



AFRICA
SICILY
ITALY

Mission Accomplished



OVER wadies and wastes of North Africa, the unnamed hills of Sicily, and the bleak mountains of Italy, Allied soldiers made history in the Mediterranean campaigns. They fought over roads the Romans built; across battlefields of long ago; through ancient ruins and modern cities; across endless ridges and through dusty or flood-swept valleys. They took the best the Germans had and advanced almost 3,000 miles—from El Alamein and Casablanca to the Brenner Pass.

This is their story—of Arabs and Indians; truck drivers and tail gunners; K-rations and trench feet; endurance and courage; the Anzio Express and Hill 609.

To those who were killed in action, this book is dedicated.



Men got battlewise in a hurry. It was a tough, hardfought campaign from start to finish.



Tanks and infantrymen teamed together to flush the last snipers out of Bizerte.



OUR FIRST D-DAY

In the bare country of Tunisia where trees and brush are scarce and the rocky slopes steepen at times into cliffs, American soldiers first learned about the Krauts and how to beat them.

These men, forerunners of the great armies that were to fight in Sicily, and Germany, learned their lessons on the beaches of Casablanca, Oran and Algiers and in defeats at Kasserine Pass and Fondouk. They took a post-graduate course in the mountains from Sedjenane station to Medjez el Bab and emerged to help knock the Nazis out of Africa.

D-day was 0100 8 November, 1942. It was but the first of many D-days before the mission in the Mediterranean would be accomplished.



Hill 609 near Mateur. The Germans had to be knocked off with grenades and bayonets in one of the fiercest fights of the war.



What these men learned the hard way saved lives in Sicily, Italy and France.

THE African landings were timed with the Eighth Army assault at El Alamein, and came a week after the veteran British divisions had scored one of the war's most decisive victories.

After securing all Morocco and Algeria within three days, the American and British forces drove east for Tunis and Bizerte. They were stopped less than 50 miles from the two great ports, and the campaign lasted five months more through a rainy winter and many bitter engagements.

For the final drive II Corps moved secretly 200 miles from El Gueftar and suddenly popped up on the north flank. The attack began 23 April and on 8 May elements of the 9th and 1st Armored divisions entered Bizerte. Five days later the war was over in Africa.

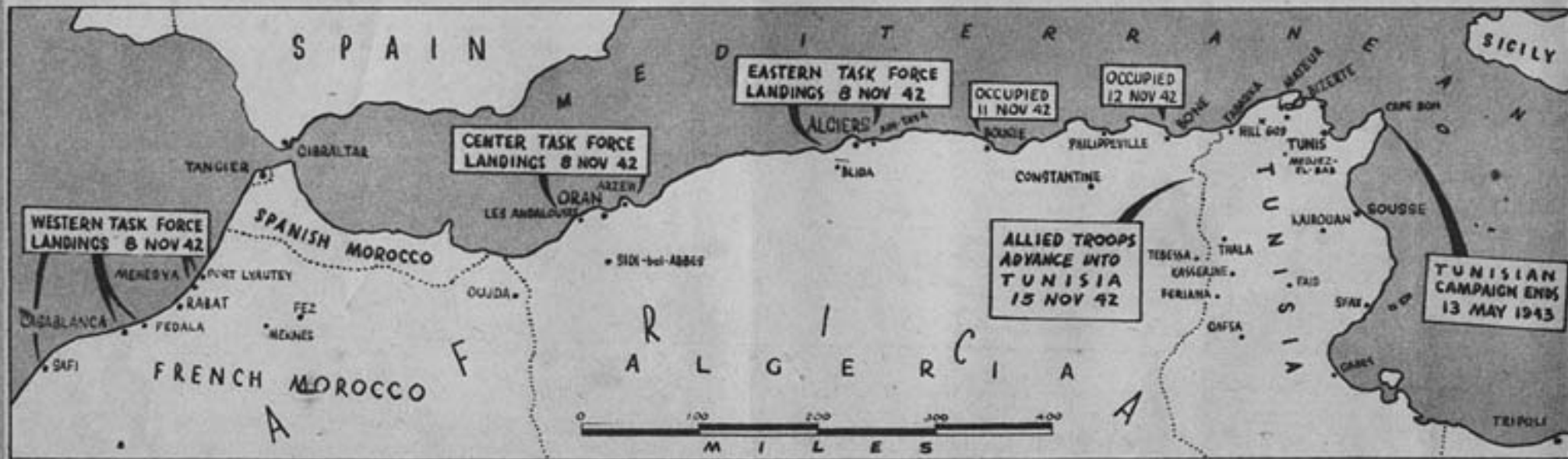
In that drive American troops won their first great victories of the European war — the 34th at Hill 609 and Eddekhila; the 1st Armored in the breakthrough from Mateur; the 9th at Jafna; and the 1st at Hill 523 and Mateur. They had taken the first long step on the road to final victory.



