek against stiff opposition. The other two battalions of the 179th Infantry followed the 2d Battalion.

Southwest of the 157th Infantry the attack of the 1st and 3d Battalions, 180th Infantry, jumped off at 0615, 28 May, and advance elements reached the railroad west of the Albano road by 1000. Opposition in this area fortunately was limited to long-range direct fire from 20-mm flak wagons, for Company C, 191st Tank Battalion, was in no condition to support the attack. Six of its tanks were without crews at nightfall on 27 May, and the replacements borrowed from the 1st Armored Division and tank destroyer units consisted largely of rear echelon personnel ill acquainted with the operation of an M4 tank; tanker replacements were so scarce that nothing else was available. At 1830 the 180th Infantry moved out again for its next objective but this time met heavy resistance both from machine guns and mortars. For the night the regiment consolidated its gains along the railroad track.

The British divisions on the far left flank were moving forward by this time under orders to conform to the advance on their right. Patrols of the 1 Division reported on the 27th that the 146th Grenadier Regiment had withdrawn two miles to the northwest the previous night, and the division began to advance on a narrow front through the heavy mine-fields south of the Factory. On the 28th it occupied the Factory without opposition. The 5 Division on the 27th relieved the left brigade of the 1 Division astride the Albano road and on the 28th swung ahead west of the road. By the evening of 28 May the old perimeter of the Anzio beachhead had everywhere been left behind except at the mouth of the Moletta.

All evidence indicated that the Germans below Lanuvio were badly disorganized, and our air force and artillery increased that disorder daily. Save at Lanuvio itself the enemy troops were poorly co-ordinated; in their retreat from position to position there was no time to organize each new line, and our attacks had driven them out of one after another. Still the enemy did not break, even though we had taken 5156 prisoners by the evening of the 28th. Greater pressure was necessary if we were to achieve a breakthrough below Lanuvio.

During the night of 28-29 May General Truscott committed the last major reserve of VI Corps by ordering the 1st Armored Division to move through the 45th Division and attack up the Albano road on the morning of the 29th. To give the armor a wider road net the boundary between VI Corps and the 1 Division was shifted to the left. The 34th Division was to continue its attack toward Lake Albano, screened on the right by the 36th Division; the 45th Division was to regroup and follow the armor. Both the 34th and the 45th Divisions turned more toward the north as a result of these orders, and both units committed their division reserves to reinforce the attack. The 179th Infantry had already entered the line east of the Albano road on the evening of the 28th; to its right the 135th Infantry attacked toward Lanuvio on the morning of 30 May. Naval support was also forthcoming, and a French cruiser shelled targets in the Albano area on the 29th with good results.

The attacks of the 34th Division on 29-30 May have already been noted. In the zone of the 45th Division the 1st Armored Division moved up during the night and left its line of departure at 0530, 29 May, Combat Command B on the left supported by the 180th Infantry and Combat Command A on the right. The 157th Infantry reverted to 45th Division reserve after Combat Command A had passed through it. In the morning the advance met light resistance. Tanks of Combat Command B had cleared the enemy rear guard out of Campoleone Station by noon and pressed north across the scrub-covered wadis of the area; Combat Command A crossed the Albano road and likewise wheeled north. By afternoon the tanks had pulled well ahead of the infantry.

As our armor began to reach the lines on which the enemy intended to hold, opposition mounted sharply both for the infantry and the tanks. Since the enemy strongpoints which our tanks had by-passed now pinned the infantry to the ground, mutual tank-infantry support could not be gained during the afternoon. The 180th Infantry, which had moved in column of battalions to Campoleone Station in the morning, was halted there by tanks, self-propelled guns, 20-mm flak wagons, and infantry fire. The 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, in the Combat Command A zone was first stopped, then driven back by an enemy tank-infantry counterattack on its right flank. The armor of Combat Command A, well to the front, met enemy artillery fire of heavy caliber and encountered antitank guns, self-propelled 88-mm guns, and tanks in small groups on the front and right flank. Our tanks, also harassed by close-range infantry opposition, suffered severely during the afternoon.

By evening 21 M-4's and 16 M-5's had been knocked out. In contrast with the initial attacks above Cisterna, where damage was due largely to mines and was easily reparable, most of the casualties on 29 May were caused by antitank guns and resulted in complete losses. For the night the 3d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment,

pulled back two miles to the line of the infantry, a mile north of Campoleone Station. On its right, east of the Albano road, was the 179th Infantry in column of battalions; on the left Combat Command B held positions northwest of the Station. Though the attack had been only partially successful, Campoleone Station was now firmly in our hands.

During the night the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, was attached to Combat Command B. The 2d Battalion, 135th Infantry, and the 2d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment, reinforced Combat Command A and moved out with the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, on the morning of 30 May. The infantry had to fight their way to the line of departure, while the tanks could move forward only about 1000 yards. A second attack in the Combat Command A zone in the afternoon merely produced further losses, for the enemy laid heavy fire from antitank guns, tanks, and self-propelled guns on any of our tanks that moved. In addition he launched several counterattacks of tanks and infantry; elements of the latter acting on the defensive knocked out several of our tanks with bazookas and other close-support weapons.

Gains on either side of Combat Command A were equally scant. East of the Albano road the 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry, passed through the left flank of the 2d Battalion and pushed on slowly under intense mortar and small-arms fire coupled with heavy artillery concentrations. Though supported by Companies B and C, 191st Tank Battalion, the infantry made slight progress in the morning and none in the afternoon, when the 3d Battalion was committed on the left. As so often before, the enemy had excellent observation, and accurate shelling met every effort of the infantry to advance. Here again we were running up against the main enemy defense line south of the railroad.

On the left of Combat Command A the armor of Combat Command B once more thrust its spearhead northwest along the Campoleone railroad. This time the tanks kept in closer touch with the infantry, and the two reached Campoleone Creek. At dark Combat Command B stabilized its lines in this area, with the 180th Infantry to its rear by Campoleone Station. The 157th Infantry was attached to the 1st Armored Division and further attached to Combat Command B at 1630 to relieve the 3d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, which passed to Combat Command A. During the night the troops rested and prepared to attack again on the morning of 31 May.

During 29-30 May the British divisions had continued to follow up the enemy. The 1 Division pushed well beyond the Albano road on the 29th, and the 5 Division crossed the Moletta. Though enemy troops in this area had withdrawn the previous night, our advance elements got behind a body of Germans just north of the coast road; to extricate this group the enemy launched a strong counterattack

which pushed the British back to the bank of the river. Thereafter the German continued their retreat, yielding Ardea on the 30th without a fight. The defense line Lanuvio—Campoleone Station—Ardea had already been so cracked at its upper end that the Germans by the sea continued to pull back toward Pratica di Mare.

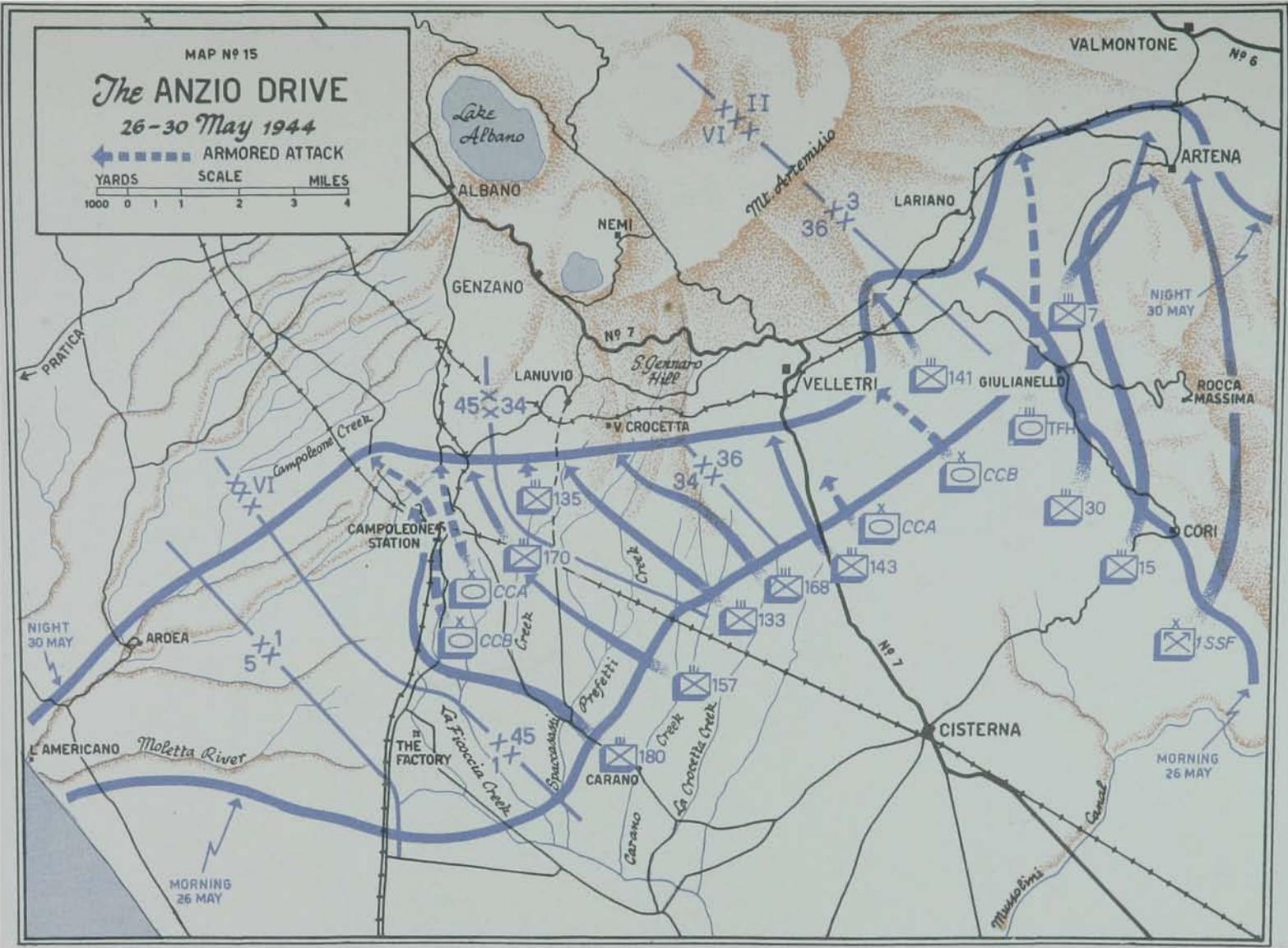
## E. FIFTH ARMY ADVANCE IN THE LEPINI MOUNTAINS

25-31 MAY

When the beachhead offensive started, the continuing drive from the south fell into the background. The issue here had been decided: the enemy had been routed, had patched together his broken line, and was retreating as rapidly as possible. The sole important point remaining was the speed with which the American and French columns could sweep through the Lepini Mountains and join up with the beachhead forces at Valmontone. For his part, the enemy was interested in slowing down our advance only so far as to permit his troops to clear the Liri—Sacco Valley. Action accordingly consisted of the pursuit of a rear guard retreating rapidly on the west and more slowly on the east.

The outlying unit in the German retreat was the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division with attached units, which lay in the hills above the Pontine Marshes. (*See Map No. 16.*) This division had suffered rather heavily in the defense of Terracina and was now withdrawing through Carpineto (15th Panzer Grenadier Regiment) and Prossedi (71st Panzer Grenadier Regiment). A speedy withdrawal was indicated, for the launching of the beachhead offensive toward Highway 6 made its position extremely dangerous. The division finally got out without suffering a major encirclement, thanks to the successful resistance of the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division at Valmontone, but its losses were heavy and its disorganization considerable. On the right the French were held up by a motley group of units comprising the remnants of the 94th Grenadier Division, the better part of the 334th Grenadier Division from the Adriatic, the 1027th Panzer Grenadier Regiment from the beachhead, the 3d Mountain Battalion and a battalion of the 134th Grenadier Regiment from north of Cassino, the 104th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, and the 400th Reconnaissance Battalion. These units appear to have functioned under the command of the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division. The 26th Panzer Division and 305th Grenadier Division, which had opposed the French at Pico and Mount Leucio, had by this time sideslipped to the enemy left to join the retreat up the Liri Valley.

On the morning of 25 May the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron had joined the task force from the beachhead southwest of Littoria. Throughout the



next few days reconnaissance elements of this squadron and then, from the 26th, of the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron ranged at liberty over the good road net in the Pontine Marshes, picking off a few stragglers occasionally and putting pressure on the enemy in the hills at the eastern edge of the plain. The line of II Corps proper began on the 25th at the point where the Amaseno River breaks out into the plain, curved north on the Roccasecca ridge, and then ran almost straight east toward Amaseno, which lay just over the Corps boundary. In the II Corps zone the 85th Division on the left held Terracina and the hills above that town as far as Sonnino; on the right lay the 88th Division, protecting the Corps right flank about Mount Pizzuto. The front of the FEC running on eastward to the Liri was composed of three divisions: the 4th Mountain Division in the mountain mass between Amaseno and Vallecorsa and also in the hills just east of the Vallecorsa valley, then the 2d Moroccan Division ringed about Pastena, and the 3d Algerian Division in the low ground near San Giovanni.

The advance of the American units on the left during the period 25-31 May was directed chiefly at cleaning up the hills immediately overlooking the Pontine Marshes and cutting the roads leading into the mountains. On 25 May the 339th Infantry crossed the Amaseno River into the hills west of Priverno, flushing out a rear guard from the 8th Panzer Grenadier Regiment. The regiment consolidated its hold on the following day and on the 27th moved under mortar and artillery fire into the hills south of Roccasecca. The 338th Infantry came into action on the 26th to the left of the 339th Infantry and pushed one company into Sezze on the 27th, after Troop B, 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, had mopped up the town the previous night. The third regiment of the 85th Division, advancing at the edge of the plain, cleared out low-lying areas by-passed in the main advance.

The capture of Sezze was the signal for the relief of II Corps by IV Corps. Warning orders for this relief had been issued at 2215, 25 May, and were carried out at 0001, 28 May. II Corps turned over all its troops to IV Corps except organic Corps units and the 85th Division. During the night of 27-28 May this division was relieved by the 351st Infantry and assembled in Army reserve below Sabaudia, preliminary to moving to the beachhead. II Corps itself came directly to the Anzio area and prepared to take over command of the 3d Division at Ardena. The appearance of IV Corps in our line was detected by the enemy on 30 May as a result of radio intercept.

Until 26 May the 88th Division had remained in place on the Roccasecca ridge with the mission from General Keyes of protecting his right flank until the French could move up. On the 26th the 350th Infantry took up positions in Roccasecca itself, and the 3d Battalion, 349th Infantry, moved to the northeast spur of the ridge. At 2300, 26 May, both regiments plunged down into the Amaseno Valley and up the

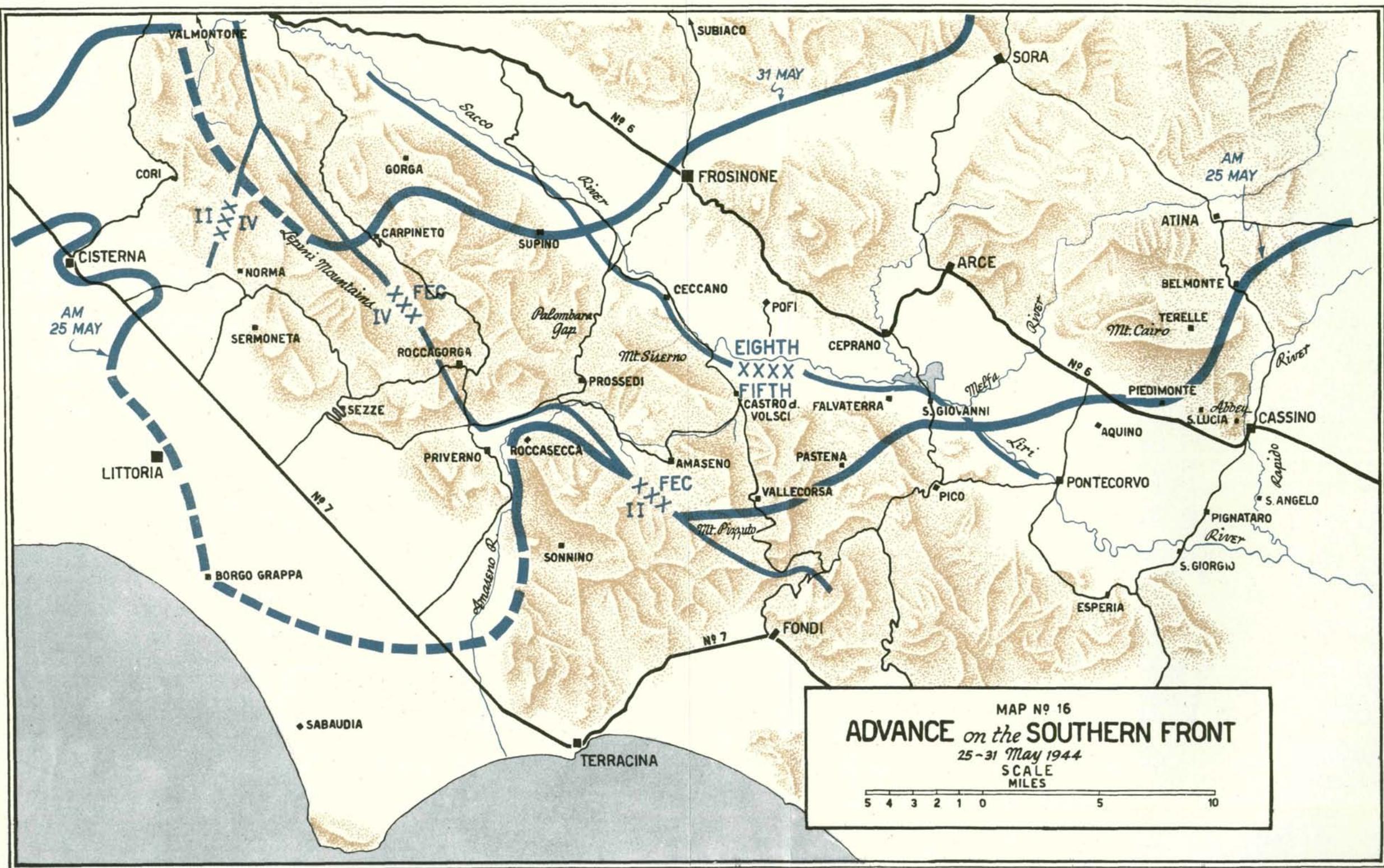
slopes on the other side. The 350th Infantry held Roccagorga by the 27th, with the 349th Infantry on its right. The capture of Vallecorsa by the French relieved the 351st Infantry from its guard at Mount Pizzuto, though the regiment was not moved until the night of 27-28 May. It then relieved the 85th Division on the left of the 350th Infantry.

Under IV Corps control the 88th Division spent the next three days in mopping up the hills as far as Sermoneta, while waiting for the FEC to advance sufficiently to relieve it. The 349th Infantry turned over its zone to the French on the 29th and departed for the beachhead; on the morning of 30 May Fifth Army issued orders for the rest of the division to move up to Colli Laziali as rapidly as possible. On the following day the 6th Moroccan Infantry of the 4th Mountain Division took over the Corps zone; IV Corps officially went out of the line at 1400, 1 June.

During the week 25-31 May the FEC advanced on two main axes, the 4th Mountain Division pushing up the Amaseno—Carpineto road to clear the Lepini Mountains and the 2d Moroccan Division guiding on the south bank of the Sacco River. The ultimate aim of these drives was junction with the beachhead forces in the vicinity of Valmontone. The right flank of the beachhead front had been exposed by the bold advance of the 3d Division and the 1st Special Service Force, which had advanced quickly to Artena to threaten the enemy's Liri Valley communications; it was essential that the FEC close as quickly as possible the gap between its front and the exposed right flank of VI Corps.

On the right flank the French met stiff delaying action, but they pushed ahead relentlessly and by 31 May had succeeded in bringing their right well up. San Giovanni Incarico fell to the 3d Algerian Division on 25 May, and Falvaterra on the 26th. This was the last gain of the division, for the 2d Moroccan Division had taken Pastena by this time and pushed on into the hills east of Castro dei Volsci, thereby pinching out the Algerians. By midnight of the 27th the 2d Moroccan Division held the important point of Castro dei Volsci, and the following day put it close to Ceccano. On the 29th, however, the division was engaged in taking over the Siserno hill mass from the 4th Mountain Division, which was shifting to the west, and also had to cope with an enemy counterattack of armor and infantry bent on holding open the Palombara Gap for the retreat of the last German forces in the area. After beating off this attack, the 5th Moroccan Infantry moved down into the pass on the 30th, while the 8th Moroccan Infantry on its right pushed through Ceccano and on to Supino on the 31st.

The advance of the 4th Mountain Division on the left proceeded as methodically and as swiftly. Vallecorsa and the hills to the west fell early on the 25th, and the division proceeded to its next objective, the wide valley running from Amaseno past Prossedi to the Palombara Gap. While the 349th Infantry took the hills south of



MAP NO 16  
**ADVANCE on the SOUTHERN FRONT**  
 25-31 May 1944  
 SCALE  
 MILES  
 5 4 3 2 1 0 5 10

Amaseno, the French moved down the valley floor and along the hills to the north. The right flank swung north to the hill below Castro dei Volsci on the 25th and 26th, then dashed west on 27 May to Mount Siserno. Goumiers and armor mopped up Amaseno and on the 28th occupied the whole valley, abandoned by the enemy.

The impending withdrawal of the two American divisions on the left forced the mountain troops to shift northwest during the next few days. After the armored group attached to the division had moved through the IV Corps zone on the 28th to get on the Carpineto road, the boundary between the two corps was changed to give the entire Priverno—Carpineto road to the 4th Mountain Division. By the 31st the French infantry had taken over the entire zone of IV Corps. The armored group released the 756th Tank Battalion to the beachhead and received from the FEC the 755th Tank Battalion in its place.

Supported by infantry on both sides of the road, the armor pushed into Carpineto on 31 May, and the 2d Tabor advanced on through the hills toward Gorga. Since the Germans thought that our troops were confined to the valley near Carpineto, this move had possibilities of upsetting the German withdrawal northwest of Carpineto and also threatened the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division headquarters just below the hills in the Sacco Valley. Unfortunately a French message was intercepted by the Germans and allowed them to throw sufficient troops into Gorga to check our advance and to extricate their headquarters and troops. Opposition in the Lepini Mountains, however, was almost ended, and the 4th Mountain Division prepared to go into reserve as the 3d Algerian Division passed through it.

## F. *EIGHTH ARMY*

25-31 MAY

On the morning of 23 May Eighth Army had launched its attack on the Hitler Line, the Polish Corps at Piedimonte, 13 Corps on Highway 6, and 1 Canadian Corps east of Pontecorvo. (*See Map No. 16.*) The attack had gone so well that the enemy abandoned Piedimonte and the Hitler Line on the night of 24-25 May. The Poles took Piedimonte on the 25th, and troops in the valley rushed up to the Melfa River. While the 78 Division pushed through Aquino and across the Melfa on the right, the Canadian armor and infantry each secured a bridgehead over the lower course of the stream.

The main battle was over. Though Eighth Army continued to meet stiff delaying action, the enemy henceforth was primarily engaged in drawing out of the upper Liri Valley as fast as possible, partly into the mountains by Arce and Subiaco, partly through the road network below Palestrina. The mission of Eighth

Army, therefore, was essentially to drive up speedily to co-operate with Fifth Army in cracking the Velletri—Valmontone—Avezzano line.

