

ITALY: Grosseto to the Arno River

## CHAPTER 4

### THE ROME-ARNO CAMPAIGN

FROM the 11th to the 21st of June the Combat Team brushed up on marksmanship and small-unit tactics in addition to an arduous physical conditioning program which included long marches over the mountainous terrain. There had been hills in Mississippi, but never hills like these. It seemed to the men that all of Italy was either straight up or straight down. Neither were there heavy forests. Most of the growth was stunted scrubby stuff that eked out a precarious existence from the rocky soil of the hillsides. Other than this growth the hills were bare and there were unlimited opportunities for observation. The air was clear and from the tops of some of the peaks a man could see for miles.

The 2d Battalion rejoined the rest of the Combat Team on June 17, having come from Oran to Naples and gone through the same processing as the other units.

Events moved swiftly now. The 36th Division had been driving the enemy north at a fast clip and the front was now many miles from the 34th Division bivouac area. Consequently the Combat Team was ordered into a new bivouac area near Grossetto, closing in before dawn of June 22. A certain amount of training continued, but considerable time was devoted to hashing over some last-minute advice to the men before battle. On the 24th the Combat Team moved to another bivouac near Gravasanno, stayed overnight, and on the following day marched thirteen miles to its final assembly area behind the lines. The 34th Division was relieving the 36th Division, which, although the rank and file had no idea of it at the time, would then move south to prepare for the invasion of Southern France.

The 442d Combat Team moved into the lines before dawn of June 26. The 3d Battalion relieved the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment, the 2d Battalion relieved elements of the 142d Infantry Regiment, and the 100th Battalion remained in reserve initially. The 2d Battalion crossed the line of departure at 0630 and made contact with the enemy about 0830. The 3d Battalion, attacking on the left of the 2d, pushed off at 0900 hours. By 1100 hours both battalions were stopped. The 2d Battalion had met fierce enemy resistance after driving forward about 1500 yards. Companies E, F and G were now

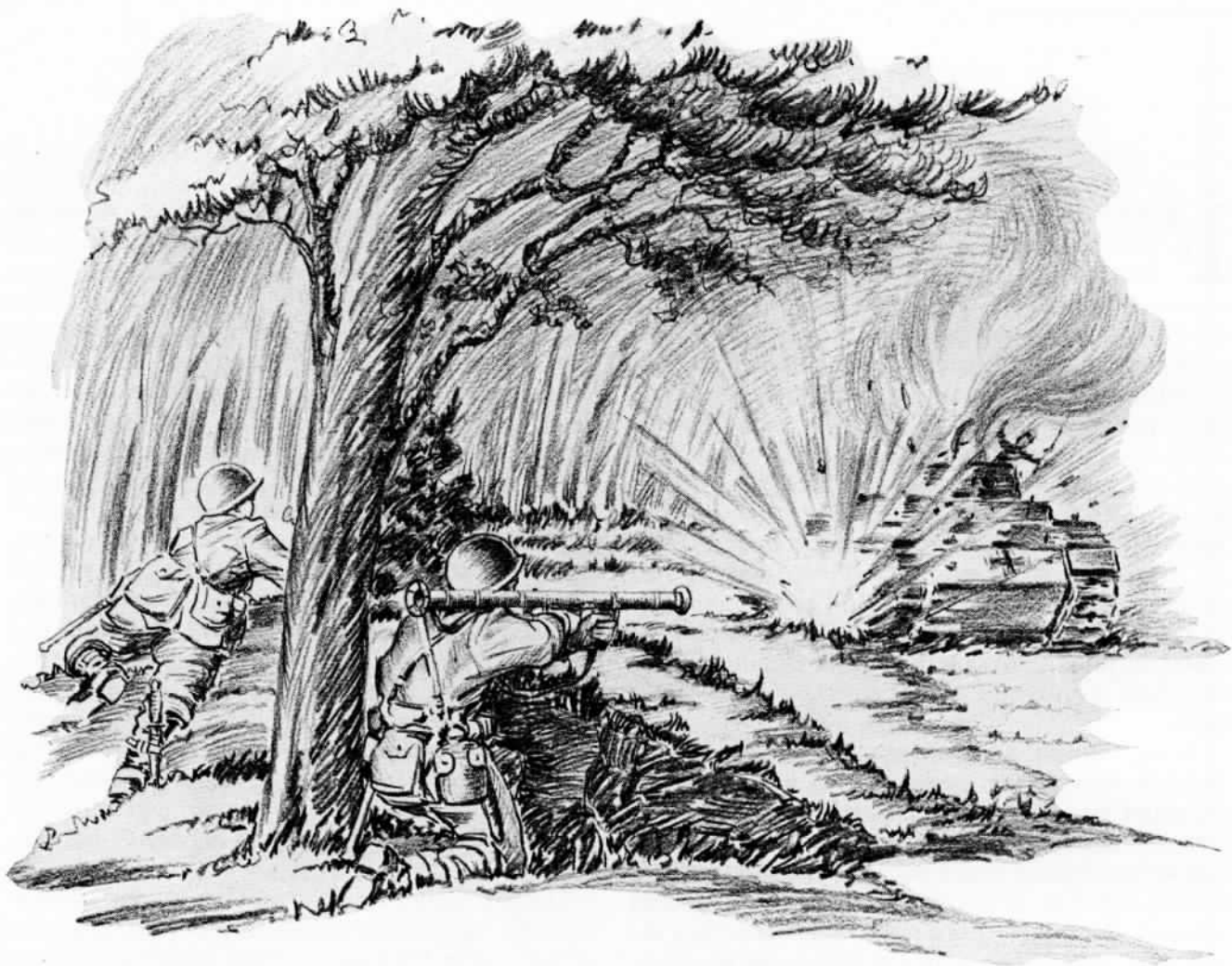
on line and were hard-pressed to beat off enemy counterattacks supported by fire from artillery and tanks. One gun in particular was causing a great many casualties in Company F with direct fire. The men sought cover as best they could, and the company commander ordered his mortars into action. However, the terrain made it impossible to set up the weapon in a covered position. The squad leader was about to abandon the attempt to open fire when Private First Class Kiyoshi K. Muranaga, the gunner, volunteered to man the mortar alone in an attempt to neutralize the fire of the enemy 88mm gun. Going into action, Muranaga opened fire. His third round landed directly in front of the enemy gun position. Before he could fire again the German gun crew had located his mortar and scored a direct hit on the position, killing him instantly. Because of the accuracy of his previous fire, however, the Germans decided not to risk further exposure and withdrew the gun. Muranaga's courageous performance undoubtedly saved his company many casualties. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously.

The 3d Battalion, although it was not counter-attacked, was unable to advance beyond the town of Suvereto in the face of enemy automatic-weapons fire from high ground to the north.

It now became evident to the regimental commander, Colonel Pence, that there was a gap in the enemy defenses. At 1130 he sent the veteran 100th



*Elements of the 100th Battalion moving up*



*Nakano fired, scoring a direct hit and blowing up the tank*

Battalion driving into that gap to seize the high ground around the town of Belvedere and break the stalemate. Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Singles, commanding the 100th Battalion, quickly drew up a plan from his maps and at 1200 the 100th Battalion pushed off in column of companies: B, A, and C. Companies B and A advanced east of Belvedere by a covered route and reached a high point northeast of the town which the enemy had neglected to cover. From here, observers sighted a large infantry and artillery force. Quickly, Captain Takahashi, commanding Company B, sent his 1st Platoon to attack the town of Belvedere while the 2d Platoon cut the road running northwest from Belvedere to prevent the escape of the enemy. The 3d Platoon headed southwest to cut the road leading into the town to catch any troops who might withdraw in that direction from the enemy main line of resistance.

Company A swung to the right (north) of Company B and began sweeping north along the main road from Belvedere to Sassetta. Company C remained close behind in reserve.