Arab kids knew the score on getting "bon-bon", cigarettes, and chewing gum.



African battles featured over-extended fronts and equally extended lines of supply. Tanks did a big job.



Stepping Stone TO EUROPE

SICILY was the scene of sharp and stubborn fighting, long marches and steep hills. The doughboys had a battle on their hands and blisters on their feet.

The 1st, 3rd, 45th, 2nd Armored and the Rangers hit the Southern Sicilian coast at 0245 10 July. Men of the 82nd Airborne division were dropped behind the beaches.

One of the toughest battles of the campaign was fought on the beach at Gela where the 1st division, backed by the navy, stood off 50 medium and heavy tanks of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division. After the beaches were secure the 2nd Armored and the 3rd divisions slashed across the island with amazing rapidity.

With the island cut in half, the end was inevitable. By a series of leap-frog maneuvers along the coast and frontal attacks through the mountains, the Germans were steadily forced to give ground.

When patrols of the 3rd and 45th entered Messina 17 August, Sicily was completely ours.



On the road to Messina, American soldiers got their first look at historic Mt. Etna.



President Roosevelt visited Sicily after the campaign was over. He is shown here presenting the DSC to Lt. W. W. Kellogg.



On the beach at Gela, shore engineers, MP's, doughboys, and sailors worked under fire to get the equipment inland.



The price was high.

**"COME ON IN
AND GIVE UP!"**

THE 36th and 45th divisions and the British 10th Corps punched the first wedge into Hitler's Fortress Europe near Paestum on the Gulf of Salerno.

H-hour, D-day was 0330, 9 September 1943. A voice blared out in English over a loudspeaker apparently from the landing-area:

"Come on in and give up." The Krauts were waiting.

It took seven critical days to secure the beachhead. But the navy, airforces, and men on the beaches beat off the full weight of every German counter-attack.

The Eighth army landed at the toe end instead of the boot 5 September. When patrols of the Fifth and Eighth linked up 16 September, the Germans had begun to retreat. Naples fell 1 October. By 6 October Fifth army troops were at the south bank of the Volturno river. They had battered their way 48 miles in 27 days.



Huge quantities of supplies were landed.



Reinforcements kept coming.



Naples harbor was heavily damaged.



Nazi time bomb in Naples post office killed and injured many civilians.



First lap on the road to Rome.

PROGRESS BY YARDS

THE German retreat was bitter and deliberate. They used every trick in the book to delay our advance as they pulled back.

The 3rd, 34th, and 45th divisions forced the first crossing of the Volturno river on the night of 12/13 October. The weather was cold and rainy, the water chest deep and the current swift.

Mountain by mountain in rain and mud, grim battles were fought at Mignano, Venafro, Mt. Camino, Mt. Sanmucro, San Pietro, San Vittore, Mt. Porchia, and Cervaro. Progress was made, but it was measured in yards. Casualties were heavy on both sides.

Finally, on 15 January 1944, men of the 34th division took Mt. Trocchio. Below, across the flat Rapido valley, lay the gray, undamaged buildings of a town called Cassino.



Taking San Pietro was a three-day job.



There was always "one more hill."