Elements of the 5 Canadian Armoured Division reached the north side of the lake at San Giovanni on 26 May and pushed into Ceprano on the 27th. To its left the 1 Canadian Infantry Division was stopped on the 26th at the lower end of the lake by a blown bridge. The French, however, had already taken San Giovanni, and the Canadian infantry went into reserve pending the completion of a new bridge. To the right 13 Corps moved forward more slowly, with the 8 Indian Division and the 6 Armoured Division forward and the 78 Division in support. At the two hills south of Arce the German rear guard put up a considerable battle to protect the withdrawal through that town. The British armor took the hills on the 27th but lost them again in the night; on the 28th our troops gained final control of the position after desperate fighting. This acquisition cut the Arce road, and the Indians, moving along the hills, occupied Arce itself on 29 May without opposition.

The battle for this point, together with bad weather in the valley, had delayed Eighth Army by at least a day. On the left flank the Canadian infantry was held up on bridge construction, and the armor at Ceprano was unable to advance farther until more bridges had been thrown across the Liri to its rear. These bridging operations were hindered by heavy fire from mortars and self-propelled guns in the German rear guard. A sudden rain on the 26th, typical of May thunderstorms in the Liri Valley, also made the roads muddy. For the first few days after the penetration of the Hitler Line progress accordingly became in large part an engineers' battle against the deeply laid minefields and the numerous streams cutting across the path of the Army's advance.

On 28 May the 78 Division was barred from crossing the Liri in its zone by the massed fire of enemy self-propelled guns. Part of the division passed through the Canadian Corps bridgehead at Ceprano and cleared the west bank of the river so that the remainder of the 78 Division could cross the Liri at its original sites on the 29th and take over the advance from the 6 Armoured Division. Advance elements pushed halfway to Frosinone during the day, while the Canadian armor reached the vicinity of Pofi; contact with the enemy had generally been lost along the entire line. For the next two days the advance continued with less interruption, the 8 Indian Division still in the hills to the north, the 78 Division above Highway 6, and the 5 Canadian Armoured Division south of the highway, which was heavily mined and cut at almost every bridge. Nevertheless, the Canadians entered Frosinone on 31 May and pushed up along the right flank of the FEC past Ceccano. As the troops to the south approached the beachhead, their line in the Liri Valley was gradually straightening out.

The Eighth Army advance in the valley proper had also forced the enemy to evacuate the area above Cassino. Before the Polish Corps went out of the line for a much needed rest it occupied Mount Cairo on 26 May, and on the same day the 2 New Zealand Division began to follow the enemy withdrawal on Sora. Terelle was occupied without opposition on the 26th, then Belmonte on the 27th, and Atina on the 28th. The New Zealanders crossed the Melfa at the latter town and continued their pressure on the enemy while an Italian force mopped up toward the Abruzzi National Park. At 1800, 31 May, one company of the 2 New Zealand Division entered Sora.



*The engineers have completed a bridge which will further the advance.*



*A group of the German garrison in Cisterna surrenders after being surrounded.*



*Men of the 100th Battalion move up to support the drive on Lanuvio.*



*On 2 June 1944 the 3d Division entered Valmontone and cut Highway 6.*

# CHAPTER VIII

\* \* \* \* \*

## *At the Gates of Rome*

AT dusk on 30 May the Fifth Army drive on Rome appeared to have stalled. The 1st Armored Division and the 45th Division had fought bitterly but unsuccessfully along the Albano road throughout the day. The 34th Division had been stopped below Lanuvio on the 29th; to its right the 36th Division, encircling Velletri on the south and east, found the town an enemy stronghold. On the extreme right flank of the beachhead, now held by II Corps, the 85th Division was just coming up to reinforce the 3d Division below Valmontone. In this zone our troops had remained on the defensive since 27 May.

Nonetheless, the over-all situation of Fifth Army was favorable. Our troops in the Lepini Mountains were moving north against slight rearguard actions. The 88th Division was being relieved for movement directly to the II Corps zone; the FEC might be expected to come up on the right flank in two or three days. In the Liri Valley the enemy forces retreating before Eighth Army were moving generally in the direction of Avezzano, away from the scene of battle at Colli Laziali. The Germans before Fifth Army were ever more weary, ever fewer; and we could count with some certainty on the fact that they could not be reinforced. When the FEC and the 88th Division arrived, we would have a sufficient superiority to crush the enemy completely. Actually, movements were in progress at dark on 30 May which made our capture of Rome a matter of the immediate future. These movements were being executed by the 36th Division: the unit which had secured the initial beachhead of Fifth Army at Salerno long months ago was now to cap its record by making the final breakthrough at Colli Laziali.

## A. THE BEGINNING OF THE FINAL DRIVE

30-31 MAY

1. *Breakthrough by the 36th Division.* (See Map No. 18.) The 36th Division had been committed on the night of 25-26 May to block Highway 7 north of Cisterna. On the following night the 143d Infantry moved forward to relieve the 1st Armored Division below Velletri and held positions about a mile south of the railroad through the next four days. The 141st Infantry had taken over the area east of Velletri on 27 May and gradually advanced until by the 30th it had a firm hold on the Artena—Velletri road below the great bulk of Mount Artemisio. The 142d Infantry had been alerted on the 27th to move by motor and exploit a breakthrough by the 1st Armored Division on the Albano road; since that breakthrough had not been secured, the regiment remained north of Cisterna in division reserve.

Extensive patrolling by the front-line elements of the 36th Division gradually disclosed the fact that the enemy forces, drawn by the fight at Lanuvio and by the threat to Valmontone, had left Mount Artemisio unguarded. Our exploitation of this superb opportunity was swift. General Clark, seizing the significance of the possibility, cancelled tentative plans for the division to attack through the 34th Division, and shortly after noon on 30 May the division commander, General Walker, issued his attack orders. In brief, the 142d Infantry and the 143d Infantry, with the former in the lead, were to move through the 141st Infantry on the night of 30-31 May and seize Mount Artemisio while the latter regiment blocked off the enemy at Velletri. The night attack up steep, wooded slopes would be a difficult operation, but the 36th Division had been trained for just such missions.

In the late afternoon and early night the 36th Engineers, which had reverted to Army reserve after joining up with the southern forces on the 25th, relieved the 143d Infantry south of Velletri and two battalions of the 141st Infantry east of the town. At 2100 the 143d Infantry began its movement to the right flank of the division. The 142d Infantry received its orders at 1600 from Colonel Lynch, entrucked immediately, and at 1830 proceeded via Cisterna, Cori, and Giulianello to the zone of the 141st Infantry. Although the regiment had road priority, congested traffic delayed completion of the 16-mile motor march until 2215. Battalion and company commanders reached the new area ahead of the troops, made their reconnaissance, and pointed out to the platoon leaders their objectives on the great black mass of Mount Artemisio as dusk turned to dark.

At 2255, 30 May, the 142d Infantry moved out in column of battalions, the 2d Battalion in the lead, followed by Regimental Headquarters, 1st Battalion, and 3d Battalion. Aided by the new moon, which cast just enough light to pick out the path, the advance guard reached the Velletri—Artena road at 0130, 31 May,

and marched through the vineyards on the lower slopes of Mount Artemisio. Amid the howling of occasional dogs and a burst of enemy air activity toward Velletri the regiment moved forward steadily. As the first gray light of dawn began to dim out the stars about 0415, the head of the column was starting up the steeper slopes of the hill across an open field. Men hurried a little faster, and by 0635 the 2d Battalion had seized Maschio d'Ariano and Hill 931. On the former they captured three German artillery observers, one of whom was taking a bath; thus far not a shot had been fired.

After the reorganization necessitated by the rapid advance over unfamiliar terrain, the 1st and 2d Battalions, the latter on the right, moved southwest down the ridge at 0840 and searched through the dense woods for the enemy. Throughout the morning they advanced with almost no opposition. After noon enemy resistance gradually increased as the Germans discovered the penetration, and by evening enemy tanks and 20-mm flak guns were firing on our troops from the vicinity of Nemi; but the two battalions were on their objective at 1930, directly overlooking the Velletri—Nemi road. Road blocks were established by the 1st Battalion during the night and early morning of 1 June.

To the rear Company E had remained on Maschio d'Ariano, and began to meet enemy counterattacks from the northeast at 0800. The 1st Battalion, 143d Infantry, relieved the company during the morning and beat off the disorganized, hasty jabs of the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division, one of which left 70 dead Germans behind it. In the afternoon the 143d Infantry organized the central part of Mount Artemisio, southwest from Maschio d'Ariano.

Meanwhile the 141st Infantry moved on Velletri. The 1st Battalion drove slowly west in the afternoon through minefields commanded by enemy strongpoints. The 2d Battalion, advancing to the north of Velletri on the lower slopes of Mount Artemisio, met less heavy resistance. By 0230, 1 June, the battalion was on the Velletri—Nemi road east of the 142d Infantry. This escape route of the enemy garrison at Velletri was cut; the Velletri—Valmontone line was broken; and the enemy position at Colli Laziali was doomed.

2. *Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 25.* (See Annex No. 1L.) As the 36th Division unleashed its bolt, the 85th Division to its northeast was taking over the left half of the 3d Division zone. Fifth Army was ready for the last, all-out attack. By Operations Instruction No. 25, 31 May, General Clark ordered new offensives to crush the German Fourteenth Army and to exploit by all possible means every opportunity to destroy the enemy.

To carry out this mission VI Corps was to attack 1 June to secure that part of Colli Laziali in its zone of action. It was then to drive forward with the utmost speed to cut the routes of withdrawal for enemy forces through Rome.

Strong forces would be turned southwest to annihilate the enemy against the Tiber River, while long-range artillery interdicted enemy crossing sites. In conjunction with the VI Corps push the British 5 Division was to press forward rapidly toward the Tiber to cut off and destroy the enemy forces which VI Corps turned south. On the north side of Colli Laziali II Corps would block all enemy traffic on Highway 6 by securing the high ground north of Valmontone. It was also to take the northern part of Colli Laziali and then be prepared on Army order to pursue and annihilate German forces withdrawing northwest across its front. As one step in this policy, II Corps was directed to send the 1st Special Service Force toward Ferentino to make contact with the FEC, which was to press vigorously toward Segni.

During the next three days the attack by Fifth Army proceeded generally on the basis of these instructions. VI Corps slugged its way slowly north toward Albano against stubborn enemy opposition, which weakened from east to west as the 36th Division pushed across the center of Colli Laziali behind the German main line of resistance. The troops of II Corps first forced back the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division and then from 2 June exploited the rapid enemy withdrawal north of Colli Laziali. In addition to the 85th Division, the 88th Division was also employed in this zone and increased the pressure on the Germans at their weakest point. By the evening of 3 June it was clear that the enemy was everywhere withdrawing in defeat from his positions south of Rome.

## B. *THE ATTACK NORTH OF COLLI LAZIALI*

31 MAY-3 JUNE

1. *The Hermann Goering Division Retreats.* (See Map No. 17.) During the night of 30-31 May the 85th Division relieved the 30th Infantry and the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, and at 0500, 31 May, took command of the left half of the II Corps line. The 349th Infantry was attached to the division at 2130, 30 May, after closing southwest of Cori in the afternoon. In the right half of the Corps zone the 3d Division regrouped its regiments and prepared to resume the offensive which had carried it almost to Valmontone. Before us the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division was still maintaining an active defense of the sector from Valmontone to Lariano.

The 85th Division attacked northwest at 1330, 31 May, to exploit the success of the 36th Division on Mount Artemisio and to secure a line of departure for the main Corps drive on the following day. The 337th Infantry on the left by-passed Lariano, which the reserve battalion later mopped up, and climbed the slopes of

Mount Artemisio with little opposition. During the morning of 1 June it relieved the 143d Infantry in the Maschio d'Ariano area. Northeast of Lariano the 338th Infantry met more stubborn resistance from the 1st Hermann Goering Panzer Grenadier Regiment, entrenched in commanding positions. The enemy reacted strongly to our advance and threw an unsuccessful counterattack of 3 tanks and about 50 infantry against the regiment after it had secured a line across the Velletri—Artena road. Farther to the right the 7th Infantry pushed combat patrols forward for limited objectives.

During the day the 88th Division moved to Anzio and then, after being attached to II Corps at 2130, to assembly areas near Rocca Massima. II Corps again had under its command the divisions with which it had broken the Gustav Line, and the 3d Division in addition. General Keyes issued his orders, and at 0500, 1 June, II Corps began its final drive on Rome. The first objectives set by Corps were Highway 6 and the Cave road. The 3d Division attacked the enemy positions astride the Artena—Valmontone road to cut Highway 6 at Valmontone and drive on to the Palestrina—Cave road near Cave, thereby blocking off the enemy forces to the east. To screen the extreme right flank of II Corps the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron continued to operate beyond the 3d Division. On the left of II Corps the 85th Division pushed northwest toward Mount Ceraso, the dominating height at the northeast corner of Colli Laziali. The 88th Division, when committed in the center of the line, had the mission of taking the high ground at Gardella Hill across Highway 6 and just below Zagarolo.

Opposition by the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division was intense on 1 June, but our superiority in force gradually pushed the enemy back. In the 3d Division the 15th Infantry advanced east of the Artena—Valmontone road, beat off several attacks by Mark VI tanks, and reached Highway 6 by 2100. The 1st Special Service Force took its objective, the high ground southeast of Valmontone, in the morning and consolidated its positions to guard the right flank of the division. On the left flank, the 30th Infantry (plus 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry) and Task Force Howze (plus 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry) passed through the 7th Infantry and advanced slowly against a determined enemy. During the first hour of the attack alone, Task Force Howze on the left knocked out eight antitank guns, but enemy snipers picked off several of our tank commanders from the rear. Our progress in this area was limited.

The 85th Division also met stiff resistance. Directly north of Lariano, on the left flank of Task Force Howze, the 338th Infantry found the enemy so well entrenched along the steep railroad embankment that it made little gain until late in the day. The slow wheeling turn of the regiment northwest toward Mount Ceraso produced a gap on its right flank which the 349th Infantry filled at 1100. By

dusk this unit had reached high ground just north of the railroad. The 337th Infantry, pushing north along the wooded draws of Mount Artemisio, met heavy opposition from infantry weapons on the north slopes of Maschio d'Ariano; the Germans also infiltrated through the dense foliage as far as one battalion command post. By dusk, however, this resistance was beaten back, and the 1st Battalion, 337th Infantry, aided by tanks made a substantial advance to the north. Throughout the afternoon enemy vehicles moved in column on the road toward Rocca Priora and gave fine targets to our artillery observers, who had dominating observation from Mount Artemisio.

After dark the divisional and regimental zones on the left flank of II Corps were considerably shuffled. The 88th Division had assumed command of the 349th Infantry late in the afternoon. During the night the 351st Infantry relieved the 338th Infantry, which went into reserve until the following morning. The 337th Infantry took over the mission of capturing Mount Ceraso, and the 339th Infantry moved up to Maschio d'Ariano to attack on the left of the 85th Division zone. Though units of the 36th and 85th Divisions had already held this point, small enemy groups were still found in the dense woods—an indication of the fluidity of the battle.

Realizing the hopelessness of his stand, the enemy began to withdraw on 2 June. The Hermann Goering Panzer Regiment moved from Valmontone toward Tivoli, and the infantry of the division fell back slowly, together with the remnants of other units under its command. Accordingly II Corps gained all its initial objectives during the day. The 30th Infantry found Valmontone unoccupied early in the morning and fanned out to the north and northeast to secure good positions in the vicinity of Cave. The 751st Tank Battalion lent support to this expansion, which effectively sealed the upper end of the Liri—Sacco Valley. The 15th Infantry advanced in column of battalions and took over the guard of the right flank from the 1st Special Service Force. On the left the 2d and 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, pushed as far as Labico with Task Force Howze and then proceeded alone during the night to the vicinity of Palestrina.

In the morning of 2 June the 1st Special Service Force reverted to direct Corps control and at 1100 attacked down Highway 6 to gain contact with the FEC. Backed by the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron and the 732d Tank Battalion, it made rapid progress which culminated in a meeting with the French east of Colle Ferro at 1530. By this time the 3d Algerian Division and the 2d Moroccan Division had swept up the last enemy stragglers in the Lepini Mountains and were pressing forward toward II Corps with all possible speed. After this second junction with the beachhead forces Fifth Army had a continuous line sweeping from the Moletta River around the slopes of Colli Laziali and on down to the Sacco River.

In the zone of the 88th Division the 351st Infantry and the 349th Infantry advanced on Gardella Hill. Enemy pockets, supported by artillery from Palestrina, caused the infantry some trouble, but the 349th Infantry held the division objective by the middle of the afternoon. The 3d and 2d Battalions, 351st Infantry, swung northwest, took San Cesareo, and cut Highway 6 by 1630. The road blocks established by these battalions proved very profitable; 1 manned by a platoon of Company G accounted for 14 enemy vehicles, including an 88-mm gun with prime mover. Elsewhere on the highway the enemy retreat was becoming so hurried that large amounts of materiel were left behind.

The 337th Infantry attacked in the hills to the south behind the fire of six artillery battalions. After initial resistance from enemy armored cars and infantry, our troops with tank and tank-destroyer support broke through and took Mount Ceraso by 1840. The 2d Battalion pushed on to a point less than two miles from Highway 6. To its left the 339th Infantry attacked in the afternoon and took Mount Fiore; on its right the 1st Battalion, 338th Infantry, reached Highway 6 at San Cesareo by 2200.

2. *Pursuit toward Rome—3 June.* At 2000, 2 June, II Corps issued orders to govern its advance on Rome. The last stages of the drive would necessarily consist of a great wheeling movement from north to west as the divisions of II Corps entered the narrow corridor between Colli Laziali and the hills at Tivoli. This corridor was divided into three divisional zones, the 85th Division to the south, the 88th Division astride Highway 6, and the 3d Division to the north. The long right flank of II Corps, which would be badly exposed during our left turn, was guarded by the 1st Special Service Force at Colle Ferro, the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron in the vicinity of Genazzano, and the 3d Division with one regimental combat team of the 88th Division on the line Cave—Palestrina; the 91st Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was to be ready to protect the extension of our right flank below Tivoli as our troops advanced.

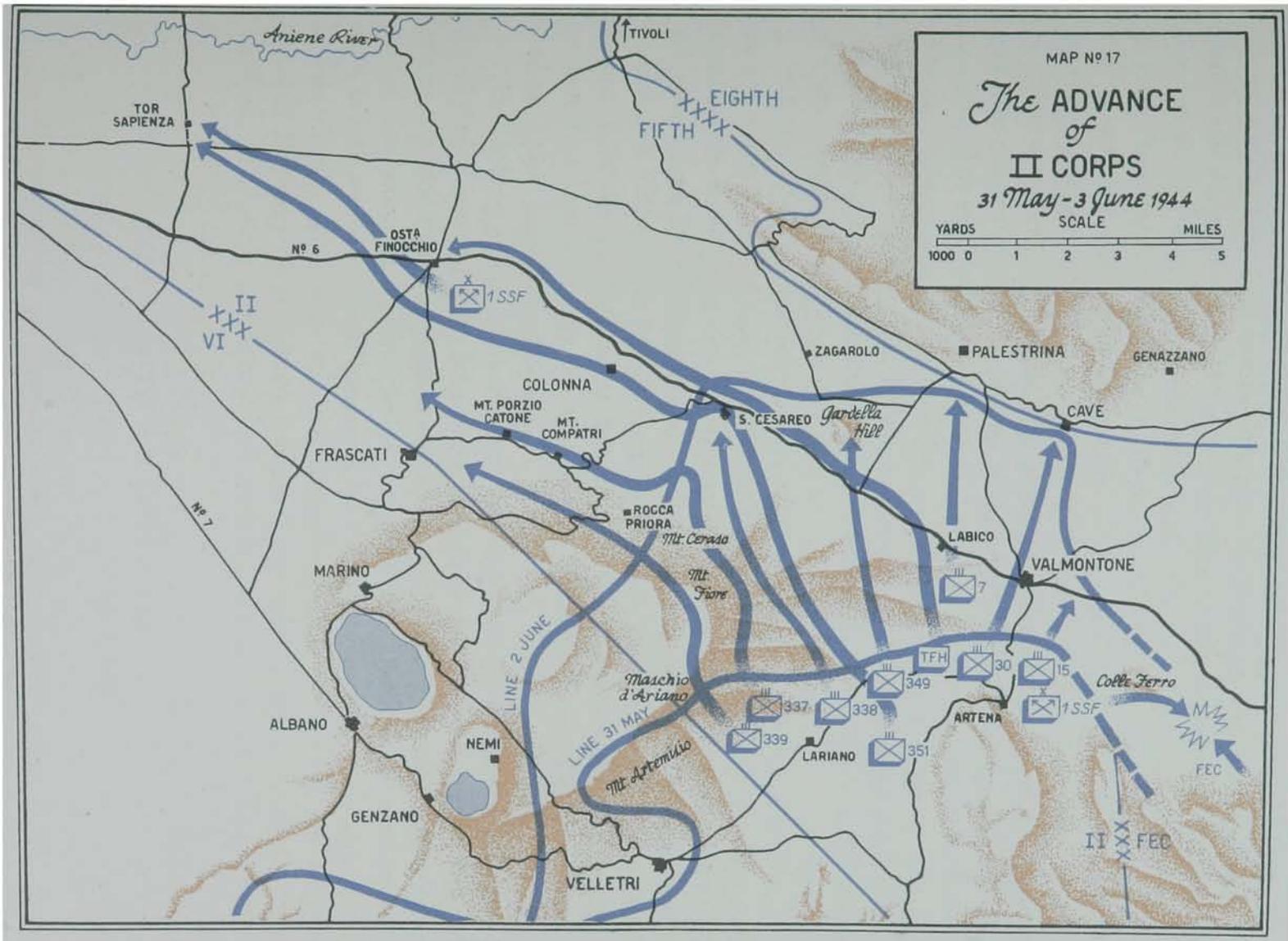
The main attack toward Rome would accordingly be delivered by the 85th and 88th Divisions. Task Force Howze (3d Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment; and Company A, 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion) was strengthened by the addition of the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry; the 1st Battalion, 349th Infantry; the 756th Tank Battalion; and a battalion from the 6th Field Artillery Group, and received orders to act as a spearhead up Highway 6. At 0915, 3 June, it was attached to the 1st Special Service Force but continued to act independently until evening, when that unit came up from the right flank. The Corps order further laid down phase lines to co-ordinate the attack, but units were not to halt until they reached the last phase line short of Rome, the north-south road passing through Tor Sapienza.

This wheel by II Corps to the west put it squarely in front of the FEC and the main bulk of Eighth Army, both of which were still well behind in the Liri—Sacco Valley. As a result a jam of troops was threatened in the area below Palestrina. Some room was available to the French on our far right flank west of Tivoli, and the FEC began on the 3d to move the 3d Algerian Division forward on Highway 6 to relieve the 1st Special Service Force and then the 3d Division so as to take its place in this area. Meanwhile the 2d Moroccan Division moved across Highway 6 and halted facing Paliano and Genazzano to protect the right rear of the FEC.

Eighth Army was still farther down the valley and was turning its attention more toward the Subiaco road. To permit II Corps to maneuver more freely AAI on the afternoon of 2 June temporarily shifted the boundary between the two armies north from Highway 6 to the road Paliano—Cave—Palestrina—Tivoli, with the proviso that when Eighth Army had drawn abreast the old boundary would be restored. As it turned out, the forward elements of Eighth Army did not reach the area in question until after II Corps had entered Rome. The 6 South African Armoured Division, which was scheduled to continue the advance on the left flank of Eighth Army, did not finish concentrating in Colle Ferro until 5 June. The final days of the drive on Highway 6 thus remained to II Corps. The reshuffling of troops in the night of 2-3 June caused by the shift in direction of attack held up operations slightly, but during the following day units proceeded steadily. By evening the advance elements of II Corps were in position to reach the Eternal City in one more bound.