The 2d Platoon of Company B cut the Suvereto-Sassetta road shortly after the jumpoff, overran and captured a battery of self-propelled guns and proceeded to mop up the remaining resistance on the west side of the highway. Meanwhile, the 1st Platoon swarmed into Belvedere and took control of the town after some sharp house-to-house fighting.

The 3d Platoon, covering the secondary road running northwest, located enemy movement in a house to its immediate front. The platoon leader attacked the house with a squad, capturing two halftracks, a truck, and eleven "Jerry jeeps." The house had been a company command post. No sooner had the platoon begun to consolidate its gain when a Mark IV

tank began to lay down heavy fire on the position from a nearby olive grove. A bazooka team, made up of Staff Sergeant Grover N. Nagaji, Private First Class Taneyoshi Nakano, and Private First Class Henry Y. Nakamura worked its way forward to within thirty yards of the tank under cover of fire from Private First Class Nakamura's BAR. Private First Class Nakano took careful aim with his launcher and fired, scoring a direct hit. Almost instantly the tank blew up, killing all the occupants. The force of the explosion was so great that it also killed Sergeant Nagaji and stunned the gunner, Nakano.

By 1700 Company A had broken the enemy defenses to the north and occupied the neighboring village of Michelino, taking a battalion command post and motor pool intact. Both companies now set up defensive positions covering the Suvereto-Sassetta road and waited. They had very little time to wait, for the 2d and 3d Battalions, advancing slowly behind a curtain of mortar fire, were even then driving the remaining enemy back into the waiting arms of the 100th. As the retreating German formations appeared on the road the heavy machine guns of Company D opened up, killing many and scattering the rest into the hills.

Total enemy casualties for the day had been 178 killed, 20 known wounded, 86 captured. They had lost 8 trucks, 19 jeeps, 13 motorcycles, 2 antitank guns, 3 self-propelled guns, 2 tanks, 2 command cars, 2 halftracks, 1 81mm mortar, and 1 battalion and company command post, complete.

The 2d Battalion reverted to reserve and the 100th and 3d Battalions made plans to take Sassetta, about ten kilometers north of Belvedere. At 1200 of the 27th the 100th Battalion made a frontal attack on the town, supported by massed machine guns and mortars firing from the hills overlooking Sassetta from the south. The 3d Battalion made a wide flanking movement around the west side of the town and seized the high ground to the north. Two enemy tanks were knocked out by the combined fire of Antitank Company and Cannon Company. Forward observers of the 522d Field Artillery also spotted a large enemy concentration north of Sassetta and blasted away with battalion concentrations of time fire (air burst), breaking up the formation and causing heavy casualties.

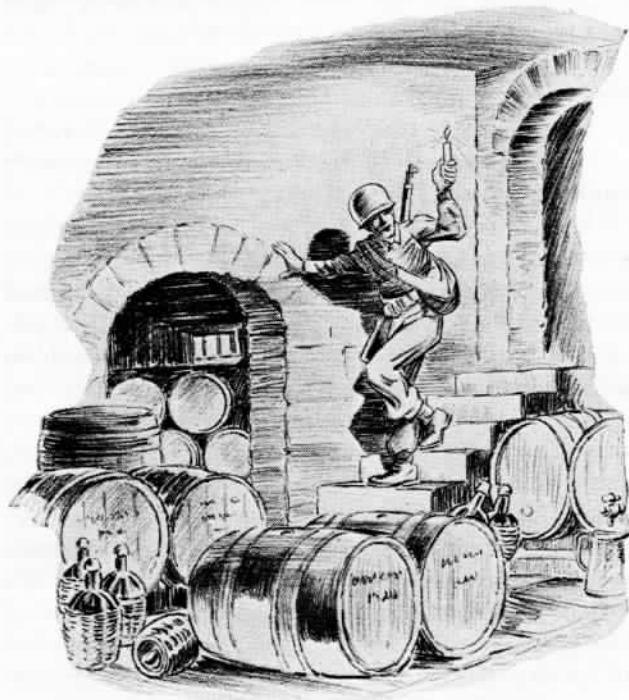
The 3d Battalion was directed to push northwest and seize Castagnetto while the 100th drove north along the main road to take and block the principal

junction north of Sassetta. In the confusion of darkness and broken terrain, elements of the 3d Battalion headed northeast by mistake and came under fire from the roadblock which was the 100th Battalion's objective. The enemy, equally confused, believed themselves to be outflanked, and hastily withdrew on a halftrack, leaving considerable equipment, including two 81mm mortars, behind them.

The following morning, June 28, the 2d Battalion pushed through the 3d, which was reorganizing and gathering up its scattered units. After several skirmishes with enemy strongpoints, the 2d Battalion cleared Castagnetto and pushed about three kilometers north before being held up by direct fire from self-propelled guns. The 100th Battalion cleared the road junction north of Sassetta without opposition and pushed on abreast of the 2d Battalion. The 3d Battalion followed in reserve.

The 522d Field Artillery Battalion had given the assault battalions effective support. The infantry was learning that its job could be made easier by the fast-firing gunners and the observer parties with the leading platoons. The Infantry-Artillery team, one of the great achievements of World War II, was beginning to click for the Combat Team.

At this point the Division commander decided to give the Combat Team time to catch its breath. At



One man discovered 15,000 gallons of wine

0830, June 29, the 135th Infantry passed through the 442d Infantry and resumed the attack. The 100th and 2d Battalions passed into division reserve in the vicinity of Bibbona. The 3d Battalion entrucked the morning of the 29th and moved to Monteverdi, the extreme right flank of the division, to guard against a possible counterattack that never came. The 3d Battalion did suffer one of the great disappointments of the war in Monteverdi, however. After they had occupied the town for a day and a half, one of the men discovered a cache of 15,000 gallons of wine which had been very carefully hidden from the Germans. Thirty minutes after the discovery, the battalion was ordered to pull out and rejoin the regiment. The men were several days recovering from the disappointment.

On July 1 the regiment marched from Bibbona to an assembly area immediately south of the Cecina River, at that time of the year hardly more than a trickle of water, easily fordable in most places. By 0400 the next morning the 100th and 2d Battalions were across the river and waiting for dawn to jump off.

Resistance, while not heavy, was stiffening, indicating that the enemy would make some sort of a stand on the high ground north of the Cecina River. Prisoners taken during the day were from the 35th SS Regiment and the 48th *Jaeger* Regiment, both good units. For the first time in several weeks the enemy also had air support. Several planes came over during the night of July 2 to lay antipersonnel bombs and strafe the roads leading to our forward positions. Elements of the 522d Field Artillery were caught in the strafing, but suffered no damage.

The following day, July 3, enemy artillery fire became increasingly heavy. Both leading battalions had advanced to positions about eight kilometers north of the Cecina River. The 2d Battalion, attacking on the right, had taken Molino a Ventoabto and the two hills to the north and had then run head-on into the enemy main line of resistance, located on Hill 140. The enemy now held two key observation posts, Hill 140 and the town of Rosignano Marittimo near the coast. From these key points the German observers directed a rain of shells into both forward battalions all during the day. By 1200 of the 4th of July the 3d Battalion had relieved the 100th Battalion in position. The relief, carried out in daylight, brought on a storm of enemy self-propelled and artillery fire, causing heavy casualties in both battalions. One machine-gun squad of Com-

pany L was wiped out completely by a single shellburst.

On the right the 2d Battalion, led by Company G and Company E, had jumped off against Hill 140. Reaching the forward slope of the hill directly to the south of the objective, both companies immediately came under heavy small-arms and artillery fire from a force estimated to be an enemy battalion well supported by all types of artillery. All of the Company G officers except the company commander became casualties. Captain William Aull, commanding the company, left a small security detachment to hold the position while he withdrew the remainder to a covered position to effect a reorganization. Company E, still moving forward in its zone, gained the base of Hill 140 and dug in around it. During the day's fighting three men of Company G exhibited exceptional heroism and were later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Private First Class Frank H. Ono, when his squad became disorganized in the initial attack, opened fire with a BAR and silenced a machine gun three hundred yards away. Continuing to advance, he killed a sniper before his own gun was torn from his hands by a burst of fire. Seeing this, the enemy tried to close in on him but he drove them back with hand grenades, killing several. When the rest of his platoon moved forward to join him, he took up a wounded comrade's rifle and joined the assault until his platoon leader and another man were hit. He gave them first aid under heavy fire. When his platoon, in danger of being encircled, was ordered to withdraw he volunteered to cover the movement. Making himself the target of enemy fire he engaged a machine gun and riflemen on the next ridge until his platoon was safe, and then withdrew himself, firing as he pulled back.