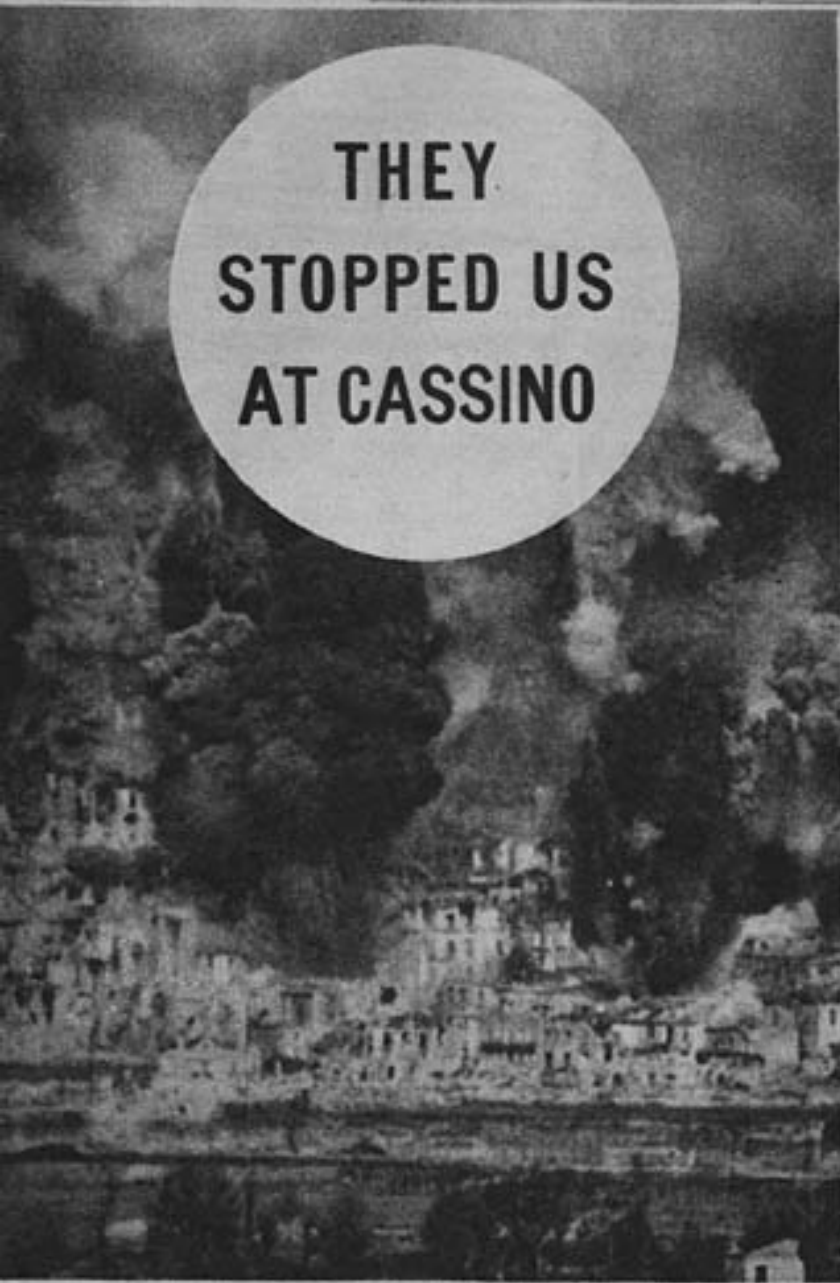
Where there was mud there were engineers.



Volturno was crossed, bridged three times.



CP — wherever the CO sat down.



**THEY
STOPPED US
AT CASSINO**

IT took four full-scale attacks and four months to capture Cassino, strongest point in the enemy's Gustav line. The 36th division made the first bid by crossing the narrow Rapido river, south of the town. This action became known as "The Battle of Guts." When it was over, the 36th had lost heavily and was forced back to where it started from.

Four days later the 34th division crossed the river north of Cassino and stormed the hills overlooking the town. Through minefields and against deeply entrenched paratroopers, one regiment forced its way into the town. Another assaulted and captured

Hill 593 overlooking the famous Benedictine Abbey above the town.

Then the New Zealand Corps took over and on 15 February the Abbey was shattered by a heavy bombing attack. On 15 March Cassino was leveled under a great concentration of bombs. Still the Germans could not be driven out.