The 3d Division continued its guard of the right flank throughout most of 3 June. The advance guard of the FEC first relieved the 15th Infantry on the far right, and that regiment moved up Highway 6 in the afternoon to positions northeast of Osteria Finocchio. The 30th Infantry remained west of Cave; the 7th Infantry turned west north of Highway 6 and beat off an enemy counterattack south of Palestrina in the evening. The 349th Infantry, which lay south of Zagarolo guarding Highway 6, came under the control of the 3d Division on the morning of the 3d, and beat off a small enemy tank-infantry counterattack at 1900. The enemy forces in this attack, which consisted of the 2d Battalion, 11th Parachute Regiment, had been shifted from the vicinity of Ardea across our front and had lost a company to our tanks on Highway 6 in the process.

On the highway itself Company A, 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, led the way, followed by tanks of Task Force Howze at a pace of five to seven miles per hour. The accompanying infantry were hard pressed to keep up, and the tanks were stopped beyond Colonna by snipers and antitank guns. When the infantry came up, they moved through the tanks, located in partial defilade on either side of the road, and by combined action with the tank fires forced the enemy to withdraw.



The advance then continued until dark under stiffer opposition, especially from the north where the Germans were guarding their escape route below Tivoli. During the afternoon three tank battles took place on Highway 6 west of Colonna, but by dark Task Force Howze held the crossroads at Osteria Finocchio. The 1st Special Service Force, which had been relieved by the 3d Algerian Division at 0130, 3 June, then took up the drive at 2000. Enemy resistance had now collapsed and the 3d and 2d Regiments pushed on to the final phase line near Tor Sapienza by 0400, 4 June.

Shortly after daybreak on the 3d the 351st Infantry had shifted south of Highway 6 to a line of departure in front of the 337th Infantry and advanced through Colonna, with the 350th Infantry to its left rear. Enemy opposition here also was that of a mobile rear guard with 88-mm self-propelled guns, tanks, and 37-mm guns. After dark the 351st Infantry swung northwest on the left flank of the 1st Special Service Force, likewise gaining the final phase line south of Tor Sapienza at 0400, 4 June.

In the 85th Division zone advance elements of the 337th Infantry climbed back up the north slopes of Colli Laziali, and the regiment changed the direction of its attack from north to northwest. By-passing Rocca Priora, it took Monte Compatri, then Monte Porzio Catone and by dark was moving down the slopes northeast of Frascati. The 339th Infantry continued on its left into the hills west of Rocca Priora, with the 338th Infantry behind. Enemy resistance in the division zone was composed of such troops as the 38 prisoners taken at Monte Compatri from the German Cooks and Bakers School of Rome.

Throughout 3 June our aerial reconnaissance reported heavy movements into the city of Rome from the area north of Colli Laziali around as far as Tivoli. The enemy plan evidently was to delay our forces north of and astride Highway 6 to permit completion of this evacuation, for the 85th Division in the northern hills of Colli Laziali was sufficiently hampered by the terrain to prevent its constituting a serious threat. This plan was not carried out with full success, for our troops north of Highway 6 reached the last phase line short of Rome during the night of 3-4 June. The entry of II Corps into the city could now be only a matter of hours.

### C. THE ATTACK SOUTH OF COLLI LAZIALI

31 MAY-3 JUNE

1. *Hammering at the Lanuvio Line.* (See Map No. 18.) While the German left wing fell back before II Corps, the right wing had clung tenaciously to its lines opposite VI Corps. Our troops in this area were initially closest to Rome and

must be held until the enemy to the north had cleared across the Tiber. Nevertheless, the Germans could not stop the 36th Division drive across the center of Colli Laziali, which cut west on the slopes above the Lanuvio line. The advance of this division rolled back the German garrison below it, first from Velletri, then from Lanuvio, and finally from Albano.

The penetration by the 36th Division on 31 May had put it in command of the Velletri—Nemi road. In the expectation that the enemy would thus be forced to evacuate Velletri, the 36th Engineers attacked toward the town at 1730 with its 2d Battalion on the south and the 1st Battalion on the east. After reaching within 200 yards of the railroad, the engineers came under heavy machine-gun, mortar, and artillery fire, and withdrew slightly to reorganize.

To their left, dogged assaults by the rest of VI Corps met the same stubborn resistance as on 30 May. At 0530 the 135th Infantry attacked toward the railroad in its zone. Our air force, which devoted its main efforts on the 31st to enemy troops and installations along Highway 7, bombed Lanuvio twice before 1000, and our mortars laid a heavy smoke screen on the town; for artillery support the regiment had one 8-inch howitzer battalion, one 155-mm gun battalion, two medium battalions, and five batteries of light artillery. Nevertheless, the infantry had made scant gains by the middle of the day. After noon the 3d Battalion, 133d Infantry, attacked on the right, preceded by the 34th Reconnaissance Troop; this time we pushed forward 500 yards. The enemy promptly counterattacked with infantry and tanks in the center of the 135th Infantry line and also on the left between the 179th Infantry and 135th Infantry, but the fire from 13 battalions of artillery halted the thrust.

The renewed push by the 1st Armored Division and 45th Division on 31 May was little more successful than on the previous day. On the Albano road the 2d Battalion, 179th Infantry, launched its attack at the same time as the 135th Infantry. It met similar opposition, based on enemy strongpoints stubbornly defended by infantry weapons and supported by tanks, self-propelled guns, and flak guns. The 191st Tank Battalion found enemy antitank fire so intense that it could not attack frontally. At this time the battalion had 37 tanks, 18 of them without crews.

Combat Command B, northwest of Campoleone Station, was reinforced for the day's push by the 157th Infantry. The tanks moved out at 0530, followed 15 minutes later by the 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry, astride the Campoleone railroad. Remaining 300 to 500 yards behind the tanks, the infantry made a slight advance during the day against heavy artillery fire and small-arms opposition. Farther to the left the 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion continued to maintain contact with the British 1 Division, which was attached to VI Corps at midnight on 30 May.

The attack of the 31st had been better co-ordinated than previously, but the troops were exhausted and the effective tank strength was low. At 2000 the 2d Battalion, 135th Infantry, and the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, which held the line west of the 179th Infantry, were attached to the 45th Division. The remainder of the 1st Armored Division then passed to Army reserve for maintenance purposes. Thus far in the Anzio attack 161 medium tanks and 48 light tanks of the division had been knocked out by enemy action. Of these, 117 and 25 respectively were recovered; 100 mediums and 12 lights had been returned to duty. From reserve stocks 48 medium tanks and 19 light tanks had been issued, so that on 31 May the 1st Armored Division was short only 13 M4's and 17 M5's. The division was actually more weakened by loss of men than by loss of tanks. Twenty medium tank crews had been hastily brought up from the 752d Tank Battalion in IV Corps on 30 May, but filled only part of this shortage.

During the night of 31 May-1 June the enemy pulled out part of his forces between Lanuvio and Velletri, with the result that opposition in this area began to diminish on 1 June. In the 36th Division the 142d Infantry consolidated its positions at the south end of Mount Artemisio, and the 143d Infantry, relieved at Maschio d'Ariano by the 337th Infantry, moved southwest along the ridge. Further action was delayed while the pack train brought up supplies and the 111th Engineer Battalion built a road by which tanks could enter the valley lying to the west of Mount Artemisio.

During the day the 141st Infantry attacked through the vineyards and orchards toward the strong enemy positions on the high hill of Velletri. The bitter fighting grew more intense as the enemy tanks and infantry attempted in the afternoon to break out to the northwest; many of our men used up all their ammunition and resorted to hand-to-hand combat to beat back the enemy sortie. At 1630 leading elements of the 2d Battalion entered the town and together with the 1st Battalion spent the night mopping up scattered enemy groups in the debris. A large number of Germans had been trapped and fell prisoner.

With victory in sight the 34th Division put increased pressure on the enemy to its front. At 0500, 1 June, the 133d Infantry renewed the attack below Lanuvio and made some progress. On its right the 109th Engineer Battalion, which relieved the 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry, in the previous night, joined with the 3d Battalion of that regiment in an attack on Villa Crocetta and Genaro Hill. The 3d Battalion struggled up to within 50 yards of the enemy main line of resistance, then fell back in order to direct careful artillery fire on the enemy, and finally took Hills 225 and 202 just below Gennaro Hill. One platoon of the 109th Engineers reached the vicinity of the Villa itself but retreated under enemy pressure. Apart

from one counterattack of tanks and infantry west of Lanuvio, which netted us 40 prisoners, the enemy was content to hold his main strongpoints.

The center of German resistance was by this time passing farther west to the front of the 45th Division, for if this unit could drive up to Albano it would cut off the retreat of the enemy to the east. At 0530 the 3d Battalion, 179th Infantry, passed through the 1st Battalion and attacked with the 2d Battalion on its left. Gains were scant. The 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry, relieved elements of the 179th Infantry just west of the Albano road and drove north. Opposition was first light, then heavy, and the battalion failed to make progress. On its left the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, and the 2d Battalion, 135th Infantry, were forced to remain in the front lines another day until the 45th Division could pass beyond them. The British units on the far left met stiffer opposition than previously, and enemy counterattacks forced our advanced patrols out of some points.

The second of June marked the eighth straight day of heavy fighting for the 34th and 45th Divisions—the most intensive and continuous battle in which any units of Fifth Army had been engaged since Cassino. The end, however, was near, and the enemy finally yielded part of the Lanuvio line. Our advance in this area was materially aided by the push on the right flank of VI Corps. In this area the 142d Infantry and the 143d Infantry attacked abreast at 0930 across the grain fields between Mount Artemisio and the hill mass of Mount Cavo. The 142d Infantry moved in column of battalions along the only covered approach in its zone and gained the hills just east of Mount Cavo. Among the 50 prisoners taken from the light opposing forces were a number of German military police from Rome. The 143d Infantry met similarly ineffectual resistance and occupied the hills east of Tano Hill. To the south the 1st and 2d Battalions, 141st Infantry, had reached Highway 7 during the night and proceeded west along the road with part of the 36th Engineers to their left. In the afternoon, both of these units were relieved by the 157th Infantry. The 36th Engineers passed to Corps control, and the 141st Infantry swung north toward the hills east of Lake Nemi. Strafing and enemy artillery fire delayed completion of this attack until the early morning of 3 June.

The 157th Infantry drove west on Highway 7 during the afternoon of 2 June to an enemy strongpoint two and one-half miles west of Velletri. This regiment had been relieved on the left flank of the 45th Division during the night and moved by truck to the neighborhood of Velletri, where it came under the command of the 36th Division and strengthened our push at its most important point. Such a transfer of an entire regiment from one flank to another demonstrated anew the mobility of Fifth Army, based on air superiority, availability of transportation, and unceasing work by Corps and division engineers in keeping up the road net.

Threatened from the rear, the enemy garrison on the east of the Lanuvio line pulled out. At 0430, 2 June, a special raiding party from the 168th Infantry had occupied Villa Crocetta, and after dawn the entire regiment moved in column of battalions across Gennaro Hill to the railroad. On its left combat patrols of the 2d Battalion, 133d Infantry, likewise pushed up to the railroad. Farther west, however, the enemy was not yet sufficiently in danger to yield his positions. The 1st Battalion, 133d Infantry, jumped off at 0830 without an artillery preparation but found the enemy still on its front. The main attack of the 34th Division during the day, launched by the 100th Battalion at 0930, met considerable machine-gun and self-propelled fire from the Lanuvio ridge together with small counterattacks in the afternoon.

In the 45th Division zone the 179th Infantry attacked at 0930 and made small gains against stern opposition. New efforts in the afternoon by the 179th Infantry and the 180th Infantry brought only slight advances. An enemy counterattack stopped the advance of the 179th Infantry, and enemy tanks drove back the 2d Battalion, 135th Infantry, to its left. Five of our M4's, which came up to stem the enemy thrust, were knocked out by enemy antitank and self-propelled guns.

2. *The Enemy Withdraws—3 June.* For the first two days in June the German forces in front of VI Corps had clung to their Lanuvio line, yielding a little on their left flank but still safeguarding the evacuation of rear echelons. Time, however, was now growing short, for II Corps had swept around the north side of Colli Laziali and the 36th Division had reached the central heights within the volcanic bowl. During the night of 2-3 June the bulk of the enemy accordingly pulled out along the entire VI Corps front.

Early in the morning of 3 June the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry, seized Nemi. The 2d Battalion continued northwest to the road junction east of Lake Albano by noon. Here an enemy rear guard of some force halted the battalion in a stiff action; the battalion commander was killed, and his men were ordered to hold their ground until the 3d Battalion could pass through after dark. Company G, 142d Infantry, took the large hotel on top of Mount Cavo in a dashing attack which resulted in 50 enemy dead and prisoners without a single casualty in our attacking force. The 143d Infantry reduced an enemy strongpoint at Tano Hill with equal success and netted 110 prisoners from the 3d Battalion, 1059th Grenadier Regiment. A new unit, the 361st Regimental Combat Team of the 91st Division, had closed at Velletri on the evening of 2 June and was attached to the 36th Division to operate with the 141st Infantry. These orders were later cancelled as a result of the enemy retreat, and the 361st Infantry saw no action before the fall of Rome.

On the south slopes of Colli Laziali the 157th Infantry had prepared a co-ordinated attack to be launched on the morning of the 3d, but on news of the enemy

withdrawal all three battalions of the regiment pushed toward Mount du Torri below Genzano as rapidly as possible, impeded only by long-range artillery and by mines. The 157th Infantry thus entered the zone of the 34th Division and at 1100, 3 June, was attached to that division.

During the night patrols of the 168th Infantry had entered Lanuvio, which was firmly in our hands shortly after daybreak on 3 June. The 168th Infantry then assembled just north of Lanuvio while the other two regiments of the division continued the attack. The 133d Infantry moved out at 0300 and turned north along the railroad toward the high ground east of Mount du Torri. Initially the 100th Battalion led the attack of the 135th Infantry on the left, jumping off at 0530, but at 1030 the 135th Infantry was attached to the 1st Armored Division and the independent battalion continued on alone toward Mount du Torri. With two units of the 34th Division heading for this area from the south and the 157th Infantry driving in from the east, some intermingling of troops and accidental cross-fire from supporting weapons took place during the afternoon. These difficulties were straightened out by orders for the 157th Infantry under Corps control to attack southwest below Mount du Torri for the road junction on the Albano road just above the railroad. Problems of passing the 133d Infantry through the 157th Infantry, and this in turn through the 100th Battalion to its west, unavoidably delayed action in the area below Genzano for several hours.

Thus, the 157th Infantry was forced to wait until the 100th Battalion had closely invested Mount du Torri. Though this commanding point was gained by our troops three times, enemy artillery shelled us off again each time, for the hill dominated the enemy escape route through Genzano. At 2200 the 157th Infantry passed west behind the 100th Battalion and reached its objective on the Albano road at 0345, 4 June. The 100th Battalion continued to assail the enemy rear guard before it and finally succeeded in reducing opposition on Mount du Torri by 0100, 4 June. The 133d Infantry attacked for Genzano from positions east of Mount du Torri at 1930 on the 3d and occupied the town about 0320 on the following morning. Patrols to Ariccia reported Highway 7 clear to that point.

While the 34th Division advanced toward Albano from the southeast, the 45th Division continued its push north on the same point and directed an attack by both the 179th Infantry and 180th Infantry in the middle of the morning on 3 June. At first our infantry met the same small-arms and mortar fire as before, then opposition slackened, and in the afternoon enemy fire died down. By evening contact was lost. As the infantry began to advance, the 1st Armored Division (135th Infantry attached) moved up, preparatory to passing through the 45th Division when it reached the railroad. Late in the evening the armor crossed the railroad and went into temporary bivouac areas while plans were being made for the dash on Rome.



*American tanks rumble through Velletri past the wreckage of the battle.*



*Our tanks wait off Highway 6, ready for the signal to enter the city of Rome.*



*A Mark VI tank burns at the edge of Rome as our men rush forward on Highway 6.*



*General Clark in Rome, after giving pursuit instructions to his commanders.*

# CHAPTER IX \* \* \* \* \*

## *Fifth Army Enters Rome*

ON the late afternoon of 3 June all the troops of Fifth Army were moving. On the slopes south of Albano, in the hills and plains of Colli Laziali, along the narrow valley below Palestrina—everywhere masses of infantry, tanks, and all the other fighting arms were driving at their great objective, the city of Rome. As the night came, some of these troops halted briefly for a little rest; others kept going and probed their way through the dark. To their front a beaten German army was retiring hastily through the city. The day's fighting had died down, but enemy planes once again swept over the highways behind our lines to bomb and strafe our troops through the night.

### A. *PREPARATIONS IN THE NIGHT*

Final instructions for the drive on Rome were issued by General Clark in Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 26, early on 4 June. (*See Annex No. 1M.*) This directive laid down zones of action for the units of Fifth Army, prescribed a phase line north of Rome, and emphasized the vital necessity of securing the Tiber bridges. The fall of Rome was certain; the important point now was to secure bridging sites over the Tiber in order that Fifth Army might continue the pursuit. All units were ordered to be ready to push armored reconnaissance columns forward rapidly to seize and secure the crossings in their respective zones. An annex to the operations instruction dealt more specifically with the engineer equipment to be carried by each of these columns, including 2 infantry support rafts, 14 assault boats, 10 6-man pneumatic boats, and 2 22-horsepower outboard motors. Both II and VI Corps were advised to hold well forward one footbridge, one 130-foot DS set Bailey bridge, and enough floating steel treadway bridge for two crossings.

Desirable sites for the construction of hasty bridges were listed, for the planning of Fifth Army for the Tiber crossing had been thorough both in reconnaissance and in assembly of bridging units and materiel.

In the evening of 3 June General Clark had also dealt with the potential problem of German defense within the city of Rome in a message to all troops:

Fifth Army forces are approaching rapidly the city of Rome. The intentions of the enemy are not known; he may decide to fight within the city or he may withdraw to the north. It is my most urgent desire that Fifth Army troops protect both public and private property in the city of Rome. Every effort will be made to prevent our troops from firing into the city; however, the deciding factor is the enemy's dispositions and actions. If the German opposes our advance by dispositions and fires that necessitate Fifth Army troops firing into the city of Rome, battalion commanders and all higher commanders are authorized to take appropriate action without delay to defeat the opposing enemy elements by fire and movement. Such action to be reported immediately to this headquarters.

As events of the next day proved, the enemy had no intention of fighting a major action within the city. By this time the uncaptured survivors of the two armies under Kesselring's command had escaped. The divisions in the Liri—Sacco Valley had mostly withdrawn through Avezzano and Subiaco; the broken units in the Lepini Mountains had slipped around behind the Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division when it still held Valmontone; and that division had retired on 2 June below Tivoli. While the garrison of Colli Laziali beat its hasty retreat through Rome on the night of the 3d and the morning of the 4th, the 4th Parachute Division moved from the Ardea sector to serve as rear guard along the entire front. The bulk of this division cleared the city in the afternoon of 4 June.

During the day our troops met only mobile rear guards, whose sole mission was to check us temporarily. Snipers showed up now and again to the rear of our advance elements; self-propelled guns and tanks fired a few rounds from good positions and then withdrew in the maze of roads of the Roman suburbs. Only along Highway 6 did a real action develop. Here a strong group of enemy infantry and self-propelled guns held its positions west of Centocelle from early morning until the middle of the afternoon, and thus delayed the 1st Special Service Force and the 351st Infantry for approximately nine hours. Toward evening the enemy delaying action died away everywhere east of Rome. Within the city itself our men met only an occasional sniper or self-propelled gun, retreating toward the Tiber bridges.

As our command had foreseen, the situation on 4 June called for the employment of speedy forces heavy in fire power, with the minimum number of troops: the latter both to avoid congestion on the narrow streets of the city and to retain the maximum flexibility. A number of our divisions accordingly formed flying columns of tanks, tank destroyers, engineers, and infantry, usually based on a battalion or less of infantry and a company of tanks. The infantry were sometimes motORIZED by taking vehicles from the regimental service company or from the division quartermaster company; in other cases they rode on the decks of the tanks until opposition was met. Behind these spearheads, columns of infantry advanced by foot and motor to the suburbs, but did not press into the city proper until the Tiber bridges had been secured.

The first troops into Rome were accordingly small forces, mostly of battalion strength or less. In VI Corps the main thrust was entrusted to the 1st Armored Division, only one combat command of which entered the city itself. The two British divisions remained west of Ardea; the bulk of the 45th and 34th Divisions assembled below Albano; and the 36th Division halted on Via Tuscolana short of Rome. To the north II Corps sent the 1st Special Service Force and a battalion each from the 351st Infantry and 350th Infantry, both with tank elements attached, along Via Prenestina and a battalion of the 338th Infantry along Via Tuscolana to secure the Tiber bridges in its zone. The 3d Division shuttled its troops by motor along the north side of Highway 6 as fast as they were relieved by the FEC, and the bulk of the 88th Division also moved north of the highway to the vicinity of the city. The 85th Division with the 760th Tank Battalion attached curved south to cut Highway 7 and so trap the last enemy rear guards in front of VI Corps.

All through the 4th the scene east of Rome was one of hectic excitement as our small columns drove at the Eternal City along the walled roads and through the close-packed suburbs. Veering from one road to another as the opportunity presented itself, the spearheads occasionally crossed each other's path; but in general each proceeded independently of the others, and many soldiers had the proud feeling of being the « first in Rome ». Here and there our men flushed out the snipers in brief, violent fire fights. At times the tanks barked briefly at an enemy self-propelled gun. And everywhere were the throngs of cheering civilians throwing flowers and dispensing wine with open hand.

After our capture of Rome, the question naturally arose as to what unit had entered the city first. Under the pressure of combat conditions of the moment and the necessity of pressing forward with all possible speed, careful records to establish the point in question were not made. The only item in official records which bears on the problem is a report that elements of the 88th Reconnaissance Troop (88th

Division) entered Rome at 0800, 4 June. Interrogation of individuals who were in this patrol indicated that the report of entrance was based on the patrol having passed at that hour a « Roma » sign located on Route 6 with co-ordinates approximately 799647'. It was accordingly considered that elements of the 88th Reconnaissance Troop were officially the first to enter the city of Rome.

## B. *THE RACE TO ROME: HIGHWAY 6*

*See Map No. 18*

In the II Corps zone the line of advance lay along Via Prenestina just north of Highway 6, with a side drive by the 85th Division southwest to cut Highway 7 and west on Via Tuscolana. The main attack was carried out by the 1st Special Service Force and by elements of the 88th Division, both of which had reached the road running south from Tor Sapienza at 0400. On Highway 6 two companies of the 1st Regiment, 1st Special Service Force, moved out at 0440, riding on the tanks of two companies of the 13th Armored Regiment (Task Force Howze) and in eight armored cars of Company A, 81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. Progress was rapid, and the force reached the road junction west of the settlement of Centocelle by 0615. Here antitank fire put out the two leading tanks, and the infantry deployed under heavy small-arms fire. The advance on this route had been stopped.

On Via Prenestina the advance guard of the 88th Division was likewise driving west. As already noted, elements of the 88th Reconnaissance Troop had made a sortie into the edge of the city shortly after daybreak, but further penetration awaited the advance of the infantry. A special pursuit force was formed from the 1st Battalion, 350th Infantry; a battery of the 338th Field Artillery Battalion; a company of the 313th Engineer Battalion; a battery of six 105-mm self-propelled guns; and a company of the 752d Tank Battalion. This force moved up Highway 6 to Torre Nova, turned north to Via Prenestina, and moved west on that road. Ahead of it the 1st Platoon, 88th Reconnaissance Troop, and the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon, 351st Infantry, were leading a special force from the 351st Infantry composed of Company C and the Antitank Company, while the other companies of the 1st Battalion marched on foot. This force had cut south to Via Prenestina from its position below Tor Sapienza, reached the road at 0930, and moved toward Centocelle.

About 0900 the reconnaissance elements were stopped by strong enemy fire from the ridge north of the suburb, and it developed that paratroopers with 150-mm self-propelled guns had organized strongpoints on a line curving about the west

side of Centocelle. Company C, 351st Infantry, was forced to detruck and take up firing positions, while the other companies of the battalion, aided by tanks from the 752d Tank Battalion, worked toward the north of the enemy positions. The Germans, however, knocked out three tanks and put up determined resistance which pinned the 1st Regiment on Highway 6 and the 351st Infantry on Via Prenestina until after noon.