Private First Class William K. Nakamura, in the initial attack crawled to within fifteen yards of an enemy machine gun that had pinned down his platoon, silenced the gun, and killed the crew with hand grenades. Later, when the platoon was being pulled back for reorganization, it was again pinned down by fire from concealed machine guns. Private First Class Nakamura crawled to a point from which he could observe the guns and fired clip after clip of ammunition with his rifle, keeping the enemy gunners down until his platoon had reached cover. As a result of his heroic stand, Private First Class Nakamura was killed.

At the same time, Staff Sergeant George S. Iida,

a platoon sergeant, successfully neutralized one machine-gun position himself and directed the fire of a BAR gunner in knocking out another. Twice, after his platoon leader had been wounded and he had taken command of the platoon, he advanced alone to within a few yards of hostile emplacements and destroyed them with hand grenades.

On the left of the 2d Battalion, the 3d Battalion had taken a five-hour enemy artillery barrage. Lieutenant Colonel Virgil R. Miller, the regimental executive officer, assumed command of the battalion, reorganized it, and initiated a limited attack late in the afternoon. The battalion was able to gain very little ground, but managed to improve its position somewhat.

Furious firefights raged all through the 5th of July as both sides sparred for an advantage. Resistance was skillful and determined. All along the 34th Division front the Germans held more doggedly than at any time since the breakthrough at Cassino and Anzio. Both battalions of the 442d were now taking prisoners from the 36th SS Regiment in addition to the two regiments which had started the battle. The prisoners said that "they had been ordered to hold until the defenses at Pisa were completed." Late in the day conditions improved somewhat as the 135th Infantry, attacking on the left, battered the town of Rosignano Marittimo to pieces with heavy artillery and engaged the Germans in house-to-house fighting. Artillery fire against the 3d Battalion eased off noticeably.

At 2200, July 5, the 2d Battalion, Companies G and F leading, made a night infiltration onto the high ground east of Hill 140, where they dug in at the first approach of daylight. As soon as the Germans discovered the troops on their flank they fought back fiercely. Artillery and mortar fire fell all along the 2d Battalion's line, but the troops hung on and fought back. Company H's mortar platoon fired over 1,200 rounds of 81mm shells into the enemy positions, breaking up one counterattack after another. Perhaps the greatest single exploit of the day was that of Staff Sergeant Kazuo Masuda of Company F. Sergeant Masuda, manning a company observation post, crawled 200 yards through heavy fire, secured a 60mm mortar tube and ammunition, and returned to his post. Using his helmet as a baseplate for the mortar tube, Sergeant Masuda remained at his position and fired the piece single-handed for twelve hours, throwing back two counterattacks with his fire alone, never leaving his firing

point except for more ammunition. Sergeant Masuda was later killed on patrol along the Arno River when he deliberately sacrificed himself so that the men with him could return with valuable information. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

At 1915, July 6, Lieutenant Colonel James M. Hanley, 2d Battalion commander, moved his third company, E, on line with F and G. Following a 45-minute artillery preparation, all three companies jumped off against Hill 140 and the ridge to the north. By midnight the last of the enemy had been driven off and the objective, the eastern half of Hill 140, was secure. At 0500, July 7, the 2d Battalion was relieved by the 100th Battalion and the attack went on.

On the left the 3d Battalion had been working its way up the western slopes of Hill 140, in reality a long ridge which ran west from the summit of the hill toward the sea. This ridge was honeycombed with caves which made excellent defensive positions for the Germans. With Company K bearing the brunt of the attack, the men measured their advance in yards through the day of the 6th while they protected the left flank of the 2d Battalion. On the 7th of July, the last German resistance was battered into submission and the assault companies were able to push on more rapidly. Lieutenant Colonel Alfred A. Pursall took command of the battalion July 8.

In the battle to wrest the western slopes of Hill 140 from the Germans, Technical Sergeant Ted T. Tanouye, then a platoon leader of Company K, played a great part in the success of the attack. In the course of the action Sergeant Tanouye noticed an enemy machine gun going into position on his left. He opened fire, killed three of the enemy and drove the others back. Almost at once, another German with a machine pistol opened fire on him, but he returned the fire, and either killed or wounded three more Germans. The defending troops then began throwing hand grenades at Sergeant Tanouye. His left arm was hit and paralyzed temporarily by a fragment. In spite of his wound he kept going, and raked an enemy trench with fire from his submachine gun. He then crawled twenty yards to his left to obtain more ammunition from one of his platoon. From this position he sighted a machine-pistol position, silenced it with a hand grenade, and then engaged a machine-gun position with fire from his tommy gun, also knocking it out. When he drew fire from several enemy located above him, he

opened fire on them and wounded three more. Then, with the other men of his platoon, he seized the objective and organized a defensive position before he would permit himself to be evacuated. Sergeant Tanouye was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. He later died of wounds received in action along the Arno River.

The objective for the 100th Battalion in its attack of July 7 was the town of Castellina. The 3d Battalion, advancing abreast, was directed to cut the road from Castellina west to the town of Rosignano Marittimo, for which the 135th Infantry was still fighting. The 100th Battalion attacked before dawn of July 7 to seize the high ground northwest of Castellina and force the enemy out of the town. Companies B and C made the attack, Company C being ordered to secure the high ground so that Company B could make the assault on Castellina. The 2d Platoon of Company C bore the brunt of the attack, and they were able to take the enemy by surprise in an assault just after dawn and seize the dominating ground. During the engagement Private First Class Kaoru Moto, acting as first scout, observed a machine-gun nest firing on his platoon. Making his way to within ten yards of the position, he killed the gunner with his rifle. The assistant gunner immediately opened up on Private First Class Moto, who promptly crawled to the rear of the position and surprised the German into surrendering. Taking his prisoner, Moto took a position a few yards from a house to deny the enemy the use of it as an observation post. While he was watching the house he observed an enemy machine-gun squad going into position not far away. He forced these men to disperse by firing at them until he was wounded by a sniper in another house. He then changed position to elude the sniper, dressed his own wound, and continued to deny the enemy the use of the house until he was relieved by the arrival of a squad. Making his way to the aid station for treatment, he spotted another enemy machine gun, crawled to a better position and forced the Germans to surrender. Private First Class Moto was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

After the objective had been reached, Lieutenant Takeichi T. Miyashiro, the platoon leader, organized defensive positions and took a squad to the right flank of the position to eliminate a machine-gun nest in a house. He led his men in taking the house, killing one German and taking one prisoner. The enemy launched the inevitable counterattack to re-

take the position, but Lieutenant Miyashiro, waiting until the attackers had approached within ten yards, directed the fire of his men in breaking up the counterattack. Lieutenant Miyashiro then established an observation post, holding it against another counterattack. A third assault, supported by direct fire from 88mm guns, failed to dislodge the handful of defenders, but when 170mm fire began falling in the area Lieutenant Miyashiro ordered his men to the rear and remained in observation himself to obtain information. When the barrage lifted he opened fire on the charging enemy with his rifle and, aided by a machine gun on the left flank, succeeded in taking such a heavy toll that the attack was again beaten off. Lieutenant Miyashiro was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Meanwhile, Company B, advancing astride the road north into Castellina, was counterattacked by a company of infantry supported by a platoon of tanks. Private First Class Richard M. Okazaki destroyed the lead tank with a bazooka. Accurate rifle fire and a heavy artillery barrage laid down by the 522d Field Artillery drove off the remaining tanks and infantry. By 1800 hours, Company B had cleared Castellina of all resistance and the entire battalion dug in.