The Eighth Army moved into the Cassino sector 26 March. The long fight continued until 18 May when British forces took the town and Polish troops captured the Abbey. When this happened, the Gustav line ceased to exist.



Not a building remained intact.



British finally took the town.



The Germans used the Abbey as a fortress. Bombers demolished it.



The Krauts always left mines.

MUD, MULES, MOUNTAINS, MINES, MEN

AMERICANS learned in Italy there was no easy way to win the war. It was brought home again and again that tanks, planes, and guns are just members of a team whose purpose is to make it possible for a dogface to crawl from one hole to another.

Italy was an infantryman's war. There was slimy, stinking mud that got in your shoes, your hair, and your chow. Ammunition, water and rations had to be hauled up by mules. There were mountains — Soprano, Maggiore, Cairo, Majo, Altuzo, and Grande. There were mines wherever the Krauts could lay them — "S" mines, Schu mines, concrete mines, box mines, and Teller mines.

And there were men — Americans who sweated, feared and fought like Hell to knock the Krauts out of Italy.



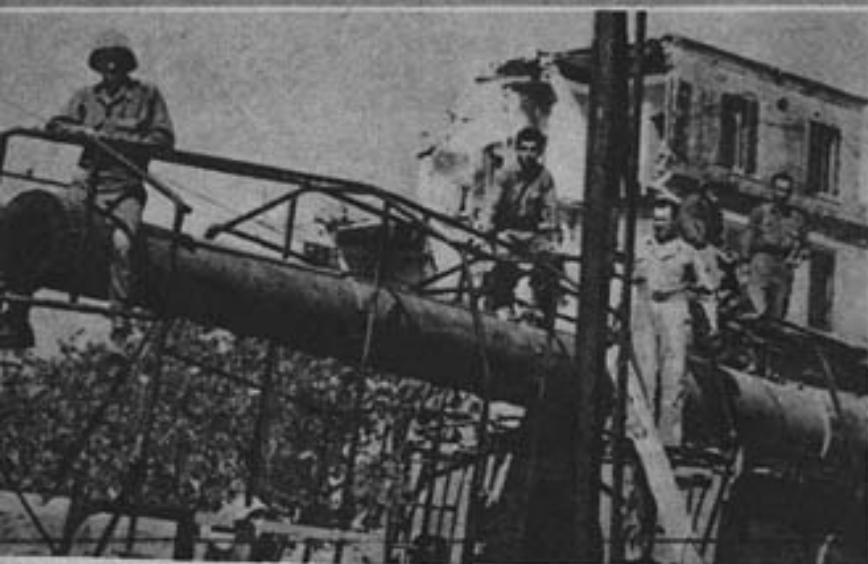
There were men—like the "One Many Army", Pvt. Alton Knappenberger (left), who won the Medal of Honor with the 3rd Division at Anzio.



Mules carried everything from radios to rations.



10th Mountain Div. men had to use "vertical evzcution" to get their wounded down the cliffs.



The Germans threw everything they had at the Beachhead. One of their favorite weapons was a 280 mm railway gun. It was known as "the Anzio Express" and sounded like a freight train coming to a stop sideways. The air corps nailed "the Express" at Civitavecchia.



The Luftwaffe was unusually active. The ack-ack boys had plenty to do.



No one was safe at Anzio.

IT TOOK GUTS TO STAY AT ANZIO



The landings were lightly opposed.

ACROSS a flat, green, ditch-crossed beachhead, approximately 10 miles deep and 10 miles wide, American and British soldiers fought one of the bravest actions of the entire war.

The Fifth Army struck at Anzio, 31 miles south of Rome. The landings were made against light opposition 22 January. Eight days later when the 3rd Division and the Rangers attacked Cisterna, the Germans had ringed the Beachhead with six divisions. Our attacks were stopped cold.

German reinforcements rushed toward the Beachhead and during February and early March, the Krauts launched three great attacks to drive the Fifth Army back into the sea. Men of the 3rd, 45th and 1st Armored divisions, the 1st Special Service Force, and the British dug in and held.

Through April and May the Beachhead was in effect a dagger stabbing into the German right flank. During the drive on Rome, it was the key to victory.