The two companies of the 1st Special Service Force on the south attacked northwest at 1100 and drove slowly through the enemy opposition; at 1530 the 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, launched a final attack to the west. Between them the two drives broke the last enemy resistance, and the 1st Regiment drove on northwest to a road junction on Via Prenestina at the edge of the city proper by 1700. Here it met the 2d and 3d Regiments with the infantry elements of Task Force Howze, which had secured crossings over the Aniene River north of Tor Sapienza in the morning and then in the afternoon moved west along the railroad.

To avoid jamming against these troops the 1st Battalion, 351st Infantry, veered northwest across the railroad tracks by 1820, encountering mines and a mined bridge. The 1st Battalion, 350th Infantry, drove west on Via Prenestina, entering the city proper at 1930. The 2d Regiment, 1st Special Service Force, meanwhile passed through the 1st Regiment, reached Porta Maggiore at 1915, and arrived at the Central Station by 2000. One company turned off and was at Piazza Venezia by 1915, where it had a short fire fight with enemy mechanized troops. The 3d Regiment struck northwest on the right flank of the 2d Regiment and entered Piazza del Popolo at 2100.

The companies of the 1st Special Service Force then fanned out to seven bridges over the Tiber north of Ponte Margherita. At this point and also at Ponte di Littorio they met enemy guards with well emplaced machine guns, but by 2300 our men held the bridges in the II Corps zone. Behind them the two battalions of the 88th Division advanced through the city toward the northernmost of these bridges. On the way the 351st Infantry and a group of the 1st Special Service Force, each mistaking the other for a German force, had a brief fire fight, but shortly after midnight the 351st Infantry had reached Ponte Milvio and the 350th Infantry Ponte Duca d'Aosta.

On the right flank of II Corps the 3d Division completed turning over its old positions to the French during the day. The 7th Infantry had moved up behind the 15th Infantry to San Cesareo in the night of 3-4 June; the 30th Infantry, relieved at 0530, 4 June, assembled at Valmontone and proceeded by motor along Highway 6 to positions just northeast of Centocelle. During the following night the 30th Infantry established contact with the 350th Infantry, sent patrols into

the northeast quarters of Rome, and seized the main railroad bridge over the Tiber north of the city.

In the 85th Division on the left flank of II Corps the 339th Infantry took Frascati early on 4 June and moved down the west slopes of Colli Laziali on Via Tuscolana. Behind it came a mobile column which the division had formed from the 2d Battalion, 338th Infantry, on trucks; a platoon each of tanks, tank destroyers, and engineers; and the regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon. To the north the 337th Infantry sent ahead at 0600 a task force of one motorized rifle company supported by engineers, tanks, tank destroyers, and artillery. The Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon of this regiment reached the suburbs of the city at 0830, but reported that it had run into elements of the 1st Special Service Force, held up on Highway 6.

Before the bulk of the 337th Infantry could become involved in the battle about Centocelle, it was turned southwest by the division to carry out the Army order (0900) to cut Highway 7 and proceed southwest. The 3d Battalion, 337th Infantry, accordingly moved across the front of the 339th Infantry on Via Tuscolana, and was approaching Highway 7 at 1500, when it ran into a small enemy force. After clearing out the snipers involved, the regiment reached Highway 7 at 1700. Enemy opposition below Albano had so diminished by this time that the regiment found elements of the 1st Armored Division passing across its front. On further Army order the 85th Division stopped its southwesterly drive, and ordered the 337th Infantry to hold its advance positions. The mobile force from the 338th Infantry then continued its advance on Via Tuscolana and approached the city about 1800. After clearing some opposition at the outskirts, the battalion pushed on to Ponte Cavour during the night.

### C. *THE RACE TO ROME: HIGHWAY 7*

*See Map No. 18*

The advance of VI Corps was led by the combat commands of the 1st Armored Division, which received road priority on Highway 7. Combat Command A on the right was initially composed of the 1st Armored Regiment (less the 3d Battalion) and the 1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry; but in the night of 3-4 June the 135th Infantry (less the 2d Battalion) took the place of the armored infantry. Combat Command B on the left was then composed of the 1st Battalion, 13th Armored Regiment, and the 3d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment, with the 6th Armored Infantry moving in column of battalions closely behind the tanks. The 3d



Battalion of the infantry was to proceed on foot and the 2d Battalion in half-track personnel carriers.

During the night of 3-4 June the troops of the 1st Armored Division waited along the Albano road near the Canuvio railroad line while their commanders received orders and counterorders. Finally, just after midnight, the combat commands were directed to attack at 0345, 4 June. In Combat Command A a flying column composed of one company each of tanks, armored infantry, and engineers and a platoon of tank destroyers moved out at 0130 and advanced through the mines to Albano. No opposition was met as far as the town, for the 157th Infantry had cleared the stretch of the Albano road immediately above the railroad and the 100th Battalion had pushed patrols into Albano itself in the early morning.

The advance guard of Combat Command A, followed by a second force composed of the 2d Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 135th Infantry, turned northwest from Albano on Highway 7. Below Castel Gandolfo the advance guard was held up just before noon by three Mark VI tanks with snipers, who forced it to halt temporarily three more times before reaching the outskirts of Rome. Here the 337th Infantry had already eliminated the major opposition, and after one brief fire fight at the very entrance to the city Combat Command A rolled about 1800 through Porta San Giovanni into the city. Making their way through the crowded, twisting streets, the tanks before midnight were guarding the approaches to Ponte Sant'Angelo, Ponte Umberto I, and Ponte Cavour.

Combat Command B, moving out at 0345, at first met only mines on the road curving along the slopes southwest of Albano, but as it turned west toward the Tiber it began to meet small-arms opposition. At an enemy strongpoint five miles west of Albano the main forces of the spearhead were forced to deploy, and fought a running battle until after noon. At 1330 Company A, 13th Armored Regiment, and a platoon of tank destroyers were sent on to the south outskirts of Rome, followed later by the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, in half-tracks. While these forces gained control of Ponte Palatino and the other bridges in the southern part of the city, the rest of Combat Command B moved out at 1500 in three columns to secure the two major Tiber crossings south of Rome. Minor enemy resistance caused occasional delay, but the armor held its objectives by 1800.

To the right of the 1st Armored Division the 36th Division had on the morning of the 4th swept the enemy out of Marino in short, heavy skirmishes. The 2d Battalion, 141st Infantry, with one company riding on tank destroyers in the van, reached Highway 7 in the afternoon, but 1st Armored Division military police, already forward, detoured the column to the north. On orders of General Walker, who accompanied this advance guard, the battalion stopped for the night in the

eastern suburbs of the city after a brief brush with the enemy. On its right motorized battalions of the 142d Infantry and 143d Infantry moved down to the same area.

The bulk of the 34th and 45th Division took no part in the last day of the drive on Rome, but task forces were sent by the two divisions to the two crossing sites south of Rome. The 34th Division formed Task Force A from a company each of the 168th Infantry and the 191st Tank Battalion, reinforced by a battery of the 175th Field Artillery, a platoon of the 894th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and a detachment of the 109th Engineer Battalion with bridging equipment. This force left Albano at 1230 but was held up by 1st Armored Division traffic until after dark. It then moved through Rome and down the north bank of the Tiber to Ponte della Magliana. Farther south the 45th Reconnaissance Troop and the 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry, reached the lower bridge by 1900. Both of these bridges had been blown, and the engineers of the two infantry divisions, together with the armored engineers, set to work at once to throw temporary structures across the Tiber.

#### D. *CONSOLIDATING THE VICTORY*

By midnight of 4 June troops of Fifth Army stood at the Tiber from its mouth to the junction with the Aniene River. Every bridge along that stretch had been taken and was under firm guard. North and south of the city the Germans had blown the bridges, but in the city proper all crossings of the river were intact.

The reception of Fifth Army by the citizens of Rome had been hysterical. While the hated Germans were scurrying north and west out of the city through deserted streets, the roads leading into Rome from the south and east were filled by its cheering citizens. As one tank commander put it, what the Germans had never been able to do the solid masses of the Roman throngs had accomplished; and our progress everywhere was slowed by the thickly packed streets. Nevertheless, the enemy still lay ahead, and the Fifth Army advance proceeded without a break.

On the north the van of the 3d Algerian Division had reached the blown bridges on the Aniene River at Lunghezza in the afternoon of 4 June. To its right, below Tivoli, the 1st Motorized Division was again committed for the first time since the 11 May attack on Sant'Ambrogio. Both divisions crossed the Aniene on the 5th, and the Algerians pushed to the Tiber. At this point all troops in the FEC except the 3d Algerian Division were halted and ordered to clear the roads for the passage of the 6 South African Armored Division through their area to operate in the original Eighth Army zone. Highway 6 reverted to Eighth Army at this time, with II Corps traffic being routed over Highway 7 and VI Corps movement on the roads to the south thereof.

The 3d Division on the 5th attacked toward the Tiber north of the Aniene River. The 15th Infantry in the lead met enemy small-arms fire at 0500 shortly after crossing the Aniene, but worked its way to its assigned bridge, which had been blown. Instead of crossing the Tiber and cutting Highway 3, as originally planned, the 3d Division received fresh orders to move to Rome as garrison for the city. These instructions were the result of Fifth Army Operations Instruction No. 27, 4 June (*See Annex No. 1N*), which directed that the 3d Division, the 1 Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, and one composite battalion of the FEC would garrison the city of Rome under the command of the Commanding General, City Administrative Section, Fifth Army.

Beyond the Tiber the 88th Division drove up Highway 2, with the bulk of its artillery firing from positions in Villa Borghese throughout most of the day. On its left one regiment of the 85th Division moved by truck through Rome and proceeded northwest of Vatican City. Right flank protection for these units of II Corps was furnished by the 91st and 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons.

The advance of VI Corps was covered by the 1st Armored Division, operating on a wide front. Due west of St. Peter's Combat Command B moved up Highway 1 ahead of the 36th Division, which crossed the city after midnight. To the south Combat Command A fanned out across the Tiber, backed by elements of the 34th Division on the north and the 45th Division on the south. Working through the night, the engineers had completed the 45th Division bridge by inserting 30 feet of treadway in the blown gap, while the 36th Engineers built a floating treadway slightly upstream. To the north the 34th Division had a class 30 bridge in operation and a floating treadway under construction. Reconnaissance elements of both British divisions had reached their respective bridging sites on the lower Tiber on 4 June, but the British bridges were not yet built.

By dusk of 5 June the sound of battle had rolled far past Rome. The bulk of the combat troops were across the Tiber, with the remainder soon to follow. Pursuit of the broken enemy was continuing at top speed. For the first time since our arrival in Italy, Rome now lay behind Fifth Army.

# CHAPTER X

\* \* \* \* \*

## *The Drive on Rome*

THE drive on Rome forms one of the most spectacular parts of the Fifth Army campaign in Italy. In extent and importance of terrain gained, in the magnitude of forces involved, this operation far outshadows all the previous action since Salerno. The enemy had vowed to hold us south of Rome; he had failed, and in that failure had suffered disaster. Fifth Army had shown that we could meet and decisively conquer the Germans on their own ground.

The attack began in the south in the hills above the Garigliano. After six weeks of preparation two corps of Fifth Army jumped off at 2300, 11 May. The FEC on the right smashed through to Mount Majo, the key of the Gustav Line, by 13 May and then exploited its penetration by swift drives to the Itri—Pico road. The second German belt of defenses, the Adolf Hitler Line, was outflanked on the south by the dash to Mount Revole on 16 May, the capture of Esperia and Mount d'Oro on 17-18 May, and finally the fall of Pico on 22 May. After these defeats the Germans could no longer hold the British Eighth Army in the Liri Valley to our north.

II Corps on the left attacked along the sea with two new American divisions, the 85th and the 88th, abreast. In the three days 11-14 May the outwardly insignificant points of Santa Maria Infante, the S Ridge, and San Martino Hill acquired fame as American soldiers fought and died to secure their possession. By 14 May the Germans in this area were in full retreat, and II Corps pressed forward along Highway 7 in hot pursuit.

Formia fell on the 17th, Itri on the 19th, and Fondi on the 20th. Then our troops prepared to assault the hills above Terracina, the last barrier to junction with the beachhead. The enemy reinforcements came too late to stop the men of the 85th Division, who held the Terracina defile on 24 May. The following morning our reconnaissance troops, racing north up the Pontine Marshes, gained contact with

our engineers from the north, and the saga of the isolated garrison at Anzio was ended. To the right the French continued to drive back the slowly retreating enemy. The battle in the south was essentially finished.

The focus of action then swung to Anzio, where VI Corps had on 23 May begun its drive toward Cisterna and Cori. The immediate objective of this attack was the capture of Valmontone to block Highway 6 behind the enemy, but the initial success of the drive led to its expansion on 26 May. While the 3d Division continued to drive on Valmontone, the 34th and the 45th Divisions swung west below Velletri to break the last German defensive line south of Rome. As our threat to this line developed, enemy resistance stiffened, and every man available to the German High Command was thrown into the front lines. For a few days during the last of May the battle swirled in indecision about the slopes of Colli Laziali.

On 28 May II Corps turned over its previous zone of action to IV Corps and moved to Anzio. Together with its divisions it was placed in line to the right near Valmontone on 31 May. The following day the last, all-out attack to smash the Germans began. II Corps drove up the valley north of Colli Laziali, VI Corps hammered at the southern slopes of the hills, and the FEC hastened north through the last of the Lepini Mountains. Crushed by the weight of our attack, the enemy first retreated slowly, then ran, and by evening of 4 June our troops were within the ancient walls of the Eternal City.

Every victory must be bought by the expenditure of materiel, energy, and lives. During the period 1 April-4 June Fifth Army had 35,014 casualties, of which 5,938 were killed, 26,450 wounded, and 2,626 missing in action. Broken down by nationalities the totals were:

	<i>Killed</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Missing</i>	<i>Total</i>
U. S. . . . .	3,667	16,153	1,204	21,024
British . . . . .	520	2,385	450	3,355
French . . . . .	1,751	7,912	972	10,635
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	5,938	26,450	2,626	35,014

By far the greatest bulk of these was incurred during the period 12 May-4 June. American casualties during the drive amounted to 3,145 killed, 13,704 wounded, and 1,082 missing—a grand total of 17,931. The three most costly days of the American attack were 12 May with 1572 casualties, 23 May with 1928, and 1 June with 1539. Fifth Army had never experienced such losses during its previous action in Italy; in the 24 days of the May drive the Army suffered one-third of its total losses in Italy during the 269 days from D Day at Salerno to 4 June 1944.



*War has its price: evacuating the wounded from the battlefield of Cisterna.*

In offset it must be noted that Fifth Army had never been as strong as during the May drive. On 4 June the effective strength of the Army was 369,356, represented by 231,306 Americans, 42,908 British, and 95,142 French.

As in previous parts of the Italian campaign, it is again impossible to assess accurately the losses of the enemy. His surrender of Rome and all the territory south thereof as far as Cassino and the Garigliano represented a heavy blow to his prestige in the world at large and within the confines of the German fortress of Europe. Physically the German losses in materiel were tremendous during the battles and the subsequent retreat. The enemy casualties may be measured only by the prisoner-of-war total. The American divisions took 10,420 prisoners, the British 107, and the French 5,079, a total of 15,606. On the basis of these figures alone it is apparent that the German Fourteenth Army and that part of Tenth Army facing us suffered more heavily, with a fewer number of troops originally available, than did Fifth Army. The continuation of the German retreat throughout June and July attests to the smashing victory we had won in the drive to Rome.

MAP No 19

# The TERRAIN of the MAY DRIVE

SCALE  
MILES

Elevation in Meters



ROME

PALESTRINA

FRASCATI

VALMONTONE

ALATRI

FERENTINO

FROSINONE

Colli

Lake Albano

Laziali

VELLETRI

ARTENA

COLLE FERRO

Sacco River

CAMPOLEONE

CORI

Lepini Mountains

CARPINETO ROMANO

CECCANO

CEPRANO

ARCE

M. Cairo

PIEDIMONTE

CASSINO

VENAFRO

Incastro R.

Moletta R.

CISTERNA

M. Arretino

ROCCAGORGA

CECCANO

PROSEDI

CASTRO D. VOLSCI

Melfa River

Liri River

S. ANGELO

PONTECORVO

MIGNANO

Mudicina Canal

LITTORIA

SEZZE

PRIVERNO

ROCCASECCA

AMASENO

M. Cabrilli

PASTENA

PICO

S. OLIVA

S. GIORGIO A LIRI

S. AMBROGIO

NETTUNO

ANZIO

BORGO GRAPPA

PRIVERNO

Aurunci Mountains

SONNINO

M. Pizzano

VALLECORSO

LENOLA

M. d'Oro

ESPERIA

AUSONIA

M. Majo

M. Iuga

FONDI

Lake Fondi

M. Ruazzo

Mt. Revole

M. Petrella

CASTELFORTE

S. MARIA INFANTE

MINTURNO

SESSA AURUNCA



Tyrrhenian

Sea

ANNEX NUMBER ONE \* \* \* \* \*

*Orders and Operations Instructions*

# A

OPERATION ORDER

NUMBER 1

REFERENCE MAP: Italy 1/100,000

Headquarters  
Allied Armies in Italy  
5 May 1945 ~~4~~ Ze  
4

## INFORMATION.

### 1. The Enemy.

*a.* The latest information of enemy strengths and dispositions has been issued to all concerned in intelligence summaries. It is expected that the enemy will fight stubbornly for his present positions, and that further resistance is to be expected on the PIEDIMONTE—PONTECORVO line, for the defense of which all reserves at the disposal of the German Tenth Army are likely to be used. It is also expected that when driven from these positions the enemy will make every effort to stabilize his front South of ROME by organized resistance on the general line North of AVEZZANO—VALMONTONE—VELLETRI. For the defense of that line all reserves of the German Fourteenth and Tenth Armies are likely to be deployed.

*b.* Once the enemy has been driven North of ROME, it is probable that he will withdraw fighting to the RIMINI—PISA line imposing the maximum delay on our advance by strong mobile rear guards and demolitions.

### 2. Own Troops.

*a.* There will be no further major changes in the order of battle prior to the opening of active operations.

*b.* 91 US Div is expected to arrive in Italy during the latter part of May and beginning of June, and will join Fifth Army.

*c.* 1 Br Armd Div. The elements of this formation left in NORTH AFRICA will be moved to ITALY by mid June. The division will be concentrated as soon as the course of operations enables 18 Infantry Brigade to be released. When concentrated 1 Br Armd Div will be placed at the disposal of Eighth Army.

*d.* 1 and 5 Br Divs will be withdrawn into AAI reserve as soon as Fifth Army advances North of ROME. 18 Infantry Brigade will then rejoin 1 Br Armd Div.

*e.* 2 Para Bde will be released by Eighth Army at the end of May or as soon after as possible for airborne training for operations later.

*f.* 24 Gds Bde will be released by Eighth Army as soon as the course of operations permits, and will then rejoin 1 Br Div.

### 3. Air Forces.

*a.* Fifth and Eighth Armies are being supported by 12 TAC which is in turn being supported by MATAF as required.

*b.* Priorities as between armies for air support will be decided by C-in-C, AAI.

*c.* MATAF is arranging to ask for assistance as required from MAAF to maintain air operations against the enemy's supply system and such other suitable targets as the course of operations may dictate.

### 4. Boundaries.

*a.* Between 5 Corps and Eighth Army incl to 5 Corps: PALENA (H 1175) — M. AMARO Pt. 2793 (H 071869) — TORRE (B 9404) — M. BOLZA Pt. 1957 (B 745207) — M. CORNO (B 6329) — June Political Bdy and Road (B 528353) — Pt. 2411 (B 505495) — MONTE DI MORTE Pt. 2073 (B 474549) — BORGIO (B 4264).

*b.* Between Eighth Army and Fifth Army incl Fifth Army: R. SACCO to G 295432. Excl Fifth Army: G 216421 — G 095492 — F 8961 — F 8263 — F 815700 — F 7875 — F 7477 — F 7193.

## INTENTION.

5. To destroy the right wing of the German Tenth Army; to drive what remains of it and the German Fourteenth Army North of ROME; and to pursue the enemy to the RIMINI—PISA line inflicting the maximum losses on him in the process.

## METHOD.

### 6. Tasks of Armies.

*a.* Eighth Army will:

- 1) Break through the enemy's positions into the LIRI Valley and advance on the general axis of Highway 6 to the area East of ROME.
- 2) Pursue the enemy on the general axis TERNI—PERUGIA.
- 3) Thereafter advance on ANCONA and FLORENCE, the main objective at that stage to be decided later.

*b.* Fifth Army will:

- 1) Capture the AUSONIA defile and advance on an axis generally parallel to that of Eighth Army but South of the LIRI and SACCO Rivers.
- 2) Launch an attack from the ANZIO Bridgehead on the general axis CORI—VALMONTONE to cut Highway 6 in the VALMONTONE area, and thereby prevent the supply and withdrawal of the troops of the German Tenth Army opposing the advance of Eighth and Fifth Armies.
- 3) Pursue the enemy North of ROME and capture the VITERBO airfields and the port of CIVITAVECCHIA.
- 4) Thereafter advance on LEGHORN.

7. Task of 5 Corps. 5 Corps will hold its present front with the minimum of troops; will harass the enemy; and will vigorously pursue him should he attempt to withdraw, inflicting the maximum losses on him in the process.

#### 8. Timing.

*a.* The attacks of Eighth and Fifth Armies on the main front will be simultaneous.

*b.* D Day and H Hour have been notified to all.

*c.* Postponement. The attacks on the main front will only be postponed if heavy rain or the prospect of it makes ground conditions unfavorable. The final decision to postpone the attack will rest with the C-in-C, AAI. If postponement is decided on, it will be for 24 hours at a time, and Armies will be notified by 1600 hrs on D Day.

*d.* Fifth Army's attack from the Bridgehead will be ready to be launched at 24 hours notice at any time from D plus 4 Day. The final decision when this attack is to be launched will rest with the C-in-C, AAI.

#### 9. Subsidiary Operations.

*a.* An operation to capture and hold the Island of ELBA, using French troops not under command AAI, has been prepared under the direction of AFHQ to be launched at any day from 25 May. It will only be launched in consultation with C-in-C, AAI. Armies will be notified at once of any decision to launch it.

*b.* Fifth Army will prepare an amphibious operation to be launched if required to assist in the earliest possible capture of the port of CIVITAVECCHIA.

*c.* 5 Corps will prepare an amphibious operation by a force of approximately one division for the capture of the port of ANCONA. The decision to launch this operation will rest with the C-in-C, AAI, or GOC Eighth Army, depending on whether 5 Corps is directly under command C-in-C, AAI, or under command Eighth Army at the time.

10. Reserve.

No troops are being specifically allotted to AAI reserve but CG Fifth Army will not commit 36 US Division without reference to C-in-C, AAI.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

11. Plans and instructions have already been issued by letter and in conference by CAO, AAI.

INTERCOMMUNICATION.

12. HQ, AAI will remain at CASERTA until line signal communications have been carried forward to the ROME area. The actual site will be notified later.

13. To ensure uniformity, all timings in connection with these operations will be synchronized with the BBC time signal, the necessary adjustments being made for local time.

To safeguard against the possibility of failure of BBC time due to adverse reception conditions, Fifth Army will arrange to check a chronometer with BBC time throughout D Day. This time will be taken as the standard and any formation in doubt will apply for this time through normal signal channels.

A. F. HARDING  
Lieutenant General  
Chief of General Staff

# B

FIELD ORDER  
NUMBER 6

}

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
20 April 1944

MAPS: Special Operation Map No. 1, Scale 1:50,000

## 1. Information.

a. Enemy. Intelligence Annex, Annex No. 1.

b. Friendly. AAI resumes offensive to join forces with the beachhead and drive the enemy North of ROME.