The regimental objective was now a road which ran west from the town of Pomaja toward the sea. The seizure of this road would greatly cut down the enemy's lateral movement across the division front, and the enemy fiercely resisted its capture. As night fell on the 8th, neither the 100th nor the 3d Battalion had reached its objective.

Both battalions attacked the following morning. Companies A and B were in assault for the 100th Battalion; Companies I and L formed the 3d Battalion's striking force. Resistance was still heavy, but showed signs of breaking except in Company A's sector, on the extreme right of the regimental front. There the attacking troops were held up by fire from the vicinity of Pomaja. The initial resistance came from a patch of woods. Private First Class Kiichi Koda of Company A took four men with him, led a foray into the woods, and routed the small enemy force. Koda then rejoined his platoon, which had been ordered to flank and guard an ancient castle, the objective of Company B. The enemy in the structure opened fire with machine guns in an attempt to eliminate the threat to their flank. Private First Class Koda then requested permission to capture the castle. As his men covered

him, he crept to within five yards of an open window and threw in a hand grenade. He then circled the building and repeated the performance at every window he came to. Returning to his starting point, he led his men into the castle to wipe out the remaining opposition. Koda was killed in the fight, but his squad went on to take the objective, capturing 3 men, killing 10, and seizing 5 machine guns.

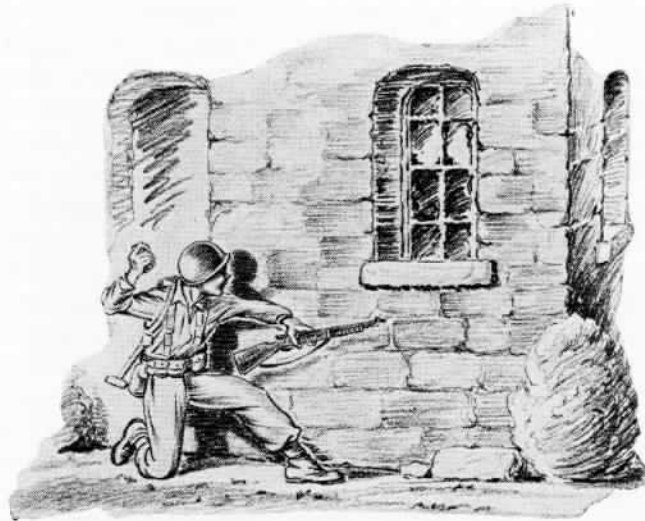
With this opposition at Pomaja out of the way, the 100th Battalion was able to reach its objective. Companies I and L of the 3d Battalion also fought their way across the road. During the night the 3d Battalion was relieved in these positions by the 2d Battalion, which had had a certain amount of rest.

The following day, July 10, both battalions were able to advance about 1000 yards against small enemy forces which were obviously rearguards. It was evident that the enemy had made one of his limited withdrawals and was now waiting for the Combat Team on the next ridge line. During the night of July 10 and 11, both the 100th and 2d Battalions made gains of about 700 yards, moving cautiously over the open terrain, even though darkness cloaked their movements. Dawn found the troops in exposed positions on rolling, open ground. Both battalions were immediately subjected to intense shelling. The 100th Battalion on the right was drawing the bulk of the fire from the town of Pastina, in the hills on the right flank of the regiment. The shells falling in the 2d Battalion area were coming from due north, the ridge line to the front. Documents taken from a dead German indicated that these positions were well planned and constructed.

Consequently the 100th Battalion struck sharply to the right to drive the Germans out of Pastina, while the 2d Battalion dug in and took it, holding on to the ground already gained while casualties went up and up. German patrols probed all along the 2d Battalion's line looking for a weak spot. They were met by our own patrols, often at point-blank range in the dark.

The 100th was able to gain little ground before night fell on the 10th. The leading companies took up the attack again on the 11th, driving the enemy outposts back into the town of Pastina.

The morning of July 12 saw the 100th Battalion begin the final assault on Pastina while the 2d Battalion made painful progress toward the ridge to



*Koda circled the building, throwing grenades in the windows*

their immediate front. Companies A and B of the 100th reached the outskirts of Pastina by 1200 and were stopped by heavy fire coming from the town itself. Calling on the 522d Field Artillery for some pinpoint shooting at suspected strongpoints, the men moved carefully from point to point, taking one house before tackling another, sometimes moving as close as fifty yards behind the thundering volleys of supporting artillery and mortar fire. By the time darkness fell the enemy force decided it had had enough and withdrew from the town, leaving the 100th Battalion in complete control of the high ground.

The 2d Battalion had secured its objective somewhat earlier in the day, partly through the heroism of Sergeant Togo S. Sugiyama, leader of a Company H machine-gun squad. In order to support the attack of the rifle companies, Sergeant Sugiyama put his gun in action in a saddle between two hills so that he could cover the forward slope of both hills with fire. He then crawled along the crest of the ridge to a point from which he could see to direct the fire of his gunner. Locating an enemy machine gun and snipers on the left flank, he retreated to the rear slope of the hill, moved to a point directly opposite the enemy position, crawled back to the forward slope of the hill and killed the two snipers with rifle fire, forcing the machine gunners to withdraw.

Sergeant Sugiyama then returned to his observation post from where he saw a dugout which two enemy riflemen were using as a firing position. Se-



curing several hand grenades, Sugiyama led three riflemen in an attack on the dugout, killing one of the occupants and capturing the other. Later, after he had reported to nearby riflemen the presence of enemy troops in a concrete house, Sugiyama observed two German machine-gun squads approaching the forward slope of the hill to the left of his position. Crawling to a point where he had better observation and exposing himself to enemy fire, he fired three rifle grenades at the enemy, killing five instantly and forcing the rest to withdraw. As he started to crawl back to his squad, Sugiyama was fired on by a hidden machine gun. As he rose to return the fire, another burst caught him and killed him instantly. For his heroism, which played a great part in the capture of the 2d Battalion's objective, Sergeant Sugiyama was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The enemy, badly mauled, pulled out again during the night of July 12-13. The same night, the 3d Battalion stumbled and groped its way over the mountains to Pastina where it relieved the 100th Battalion before dawn of the 13th. Both leading battalions, the 3d on the right and 2d on the left, made excellent progress during the day, meeting light resistance. The 3d Battalion overran San Luce behind a barrage by the 522d Field Artillery which knocked out a self-propelled gun. The 2d Battalion swept the hills to the west.

The rapid advance continued through the morning of July 14 as the 2d Battalion liberated the town of Pieve di San Luce, which the enemy had left extensively mined and boobytrapped. During the afternoon as the troops advanced, artillery fire became heavier, and the 3d Battalion ran into a violent firefight on the outskirts of Lorenzano. The sector of the Combat Team was now swinging northwest as the 34th Division prepared to cut off the great port of Leghorn from the north if it became necessary. Accordingly, the 168th Infantry relieved the 3d Battalion of the 442d Infantry in position during the night of July 14 and assumed control of the Lorenzano sector.

At the same time, the 100th Battalion passed to Division control. Company A was committed to a roadblock on the left of the regimental sector, four miles west of Pastina. The remainder of the battalion was ordered into the town of Orciano and held there temporarily. On the morning of July 15 Company C was ordered to establish another block four miles northwest of Orciano, in the direction of

Leghorn, to guard against a possible threat to the Division left. Moving into position, the company ran into enemy rearguards. A barrage laid down by the 522d Field Artillery took the fight out of the enemy force and Company C gathered fifteen prisoners, in addition to a large number of enemy dead and wounded. Companies A and B then arrived and the battalion set up a triangular defensive position until relieved the night of July 15 by elements of the 363d Infantry, 91st Division, who were pushing through to take on the job of attacking the port of Leghorn itself.