“PATROLS WERE ACTIVE”



They went out in all kinds of weather.



Their objective was a German-held farmhouse at Anzio.



They always sweated out mines.

DURING the “static” periods, Fifth Army communique laconically reported: “Patrols were active.” For the men who made those patrols there was enough activity to last a long while. It meant moving stealthily along a rocky path; sweating out ambushes; mines; and all the noises of night in no-man’s land. There were flares, fire-fights, mortars, artillery and Screaming Meemies, and men got hurt.

They sought information; looked for crossings along rivers; went for Kraut outposts; hunted Germans; and laid in ambush. It took a couple of hours to reach an objective and 20 minutes to come back. They went out whether it was raining or freezing cold. The weather made no difference.

They went out and patrols were active.







Service troops were targets too.

•
Naples handled more tonnage than New York.

SUPPLIES KEPT COMING

WHEREVER the armies fought, supplies got there. For every man in the line were a number of others backing him up — unloading boats, driving trucks, repairing guns, directing traffic, building bridges, repairing railroads, and stringing communications.

During one day at Salerno, three battalions of the 45th division artillery fired almost 7,000 rounds. Port battalions and shore engineers bucked those shells across the beaches to where they'd do some good despite bad weather, air raids, and artillery fire.

Throughout the campaigns, supplying the armies was monotonous, hard, without glamour or recognition and often dangerous. Had it not been done there could have been no landings, no advances, no victories.



•
MP's kept vital traffic moving.

•
Engineers rebuilt the railroads.



ATTACK! BREAKTHROUGH! ROME!

THE blow came from the south at 2300 11 May. After three bitter days the 85th and 88th divisions and the French Corps blasted the Gustav line from the Liri valley to the sea. The Beachhead divisions hacked their way out 12 days later and on 25 May leading elements of the forces coming up from the south made contact with men from Anzio.

The Krauts were badly beaten and the Fifth moved rapidly toward Rome. At dusk 4 June, special task forces moved into the city. The next morning the main body passed through — the first army in history to capture Rome from the south.

There were cheering crowds, flowers, vino and the prettiest girls seen in Italy up to that time. The men who had walked and fought all the way from Minturno and Cisterna took the reception in stride. In the afternoon they moved out of the city and back into the war.



Snipers caused plenty of trouble in Liri.



Romans thronged St. Peter's square to offer thanksgiving.



Italian civilians, who lived near the Gustav line, came out of the hills after seven months.



The final fight for Rome took place in the outskirts.



Crowds swarmed around every jeep.



Flying Forts blazed their trails from Ploesti to Berlin.

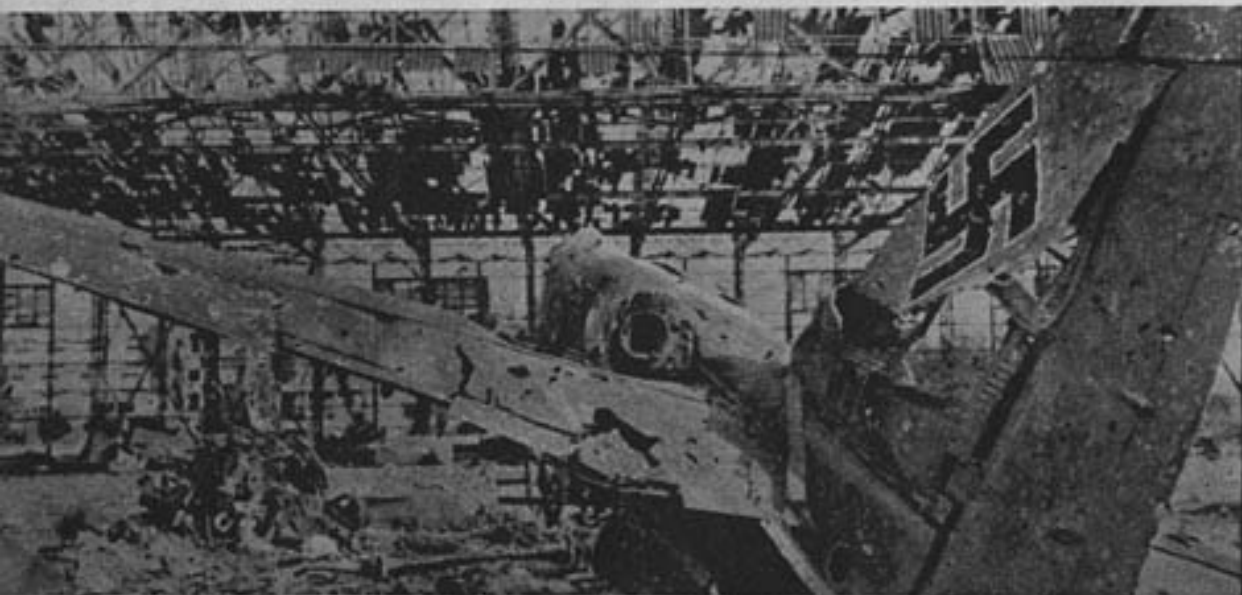
THERE WAS MORE THAN ONE FLAK ALLEY...