- 1) Eighth Army on our right flank continues operations to break through enemy's main front into LIRI Valley, advances astride Highway 6 on VALMONTONE.
- 2) 5 Corps (Br) holds its present front with minimum of troops, and follows up vigorously any withdrawal by the enemy.
- 3) XII TAC continues support of AAI operations. General plan for support of Fifth Army will be to isolate battlefield by disruption of communication.
- 4) Navy continues in support of AAI operations. (See Annex No. 2.)

2. Mission. Fifth Army from present GARIGLIANO positions attacks with Corps abreast, secures AUSONIA defile, advances South of the LIRI RIVER to cut the PICO—ITRI Road. D Day. H Hour later. Boundaries: See Spec Opn Map No. 1. Subsequent advance on Army order. Troops: Troop List, Annex No. 3.

## 3. Tactical Missions for Subordinate Units.

a. Phase I: Cut the AUSONIA—FORMIA Road. (See Special Operation Map No. 1.)

- 1) FEC.
  - a) Seizes and holds M. MAJO.
  - b) Secures high ground vic COLLE S. CROCE.
  - c) Secures high ground vic COLLE CASTELLONE.
  - d) Secures high ground vic COLLE LA GUARDIA.
  - e) Cuts the AUSONIA—ESPERIA Road North of AUSONIA.

- f) Destroys or captures enemy forces remaining in zone of action.
  - g) Protects right flank of Fifth Army.
  - h) Maintains contact with and assists advance of Eighth Army.
- 2) II Corps.
- a) Seizes and holds COLLE S. MARTINO.
  - b) Seizes ridge running Southwest from S. MARIA INFANTE.
  - c) Cuts AUSONIA—FORMIA Road.
  - d) Seizes and holds M. DEI BRACCHI.
  - e) Seizes and holds S. COSIMO E DAMIANO.
  - f) Protects left flank of Fifth Army.
  - g) Maintains contact with FEC.
- b. Phase II: Secure AUSENTE Valley South of AUSONIA, secure M. REVOLE as a firm base for further operations. (See Spec Opn Map No. 1.)
- 1) FEC.
- a) Seizes and holds M. GANNI and COLLE AVRITO.
  - b) Advances rapidly with light forces West through the PETRELLA hill mass, seizes and holds M. REVOLE and M. DEL LAGO.
  - c) Protects right flank of Fifth Army.
  - d) Maintains contact with Eighth Army.
- 2) II Corps.
- a) Seizes and holds CASTELLONORATO.
  - b) Seizes and holds M. LA CIVITA.
  - c) Captures SPIGNO (SATURNIO).
  - d) Captures M. I CERRI.
  - e) Protects left flank of FEC and facilitates advance of French force into PETRELLA hill mass.
  - f) Maintains contact with FEC.
  - g) Protects left flank of Fifth Army.
- c. Phase III: Capture M. D'ORO and cut ITRI—PICO Road vic ITRI. (See Spec Opn Map No. 1.)
- 1) FEC.
- a) Seizes and holds M. D'ORO.
  - b) Protects right flank of Fifth Army.
  - c) Assists advance of Eighth Army in the LIRI Valley.
- 2) II Corps.
- a) Captures M. SCAURI.
  - b) Seizes and holds M. CAMPESE.
  - c) Cuts ITRI—PICO Road vic ITRI.
  - d) Protects left flank of Fifth Army.

- e) Maintains contact with FEC.
- d. Phase IV: Cut ITRI—PICO Road. (See Spec Opn Map No. 1.)
  - 1) FEC.
    - a) From vic M. REVOLE as a firm base, cuts ITRI—PICO Road.
    - b) Protects right flank of Fifth Army.
    - c) Assists advance of Eighth Army in LIRI Valley.
  - 2) II Corps.
    - a) Assists advance of FEC.
    - b) Protects left flank of Fifth Army.
- e. VI Corps — be prepared to attack within forty-eight hours of receipt of Army order in any of the following directions:
  - 1) ARDEA.
  - 2) ALBANO.
  - 3) CISTERNA—CORI.
  - 4) LITTORIA—SEZZE.
- f. 36th Division is attached to II Corps and in addition to its mission as assigned by II Corps will be prepared for rapid movement to the beachhead area on Army order.
- g. 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will be prepared on Army order to drop in the PETRELLA hill mass in the zone of action of II Corps. Battalion will come under command of II Corps as soon as contact is made.
- h. Antiaircraft Artillery. Annex No. 4.
- i. Artillery. Annex No. 5.
- j. Chemical Warfare. Annex No. 6.
- k. Engineers. Annex No. 8.
- x. The success of the attack directed by this order depends to a great degree on secrecy, speed of execution, and coordinated action by the Corps.
- 4. Administrative Matters. See Administrative Order No. 48, Headquarters Fifth Army, 14 April 1944, and subsequent Administrative Orders.
- 5. Signal Communication.
  - a. Signal Annex, Annex No. 7.
  - b. Command Posts.
    - Fifth Army, vic S. MARCO (N 028886).
    - II Corps, vic PIEDIMONTE RIVOLI (M 917873).
    - VI Corps, NETTUNO (F 880182).
    - FEC, SESSA AURUNCA (M 945926).

*Official:*

BRANN

G-3

CLARK  
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# C

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION }  
NUMBER 17 }

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
9 May 1944

1. Effective 110001B, II Corps is relieved of the mission of protecting the left flank of Fifth Army from point M 878818 to M 919750.
2. Effective 110001B, the 36th Infantry Division is charged with the protection of Fifth Army left flank from point M 878818 to M 919750.
3. Direct communication is authorized.

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# D

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 18

}

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
15 May 1944

1. Confirming verbal instructions issued by the Commanding General, Fifth Army to the Commanding General, II Corps this date, it is directed II Corps attack and capture CASTELLONORATO without delay and push the advance westward on ITRI. The 88th Infantry Division will be employed rapidly through the PETRELLA hill mass to outflank the German positions in the Campese area and push on to ITRI. 85th Infantry Division will not be employed in operations West of Campese without approval of this Headquarters.

2. Effective 1200 hours 16 May, the Commanding General, II Corps will be prepared on 72 hours notice to begin withdrawal of the 85th Infantry Division from its present zone of action preparatory to a water movement to ANZIO. Tentative plans for the withdrawal and movement of this division will be made so that the complete division can be closed in NAPLES staging areas 72 hours after the withdrawal begins.

3. Commanding General, II Corps is directed to prepare the following plans:

a. To turn over to the Commanding General, IV Corps, command of the present zone of action of the II Corps.

b. Plans for the movement of the following units from the present zone of action to the ANZIO Beachhead on 24 hours notice on or after May 22:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, II Corps.

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, II Corps Artillery.

Military Police Platoon, II Corps.

53rd Signal Battalion.

54th Medical Battalion.

4. List of Army troops to follow the 85th Infantry Division and II Corps Headquarters to ANZIO will be furnished in a separate communication.

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# E

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION )  
NUMBER 19 )

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
18 May 1944

1. Upon the completion of the mission given in Field Order No. 6, Fifth Army on the main front regroups its forces and prepares for further offensive action to destroy the enemy forces opposing it.

2. a. II Corps will:

- 1) Consolidate 88th Division positions in the M. GRANDE—M. LARIGNO hill mass.
- 2) Regroup its forces and be prepared, on Army Order, to:
  - a) Continue the advance on the ITRI (M 6098)—FONDI (G 5106)—TERRACINA (M 3698) axis towards the AUSONI hill mass, or
  - b) Advance to the NW on the ITRI—FONDI—LENOLA (G 5411)—CASTRO DEI VOLSCI (G 5023) axis.
- 3) Complete plans for withdrawal of the 85th Division and accompanying troops as directed in Operations Instruction No. 18. The 85th Division, less one RCT, will not be employed West of FORMIA (M 6795) without permission from this Headquarters. One RCT, 85th Division, may be used for mopping up the ITRI—GAETA (M 6390)—SPERLONGA (M 5295) area.
- 4) Protect the left flank of Fifth Army.
- 5) Maintain contact with FEC.

b. FEC will:

- 1) Continue the attack to the NW to secure the high ground in the vicinity of PICO (G 6316).
- 2) Consolidate its positions in the PICO area.
- 3) Maintain contact with Eighth Army.
- 4) Protect the right flank of Fifth Army.
- 5) Regroup its forces and be prepared, on Army Order, to:
  - a) Advance to the NW to cut Highway 6 in the vicinity of CEPRANO (G 5926), or
  - b) Advance to the West to secure the SISERNO hill mass.

c. VI Corps will:

Continue the mission assigned in Field Order No. 6.

d. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will prepare plans to drop, on Army Order, in the AUSONI hill mass and facilitate the advance of the II Corps via the ITRI—FONDI—TERRACINA axis.

3. 36th Division, in Army Reserve, will be prepared for movement to the ANZIO Beachhead on eight hours' notice.

4. Boundaries: See overlay.

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# F

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION }  
NUMBER 20 }

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
19 May 1944

1. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will be prepared on 24 hours' notice, at any time after 0500B hours, Monday 22 May 1944 to drop on Army Order in the GALLA DI M. ORSO area North of M. ROMANO (G 3807) and facilitate the advance of II Corps by executing the following missions:

- a. Establish a firm base in the M. ROMANO area.
- b. Establish communication with II Corps.
- c. Subsequently, be prepared, on II Corps Order, to:
  - 1) Operate against the rear of enemy forces opposing II Corps.
  - 2) Secure the hills dominating Highway 7 at TERRACINA.

2. In the event it is impossible to establish communication with II Corps, the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will:

- a. Establish a firm base in the M. ROMANO area.
- b. Subsequently, harass the enemy by operating against the rear of his forces opposing II Corps, and
- c. Initiate patrol action to determine location of II Corps advance elements and secure contact as soon as possible.

3. The CO, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion is directed to deal directly with CG, II Corps on all matters pertaining to final coordination of plans.

4. On contact with advance elements of II Corps, the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion is attached to II Corps.

5. a. CG, MATAF has been requested by this Headquarters to make available the necessary aircraft from the 51st Troop Carrier Wing to accomplish the above mission.

b. CO, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion is directed to contact directly the CO, 51st Troop Carrier Wing for final arrangements as to loading, take off, and the accomplishment of the assigned mission by the troop carrier transport involved.

6. Air Support Control Section, this Headquarters, will, with CG, XII TAC, arrange for strafing mission to precede the drop and such fighter cover as may be necessary to cover passage of transport aircraft over enemy defensive positions.

7. Copy of Battalion Order for this operation, including estimate of resupply, will be submitted to this Headquarters not later than 0500B hours Monday 22 May 1944.

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*Official:*

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# G

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION }  
NUMBER 21 }

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
22 May 1944

1. Effective 1800 hours, 22 May 1944, 1 Infantry Division (British) and the 5 Infantry Division (British) (less those units enumerated in paragraph 2 below) are relieved from attachment to VI Corps and revert to Army control.
2. 19 and 156 Field Regiments, 24 Army Field Regiment and Brett Force remain under command of VI Corps.
3. All other British units remain under present assignment orders.
4. Missions are assigned in plan, « Operation BUFFALO », prescribed in Field Order No. 26, dated 6 May 1944, Headquarters VI Corps, remain in effect with no change.

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G-3

# H

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 22

}

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
22 May 1944

1. Operations Instruction No. 20, this Headquarters, dated 19 May 1944, is hereby cancelled.

2. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will be prepared on 24 hours' notice at any time after 230500B May 1944 in the case of Plan A, or after 240500B May 1944 in the case of Plan B, to facilitate the advance of II Corps by executing either of the following plans:

a. Plan A. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will drop on Army Order in the area G 3625 Northeast of COSTA LA TORRE (G 3524) and execute the following missions:

- 1) Establish a firm base in the COSTA LA TORRE area.
- 2) Establish communication with II Corps.
- 3) Subsequently, be prepared, on II Corps Order, to cut the PROSEDI—PIPERNO (G 3121) Road in the vicinity of RJ (G 3622) and deny use of the road to the enemy.

b. Plan B. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will drop on Army Order in the area G 3034 Northeast of M. MALAINA (G 2933) and execute the following missions:

- 1) Establish a firm base in the M. MALAINA area.
- 2) Establish communication with II Corps.
- 3) Subsequently, be prepared, on II Corps Order, to cut the MONTELANICO—PIPERNO (G 3119) Road South of CARPINETO ROMANO and deny its use to the enemy.

3. In the event it is impossible to establish communication with II Corps, the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will, after the accomplishment of the above missions, and at the discretion of the CO, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, initiate patrol action to determine the location of II Corps advance elements and secure contact as soon as possible.

4. The CO, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion will coordinate final operational plans with the CG, II Corps, and with the troop carrier plan of the CO, 51st Troop Carrier Wing or his representative.

5. The 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion is attached to II Corps either upon establishment of communication or upon contact with advance elements of II Corps.

6. The CG, MATAF has been requested by this Headquarters to make available the necessary aircraft from the 51st Troop Carrier Wing to accomplish this mission.

7. Air Support Control Section, this Headquarters, will arrange with CG, XII TAC strafing mission to precede the drop and such fighter cover as may be necessary to cover passage of transport aircraft over enemy defensive positions.

8. Copy of Battalion Orders for these operations, including estimate of re-supply, will be submitted to this Headquarters not later than 240500B May 1944.

CLARK  
Commanding

*Official:*

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G-3

# I

FIELD ORDER )  
NUMBER 26 )

VI Corps  
NETTUNO, Italy  
061600B May 1944

MAP: Italy 1/50,000

1. a. Int — Annex 1.

b. 1) Friendly:

- a) AAI resumes offensive to join forces with the Beachhead and drive enemy N of ROME.
- b) Eighth Army continues operations to break thru enemy main front thru LIRI Valley.
- c) 5 Corps (Br) holds present front with minimum of troops, and follows up vigorously any withdrawal of the enemy.
- d) Fifth Army from present GARIGLIANO positions atks with corps abreast, FEC on R, II Corps on L, secures AUSONIA defile, advances S of LIRI River to cut the PICO—ITRI Road. D Day H Hour to be announced. Subsequent adv on Army Order.

2) Supporting:

a) XII TAC supports action. VI Corps support:

1. Maximum destruction, neutralization, and harassment enemy arty.
2. Maximum destruction enemy concentration area, communication centers, and dumps.
3. Maximum destruction enemy movements, particularly of armor.

b) For Naval gun fire support of VI Corps see Annex 3.

2. VI Corps atks D Day H Hour, establishes firm base on line XY, seizes high ground vic CORI prepared to continue atk to seize ARTENA and cut Hwy No. 6 vic VALMONTONE (Opn Overlay — Annex 2).

3. a. Phase 1:

- 1) 1st Armd Div atchd one Inf Regt 34th Inf Div, 434th AAA AW Bn, 701st TD Bn, Det 6617th Mine Clearance Co, two Cos 83d

- Cml Bn, elements 636th TD Bn to be announced, atks D Day H Hour, seizes and holds line XY zone, maintains contact 3d Inf Div on R; destroys enemy in zone, assists atk inf elements 3d Inf Div with armd elements operating in R of zone; pushes aggressive armd rcn toward GIULIANELLO, VELLETRI, and CAMPOLEONE; prepares to continue adv on Corps Order to seize line OB.
- 2) 3d Inf Div atchd 601st TD Bn, 751st Tk Bn, 84th Cml Bn (-2 Cos), 441st AAA AW Bn, with main effort on its L atks D Day H Hour in conjunction 1st Armd Div, reduces LA VILLA, isolates and reduces CISTERNA, seizes and holds line XY in zone; destroys enemy in zone, maintains contact 1st SS Force on R.
  - 3) 45th Inf Div atchd 1 Co (-1 Plat) 894th TD Bn, 191st Tk Bn (-1 L Tk Co), 2 Cos 645th TD Bn, 83d Cml Bn (-2 Cos), 106th AAA AW Bn, atks D Day H Hour in conjunction 1st Armd Div, seizes and holds line XY in zone; destroys enemy in zone, protects L flank Corps atk, maintains contact 1st Armd Div on R; holds present Beachhead line in sector; further assists atk by vigorous combat patrolling in L of sector beginning D Day H Hour to prevent withdrawal enemy reserves on immediate front.
  - 4) 1st SS Force atchd 463d Prcht FA Bn (-Btries C, D) reinf, 1 Co 109th Engr C Bn, 1 Coll Co 52d Med Bn, 645th TD Bn (-2 Cos), 1 L Tk Co 191st Tk Bn, 1 Co 84th Cml Bn, atks D Day H Hour, seizes line XY in zone, holds enemy SE thereof; prepares on Corps Order to continue adv to seize and hold 3; destroys enemy in zone, maintains contact 36th Engr C Regt on R, protects R of Corps atk.
  - 5) 34th Inf Div (-1 Inf Regt) atchd 435th AAA AW Bn, 1 Co 805th TD Bn, 100th Inf Bn (Sep), gaps wire and mine fields on atk frontages 1st Armd Div, 3d Inf Div, and 1st SS Force, holds present Beach-Head line until reld by Corps Order; when reld responsibility present Beachhead line to regroup prepared to relieve elements 1st Armd Div and 1st SS Force on line XY.
  - 6) 5 Inf Div (Br) atchd 1 Plat 894th TD Bn, 168 L AA Btry RA, 192 A Tk Btry RA, 46 R Tk Regt (-1 Sqn), assists atk by vigorous combat patrolling beginning D Day H Hour to prevent withdrawal enemy reserves on immediate front; holds present Beachhead line in sector, maintains contact 1 Inf Div (Br) on R, commits reserve Bde on Corps Order only.

- 7) 1 Inf Div (Br) atchd 1 Co 894th TD Bn, 1 Sqn 46 R Tk Regt, assists atk by vigorous combat patrolling beginning D Day H Hour to prevent withdrawal enemy reserves on immediate front, holds present Beachhead line in sector, maintains contact 45th Inf Div on R, commits reserve Bde on Corps Order only.
  - 8) 36th Engr C Regt atchd 805th TD Bn (-1 Co), 1 Fd Regt RA, relieves 1st SS Force in sector by 10 May, holds present Beachhead line in sector.
  - 9) 36th Inf Div with atchments to be announced, in Corps Res vic TRE CANCELLI prepares on Corps Order to pass thru 3d Inf Div to seize and hold 1 and 2.
- b. Phase 2:
- 1) 1st Armd Div atchd 434th AAA AW Bn, 701st TD Bn, Det 6617th Mine Clearance Co, 2 Cos 83d Cml Bn, on Corps Order seizes line OB, holds enemy N and NW thereof; destroys enemy in zone, protects L of atk 36th Inf Div, maintains contact 36th Inf Div on R; pushes armd rcn to N as far as possible; prepares on Corps Order to continue adv to N in conjunction 36th Inf Div and 3d Inf Div.
  - 2) 36th Inf Div with atchments to be announced to include 751st Tk Bn, atks on Corps Order thru 3d Inf Div, seizes and holds 1 and 2 prepared on Corps Order to continue adv to N; destroys enemy in zone, maintains contact 1st SS Force on R.
  - 3) 1st SS Force atchd 463d Prcht FA Bn (-Btries C, D) reinf, 1 Co 109th Engr C Bn, 1 Coll Co 52d Med Bn, 645th TD Bn (-2 Cos), 1 L Tk Co 191st Tk Bn, 1 Co 84th Cml Bn, on Corps Order continues atk, seizes and holds 3 prepared to continue adv direction MONTELANICO—SEGNI to cut Hwy No. 6; destroys enemy in zone.
  - 4) 34th Inf Div atchd 345th AAA AW Bn, 100th Inf Bn (Sep), 805th TD Bn (-1 Co), 84th Cml Bn (-1 Co), 601st TD Bn, on Corps Order relieves elements 1st Armd Div and 1st SS Force on line XY; holds enemy SE line XY along Canal; follows closely atk 1st SS Force, seizes line EF, holds enemy SE thereof; maintains contact 36th Engr C Regt on R.
  - 5) 3d Inf Div atchd 441st AAA AW Bn, when passed thru by 36th Inf Div prepares on Corps Order to regroup vic Cisterna prepared for subsequent adv in N on Corps Order.
  - 6) Other units no change except:
    - a) 1 Co only 805th TD Bn atchd 36th Engr C Regt.
    - b) 36th Engr C Regt prepares on Corps Order to regroup.

- c. Corps Arty support atk Corps — Annex 3.
- d. 35th AAA Brig protects port of ANZIO, X-Ray beaches, Corps Arty and Corps rear installations.
- e. Corps Engrs (-36th Engr C Regt) support atk Corps — Annex 4.
- f. Corps Res:
  - 1) 36th Inf Div vic TRE CANCELLI until committed.
  - 2) 894th TD Bn (-2 Cos) in present position.
- x. 1) At Defense — Annex 5.
- 2) Cover Plan — Annex 6 (to be issued). → *Restricted see Ltr atk R-8023-A*
- 3) Corps will direct smoke screening of canal crossings.
- 4) Particular emphasis will be given the following:
  - a) Mine clearance (friendly and enemy).
  - b) Unit arty plans.
  - c) Unit cover plans. → *Restricted, See Ltr atk to - 8072*
  - d) Unit smoke plans.
  - e) Assembly areas and concentration of forces.
  - f) Development of offensive psychology.
- 5) The atk will be pressed with the utmost vigor to the capture of all objs and destruction of enemy encountered.

4. No Change.

- 5. a. 1) SOI: Current Index.
- 2) Unit radio silence now imposed by Corps Order may be broken H Hour D Day.
- b. 1) CPs: See overlay. Changes to be reported.
- 2) Axes Sig Com:
  - a) VI Corps: CONCA—CISTERNA—CORI.
  - b) 3d Inf Div: CONCA—CISTERNA.
  - c) 36th Inf Div: CISTERNA—CORI.
  - d) 1st Armd Div: As selected.

TRUSCOTT  
Major General

Official:

ROSSON  
Asst G-3

# J

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION  
NUMBER 23

}

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
24 May 1944

1. II Corps is pressing reconnaissance elements via TERRACINA towards LITTORIA with a mission of joining up with the right flank of the Fifth Army Bridgehead forces.

2. The 36th Engineer Combat Regiment, with present attachments plus the Brett Force, has been relieved from attachment to VI Corps and placed directly under Army control.

3. Commanding Officer, 36th Engineer Combat Regiment will continue present mission of protecting the right flank of the Bridgehead within his present zone of action and is charged with maintaining contact with VI Corps on his left.

4. Commanding Officer, 36th Engineer Combat Regiment will form a task force of not to exceed one battalion of Engineers with the necessary reconnaissance and anti-tank attachments and be prepared on 4 hours' notice on Army Order to break out of the Bridgehead via routes South of LITTORIA with the mission of joining forces with the II Corps.

5. If ordered to execute mission outlined in paragraph 4, Commanding Officer, 36th Engineer Combat Regiment will continue to be responsible for defense in his present zone of action.

CLARK  
Commanding

*Official:*

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# K

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION

NUMBER

24

}

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
26 May 1944

1. The enemy forces opposing the Beachhead offensive in the CISTERNA—CORI area have been decisively defeated. The Beachhead and main Fifth Army forces have joined. The overwhelming success of the current battle makes it possible to continue Operation BUFFALO with powerful forces and to launch a new attack along the most direct route to ROME.

2. Not later than 261200B May, VI Corps will attack to seize initially the general line LANUVIO—CAMPOLEONE Station and from that general line press on vigorously on ROME. Plans for this operation will include an attack (on Army Order) generally from the area of LANUVIO to seize the COLLI LAZIALI mountain mass.

Boundaries: Boundary between VI Corps and 1 Infantry Division (Br) F 919300 — F 910310 — F 892334. Other boundaries no change.