The 2d Battalion was able to seize two more hills on the 15th, with the aid of some heavy firing by the 1st and 2d Platoons of the Regimental Cannon Company, whose gunners put out some 350 rounds. One of the great instances of individual heroism in the regiment occurred during the day. When a platoon of Company G, led by Staff Sergeant Kazuo Otani, was pinned down on exposed, open ground by grazing machine-gun fire, Sergeant Otani first shot a sniper who was causing casualties among his men. He then raced across the open field toward the foot of a cliff. From there he directed his men to crawl to the cover of the cliff. When the movement of the men drew more fire, he ran along the cliff toward the left flank of the platoon, exposing himself and firing his tommy gun to attract the enemy's attention to himself. Part of the men reached cover while the enemy fired at Sergeant Otani. These men he organized against a counterattack, and then raced back across the open field, yelling instructions to the remainder of his men as he went. He reached the rear of the platoon position, gained partial cover, and directed his own fire at the enemy so that the rest of his platoon could reach safety. Seeing one of them fall wounded, Sergeant Otani left his own position of comparative safety, crawled to the wounded soldier, and dragged him to the cover of a shallow ditch. While he was dressing the soldier's wounds, he was mortally wounded by machine-gun fire. For gallantry at the cost of his life, Sergeant Otani was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The 3d Battalion had relieved the 2d Battalion before daylight of the 16th. The objective for the attack was the little hilltop town of Luciana. As Luciana and the surrounding hills went, so would go the port of Leghorn. It was now evident that the enemy was abandoning the port and moving to his Arno River defenses, but so long as he held this high ground to the northeast of the city, our own

troops could not occupy Leghorn. As the 3d Battalion launched its attack, the storm of fire made it very clear that the Germans were determined to sell their ownership of this patch of ground dearly. The enemy forces were supported by a platoon of tanks, several self-propelled guns, and an abundance of automatic weapons. Lieutenant Colonel Pursall sent Company L down a long ridge which overlooked Luciana from the east. The company was unable to cross a deep, exposed gully at the end of the ridge and attack the town from the rear however. Every time a man showed signs of starting across the barrier the Germans filled it with such heavy machine-gun and mortar fire that movement through it would have been suicidal. Company K made a frontal attack on Luciana itself. As night fell on July 16, advance elements of the company, literally blasting their way with bazookas, 60mm mortars, and heavy mortar fire from Company M, had gained a toehold in perhaps one-fourth of the town. All that night patrols from both sides probed cautiously at each other's positions. The night silence was constantly ripped apart as the blast of a tommy gun found an answering echo in the quicker rattle of a machine pistol when two patrols met head-on.

During the day, the Division commander ordered a battery of 8-inch howitzers to make a long move forward so that they could support the attack when a breakthrough was achieved, and also harass the enemy routes of withdrawal. They went into position just behind the area where Cannon Company's baby howitzers were emplaced, and just behind the regimental command post. During the night the big guns opened fire. The resulting muzzle blast shook half the ceiling down on the unsuspecting regimental staff and scared most of them out of a year's growth. Cannon Company, trying to fire, gave it up as a bad job when they found the ground shaking under their pieces so violently that it was impossible to fire accurately.

The following morning, Company K and the SS defenders were at it again, hammer and tongs. The 2d Battalion was committed on the left of the 3d Battalion to attack and seize Hill 108, which had been a prominent artillery observation post for the enemy. The 232d Engineers were called up to remove the tremendous quantities of mines which the enemy had laid to cover all the approaches to Luciana, approaches which were now vital as supply routes to keep Company K going. There were mines in the roads, mines festooned through the grape

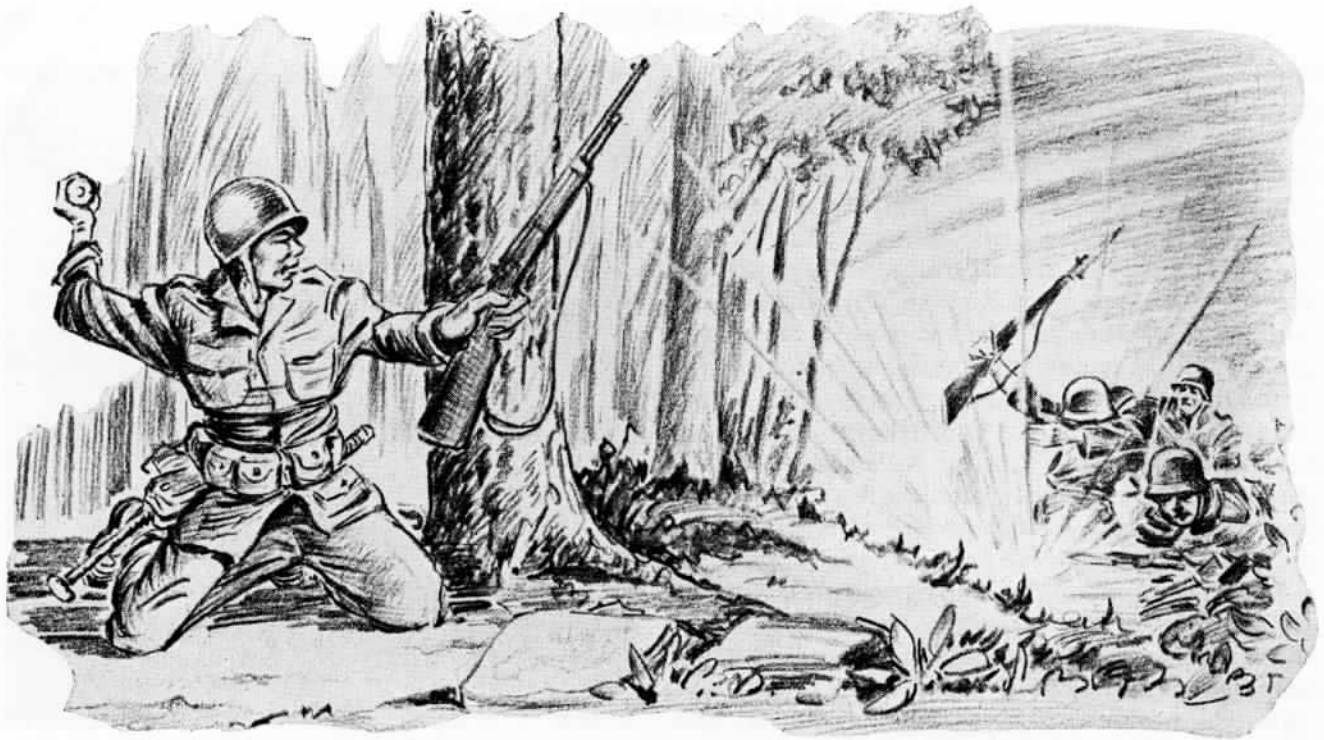


*Lucy, found by 3d Battalion medics in Luciana*

arbors, antipersonnel mines in the open fields. Working furiously, the engineers' mine experts, the Pioneer Platoons of the 2d and 3d Battalions, and some reinforcements from the Division's 109th Engineer Battalion cleared enough of the mines so that elements of the 2d Battalion could advance and supplies could get up to Company K. They worked exposed to sniper fire and artillery, but they finished the job.

Inside Luciana, Company K was making room-to-room, house-to-house progress, assisted by the 522d Field Artillery's Lieutenant Edwin C. Wood. Company K dearly loved Lieutenant Wood, partly because he was always up with the leading riflemen and partly because he had a genius for adjusting artillery fire to within a few feet of where he wanted it, instead of 25 to 50 yards.