GROWING from a few squadrons into two mighty airforces, American air power played its full share in the Mediterranean victories. Targets lay in Africa, Sicily, Italy, France, Austria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Roumania, Czechoslovakia, and Germany and the 12th and 15th air forces took them as they came.

As well as tactically supporting the ground troops, American airmen flying from Mediterranean bases participated in the great campaigns which crushed the Luftwaffe, strangled the German oil industry, and crippled the German transportation system.

For the men who flew the planes those missions meant sweating out flak and enemy fighters. For the men who kept the planes in the air there were long hours of work and long hours of waiting.

The lines of blasted German tanks and trucks, the demolished bridges, flattened railroad yards, and battered factories testified to the kind of job they did.



Wholesale destruction of the Luftwaffe was carried out in support of the May offensive.



Railroad yards were vital targets.



Knocked out German vehicles littered the roads north of Rome.



Smashed Panther tanks made everyone feel good.



This troop train caught Hell south of Florence.



105 Missions — From Egypt to Germany.



OBJECTIVE... GOTHIC LINE

AFTER Rome fell, the 3rd, 36th and 45th divisions and the French were withdrawn to make the invasion of Southern France. For the Americans remaining in Italy there was plenty of unfinished business.

In one month the Fifth drove 150 miles north of Rome against spotty resistance. The 91st division reached the Arno river 18 July. By 10 September the full strength of the Fifth Army was drawn up before the center of the Gothic line.

Here the 34th, 85th, 88th and 91st divisions met the strongest prepared defenses of the entire campaign. The line was broken 17 September after four days of hard fighting.

As they had done at Salerno, Cassino and Anzio, the Krauts held on until they had been hit so hard and so often they had to give ground. For five long months the Fifth wintered in the high Apennines.

OP's kept the long vigil.



Plenty of artillery blasted the way.



The Krauts know what hit them.



The long line of weary men.



Italian Partisans helped free Florence.

MEN OF MANY NATIONS FOUGHT Together

IN the beginning the British, Australians, and Indians fought the Germans and Italians back and forth across Libya and Egypt. At El Alamein New Zealanders, who were veterans of Crete and Greece, plugged the line. Then as the campaign grew in importance, men came from every corner of the world to fight and to kill Nazis.

At the end approximately 40 nations were represented. There were Greeks, Arabs, French, Brazilians, Poles, Palestinians, Dutch, Canadians, South Africans, Italians and there were Americans — black, white, yellow or red-skinned Americans — of Mexican, Japanese, German or Irish descent.

It was called "The Polygot Army" and "the greatest military experiment in history." Here was convincing proof that people of different races, nationalities and religions can fight together. They did it.



New Zealanders



Negroes



Canadians



Poles



Arabs



Japanese-Americans



Sikhs



British



INTO THE PROMISED LAND

Pointing the way — the Po Valley lay ahead.



91st Div. men used a blown bridge to cross the Adige river.

WHEN the blow came, the Krauts lasted exactly 23 days. The drive was launched 9 April by the Eighth Army on the right and the 92nd division on the left. Main Fifth Army forces attacked below Bologna a week later.