3. 1 Infantry Division (Br) will by first light 26 May relieve the 179th Infantry Regiment. Actual time at which responsibility for this sector will pass to 1 Infantry Division (Br) by agreement between Division Commanders concerned. When VI Corps attack is launched, 1 Infantry Division (Br) will assist the attack by pushing forward strong combat patrols and by increased fires along the entire front. As VI Corps attack advances, 1 Infantry Division (Br) will conform with the advance.

4. 5 Infantry Division (Br) in its present zone of action will assist the attack by pushing forward strong combat patrols and increased fires along the entire front. 5 Infantry Division (Br) will conform to the advance of 1 Infantry Division (Br).

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*Official:*

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# L

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION }  
NUMBER 25 }

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
31 May 1944

I. Fifth Army forces are now in position to launch what is intended to be the final phase of our operations East of ROME. I June VI Corps will strike out with all their forces in continuation of their successes of the past 9 days. II Corps will launch a new offensive from its present positions. Mission of these attacks is to crush the Fourteenth German Army facing our ANZIO forces and to exploit by all possible means every opportunity to destroy completely the enemy's forces and materiel. To accomplish this, it is directed that:

a. II Corps will:

After having secured the high ground North of VALMONTONE, blocked all traffic through Route 6 and secured that part of COLLI LAZIALI that lies within its zone, be prepared on Army Order to pursue and annihilate German forces withdrawing Northwest and will send hard hitting mobile forces under vigorous leadership via Route 6 on FERENTINO to capture or destroy any enemy forces withdrawing from the fronts of Eighth Army and French Expeditionary Corps.

b. VI Corps will:

Secure that part of COLLI LAZIALI in its zone of action and drive forward with the utmost speed to cut the routes of withdrawal of enemy forces through ROME and then turn strong forces Southwest to annihilate the enemy against the TIBER River to the West.

c. French Expeditionary Corps will:

Press forward vigorously within their zone of action to secure the high ground in the vicinity of SEGNI (G 1944), protect the right flank of II Corps and Fifth Army and facilitate the advance of Eighth Army.

d. 5 Infantry Division (Br) will:

Press forward rapidly towards the TIBER River to cut off and destroy enemy forces that have been turned South by the VI Corps. Artillery will be kept well forward in order to interdict crossing sites over the TIBER River.

e. Details on sectors of responsibility for seizing the city of ROME and advance to the North later.

CLARK  
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Official:

BRANN  
G-3

# M

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION  
NUMBER 26

}

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
4 June 1944

1. The purpose of this Operations Instruction is to prescribe the method of crossing the TIBER River, passing through the city of ROME and advancing to the Northwest.

2. a. 5 Infantry Division (Br) will:

- 1) Continue advance to the TIBER River.
- 2) Reconnoiter bridge sites.
- 3) Be prepared on Army Order to cross and secure a limited bridge-head.
- 4) Maintain contact with VI Corps.

b. VI Corps will:

- 1) Be prepared at the earliest opportunity to push armored reconnaissance columns forward rapidly in sufficient strength to seize and secure crossings over the TIBER in its zone of action.
- 2) Advance to Northwest in zone and secure objectives indicated on overlay.

c. II Corps will:

- 1) Be prepared at the earliest opportunity to push armored reconnaissance columns forward rapidly in sufficient strength to seize and secure crossing over the TIBER in its zone of action.
- 2) Advance to Northwest in zone and secure objectives indicated on overlay.
- 3) Maintain contact with VI Corps.

d. French Expeditionary Corps will:

- 1) Continue advance Northwest to the TIBER River in its zone.
- 2) Be prepared at the earliest opportunity to push armored reconnaissance columns forward rapidly in sufficient strength to seize and secure crossings over the TIBER in its zone of action.
- 3) Advance to Northwest in zone and secure objectives shown on overlay.

- 4) Maintain contact with II Corps.
- 5) Protect Fifth Army right flank.
- e. Boundaries:  
See overlay to accompany Operations Instruction No. 26, 4 June 1944.
- f. Recommended crossing sites shown on overlay. The characteristics of the TIBER River, bridges and sites are as previously furnished by Army Engineer. See inclosure No. 2, Annex No. 1 for floating bridge sites.
- g. Army units will move directly through ROME and clear to the Northwest except as authorized by this Headquarters. No unit will bivouac within the city limits or leave behind detachments.

CLARK  
Commanding

*Official:*

BRANN

G-3

# N

OPERATIONS INSTRUCTION }  
NUMBER 27 }

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
4 June 1944

1. The following troops are designated to garrison the city of ROME and will on Army Order come under command of the Commanding General, City Administrative Section:

3d Infantry Division (U.S.)

1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (Br)

1 Composite Battalion (FEC)

One regiment 3d Infantry Division will be held as an Army Reserve within the city of ROME. This regiment will not be available for garrison duty.

2. The Commanding General, 3d Infantry Division is designated as the Commanding General of Troops, City of ROME. He will report to the Commanding General, City Administrative Section for assignment of duties and responsibilities.

3. Movement of all garrison troops into the city of ROME will be on Army Order. 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (Br) and 1 Composite Battalion (FEC) are on arrival in ROME attached to the 3d Infantry Division (U.S.).

4. All movements in compliance with these instructions will be coordinated by Army Movements Control.

5. There will be no other troops bivouaced or garrisoned in the city of ROME without authority of this Headquarters.

CLARK  
Commanding

*Official:*

BRANN

G-3

ANNEX NUMBER TWO \* \* \* \* \*

*Other Documents*

# A

## SOLDIERS OF THE ALLIED ARMIES IN ITALY

Throughout the past winter you have fought hard and valiantly and killed many Germans. Perhaps you are disappointed that we have not been able to advance faster and farther, but I and those who know, realize full well how magnificently you have fought amongst these almost insurmountable obstacles of rocky, trackless mountains, deep in snow, and in valleys blocked by rivers and mud, against a stubborn foe.

The results of these past months may not appear spectacular, but you have drawn into Italy and mauled many of the enemy's best divisions which he badly needed to stem the advance of the Russian Armies in the East. Hitler has admitted that his defeats in the East were largely due to the bitterness of the fighting and his losses in Italy. This, in itself, is a great achievement and you may well be as proud of yourselves as I am of you. You have gained the admiration of the world and the gratitude of our Russian Allies.

Today the bad times are behind us and tomorrow we can see victory ahead. Under the ever increasing blows of the air forces of the United Nations, which are mounting every day in intensity, the German war machine is beginning to crumble. The Allied armed forces are now assembling for the final battles on sea, on land, and in the air to crush the enemy once and for all. From the East and the west; from the North and the South, blows are about to fall which will result in the final destruction of the Nazis and bring freedom once again to Europe, and hasten peace for us all. To us in Italy, has been given the honor to strike the first blow.

We are going to destroy the German Armies in Italy. The fighting will be hard, bitter, and perhaps long, but you are warriors and soldiers of the highest order, who for more than a year have known only victory. You have courage, determination and skill. You will be supported by overwhelming air forces, and in guns and tanks we far outnumber the Germans. No Armies have ever entered battle before with a more just and righteous cause.

So with God's help and blessing, we take the field — confident of victory.

H. R. ALEXANDER  
General

C-in-C Allied Armies in Italy

May, 1944

# *B*

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
May, 1944

## TO: THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE FIFTH ARMY

During the eight months that have passed since your invasion of the Italian mainland you have accomplished results of major strategic and tactical importance to the United Nations. The entire world, including the Axis, knows the success and significance of your Salerno landing against bitter opposition, and of your subsequent capture of Naples in the face of the enemy's determination to deny to us the port which was indispensable to support our further operations in Italy. After the fall of Naples you pressed your attack relentlessly and without delay, forcing the Germans to continue their retreat until they had reached carefully prepared lines, where the exceedingly difficult mountainous terrain provided extreme advantages to the defender. Notwithstanding the obstacles of mountains, lack of roads, bitter weather and concrete defensive fortifications, you have in your various well-executed attacks forced the enemy to reinforce heavily his advantageous position at the expense of other commitments and have harassed him continuously.

At the same time you have established firmly a strong beachhead in the Anzio—Nettuno area, where you have provided a serious threat on his line of communications which he is attempting to meet by the diversion of a large force from other operations.

It may appear to you, since the Fifth Army's progress in terms of territory gained during the past few months has been slow, that our campaign is no longer a major one or that it is not having significant success in the war as a whole. Nothing could be farther from the truth. You have made a conspicuously successful invasion of the continental fortress which the Germans boasted was impregnable. You have required the Germans to devote more than twenty divisions to the costly and losing task of retarding the Allied progress to the north. You have inflicted heavy losses upon their troops and have taken more than 13,000 prisoners. You

have placed the enemy in his present distressing position of trying hopelessly to hold back the Allied forces, which he knows will eventually overrun him from two directions.

I have direct personal knowledge that the accomplishments of the Fifth Army are understood and appreciated by the governments and peoples of the United Nations. They appreciate that you have not only accomplished as much as was possible with the strength of your force, but also that you have contained in this campaign many thousands of German soldiers whom the Nazis have needed desperately in their attempts to stem the Russian advance, and to prepare themselves against invasion in other parts of Europe.

For some weeks there has been a period of comparative calm, during which there has been opportunity for replenishment of men and equipment. We shall soon again resume the offensive and launch the attacks which our apprehensive enemy expects and dreads. You have what you need to strike smashing blows and to follow them through to completion: thorough training, superior equipment, heroic courage and the knowledge that we can and will destroy the German Armies.

I have full confidence that, as in the past, the men of the Fifth Army will meet the tests to come as true soldiers and that with God's guidance and help you will press on to great and decisive victories.

MARK W. CLARK  
Lieutenant General USA  
Commanding

# C

Headquarters Fifth Army  
A.P.O. No. 464, U.S. Army  
6 June 1944

## TO: THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE FIFTH ARMY

It is with extreme pride and satisfaction that I address my congratulations to all the members of the Fifth Army for the magnificent offensive operations with which you have taken Rome and accomplished so much destruction and capture of enemy forces and materiel.

You have carried out these operations step by step according to plan, demonstrating the relentless drive and effective coordination of a courageous and fully cooperative Allied team. Pounding your way past every obstacle of enemy resistance and terrain, oblivious to counterattack or fatigue, you have pressed on to the goal.

The victory which you have won will have far reaching effects in the war against Germany. The German's last ditch defense from position to position as he retired before Rome shows conclusively that he realized how important it was for him at this time to prevent the capture of Rome, the destruction of his forces in Italy and the accomplishment of a major Allied victory here. His failure to accomplish these missions is at once a severe blow to his prestige in the war and a loss to his armed forces which he can not afford. Your victory augurs well for the success of other offensives which will be hurled against the Nazis in other parts of his so-called impregnable European fortress.

As your Army Commander, I wish to pay homage to your splendid accomplishments and to the brave and efficient manner in which now, as on former occasions, you have earned them. I congratulate you, every one. As soldiers of the Fifth Army you have again proved that you form a great Allied fighting team, ready to launch new assaults on new objectives that lie between us and complete victory.

I wish this message to be read in formation to all units of the Fifth Army.

MARK W. CLARK  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

# D

Task Force von Zangen  
G-3 Section  
2289/44

Headquarters  
Task Force  
19 May 1944

## FIRST EVALUATION BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF SOUTHWEST (ARMY GROUP C) OF ENEMY TACTICS DURING THE OFFENSIVE SINCE 12 MAY 1944

1. In direct contrast to enemy tactics observed prior to the present offensive, which involved attacks strictly confined to small areas (no wider than 8—10 km at the most), the enemy attacked for the first time on a wide front (of approximately 40 km). The offensive was launched and conducted with absolute coordination.

2. The enemy attacked with a short, preparatory artillery barrage of unprecedented intensity, which lasted for approximately 1/2 hour. It reached as far as our own artillery.

3. British and American tactics were again methodical. Local successes were seldom exploited. On the other hand, the French, particularly the Moroccans, fought with great elan, and exploited each local success by concentrating immediately all available forces at the weakened point.

4. It is noteworthy that strongpoints were again by-passed as widely as possible. On these occasions the enemy penetrated often through mountainous terrain, which had previously been considered impassable. This proves that the enemy was prepared and equipped for this attack in the smallest detail.

It is essential, therefore, that even terrain which hitherto has been considered impassable, be secured henceforth in accordance with prearranged plans.

Even weak occupation of points of possible penetration by the enemy in difficult terrain may be considered sufficient, if it takes place in time, and is carried out with absolute coordination.

5. Smoke was employed to screen our observation and to conceal enemy movement on an unprecedented scale. For instance, the entire Garigliano Valley was cloaked with smoke for hours on a very wide front. Thus, our artillery had to fight enemy river crossings without the least observation. Smoke was also used by the enemy to indicate targets. In this sector, phosphorous shells, used by the enemy in his attacks from the Beachhead, were not employed to any appreciable extent.

6. In suitable terrain tank attacks were conducted with strong concentrations of armor (100 to 150 tanks). Screening maneuvers, strong, concentrated artillery fire, accompanied by bombing, reduced the effect of our AT weapons greatly, and in points silenced them altogether. Movement of guns in the MLR during daytime is impossible. Therefore, AT weapons must be placed in their final position before the attack takes place. It is most important that all AT (including self-propelled) guns, tanks, and assault guns, be dug in deeply. Mobile reserves, which proved so effective on the eastern front, result in heavy losses and cannot be used in combat against the Anglo-Americans with their great superiority in artillery. Fire, which reveals the position of the gun, must not be opened unless the target is only a short distance away, or else the weapon will be put out of commission immediately by concentrated fire.

7. Enemy artillery was frequently directed by air observation. Artillery reconnaissance planes were protected so strongly by fighters that they could operate without the slightest disturbance, as if they were on maneuvers. With the aid of these artillery observation planes, the enemy was able to kill off strongpoint after strongpoint with concentrated fire.

8. Command posts must be absolutely bombproof. For higher headquarters alternative command posts, complete with signal communication facilities must be available. A strong air raid (of 80 4-motor bombers) destroyed the command post of an Army completely, and rendered it absolutely useless. On the first day of the offensive Army Group Headquarters was attacked twice by 4-motor formations. Wire communications are always disrupted first. Therefore, the main stress in communications should be laid on messengers and liaison officers. Liaison officers should be kept ready at all times in sufficient numbers to meet any contingency, as they must be sent out immediately when wire communications are disrupted to clarify the situation.

9. Reserves must be kept very close to endangered sectors, as troop movements during the day are more or less impossible, because of the heavy and superior artillery fire and aerial attacks (round-the-clock bombing and attacks by fighter

bombers). If, however, these moves should become necessary, the troops must be divided into small groups, an operation which takes a great deal of time. Generally, moves must be limited to the night, though recently enemy air even attempted to harass our night moves.

10. Narrow passes and bridges behind the MLR were covered incessantly with heavy artillery fire. These barrages made our supply problem extremely difficult. At some points supply trains could move only up to 8—10 km from the front lines, and troops had to be supplied by mules and carriers, who reached the lines only under great difficulties. This operation took much valuable time.

11. The performance of enemy tanks and motor vehicles was astoundingly good, particularly in mountainous terrain. For this reason close AT weapons should be kept ready even in sectors where the employment of German tanks seems impossible.

KESSELRING



ANNEX NUMBER THREE \* \* \* \* \*

*Statistics*



# A

## CASUALTIES, U. S. FORCES

1 APRIL - 4 JUNE 1944

	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action	Missing in Action	Total
1 April	17	43	0	60
2 »	14	34	3	51
3 »	15	43	0	58
4 »	13	50	0	63
5 »	9	41	4	54
6 »	10	57	5	72
7 »	5	89	6	100
8 »	16	82	2	100
9 »	3	34	9	46
10 »	12	49	3	64
11 »	8	36	4	48
12 »	17	72	1	90
13 »	3	43	2	48
14 »	8	63	1	72
15 »	17	57	0	74
16 »	9	59	0	68
17 »	24	59	0	83
18 »	8	51	1	60
19 »	2	38	1	41
20 »	11	63	2	76
21 »	10	49	2	61
22 »	22	80	2	104
23 »	18	69	1	88
24 »	48	155	5	208
25 »	12	106	5	123
26 »	12	73	33	118
27 »	13	38	1	52
28 »	8	31	2	41
29 »	10	57	7	74

	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action	Missing in Action	Total
30 April	7	44	0	51
1 May	6	32	1	39
2 »	8	29	2	39
3 »	21	67	1	89
4 »	11	41	2	54
5 »	11	40	2	53
6 »	11	81	2	94
7 »	8	51	0	59
8 »	18	53	1	72
9 »	12	68	3	83
10 »	10	56	0	66
11 »	25	166	6	197
12 »	367	922	283	1,572
13 »	98	497	53	648
14 »	125	389	47	561
15 »	53	288	22	363
16 »	57	206	12	275
17 »	28	180	14	222
18 »	21	93	1	115
19 »	32	132	5	169
20 »	38	177	18	233
21 »	58	225	12	295
22 »	43	258	1	302
23 »	334	1,513	81	1,928
24 »	170	894	24	1,088
25 »	118	523	17	658
26 »	133	683	29	845
27 »	131	668	33	832
28 »	174	769	51	994
29 »	146	663	58	867
30 »	130	662	55	847
31 »	208	1,007	52	1,267
1 June	266	1,189	84	1,539
2 »	162	772	33	967
3 »	160	591	60	811
4 »	93	403	37	533
Total	3,667	16,153	1,204	21,024

# B

## TOTAL CASUALTIES AND STRENGTH

### I. *BATTLE CASUALTIES* . . . . .

9 SEPTEMBER 1943 - 31 MARCH 1944

	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action	Missing in Action	Total
American	7,625	28,966	6,259	42,850
British	4,497	20,683	10,163	35,343
French	2,153	7,924	649	10,726
Italian	176	366	442	984
	14,451	57,939	17,513	89,903

1 APRIL - 4 JUNE 1944

American	3,667	16,153	1,204	21,024
British	520	2,385	450	3,355
French	1,751	7,912	972	10,635
	5,938	26,450	2,626	35,014

### 2. *STRENGTH OF COMMAND* . . . . .

	Effective Strength		Total Replacements
	31 MARCH 1944	4 JUNE 1944	9 SEPT. 1943 - 4 JUNE 1944
American	220,627	231,306	82,437
British	57,322	43,784	43,319
French	72,327	95,142	18,722
	350,276	370,232	144,478

# C

## MAJOR ORDNANCE LOSSES

30 MARCH - 8 JUNE 1944

### STANDARD NOMENCLATURE LIST GROUP A

Gun, 37-mm, M3 & M3A1, w/carriage M4 & M4A1 . . . . .	14
Gun, auto., 40-mm, M1, w/carriage M2 . . . . .	14
Gun, MG, cal .30, M1917A1 . . . . .	110
Gun, MG, cal .30, M1919A4 . . . . .	226
Gun, MG, cal .50, M2, HB . . . . .	45
Gun, MG, cal .50, M2 WC . . . . .	1
Gun, sub MG, cal .45; Thompson, M1928A1 & M1A1 . . . . .	986
Mortar, 60-mm, M2 . . . . .	181
Mortar, 81-mm, M1 . . . . .	40
Rifle, auto., cal .30, Browning, M1918A1 & M1918A2 . . . . .	117

### STANDARD NOMENCLATURE LIST GROUP B

Bayonet, M1905, M1917, M1 . . . . .	3033
Carbine, cal .30, M1 & M1A1 . . . . .	1668
Knife, trench, M1918, M1, M2, M3 . . . . .	4179
Launcher, grenade, M1 . . . . .	538
Launcher, grenade, M7 . . . . .	892
Launcher, grenade, M8 & M9 . . . . .	319
Launcher, rocket, AT, M1A1 & M1A2 . . . . .	428
Pistol, auto., cal .45, M1911 & M1911A1 . . . . .	1281
Pistol, pyro, M2 . . . . .	6
Pistol, pyro, AM, M8, w/mount . . . . .	1
Pistol, Very, 10 Gauge, Mk III, IV, V . . . . .	53
Projector, pyro, hand, M9 . . . . .	290
Projector, signal, ground, M4 . . . . .	57
Revolver, cal .45, M1917 . . . . .	1

Rifle, US, cal .30, M1903, M1903A1, M1903A3 . . . . .	121
Rifle, US, cal .30, M1903A4, snipers . . . . .	26
Rifle, US, cal .30, M1 . . . . .	290

STANDARD NOMENCLATURE LIST GROUP C

Gun, 57-mm, M1, w/carriage M1A1 & M1A2 . . . . .	10
Howitzer, 75-mm, M1 & M1A1, w/carriage M1, pack . . . . .	1
Howitzer, 75-mm, M1 & M1A1, w/carriage M2A1 & M3A3 . . . . .	1
Howitzer, 105-mm, M2 & M2A1, w/carriage M2 . . . . .	1
Howitzer, 105-mm, M2A1, unmounted . . . . .	2
Howitzer, 155-mm, M1917A1 & M1918, w/carriage M1917 & M1918 . . . . .	6
Howitzer, 155-mm, M1, w/carriage M1 . . . . .	7
Howitzer, 155-mm, M1, unmounted . . . . .	1

STANDARD NOMENCLATURE LIST GROUP C

Ambulance, 3/4 ton, 4x4, Dodge . . . . .	11
Car, armored, light M8 . . . . .	6
Car, armored, utility, M20 . . . . .	1
Car, half-track, M2 . . . . .	7
Carriage, motor, 37-mm gun, M6 . . . . .	1
Carriage, motor, 75-mm howitzer, M8 . . . . .	7
Carriage, motor, 3-inch gun, M10 . . . . .	58
Carriage, motor, 105-mm howitzer, M7 . . . . .	15
Carriage, motor, multiple gun, M15 . . . . .	1
Carrier, personnel, half-track, M3 & M3A1 . . . . .	11
Motorcycle, chain driven, Harley-Davidson . . . . .	32
Tank, light, M5 & M5A1 . . . . .	67
Tank, medium, M4 & M4A1 . . . . .	265
Trailer, 1/4 ton payload, 2 wheel cargo . . . . .	36
Trailer, 1 ton payload, 2 wheel cargo . . . . .	39
Trailer, 1 ton, 2 wheel, 250 gal. water tank . . . . .	2
Trailer, 45 ton, tank transporter, M9 . . . . .	3
Trailer, tank recovery, M15 (for tractor M26) . . . . .	1
Truck, 1/4 ton, 4x4, amphibian . . . . .	7
Truck, 1/4 ton, 4x4 . . . . .	374
Truck, 1/2 ton, 4x4, pickup . . . . .	4
Truck, 3/4 ton, 4x4, C&R, w/winch . . . . .	7

Truck, 3/4 ton, 4×4, C&R, wo/winch . . . . .	18
Truck, 3/4 ton, 4×4, WC, w/winch . . . . .	23
Truck, 3/4 ton, 4×4, WC, wo/winch . . . . .	65
Truck, 1 1/2 ton, 4×4, dump . . . . .	21
Truck, 1 1/2 ton, 6×6, cargo and personnel . . . . .	32
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, amphibian . . . . .	7
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 4×4, telephone repair . . . . .	1
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, LWB, cargo, w/winch . . . . .	67
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, LWB, cargo, wo/winch . . . . .	77
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, SWB, cargo, w/winch . . . . .	5
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, SWB, cargo, wo/winch . . . . .	8
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, dump . . . . .	12
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, electrical repair . . . . .	1
Truck, 2 1/2 ton, 6×6, 700 gal. water tank . . . . .	7
Truck, 4 ton, 6×6, cargo . . . . .	9
Truck, 4 ton, 6×6, wrecker . . . . .	2
Truck, 4-5 ton, 4×4, tractor . . . . .	3
Truck, 6 ton, 6×6, prime mover . . . . .	3
Truck, 10 ton, 6×6, wrecker, heavy . . . . .	8
Truck, 12 ton, 6×6, M20 . . . . .	3
Vehicle, tank recovery, T2 . . . . .	2

# D

## PRISONERS OF WAR

### 1. TOTALS CAPTURED BY FIFTH ARMY . . . . .

	9 SEPT. 1943- 31 MARCH 1944	1 APRIL 1944- 4 JUNE 1944	9 SEPT. 1943- 4 JUNE 1944
American	8,109	10,420	18,529
British	4,782	107	4,889
French	1,208	5,079	6,287
Italian	9	....	9
	14,108	15,606	29,714

### 2. PRISONER OF WAR BREAKDOWN . . . . .

12 MAY-2 JUNE 1944

Total (1)

3d Panzer Grenadier Division			}	1042
103d Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .		....		
8th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .		295		
29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .		559		
Infantry Lehr Regiment ( <i>attached</i> ) . . . . .		157		
103d Panzer Battalion . . . . .		....		
3d Artillery Regiment . . . . .		....		
4th Parachute Division			}	208
10th Parachute Grenadier Regiment . . . . .		28		
11th Parachute Grenadier Regiment . . . . .		23		
12th Parachute Grenadier Regiment . . . . .		153		
4th Parachute Artillery Regiment . . . . .		....		