At this point all artillery fire had to be stopped. One platoon had made an attack on a house, and had then been forced back by enemy troops on the flank, leaving one squad cut off. With that squad was Private First Class Harry F. Madokoro. Early in the attack he had held his ground and provided covering fire for his squad when it was forced to fall back in the face of a withering mortar barrage. Now, as the enemy tried to destroy his squad, he provided flank protection against the attack. When enemy soldiers got into a nearby draw and attacked him



*Madokoro crawled to the lip of the draw and tossed in a grenade of his own*

with hand grenades, Madokoro crawled to the lip of the draw and tossed a grenade of his own into the midst of the enemy. Later, he again left his position to knock out a machine-gun nest with another grenade. Somewhat later in the course of the battle, after his squad had rejoined the platoon and was again attacking, he approached a machine-gun position and, deliberately exposing himself to enemy fire, silenced the gun with a burst from his BAR. Private First Class Madokoro was later killed in action. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Luciana now resembled something a man might imagine in one of his worst nightmares. The noise was ear-splitting; steel fragments, jagged chunks of rock, pieces of wood, and machine-gun slugs whistled through the air with terrifying screeches. Above everything else, the noise of exploding shells and rockets punctuated the whine of the fragments. By midafternoon Company K had used up several basic loads of all types of ammunition, particularly hand grenades, rifle grenades and 60mm mortar shells. Battalion supply personnel rushed ammunition to the edges of town by jeep even though the jeeps were constantly under mortar fire as they moved along the exposed road. Late in the afternoon the Commanding General turned all of the 34th Division Artillery and all of Corps artillery that he controlled

at the moment over to the 3d Battalion. For fifteen minutes hundreds of rounds poured into the north end of Luciana. Following the barrage Company K made a last effort as the artillery continued to harass the roads leading north out of town. By dusk the last resistance had been cleared out. The net result was some fifty prisoners and large quantities of small arms and automatic weapons. Civilians stated that the Germans had taken "a great many" dead and wounded with them as they left.

The next morning, July 18, Leghorn fell to elements of the 363d and 135th Infantry regiments. The 2d and 3d Battalions of the 442d Infantry continued to drive north, meeting only scattered small-arms fire from the enemy's disorganized rearguard. The 3d Battalion seized Colle Salvetti, situated on the last high ground before the Arno River. The 2d Battalion moved up abreast on the left of the 3d. On July 19 both battalions set up defensive positions and sent patrols probing to the front to find out how far the enemy had withdrawn. From their observation posts the men could see the Leaning Tower of Pisa in the distance. Of more immediate importance, however, they could watch the occasional enemy activity in the flats in front of Pisa and direct artillery fire at it.

The same day the 100th Battalion moved into Leghorn under the control of the Fifth Army Intel-

ligence Collecting Unit. Here they were deployed around the city to protect key installations and keep order as the citizens of Leghorn slowly straggled back into their city from hiding places in the hills where they had taken refuge when attack seemed imminent.

Invariably, when a situation becomes somewhat stabilized, a number of rumors take form and begin circulating. This time, there were "unconfirmed reports" that the Germans were evacuating Pisa and pulling back across the Arno. The Division Commander wanted to find out if there were truth or fiction behind the report. Consequently, the 442d Infantry was called upon to furnish three patrols, each patrol to probe as far north as the Arno River if possible. Two 20-man patrols from Company G, led by Lieutenant Arthur M. Boyd and Lieutenant Francis R. Bianco, set out at 2100, July 20. At 2300 the same night a 12-man patrol from Company L, led by Lieutenant Edward E. Androvette and Lieutenant Norman F. Gilbert, took off for the same objective with a partisan guide and additional orders to make contact with the partisan leader in Pisa and bring back information that he had.

The two patrols from the 2d Battalion returned at midnight, July 21, having penetrated as far as the Pisa airfield south of the city. They reported that the area south of the Arno was still defended by the Germans, but not heavily. The Company L patrol was almost given up for lost, but it finally came wearily in about noon of July 22, having entered the southern part of the city of Pisa. The patrol had contacted the partisan leader and returned with a sketch of the entire enemy dispositions, including major minefields and river crossings which the Germans were using at the time. The patrol had had some bad moments, having spent most of the 21st hidden in the attic of a partisan's house while a German patrol wandered around downstairs.

On July 21 the Combat Team pushed out as far as Highway 67, the main east-west road between Leghorn and Florence, set up defensive positions there, and moved an outpost line some distance beyond the highway. The same night all elements were relieved by troops of the 133d and 135th Infantry regiments, and pulled back to a bivouac near Colle Salvetti. The following day the Combat Team less the 100th Battalion moved back to a rest area around Vada, where the 100th rejoined the unit on the 25th, having been relieved of the security of Leghorn.

Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark, then Commanding General of the Fifth Army, arrived in the Combat Team Area July 27. In an impressive ceremony he decorated the colors and guidons of the 100th Battalion with the blue streamer which represents the Distinguished Unit Citation, awarded for outstanding accomplishment in combat in the Battle of Belvedere. General Clark also commended the other units of the Combat Team for their great accomplishments in the recent fighting for the port of Leghorn.

The following day elements of the 2d Battalion formed part of the Guard of Honor for His Majesty, King George VI of England, in a ceremony at Cecina.

During the week since they had been relieved the men had devoted most of their time to bathing, cleaning their equipment, relaxing, and unwinding themselves back to normal. The general consensus was that if this was the glory of war somebody else could have it. Some of the men remembered seeing some of the headlines of the North African campaign like the famous "Yanks Surge on to Gafsa." The papers at home had been dishing out the same old stuff the last few weeks. "Fifth Army Drives For Leghorn" had been one of the bigger headlines.



100th Battalion soldier patrolling in Leghorn



Top, King George VI of England and Lt.Gen. Mark W. Clark review 2d Battalion honor guard. Bottom, Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal and Lt.Gen. Mark W. Clark review 100th Battalion honor guard.



There was no longer a man in the Combat Team who didn't know now that you don't "surge" or "drive" over 200 yards of well-defended ground. The men remembered what those 200 yards had cost, 200 yards multiplied until they stretched into forty miles of hills that the Germans hadn't wanted to give up. The bill was paid now—paid in men mending slowly in hospitals, other men buried under neat white crosses in geometrically-arranged military cemeteries. The Joes who had been through the mill and come out were veterans now. They weren't ready to go back again; no man who has heard the screech of a shell just before it hits is ever ready to go back. They did go on, however, no longer in a spirit of high adventure, but with the dogged determination of men with a job to finish.

The men had parties and bull sessions in the evenings, and there was always something to laugh about when they looked back over the campaign. One of the best stories had to do with a day when the 2d Battalion had been in reserve. Staff Sergeant Kazuo Masuda, wandering through a nearby vegetable patch, spotted a German soldier cautiously approaching the adjacent farmhouse. He waited till the German was close enough and then took a shot at him. The startled Jerry took off closely followed by 25 of his buddies who streamed out of the house, believing they had been ambushed, and headed north as fast as their legs would carry them. Masuda was so surprised he forgot to shoot at them.

On another occasion Private First Class Francis T. Sakai, the Regimental executive officer's orderly, had acquired a goose, by means known only to himself. This he chopped up, mixed with practically every vegetable native to Italy, and proceeded to fix a mess of "hekka." Two hours later he dished up the stew, gave some to Colonel Miller, and then offered a messkit full to the Regimental commander, Colonel Pence, who declined on the grounds that he wasn't very hungry. Sakai favored the "old man" with his best cold stare and said, "Sir, I didn't spend two hours cooking this stuff so you could tell me you're not hungry. You eat it." The Colonel ate it.