Suddenly the Krauts collapsed. In quick succession Bologna, Modena, Ferrara, Parma, Verona, and Venice fell to the men who had fought for 19 months to reach the Po valley — "The Promised Land." All divisions, the 10th Mountain, 1st Armored, 34th, 88th, 91st and 92nd were in on the kill.

Before the Fifth Army could reach Milan, Italian Partisans drove the Germans out and placed the bullet-ridden, battered body of Mussolini on display.

Twenty-five German divisions were whipped. The show was over in Italy.



Men of the 34th were first into Bologna.



The 85th moved fast through Vincenza.



1st Armored tanks led the way.

APPROPRIATELY, the men who opened the first American front in Europe were the first to finish the job. The German armies in Italy and part of Austria surrendered — completely and unconditionally, effective at noon, Wednesday, 2 May, 1945. A week later German forces everywhere officially laid down their arms.

The men who fought in the Mediterranean campaigns could look back with pride on the job they had done. Behind lay the beaches of Oran, Gela, Salerno, and Anzio; Arab huts and two-wheeled Neapolitan carts; Algiers, Palermo, Rome, and Florence; the weary climbs up the mountains and the treacherous descents into the valleys; the smell of the dead and the fear of being wounded.

There was glory enough for all — for the men of the 34th with over 500 days in the line; for the 1st, 3rd, 9th, 10th Mountain, 36th, 45th, 82nd Airborne, 85th, 88th, 91st, 92nd, and 1st and 2nd Armored divisions; for the Rangers, the 1st Special Service Force and the 442nd Combat team; for the service troops, ack-ack crews, and headquarters personnel; and for the 12th and 15th Air Forces and the navy.

The mission was accomplished.



UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER



The end of the line.



The German representatives wore civilian clothes. They signed at AFHQ in Caserta.



Photos through courtesy of Stars & Stripes, Army Pictorial Service, Signal Corps, British Army Film Unit, International News Service, PWR, OWI, RAF, MAAF

What it was all about...

EVERY step of the long road from Africa to the Alps was bought with the hardship and blood of the men who marched with the Fifth, Seventh and British First and Eighth armies.

What were the Mediterranean campaigns worth and why did we fight there? There are several answers for the job was big and much was accomplished.

This is what we did:

★Cleared the Mediterranean sea of German planes and submarines. This shortened our sea lines to the Near East, Russia, India and China by 7,000 miles and added several million tons of shipping space that were vitally needed.

★Drained the Nazis of men, material and planes which they could not afford to lose.

★Tied down and defeated 28 German divisions in Italy which without question would have prevented or at least delayed the victory in Normandy.

★Forced the Germans to withdraw men and guns from Russia to fight in Sicily and Italy.

★Knocked Italy out of the war and brought the Italians onto the Allied side as co-belligerents.

★Brought France back into the war with an ever-growing army, navy and airforce.

★Secured airfields in Italy from which Allied planes were able to range over the industrial heart of central and Southern Germany and the Balkans as well as to support tactically Allied forces in Italy and the Red Army.

★Kept the initiative in Allied hands until the invasion of France was completely planned and ready to go.

★The military lessons learned on the front lines and in the rear areas in Africa, Sicily and Italy provided the "know-how" for the victories in France and Germany.

"No praise is adequate for the heroic achievements and magnificent courage of every individual during this long and trying campaign."

President Harry S. Truman.

"You may be proud of this victorious campaign which will long live in history as one of the greatest and most successful ever waged.

"No praise is high enough for you sailors, soldiers, airmen and workers of the united forces in Italy for your magnificent triumph. My gratitude to you and my admiration

is unbounded, and only equaled by the pride which is mine in being your Commander in Chief."