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(1) The normal German division has also an antitank battalion, signal battalion, engineer battalion, and services, which are usually given the same number as the artillery regiment. Prisoners from these subsidiary units are included in each division's total.

15th Panzer Grenadier Division		
115th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	30	} 372
104th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	194	
115th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	128	
129th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	....	
115th Panzer Battalion . . . . .	....	
33d Artillery Regiment . . . . .	16	
33d Engineer Battalion . . . . .	14	
26th Panzer Division		
26th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	39	} 343
9th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	134	
67th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	139	
26th Panzer Regiment . . . . .	....	
93d Artillery Regiment . . . . .	18	
93d Engineer Battalion . . . . .	11	
29th Panzer Grenadier Division		
129th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	39	} 412
15th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	210	
71st Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	153	
29th Panzer Battalion . . . . .	....	
29th Artillery Regiment . . . . .	....	
44th Grenadier Division		
44th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	149	} 727
131st Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	490	
132d Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	6	
134th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	72	
96th Artillery Regiment . . . . .	....	
65th Grenadier Division		
65th Fusilier Battalion . . . . .	65	} 421
145th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	53	
146th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	27	
147th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	233	
165th Artillery Regiment . . . . .	....	
165th Engineer Battalion . . . . .	12	

71st Grenadier Division

71st Fusilier Battalion . . . . .	124	}	1791
191st Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	541		
194th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	669		
211th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	306		
171st Artillery Regiment . . . . .	31		
171st Engineer Battalion . . . . .	33		

90th Panzer Grenadier Division

190th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	....	}	189
155th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	....		
200th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	183		
361st Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	....		
190th Panzer Battalion . . . . .	....		
190th Artillery Regiment . . . . .	....		

92d Grenadier Division

92d Fusilier Battalion . . . . .	....	}	198
1059th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	....		
1060th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	195		
192d Artillery Regiment . . . . .	....		

94th Grenadier Division

94th Fusilier Battalion . . . . .	223	}	1450
267th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	280		
274th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	218		
276th Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	473		
194th Artillery Regiment . . . . .	120		
194th Engineer Battalion . . . . .	36		
194th Antitank Battalion . . . . .	16		

114th Light Division

114th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	236	}	236
721st Light Regiment . . . . .	....		
741st Light Regiment . . . . .	....		
661st Artillery Regiment . . . . .	....		

305th Grenadier Division			
305th Reconnaissance Battalion	. . . . .	102	} 320
576th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	....	
577th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	140	
578th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	77	
305th Artillery Regiment	. . . . .	....	

334th Grenadier Division			
334th Fusilier Battalion	. . . . .	27	} 38
754th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	....	
755th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	10	
756th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	....	
334th Artillery Regiment	. . . . .	....	

362d Grenadier Division			
362d Fusilier Battalion	. . . . .	99	} 1931
954th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	482	
955th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	427	
956th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	548	
362d Artillery Regiment	. . . . .	72	
362d Engineer Battalion	. . . . .	98	
362d Antitank Battalion	. . . . .	32	
Attached Russians	. . . . .	130	

715th Light Division			
725th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	367	} 739
735th Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	238	
671st Artillery Regiment	. . . . .	83	
715th Engineer Battalion	. . . . .	14	
715th Antitank Battalion	. . . . .	25	

Hermann Goering Panzer Parachute Division			
HG Reconnaissance Battalion	. . . . .	74	} 122
1st HG Panzer Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	40	
2d HG Panzer Grenadier Regiment	. . . . .	....	
HG Panzer Regiment	. . . . .	....	
HG Artillery Regiment	. . . . .	....	

Miscellaneous Units:

7th GAF Battalion . . . . .	70
1027th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	23
1028th Panzer Grenadier Regiment . . . . .	130
3d Mountain Battalion . . . . .	31
400th Reconnaissance Battalion . . . . .	43
616th Ost Battalion . . . . .	130
620th Ost Battalion . . . . .	89
22d Antiaircraft Regiment . . . . .	34
433d Construction Battalion . . . . .	121
818th Mountain Engineer Battalion . . . . .	47
94th Coast Artillery Unit . . . . .	12
Coast Artillery Regiment (Schulze) . . . . .	23
791st Construction Battalion . . . . .	24

# E

## QUARTERMASTER SUPPLY

APRIL - MAY 1944

*CHART I* . . . TONNAGE ISSUED . . . . .

	<i>Class I</i> <sup>(1)</sup>	<i>Class II &amp; IV</i>	<i>Class III</i> <sup>(2)</sup>	<i>Total</i>
April	22,860.82	3,052	26,259.87	52,172.7
May	23,767.20	2,207	31,895.74	57,869.9
	46,628.02	5,259	58,155.61	110,042.6

*CHART II* . . . RATION ISSUES (*individual*) . . . . .

	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>
B . . . . .	5,262,462	5,385,420
C . . . . .	111,768	309,621
D . . . . .	42,533	175,032
K . . . . .	147,316	668,989
U . . . . .	1,867,692	1,180,515
American Total . . . . .	7,431,771	7,719,577
Average American Daily Issue . . . . .	247,726	249,019
French . . . . .	1,065,383	1,472,333
Moslem . . . . .	1,182,177	1,421,546
Italian . . . . .	406,729	458,349
Grand Total . . . . .	10,086,060	11,071,805

(1) Includes only rations. Class I tonnage is based on the gross weight of each ration.

(2) Tonnage factors used are: 300 gallons = 1 ton gasoline. 250 gallons = 1 ton diesel, kerosene, and oils.

CHART III . . . OTHER CLASS I ISSUES . . . . .

	Tobacco	Toilet Arts.	Candy	Soap	Bread (pounds)	Meat Butter (issues) <sup>(1)</sup>			
						SF		BH	
						SF	BH	SF	BH
April	6,563,102	5,368,249	5,190,569	546,238	3,494,554	27	15	30	15
May	7,101,205	5,414,111	4,813,927	561,703	3,433,926	29	17	31	17

CHART IV . . . PETROLEUM ISSUE (all in gallons except grease in pounds)

	V-80	Diesel	Kerosene	Lubricating Oils	Greases
April	6,818,077	542,436	135,068	192,386	106,768
May	8,514,655	560,247	82,632	221,493	112,144

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<sup>(1)</sup> Meat and butter issues to the Southern Front appear under the heading SF; to the Beachhead, under the heading BH.

# F

## ALMANAC

11 MAY - 5 JUNE 1944

	Sunrise	Sunset	Moonrise	Moonset
11 May . . . . .	0549	2012	2331	0817
12 » . . . . .	0548	2013	....	0910
13 » . . . . .	0547	2014	0028	1010
14 » . . . . .	0546	2015	0118	1117
15 » <i>(last quarter)</i> . . . . .	0545	2016	0203	1224
16 » . . . . .	0544	2017	0242	1335
17 » . . . . .	0543	2018	0317	1447
18 » . . . . .	0542	2019	0349	1559
19 » . . . . .	0542	2020	0421	1710
20 » . . . . .	0541	2021	0453	1821
21 » . . . . .	0540	2021	0526	1931
22 » <i>(new moon)</i> . . . . .	0539	2022	0604	2039
23 » . . . . .	0538	2023	0645	2144
24 » . . . . .	0538	2024	0731	2242
25 » . . . . .	0537	2025	0821	2334
26 » . . . . .	0536	2026	0916	....
27 » . . . . .	0536	2027	1013	0019
28 » . . . . .	0536	2027	1110	0058
29 » . . . . .	0535	2028	1207	0133
30 » <i>(first quarter)</i> . . . . .	0535	2029	1306	0203
31 » . . . . .	0534	2030	1405	0229
1 June . . . . .	0534	2031	1510	0301
2 » . . . . .	0534	2032	1609	0327
3 » . . . . .	0533	2033	1701	0353
4 » . . . . .	0533	2034	1815	0423

ANNEX NUMBER FOUR \* \* \* \* \*

*Fifth Army Staff*



# FIFTH ARMY STAFF

30 MAY 1944

Chief of Staff . . . . .	Maj. Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther
Deputy Chief of Staff . . . . .	Col. Charles E. Saltzman
Secretary, General Staff . . . . .	Lt. Col. Ira W. Porter
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1 . . . . .	Col. Cheney L. Bertholf
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 . . . . .	Col. Edwin B. Howard
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Donald W. Brann
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4 . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Ralph H. Tate
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-5 . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Edgar E. Hume
Adjutant General . . . . .	Col. Melville F. Grant
Antiaircraft Artillery Officer . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Aaron Bradshaw, Jr.
Artillery Officer . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Thomas E. Lewis
Chaplain . . . . .	Col. Patrick J. Ryan
Chemical Officer . . . . .	Col. Walter A. Guild
Engineer Officer . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Frank O. Bowman
Finance Officer . . . . .	Col. Clarence B. Lindner
Inspector General . . . . .	Col. Irving C. Avery
Judge Advocate General . . . . .	Col. Claude B. Mickelwait
Medical Officer . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Joseph I. Martin
Ordnance Officer . . . . .	Col. Urban Niblo
Provost Marshal . . . . .	Col. Kirk Broadus
Quartermaster . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Joseph P. Sullivan
Signal Officer . . . . .	Brig. Gen. Richard B. Moran



ANNEX NUMBER FIVE

\* \* \* \* \*

*Troop List of Fifth Army*

22 MAY 1944



# TROOP LIST OF FIFTH ARMY

22 MAY 1944

## FIFTH ARMY TROOPS . . . . .

Headquarters, Fifth Army

Special Troops, Fifth Army

Headquarters Detachment, Special Troops

Headquarters Company, Fifth Army

*Attached to Special Troops:*

6736th Headquarters Company (Provisional)

6669th Women's Army Corps Headquarters Platoon

232d and 245th Army Bands

693d AAA Machine Gun Battery

2616th Engineer Utilities Platoon (Provisional)

13th, 33d, 48th, and 49th Finance Disbursing Sections

53d and 61st Military Police Companies (Post, Camp, and Station)

1 Platoon, Company B, 101st Military Police Battalion

22d Quartermaster Car Company

523d Quartermaster Car Company [-2 Platoons]

Detachment, AFHQ, Document Section [from AFHQ]

Detachment, 2680th Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Interrogation of Prisoners of War (Provisional) [from NATOUSA]

Detachment A, 2672d Headquarters Company, Allied Liaison Service (Provisional) [from NATOUSA]

Detachment, Northwest African Photo Reconnaissance Wing (Provisional) [from North African Air Force]

Headquarters, 210th Infantry Division [Italian]

Adjutant General:

34th Postal Regulating Section

542d, 543d, 547th, and 549th Army Postal Units

FIFTH ARMY TROOPS (*continued*) . . . . .

*Adjutant General Units Attached to Fifth Army:*

- 9th and 25th Machine Records Units [from NATOUSA]
- 533d and 537th Army Postal Units [from NATOUSA]
- 539th Army Postal Units [from PBS]

Antiaircraft Artillery:

- 45th AAA Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; *attached:*
  - 898th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion
  - 689th AAA Machine Gun Battery (Airborne)
  - 21st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion [French]
- 107th AAA Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; *attached:*
  - 403d AAA Gun Battalion
  - 439th and 450th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalions
  - 1st Platoon, Company A, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion

Cavalry:

- 5 Reconnaissance Regiment [British] [Battalion] [-1 Squadron]

Chemical:

- 6th Chemical Company (Depot)
- 11th Chemical Maintenance Company

Engineers:

- Engineer Headquarters, Fifth Army
- 92d, 337th, 343d, and 344th Engineer General Service Regiments
- 175th Engineer General Service Regiment [-Companies E and F]
- 540th Engineer Combat Regiment; *attached:*
  - 389th Port Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment [from PBS]
  - 684th, 685th, 686th, and 687th Port Companies
  - 387th Engineer Battalion (Separate)
- 405th Engineer Water Supply Battalion [-Company B]
- Company A, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion [-3 Platoons]
- Company D, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion [-3 Platoons]
- Company A, 85th Engineer Battalion (Heavy Ponton)
- 423d Engineer Dump Truck Company [-1st Platoon]
- 425th and 427th Engineer Dump Truck Companies

469th Engineer Maintenance Company  
Survey Platoon, 661st Engineer Topographic Company  
1206th and 1980th Engineer Composite Platoons (Fire Administration and Fire Control)  
Detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters and Service Company, 85th Engineer Battalion  
2699th Engineer Map Depot Detachment (Provisional)  
*Engineer Units Attached to Fifth Army:*

Survey Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 649th Engineer Topographic Battalion [from NATOUSA]  
1 Section, 1621st Engineer Model Making Detachment [from NATOUSA]  
1 Platoon, 451st Engineer Depot Company [from PBS]  
2d Platoon, 462d Engineer Depot Company [from PBS];  
*attached:*  
12th Engineer Company [Italian]  
2d Platoon, 473d Engineer Maintenance Company [from PBS]  
46 Survey Company (South African Expeditionary Corps)  
517 Corps Field Survey Company [British]  
4 Section, 1 Canadian Tunnelling Company  
15 Stores Section [British]

General:

6648th Casual Battalion (Provisional)  
20th Special Service Company [-2 Platoons]  
21st Special Service Company  
6724th Guard Company (Provisional)  
6750th Headquarters Company, City Administration (Provisional); *attached:*  
246th Army Band  
Company C, 1st Armored Signal Battalion [from Seventh Army]  
6746th Signal Service Company (Provisional)  
1 Wire Section, 180th Signal Repair Company  
134th Military Police Prisoner of War Detachment (Provisional) [from PBS]  
6788th, 6789th, 6790th, and 6791st Counter Intelligence Corps Detachments (Provisional) [from NATOUSA]

Infantry:

509th Parachute Infantry Battalion

FIFTH ARMY TROOPS (*continued*) . . . . .

Medical:

- 3d Convalescent Hospital
- 8th, 16th, 38th, and 56th Evacuation Hospitals (750 Bed)
- 11th, 15th, 93d, 94th, and 95th Evacuation Hospitals (Semi-Mobile) (400 Bed)
- 17th Veterinary Evacuation Hospital
- 10th Field Hospital
- 161st Medical Battalion (Separate), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment
  - 401st, 402d, and 403d Collecting Companies
  - 601st Clearing Company
  - Attached to 161st Medical Battalion:*
    - 551st Ambulance Company (Motor)
    - 617th and 672d Medical Collecting Companies [from Seventh Army]
- 162d Medical Battalion (Separate), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment
  - 404th, 405th, and 406th Collecting Companies
  - 602d Clearing Company
  - Attached to 162d Medical Battalion:*
    - 550th Ambulance Company (Motor)
- 2d Medical Laboratory [-Mobile Section 1]
- 12th Medical Supply Depot Company
- 549th and 582d Ambulance Companies (Motor)
- 11th Malaria Survey Unit
- 28th Malaria Control Unit; *attached:*
  - 255th Railway Battery (194-mm Gun) [Italian]
  - 2684th Malaria Control Unit (Provisional)
- Medical Units Attached to Fifth Army:*
  - 2d Auxiliary Surgical Group [from NATOUSA]
  - 56th Medical Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment [from Seventh Army]
    - 885th, 886th, and 887th Medical Collecting Companies
    - 891st Clearing Company
  - 615th Medical Clearing Company [from Seventh Army]
  - 673d Medical Collecting Company [from Seventh Army]
  - 14 and 21 Casualty Clearing Stations [British]
  - 1, 3, and 33 Field Transfusion Units [British]

1, 3, and 4 Field Surgical Units [British]  
139 and 152 Dental Units [British]  
Light Optical Section [British]

**Military Police:**

101st Military Police Battalion [-1 Platoon]  
504th and 759th Military Police Battalions  
377th and 379th Military Police Escort Guard Companies

*Military Police Units attached to Fifth Army:*

342d Military Police Escort Guard Company [from PBS]  
141st Military Police Prisoner of War Detachment (Provisional) [from PBS]

**Ordnance:**

2660th Ordnance Group (Provisional), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
6694th Ordnance Base Group (Provisional), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
5th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (w/ attached Med)  
79th, 189th, and 330th Ordnance Depot Companies  
44th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (w/ attached Med)  
411th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company  
476th Ordnance Evacuation Company [-Detachment]  
477th Ordnance Evacuation Company  
529th Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Company (Tank)  
197th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (w/attached Med)  
31st and 82d Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Companies (FA)  
881st and 907th Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Companies (Q)  
991st Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Company (Tank)  
62d Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (w/attached Med)  
87th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (w/ attached Med)  
58th, 66th, and 684th Ordnance Ammunition Companies  
*Attached to 87th Ordnance Battalion:*

149th, 150th, 153d, and 154th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squads  
53d and 605th Ordnance Ammunition Companies  
2652d Ordnance Ammunition Company (Provisional)

73d Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (w/  
atched Med)

2630th Ordnance Battalion (Provisional), Headquarters and Headquarters  
Detachment (w/atched Med)

42d Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
(w/atched Med)

28th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company; *attached*:  
147th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad

29th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company; *attached*:  
146th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad

94th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company; *attached*:  
143d Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad

261st Ordnance Maintenance Company (AA); *attached*:  
56th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad (Separate)

3488th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company (Q)

45th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
(w/atched Med)

14th, 45th, 101st, and 112th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Companies  
262d Ordnance Maintenance Company (AA)

525th Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Company (Tank)

3407th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company (Q)

*Attached to 45th Ordnance Battalion:*

77th and 201st Ordnance Depot Companies

1 Platoon, 2622d Ordnance Tank Transporter Company (Provi-  
sional)

Detachment, 476th Ordnance Evacuation Company

67th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
(w/atched Med)

3459th Ordnance Medium Automotive Maintenance Company

188th Ordnance Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
(w/atched Med)

8th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company; *attached*:

152d Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad

86th Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Company (Tank); *attached:*  
144th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad  
87th Ordnance Heavy Maintenance Company (Tank); *attached:*  
148th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad  
93d Ordnance Maintenance Company (AA); *attached:*  
145th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad  
109th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company; *attached:*  
151st Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad  
3485th and 3486th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Companies (Q)  
46th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company  
*French Units Attached to 2660th Ordnance Group:*  
651st Maintenance Battalion  
611th and 612th Stores Companies  
631st and 632d Ammunition Companies  
654/3 Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company (Q)  
4th Company, 202d Pioneer Regiment

Quartermaster:

62d Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
230th Quartermaster Salvage Collecting Company [-I Section]; *attached:*  
2 Section, 299th Quartermaster Salvage Repair Company [from PBS]  
487th Quartermaster Laundry Company [-I Platoon]  
585th Quartermaster Laundry Company  
815th, 816th, 817th, and 818th Sterilization Companies  
94th Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
204th Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquarters  
Detachment  
3837th, 3838th, 3839th, and 3880th Quartermaster Gas Supply Companies  
*Attached to 204th Quartermaster Battalion:*  
3341st Quartermaster Truck Company (Tank) [-I Platoon]  
2d Platoon, 3654th Quartermaster Truck Company (Tank) [from PBS]  
703d Petrol Company [French]  
242d Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
3254th, 3255th, and 3257th Quartermaster Service Companies  
*Attached to 242d Quartermaster Battalion*  
816th Military Police Platoon  
Detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 249th Quar-  
termaster Battalion

FIFTH ARMY TROOPS (*continued*) . . . . .

249th Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
[-Detachment]

3278th, 3280th, and 3281st Quartermaster Service Companies

*Attached to 249th Quartermaster Battalion:*

94th Quartermaster Railhead company [-Detachment]

102d Quartermaster Bakery Company [-3d Platoon]

3006th Quartermaster Bakery Company (Mobile) (Special)

3840th and 3853d Quartermaster Gas Supply Companies

4065th Quartermaster Service Company

1 Platoon, 85th Quartermaster Depot Company

3d Platoon, 487th Quartermaster Laundry Company

1 Section, 230th Quartermaster Salvage Collecting Company

259th Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment

3298th, 3299th, 3300th, and 4053d Quartermaster Service Companies

263d Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment

4062d, 4063d, and 4064th Quartermaster Service Companies

47th Quartermaster Company (Graves Registration) [-2 Platoons]

85th Quartermaster Depot Company [-1 Platoon]

90th Quartermaster Railhead Company; *attached:*

Detachment, 94th Quartermaster Railhead Company

93d and 98th Quartermaster Railhead Companies

110th Quartermaster Bakery Company

178th Quartermaster Bakery Company; *attached:*

3d Platoon, 102 Quartermaster Bakery Company

3005th Quartermaster Bakery Company (Mobile) (Special)

1st and 4th Platoons, 48th Quartermaster Company (Graves Registration)

1 Platoon, 3341st Quartermaster Trucking Company (Tank)

*Quartermaster Units Attached to Fifth Army:*

1 Platoon, 280th Quartermaster Refrigeration Company [from MBS]

1st Platoon, 67th Quartermaster Refrigeration Company

Signal:

Headquarters, Fifth Army Signal Service

51st Signal Battalion; *attached:*

163d Signal Photo Company [-Detachments]; *attached:*

Detachment, 6655th Picture Service Company (Provisional) [from  
AFHQ]

212th Signal Depot Company [-Detachment]; *attached*:  
     6737th and 6738th Signal Inspection and Maintenance Detachments  
         (Provisional)  
     3d Company, 202d Pioneer Regiment [French]  
 6681st Signal Pigeon Company (Provisional) [-3 Detachments]  
 6689th Signal Monitoring Company (Provisional)  
     Detachment, 74th Signal Company  
 63d Signal Battalion; *attached*:  
     128th Signal Company (Radio Intercept) [-Detachments]; *attached*:  
         Detachment A, 849th Signal Intelligence Service [from NATOUSA]  
     180th Signal Repair Company [-4 Section]  
     Detachment, 79 Wireless Section [from Allied Armies in Italy]  
     Detachment, 229th Signal Operating Company  
     6759th Signal Detachment (Provisional)  
 74th Signal Company (Special) [-Detachment]; *attached*:  
     2 Radio Repair Sections, 180th Signal Repair Company  
     Detachment, 163d Signal Photo Company  
     Detachment, 212th Signal Depot Company  
     Detachment, 817th Signal Post Service Company [from PBS]  
*British Signal Units Attached to Fifth Army:*  
     85 Cipher Section [-Detachment]  
     3 Special Wireless Section  
     5 Army Signal Park

Transportation:

6723d Truck Group (Provisional); *attached*:  
     6748th and 6749th Quartermaster Truck Companies (Provisional)  
     74th and 119th Military Police Prisoner of War Detachments (Provis-  
         ional) [from PBS]  
 235th Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquarters  
     Detachment  
     3637th, 3638th, 3639th, and 3640th Quartermaster Truck Companies  
*Attached to 235th Quartermaster Battalion:*  
     55th Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquar-  
         ters Detachment  
     3357th, 3358th, 3359th and 3360th Quartermaster Truck Companies

FIFTH ARMY TROOPS (*continued*) . . . . .