Training began again on August 1, inasmuch as no one was deluded into believing that this rest period was going to last forever. The following day tragedy hit the regiment. A squad from the 34th Division's 109th Engineers had just completed a demonstration of the latest German mines and boobytraps for the 3d Battalion. Fortunately, the battalion had dispersed when a crate of TNT ex-

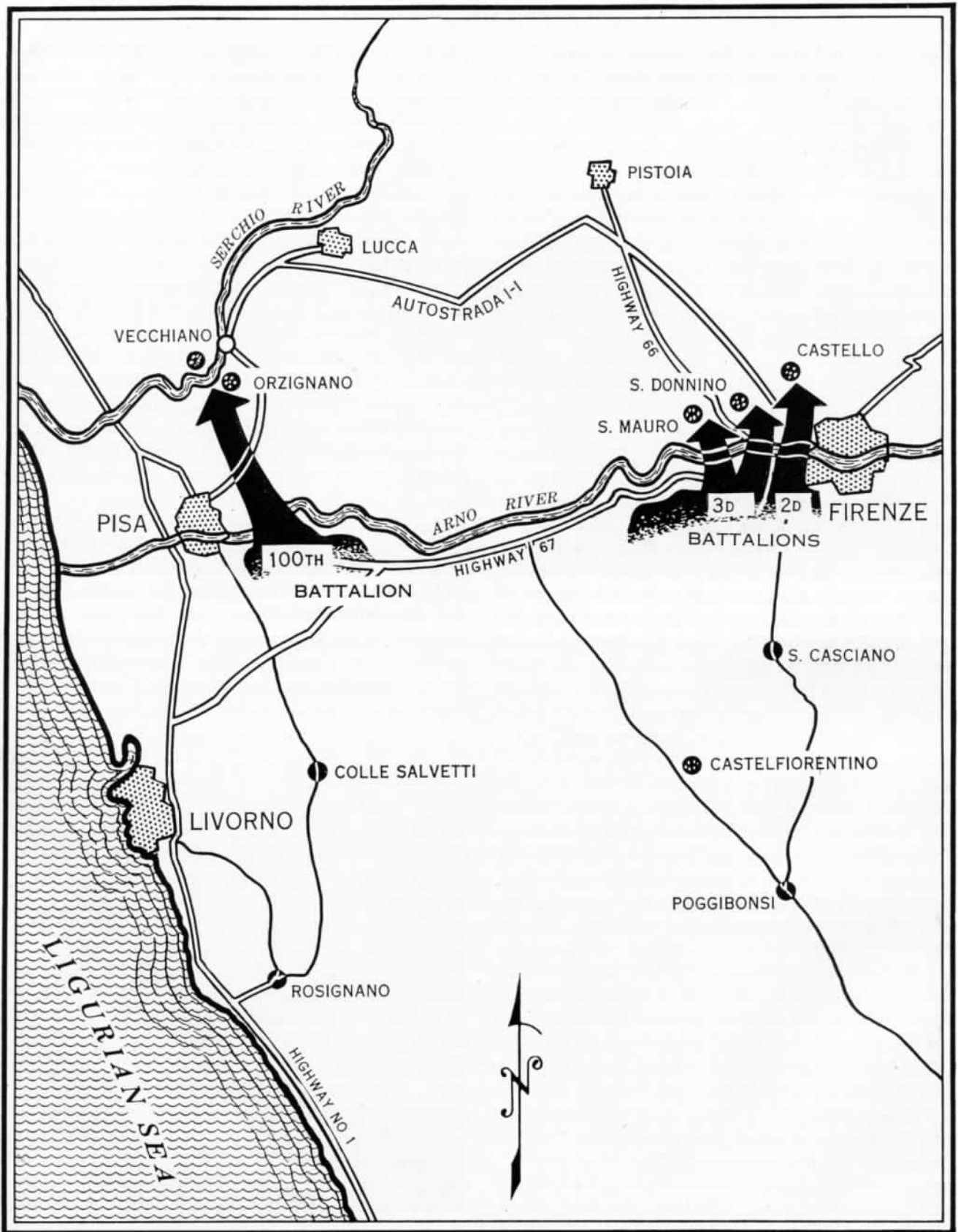
ploded while being loaded on the engineer's truck, which already contained mines of every size and description. In the terrible blast that followed 9 men were literally blown to pieces by the concussion, and 1 man later died of his injuries. Seven men were from the 109th Engineers, 2 were from the Combat Team's own 232d Engineers, and 1 was from Company M of the 442d.

All three battalions spent some time running problems over the same terrain they had so recently fought for, ironing out mistakes, and seeing where a maneuver might have been made differently. Major General Charles L. Bolte, former 69th Division commander who had taken over the Red Bulls when General Ryder was transferred, frequently inspected the Combat Team's training exercises. He also directed that the men be given all possible training in mountain fighting. So far the 442d Combat Team, trained in the swamps and pine forests of Mississippi, had fought in nothing but mountains.

In a bivouac area near Rome the Regimental Anti-tank Company was going through a different kind of training. It had been pulled out of the lines on July 14, assigned to Allied Force Headquarters, and attached to Seventh Army. Several days later the company was attached to the First Airborne Task Force. Initially, the men bivouacked near Lido di Roma, and received their initial briefing there. The



BAR man firing at field targets



ITALY: Arno River, Florence Area

mission was to provide antitank protection to the 1st ABTF in the invasion of Southern France. The company then moved to Marcigliana Airfield on July 28, borrowing 6-pounder cannon from the British because their own 57mm guns were too large and unwieldy for airborne operations.

Classes for the men consisted of loading, lashing, and unloading until every man was letter-perfect in his job. On the 2d and 3d of August all the platoons completed their two required tactical flights. The unit then moved to another bivouac area south of Rome where they went through the entire operation with the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment on terrain that was as much like the objective in France as possible. The various platoons left their trucks, guns, and baggage in charge of a sea detail which would bring them to France sometime after D-day, and moved to their dispersal area to wait.

On August 10 the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) was redesignated as the 100th Battalion, 442d Infantry, and the entire Combat Team was reorganized according to new tables of organization.

The next move came as a surprise to everyone. The 442d Regimental Combat Team was detached from the 34th Division, effective August 15. The 100th Battalion was attached to IV Corps and the remainder of the unit was attached to II Corps and the 85th Division. The following day the Combat Team loaded on trucks, bag and baggage, and moved east to Castelfiorentino. No sooner had the unit arrived than it was detached from the 85th Division and attached to the 88th Division, effective August 17. By this time no one knew what to expect next and cared less. The men began to feel slightly like the eggs in a juggling act. Having packed and unpacked three times in three days, the kitchen crews were apt to hit anyone who complained about the chow over the head with an iron pot. Orders were orders, however, so the men packed up again and moved to another assembly area at Giogoli on the 19th. There they found that they were to move again the next night, this time to relieve elements of the British XIII Corps along the Arno River just west of Florence.

One of the bright spots in all the confusion was the record of the Combat Team swimmers in Rome. Under the coaching of Captain Katsumi Kometani, the 442d team representing the Fifth Army won the Mediterranean Theater title against competition which included former Olympic and national cham-

pions from all the Allied armed forces in the theater.

Private First Class Charles Oda took three firsts and Private Halo Hirose took one. The other members of the team were: Private First Class Yujiro Takahashi, Private John Tsukano, Private Kenneth Oshima, Technician Fifth Grade Itsuhi Oshita, Technician Fifth Grade Thomas Tanaka, Private Mike Mizuki, Private First Class Robert Iwamoto, Private Joseph Yasuda, and Private First Class Asami Higuchi.

On the left of the sector the 100th Battalion moved from Vada August 16 to the Arno River line near Pisa, relieving a motley collection of American and British antiaircraft units which had been filling in as infantry. The relief was effected by 0300 hours August 17. The three rifle companies were disposed abreast, Company B on the left at the town of Oratio; Company C in the center near Badia; Company A on the right flank in the vicinity of San Lorenzo.

On August 19 the enemy, suspecting that the line might be weakly held, launched a probing attack at Company A's positions, preceded by a mortar and artillery barrage. Private Masao Nakae, holding an outpost position, had his tommy gun damaged by a shell fragment during the first stages of the attack. He picked up a wounded man's M-1 rifle and fired rifle grenades at the advancing German infantry. When this failed to stop the attack Nakae threw six hand grenades into the enemy force and drove it back temporarily. In the next barrage Nakae was wounded by a mortar fragment. Despite his injury he continued to fire his rifle at the enemy, now attacking again, and inflicted such severe casualties that the attack was broken up. Private Nakae was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for exceptional heroism.