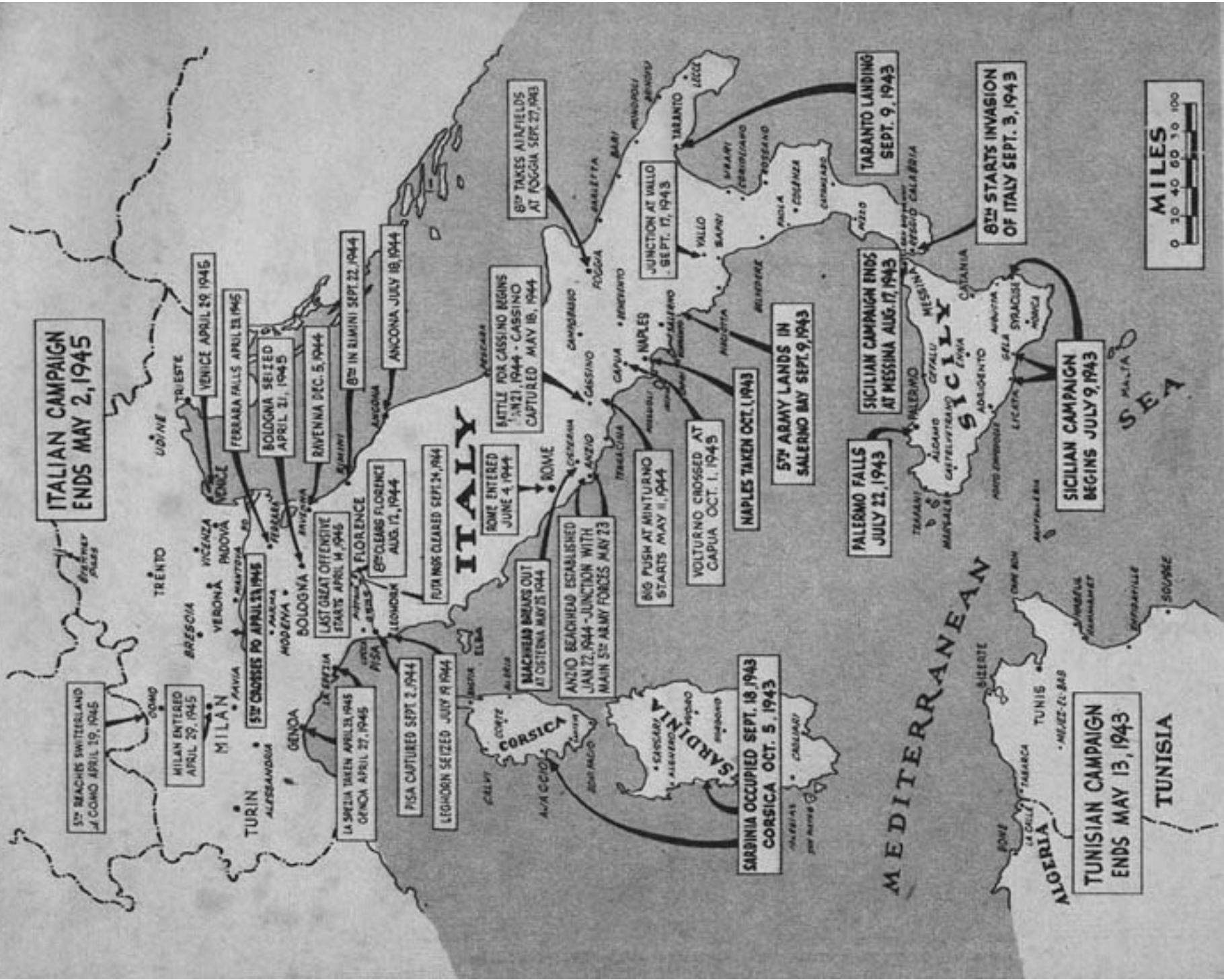
Field Marshal Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander.

"Our exultation in this moment is blended with sorrow as we pay tribute to the heroic Allied soldiers who have fallen in battle in order that this victory might be achieved. The entire world will forever honor their memory."

Gen. Mark W. Clark.

"The victory is yours—you of the ground, sea and air forces of many nationalities who have fought here as a single combat team. The surrender today is to you."

Gen. Joseph T. McNarney.





Soldiers from private to general will always remember Joe and Willie, Sgt. Bill Mauldin's miserable, grimly humorous dogfaces.

ALLIED FORCE H.Q.

SERVICES OF SUPPLY

SEVENTH ARMY

FIFTH ARMY

TWELFTH AIR FORCE

FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE

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