56th Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
3373d, 3374th, 3375th, and 3376th Quartermaster Truck Companies  
468th Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
3641st, 3642d, 3643d, and 3644th Quartermaster Truck Companies  
3605th Quartermaster Truck Company  
6730th Regulating Company (Provisional)  
1007th Docks Operating Company

*Transportation Units Attached to Fifth Army:*

52d Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment [from Seventh Army]

3333d, 3334th, 3335th, and 3336th Quartermaster Truck Companies

*Attached to 52d Quartermaster Battalion:*

3353d and 3355th Quartermaster Truck Companies

53d Quartermaster Battalion (Mobile), Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment [from Seventh Army]

3338th, 3339th, and 3340th Quartermaster Truck Companies

*Attached to 53d Quartermaster Battalion:*

3354th and 3356th Quartermaster Truck Companies

125th Quartermaster Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment [from PBS]

3541st, 3542d, 3550th, and 3551st Quartermaster Truck Companies

*Attached to 125th Quartermaster Battalion:*

3405th and 3407th Quartermaster Truck Companies

Zone 2 and Zone 3 Regulator Companies [French]

521st Traffic Control [French]

2d Platoon, 521/1 Traffic Control Company [French]

*AAI Unit Attached to Fifth Army:*

Company G, 2675th Regiment, Allied Control Commission (USC) (Provisional) [-Detachments]

*NATOUSA Units Attached to Fifth Army:*

6792d, 6793d, and 6794th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachments (Provisional)

Combat Propaganda Team, 2679th Headquarters Company, Psychological Warfare Branch

British Units Attached to Fifth Army:

« Q » Air Liaison Section (Photo Reconnaissance Unit)  
Special Liaison Unit  
No. 3 Signal Corps Intelligence Unit  
« A » Force  
Headquarters, 59 Area  
Survey Staff Directorate

II CORPS

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, II Corps

Antiaircraft Artillery:

71st AAA Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; *attached*:  
8th AAA Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery  
209th AAA Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; *attached*:  
231st Army Band  
105th and 443d AAA Automatic Weapons Battalions (Self-Propelled)  
401st AAA Gun Battalion  
532d and 630th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalions  
900th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion (Semi-Mobile)  
688th AAA Machine Gun Battery (Airborne)  
6672d Gun Operations Room Platoon (Provisional)  
2d Platoon, Company A, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion

Armored Force:

1st Armored Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Company; *attached*:  
760th Tank Battalion

Cavalry:

91st and 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons

Chemical:

2d Chemical Battalion (Motorized)  
172d Chemical Company (Smoke Generating)

Engineers:

1108th Engineer Combat Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Company

II CORPS (*continued*): . . . . .

19th Engineer Combat Regiment  
48th and 235th Engineer Combat Battalions  
Company E, 175th Engineer General Service Regiment  
66th Engineer Topographical Company  
4th Platoon, Company A, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion

Field Artillery:

II Corps Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery  
6th Field Artillery Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery  
59th and 93d Armored Field Artillery Battalions [105-mm Howitzer]  
36th and 77th Field Artillery Groups, Headquarters and Headquarters Batteries  
2d Field Artillery Observation Battalion [-Battery A]  
173d Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Gun]  
601st Field Artillery Battalion (Mountain) [75-mm Pack Howitzer]; *attached*:  
2636th Motor Platoon (Provisional)  
602d Field Artillery Battalion (Mountain) [75-mm Pack Howitzer]; *attached*:  
2637th Motor Platoon (Provisional)  
631st, 936th, and 937th Field Artillery Battalions [155-mm Howitzer]  
697th Field Artillery Battalion [240-mm Howitzer] [-Detachment]  
932d Field Artillery Battalion [8-inch Howitzer]  
935th Field Artillery Battalion [4.5-inch Gun]  
Battery A, 1st Field Artillery Observation Battalion

General:

Band, 143d Infantry Regiment

Infantry:

85th Infantry Division  
Headquarters, 85th Infantry Division  
Headquarters, Special Troops  
Headquarters Company  
785th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company  
85th Quartermaster Company  
85th Signal Company [-Detachments]  
Military Police Platoon  
85th Infantry Division Band  
85th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)

. . . . .  
310th Engineer Combat Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]  
85th Infantry Division Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery  
403d Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]  
310th Medical Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]

337th Regimental Combat Team  
337th Infantry Regiment  
328th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company A, 310th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company A, 310th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 85th Signal Company

338th Regimental Combat Team  
338th Infantry Regiment  
329th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company B, 310th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company B, 310th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 85th Signal Company

339th Regimental Combat Team  
339th Infantry Regiment  
910th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company C, 310th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company C, 310th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 85th Signal Company

*Attached to 85th Infantry Division:*  
6777th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment (Provisional) [from NA-  
TOUSA]

## 88th Infantry Division

Headquarters, 88th Infantry Division  
Headquarters, Special Troops  
Headquarters Company  
788th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company  
88th Quartermaster Company  
88th Signal Company [-Detachments]  
Military Police Platoon  
88th Infantry Division Band

II CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

- 88th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)
- 313th Engineer Combat Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]
- 88th Infantry Division Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery
  - 339th Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]
- 313th Medical Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]
- 349th Regimental Combat Team
  - 349th Infantry Regiment
  - 337th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]
  - Company A, 313th Engineer Combat Battalion
  - Company A, 313th Medical Battalion
  - Detachment, 88th Signal Company
- 350th Regimental Combat Team
  - 350th Infantry Regiment
  - 338th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]
  - Company B, 313th Engineer Combat Battalion
  - Company B, 313th Medical Battalion
  - Detachment, 88th Signal Company
- 351st Regimental Combat Team
  - 351st Infantry Regiment
  - 913th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]
  - Company C, 313th Engineer Combat Battalion
  - Company C, 313th Medical Battalion
  - Detachment, 88th Signal Company
- Attached to 88th Infantry Division:*
  - 4th Platoon, 47th Quartermaster Company (Graves Registration)
  - 6778th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment (Provisional) [from NA-TOUSA]

Medical:

- 11th Field Hospital
- 54th Medical Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment
- 379th, 380th, and 381st Medical Collecting Companies
- 683d Medical Clearing Company

Military Police:

- Military Police Platoon, II Corps
- 202d Military Police Company

.....  
Ordnance:

55th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squad (Separate)

Quartermaster:

3256th Quartermaster Service Company  
2 Platoons, 523d Quartermaster Car Company

Signal:

53d Signal Battalion  
Detachment A, 128th Signal Company (Radio Intercept); *attached*:  
Detachment H, 849th Signal Intelligence Service [from NATOUSA]  
106 Wireless Telegraph Intelligence Section [British]  
106 Special Wireless Telegraph Section [British]

Tank Destroyer:

776th and 804th Tank Destroyer Battalions

Transportation:

3337th Quartermaster Truck Company [from Seventh Army]  
3404th Quartermaster Truck Company

*NATOUSA Units Attached to II Corps:*

30th Finance Disbursing Section  
6780th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment

*Italian Units Attached to II Corps:*

Headquarters, 67th Infantry Regiment  
1st and 2d Battalions  
103d Minatori Battalion  
2d Pack Mule Group  
1st, 2d, 5th, 9th, 10th, and 11th Pack Mule Companies

IV CORPS . . . . .

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, IV Corps

Field Artillery:

IV Corps Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

IV CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

Military Police:

Military Police Platoon, IV Corps

Signal:

62d Signal Battalion [-Company A]

*NATOUSA Unit Attached to IV Corps:*

6799th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment

VI CORPS . . . . .

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, VI Corps

Antiaircraft Artillery:

35th AAA Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; *attached:*

5th and 9th AAA Groups, Headquarters and Headquarters Batteries

68th Coast Artillery Regiment (AA) [-3d Battalion]

72d, 108th, and 216th AAA Gun Battalions

433d, 451st, 534th, and 536th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalions

102d AA Balloon Battery (Very Low Altitude)

692d AAA Machine Gun Battery (Airborne)

6673d Gun Operations Platoon (Provisional)

*British Antiaircraft Units Attached to VI Corps:*

168/56 and 224/31 Light AA Batteries [Battalions]

Armored Force:

1st Armored Division

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Service Company

1st Armored Division Trains, Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Maintenance Battalion

Supply Battalion

47th Armored Medical Battalion

81st Armored Reconnaissance Battalion

16th Armored Engineer Battalion

1st Armored Division Artillery, Headquarters

27th, 68th, and 91st Armored Field Artillery Battalions [105-mm Howitzer]

VI CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

6th Armored Infantry Regiment

1st Armored Regiment

13th Armored Regiment

141st Armored Signal Company

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Combat Command A

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Combat Command B

*Attached to 1st Armored Division:*

434th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion (Self-Propelled)

191st Tank Battalion

6779th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment (Provisional) [from NA-TOUSA]

751st Tank Battalion

46 Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment [British]

Chemical:

83d and 84th Chemical Battalions (Motorized)

24th Chemical Company (Decontamination)

179th Chemical Company (Smoke Generating)

Engineers:

36th and 39th Engineer Combat Regiments

Company B, 405th Engineer Water Supply Battalion

661st Engineer Topographic Company [-Survey Platoon]

1st Platoon, 423d Engineer Dump Truck Company

Detachment, 6617th Engineer Mine Clearing Company (Provisional)

1811 Ponton Bridge Platoon

6th Minatori Company, 910th Engineer Battalion [Italian]

21st and 101st Pontieri Companies [Italian]

210th and 909th Engineer Companies [Italian]

Field Artillery:

18th Field Artillery Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

35th Field Artillery Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

15th Field Artillery Observation Battalion

36th, 976th, and 977th Field Artillery Battalions [155-mm Gun]

69th Armored Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]

141st, 634th, and 938th Field Artillery Battalions [155-mm Howitzer]

VI CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

194th Field Artillery Battalion [8-inch Howitzer]  
463d Parachute Field Artillery Battalion [75-mm Pack Howitzer] (-Batteries C  
and D)

Detachment and Battery C, 698th Field Artillery Battalion [240-mm Howitzer]  
Battery A, 2d Field Artillery Observation Battalion

*British Artillery Units Attached to VI Corps:*

24 Army Field Regiment RA (Self-Propelled)  
[24 105-mm Howitzers]

4 Medium Regiment RA [16 5.5-inch Gun/Howitzers]

80 Medium Regiment RA [16 4.5-inch Guns]

192/57 Anti-Tank Battery [Battalion] [8 6-pounders; 4 17-pounders]

Headquarters and 2 Flights, 655 Air Observation Post Squadron

Composite Battery, 5 Survey Regiment

102 Field Company

Detachment, Counterbattery Officer Staff, 5 Corps

Infantry:

3d Infantry Division

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

3d Infantry Division Band

3d Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized) .

10th Engineer Combat Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]

3d Infantry Division Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

9th Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]

3d Medical Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]

703d Ordnance Light Maintenance Company

3d Quartermaster Company

3d Signal Company [-Detachments]

Military Police Platoon

7th Regimental Combat Team

7th Infantry Regiment

10th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]

Company A, 10th Engineer Combat Battalion

Company A, 3d Medical Battalion

Detachment, 3d Signal Company

15th Regimental Combat Team

15th Infantry Regiment

39th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]

Company B, 10th Engineer Combat Battalion

Company B, 3d Medical Battalion

Detachment, 3d Signal Company

30th Regimental Combat Team

30th Infantry Regiment

41st Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]

Company C, 10th Engineer Combat Battalion

Company C, 3d Medical Battalion

Detachment, 3d Signal Company

*Attached to 3d Infantry Division:*

441st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion (Self-Propelled)

601st Tank Destroyer Battalion

6773d Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment

(Provisional) [from NATOUSA]

34th Infantry Division

Headquarters, 34th Infantry Division

Headquarters, Special Troops

Headquarters Company

734th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company

34th Quartermaster Company

34th Signal Company [-Detachments]

Military Police Platoon

34th Infantry Division Band

34th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)

109th Engineer Combat Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]

34th Infantry Division Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

185th Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]

109th Medical Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]

133d Regimental Combat Team

133d Infantry Regiment

151st Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]

Company A, 109th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company A, 109th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 34th Signal Company

135th Regimental Combat Team

135th Infantry Regiment  
125th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company B, 109th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company B, 109th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 34th Signal Company

168th Regimental Combat Team

168th Infantry Regiment  
175th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company C, 109th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company C, 109th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 34th Signal Company

*Attached to 34th Infantry Division:*

100th Infantry Battalion (Separate)  
435th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion  
6774th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment  
(Provisional) [from NATOUSA]

36th Infantry Division

Headquarters, 36th Infantry Division  
Headquarters, Special Troops  
Headquarters Company  
736th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company  
36th Quartermaster Company  
36th Signal Company [-Detachments]  
Military Police Platoon  
36th Infantry Division Band  
36th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)  
111th Engineer Combat Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]  
36th Infantry Division Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery  
155th Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]  
111th Medical Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]

141st Regimental Combat Team

141st Infantry Regiment  
131st Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company A, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company A, 111th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 36th Signal Company

142d Regimental Combat Team

142d Infantry Regiment  
132d Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company B, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company B, 111th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 36th Signal Company

143d Regimental Combat Team

143d Infantry Regiment  
133d Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company C, 111th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company C, 111th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 36th Signal Company

*Attached to 36th Infantry Division:*

6775th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment  
(Provisional) [from NATOUSA]

45th Infantry Division

Headquarters and Headquarters Company  
45th Infantry Division Band  
45th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)  
120th Engineer Combat Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]  
45th Infantry Division Artillery, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery  
189th Field Artillery Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]  
120th Medical Battalion [-Companies A, B, and C]  
700th Ordnance Light Maintenance Company  
45th Quartermaster Company  
45th Signal Company [-Detachments]  
Military Police Platoon  
157th Regimental Combat Team  
157th Infantry Regiment

VI CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

158th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company A, 120th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company A, 120th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 45th Signal Company

179th Regimental Combat Team  
179th Infantry Regiment  
160th Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company B, 120th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company B, 120th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 45th Signal Company

180th Regimental Combat Team  
180th Infantry Regiment  
171st Field Artillery Battalion [105-mm Howitzer]  
Company C, 120th Engineer Combat Battalion  
Company C, 120th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 45th Signal Company

*Attached to 45th Infantry Division:*

106th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion (Self-Propelled)  
645th Tank Destroyer Battalion  
6776th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment (Provisional)  
[from NATOUSA]

1 British Infantry Division  
Headquarters, 1 Infantry Division  
2, 3, and 18 Infantry Brigades

5 British Infantry Division  
Headquarters, 5 Infantry Division  
13, 15, and 17 Infantry Brigades

Medical:

52d Medical Battalion  
33d Field Hospital  
Mobile Section 1, 2d Medical Laboratory  
42d Malaria Control Unit; *attached:*  
3d Company, 548th Regiment [Italian]

.....  
Military Police:

206th Military Police Company

Quartermaster:

48th Quartermaster Company (Graves Registration) [-2 Platoons]  
2d Platoon, 47th Quartermaster Company (Graves Registration)  
B Platoon, Mobile Laundry Company [British]

Signal:

57th Signal Battalion  
1 Radio Repair Section, 180th Signal Repair Company  
Detachment B, 128th Signal Company; *attached*:  
• Detachment E, 849th Signal Intelligence Service [from NATOUSA]  
Detachment, 163d Signal Photo Company  
1 Detachment, 6681st Signal Pigeon Company  
Team 12, 849th Signal Intelligence Service [from NATOUSA]  
Detachment, 85 Cipher Section [British]

Special Service Force:

1st Special Service Force  
Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment  
1st, 2d, and 3d Regiments  
Service Battalion  
16th Finance Disbursing Section

Tank Destroyer:

636th, 701st, 805th, and 894th Tank Destroyer Battalions

Transportation:

3606th Quartermaster Truck Company

*NATOUSA Unit Attached to VI Corps:*

6781st Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment

FRENCH EXPEDITIONARY CORPS . . . . .

Headquarters, French Expeditionary Corps

FRENCH EXPEDITIONARY CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

Antiaircraft Artillery:

40th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion  
Battery B, 34th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion

*American Units Attached to FEC:*

34th AAA Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; *attached:*  
91st and 505th AAA Groups, Headquarters and Headquarters Batteries  
67th AAA Gun Battalion  
432d AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion (Self-Propelled)  
436th, 437th, and 894th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalions  
6707th Gun Operations Room Platoon (Provisional)  
4th Platoon, Company D, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion

Armored Force:

2d Armored Group, Headquarters and Headquarters Company [U.S.];  
*attached:*  
753d, 755th, 756th, and 757th Tank Battalions [U.S.]

Chemical:

3d Chemical Battalion (Motorized) [U.S.]

Engineers:

201st Pioneer Regiment  
1st Battalion, 202d Pioneer Regiment [-2 Companies]  
2d Battalion, 202d Pioneer Regiment [-2 Companies]  
2d Battalion, 101st Engineer Combat Group  
1/8 Pioneer Battalion  
180/1, 180/3, and 180/4 Engineer Companies  
1 Section, 42d Engineer Combat Group  
2d Geographic Section

*American Units Attached to FEC:*

Company F, 175th Engineer General Service Regiment  
1st Platoon, Company D, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion

Field Artillery:

Regiment d'Artillerie Coloniale du Levant [155-mm Gun]; *attached:*  
Naval Battery [155-mm GPF Gun]

*American Units Attached to FEC:*

13th Field Artillery Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery;  
*attached:*

17th, 178th, and 194th Field Artillery Groups, Headquarters and Headquarters Batteries

1st Field Artillery Observation Battalion [-Battery A]

17th, 178th, 248th, and 933d Field Artillery Battalions [155-mm Howitzer]

630th and 995th Field Artillery Battalions [8-inch Howitzer]

633d and 985th Field Artillery Battalions [155-mm Gun]

698th Field Artillery Battalion [240-mm Howitzer]

[-Detachment and Battery C]; *attached:*

Detachment, 697th Field Artillery Battalion [240-mm Howitzer]

939th Field Artillery Battalion [4.5-inch Gun]

3d Platoon, Company D, 84th Engineer Camouflage Battalion

**Infantry:**

1st Motorized Infantry Division

Headquarters, 1st Motorized Infantry Division

1st Marine Reconnaissance Battalion

1st Engineer Battalion

1st Artillery Regiment

1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions [105-mm Howitzer]

4th Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]

1st Medical Battalion

9th Ordnance Maintenance Company

1st Quartermaster Company

1st Signal Company

1st Motorized Infantry Brigade

1st and 2d Motorized Infantry Battalions

22d Motorized North African Infantry Battalion

2d Motorized Infantry Brigade

4th, 5th, and 11th Motorized Infantry Battalions

4th Motorized Infantry Brigade

21st and 24th Motorized Infantry Battalions

Pacific-Marine Motorized Infantry Battalion

FRENCH EXPEDITIONARY CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

*Attached to 1st Motorized Infantry Division:*

34th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion [-Battery B]

2d Moroccan Infantry Division

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

41st AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion

87th Engineer Battalion

63d Algerian Artillery Regiment, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions [105-mm Howitzer]

4th Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]

9th Medical Battalion [-Detachment]

7th Ordnance Company

9th Quartermaster Company

87/84 Signal Company

187th Transport Company

4th Moroccan Infantry Regiment

5th Moroccan Infantry Regiment

8th Moroccan Infantry Regiment

*Attached to 2d Moroccan Infantry Division:*

32d AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion

14th and 15th Pack Mule Companies

3d Algerian Infantry Division

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

37th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion

3d Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion (Algerian)

83d Engineer Battalion

67th Algerian Artillery Regiment, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions [105-mm Howitzer]

4th Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]

3d Medical Battalion

3d Ordnance Company

3d Quartermaster Company

83/84 Signal Company

183d Transport Company

3d Algerian Infantry Regiment

4th Tunisian Infantry Regiment

7th Algerian Infantry Regiment

*Attached to 3d Algerian Infantry Division:*

7th Tank Destroyer Battalion

17th, 21st, and 22d Pack Mule Companies

4th Moroccan Mountain Division

Headquarters and 88th Headquarters Company

33d AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion

4th Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion (Moroccan)

82d Engineer Battalion

69th Algerian Artillery Regiment, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery

1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions [75-mm Howitzer]

8th Medical Battalion

8th Ordnance Company

8th Quartermaster Company

88/84 Signal Company

188th Transport Company

288th and 388th Pack Mule Companies

1st Moroccan Infantry Regiment

2d Moroccan Infantry Regiment

6th Moroccan Infantry Regiment

*Attached to 4th Moroccan Mountain Division:*

3d Spahi Reconnaissance Battalion (Moroccan)

64th Algerian Artillery Regiment

1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions [105-mm Howitzer]

4th Battalion [155-mm Howitzer]

Detachment, 9th Medical Battalion

8th Tank Destroyer Battalion

Goum Headquarters

1st, 3d, and 4th Groups of Tabors (Moroccan)

Medical:

401st and 405th Casualty Clearing Hospitals

422d and 425th Field Hospitals

1st Mobile Surgical Group

1st, 2d, and 3d Mobile Surgical Formations

FRENCH EXPEDITIONARY CORPS (*continued*) . . . . .

451/3 Advance Medical Supply Depot  
531st Sanitary Company  
472d and 473d Hygiene Sections  
Hospital Complement 2

Provost Marshal:

521/1 Traffic Control Company [-1 Platoon]

Quartermaster:

311th Quartermaster Headquarters Administration  
323d Subsistence Depot  
325th Quartermaster Class I Depot  
349th Quartermaster Bakery Group  
302d Meat Supply Company  
332d Meat Supply Company [-1 Section]  
381st Administration Overhead Company  
702d Gas Supply and Transport Company  
352d Mobile Bakery  
310th Bakery Section

Signal:

806/1 and 806/3 Signal Lines Construction Companies  
807/1 Signal Operating Company  
810/1 Signal Depot Company  
808/1 Signal Radio and Telegraph Unit  
809/1 Telegraph Detachment

Transportation:

501st Transport Group [-3 Companies]  
18th, 19th, and 20th Pack Mule Companies  
21st Company, 502d Transport Group  
283/25 Transport Company

Veterinary:

541/1 and 542/1 Veterinary Ambulance Companies

ITALIAN TROOPS . . . . .

23d Engineer Battalion  
Finance Guards

ITALIAN TROOPS (*continued*) . . . . .

Headquarters, 525th Infantry Regiment

1st and 2d Battalions

1 Company, 1st Battalion, 541st Infantry Regiment

525th Field Hospital

Detachment, Royal Carabinieri

810th Radio Control Platoon

1004th and 1005th Autieri Companies

110th, 130th, and 210th Veterinary Hospitals

Headquarters, 548th Infantry Regiment

910th Engineer Battalion

2d Battalion, 567th Artillery Regiment

1st Battalion, 548th Infantry Regiment [-3d Company]

865th Field Hospital

Royal Carabinieri

154th Royal Carabinieri

Pack Mule Training Center

1st and 2d Platoons, Muleteers

1 Separate Platoon

## E R R A T A

- Page X, Contents, Line 2 under Annexes: *1945* should read *1944*
- Page 2, Par. 2, Line 5: *General Sir Harold R. L. Alexander* should read *General Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander*
- Page 8, Par. 2, Line 6: *evcept* should read *except*
- Page 18, Par. 5, Line 7: *initialy* should read *initially*
- Page 37, Par. 3, Line 7: *responsability* should read *responsibility*
- Page 49, Par. 1, Line 5: *unnecessary* should read *unnecessary*
- Page 78, Par. 1, Line 8: *4d* should read *3d*
- Page 91, Par. 3, Line 7: *forther* should read *farther*
- Page 115, Par. 2, Line 23: *off* should read *of*
- Page 171, Date Line: *1945* should read *1944*
- Page 193, Par. 1, Line 5: *Fourteenth* should read *Fourteenth*
- Page 237, Line 11: *section* should read *sections*

\* \* \* \* \*

This part of the Army History was prepared under the direction of Col. John D. Forsythe, Army Historian, by Lt. Col. Chester G. Starr, Jr., with the assistance of Capt. William D. McCain, Lt. Walter A. Hamilton, and Lt. Sidney T. Matthews. The maps were drawn by S/Sgt. Alvin J. Weinberger and Sgt. Charles W. Petersen.

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