What was happening now all along the front became fairly obvious from the disposition of troops. The bulk of the Fifth Army was being regrouped south of Florence for the impending strike at Futa Pass and Bologna while the British Eighth Army was swinging further east. The problem was to keep this from becoming equally obvious to the Germans. Accordingly the 442d Combat Team was directed to make a considerable show of strength, patrolling aggressively all along its front to keep the enemy off balance and worried about where the next strike would come from.

The 2d and 3d Battalions moved into the line on the night of August 20-21, relieving elements of the





*German and American medics mix under the Geneva flag*

1st British Division on a six-mile front. The 3d Battalion held the left sector, with the 2d Battalion on the right across the Greve River. The 232d Engineers were temporarily constituted as a rifle company in case a mobile reserve should be needed.

Patrols were very active on both sides, and the peculiar terrain made patrolling extremely dangerous. The ground was as level as a tabletop, but was so crisscrossed with hedges and vineyards that visibility from ground level was never more than a hundred yards at the maximum, usually less.

Almost immediately it was discovered that the Germans were maintaining a patrol base in San Columbano on the south side of the Arno and on the left flank of the 3d Battalion. Captain Robert L. Hempstead, commanding officer of Company M, volunteered to lead a combined Company M and L patrol to wipe out the enemy nest. The patrol went out August 23, taking along a forward observer from Cannon Company. Aided by fire from Cannon Company the patrol cleared out one enemy strongpoint, killing eight Germans and wounding several others. As the patrol worked its way beyond San Columbano it was ambushed near a canal and caught in a cross-fire from two enemy machine guns, supported by mortars.

Captain Hempstead, seeing the patrol was trapped, left his covered position and opened fire with a tommy gun, drawing the enemy's attention to him.

He was instantly killed by a burst of machine-gun fire, but by creating a diversion, he enabled his remaining men to withdraw to better positions and call down artillery fire on the enemy. Captain Hempstead was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for gallantry at the cost of his life.

Aid men and litter bearers were called up to evacuate the three men who had been wounded in the encounter. These men lay in full view of the enemy. The aid men led by Staff Sergeant James Kanaye calmly took their lives in their hands. They raised their red cross flag and walked out in full view of the enemy, a procedure which was highly dangerous at best inasmuch as German troops had shot our aid men several times during the campaign in direct violation of the Geneva Convention. This time the Germans held their fire. When the wounded had been treated, a German medic raised his red cross flag and joined Sergeant Kanaye between the lines, where he gave him some information on the condition of Lieutenant Ralph Potter, who had been wounded in the action and taken prisoner by the Germans. The medics withdrew with their patients and the war was on again. The following day, Chaplain Masao Yamada went to the same spot to remove the bodies of the dead. He also met a German party under the Geneva flag, who assisted him and his group in evacuating the bodies.

Patrols from both battalions had gotten across the

Arno, but had been unable to capture prisoners. Our II Corps desperately needed prisoners to find out what the enemy knew or suspected about our prospective plans, and also to learn the German troop dispositions. In the 100th Battalion's zone, near Pisa, prisoners taken had come from the 65th Division, *Luftwaffe* Ground Forces, and Corps was also anxious to find out if the opposition near Florence was made up of similar second-rate troops.

A patrol from Company K of the 3d Battalion was the first to have any luck. Innumerable patrols had gone out through past nights; men had been hit by artillery and small arms; other men had been killed or had feet blown off by one of the thousands of mines the Germans had laid along the river banks. No one had come back with prisoners. This patrol had run into a firefight on the river bank and was headed back to the company CP, a little sorry they had not been able to take prisoners but more than thankful there had been no casualties. About 150 yards from the CP there was a sudden halt and a challenge came from the squad leader as he peered into a dark irrigation ditch which ran under a culvert. Quickly the men surrounded the culvert and one man fired a warning shot into the ditch. This was immediately followed by cries of "Kamerad," and four very unhappy Germans emerged. They, too, had been sent to get prisoners. Corps had its PW's, who turned out to be grade "A" troops of the 71st *Panzergrenadier* Regiment, and everybody was happy. The following night, August 29, a combined patrol from Companies E and G took five more prisoners from the same unit.

For the next two days and nights there was considerable evidence of a general enemy withdrawal to the well-prepared Gothic Line. Outposts heard demolitions, and air observation confirmed that the Germans were blowing bridges a considerable distance north of the Arno. Accordingly, all battalions made elaborate plans to cross the river and establish a secure bridgehead on the north side.

The 232d Engineers reconnoitered crossings over the Arno so that vehicles could follow up the foot troops. Reconnaissance showed that it would be necessary for them to remove hundreds of mines and mark or tape off hundreds more before the crossing could be made.

Fifth Army gave the go-ahead order on August 31. The following day a strong patrol from the 2d and 3d Battalions established a bridgehead across the river. At 1900 Company F, supported by tanks

and assisted by engineers, crossed the river and occupied the town of Peretola. Two hours later Company K crossed the river on the left of the regimental sector and, guided through the minefields by partisans, occupied San Mauro.

In the Pisa sector Company C of the 100th Battalion crossed the Arno at 1200 September 1, followed by Company A some three hours later. This bridgehead was held until engineers could construct a bridge to get tanks and supporting artillery across. On September 3 the battalion, all three companies abreast, moved north as far as the Serchio River, where the men encountered enemy defensive positions in considerable strength.

Patrols from the 2d and 3d Battalions sent out on September 2, probed north six kilometers before running into enemy patrols. That night the 349th Infantry of the 88th Division passed through our lines and drove on to the north. Company F withdrew south of the river, but Company K remained in position until September 5 as insurance that the enemy would not molest the Arno Crossing which the engineers had so laboriously constructed. Beginning September 6 the Combat Team was detached from the 88th Division and moved south to the coast at Castiglione, where the 100th Battalion rejoined the rest of the unit after it was relieved along the Serchio River the night of September 6.

For several days prior to the relief there had been considerable argument going on in the stratospheric levels of command as to whether the 442d Combat Team should continue with the attack of the Fifth Army or join the Seventh Army in France. The men wanted to go to France. The Seventh Army had been going up the Rhone Valley hell-bent for election. General Patton's Third Army had not yet stalled in its drive toward Germany. Everybody was expecting the war to end any day now, and most of the GIs wanted to get to France and get in on some of the blitz before it was too late. They were tired of walking up and down an endless succession of hills. Unfortunately the Combat Team's crystal ball was out of order at the time. What the men expected and what they got were as far apart as the poles.

The final decision was to send the Combat Team to the Seventh Army in France. Accordingly, the unit moved from its bivouac area to the port at Piombino on September 10, embarking on Liberty ships for Naples the same day. On arrival at Naples around midnight of September 11 the unit was

detached from Fifth Army and assigned to Seventh Army.

After the quartering parties had done some frantic scurrying around the various sections of the 2d Replacement Depot in the dead of night, most of the Combat Team finally got its pup tents pitched in a group of olive groves several kilometers outside of Naples, which was something of a blessing. Naples was even dirtier and more crowded than most of the men last remembered it.

For the first few days in the area the men washed, cleaned their equipment, loafed, or took passes in Pompeii and Naples. The rest period came to an abrupt end on the 18th of September when 672 replacements, mostly young Nisei from the continental United States, joined the Combat Team and were assigned to companies. These men had to be

trained and integrated into their companies while there was still time to do the job. There would be no opportunity for orientation after the Combat Team went back in the lines—then it would be sink or swim.

From the Replacement Depot the Combat Team moved to Staging Area Number 1 in what had once been the University of Naples. Equipment and vehicles were immediately trucked to the port and loaded aboard ship under the supervision of our own advance parties and Coast Guard crews. Finally, on September 26 and 27 the troops boarded light assault boats which shuttled them out to the waiting Navy transports. Precisely at 1200 September 27 the unit, aboard the transports *Thurston*, *Dickman*, *Chase*, and *Henrico*, sailed for Marseille. Ahead lay the bitterest fighting the men were ever to see.