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752nd Tank Bn

United States Army

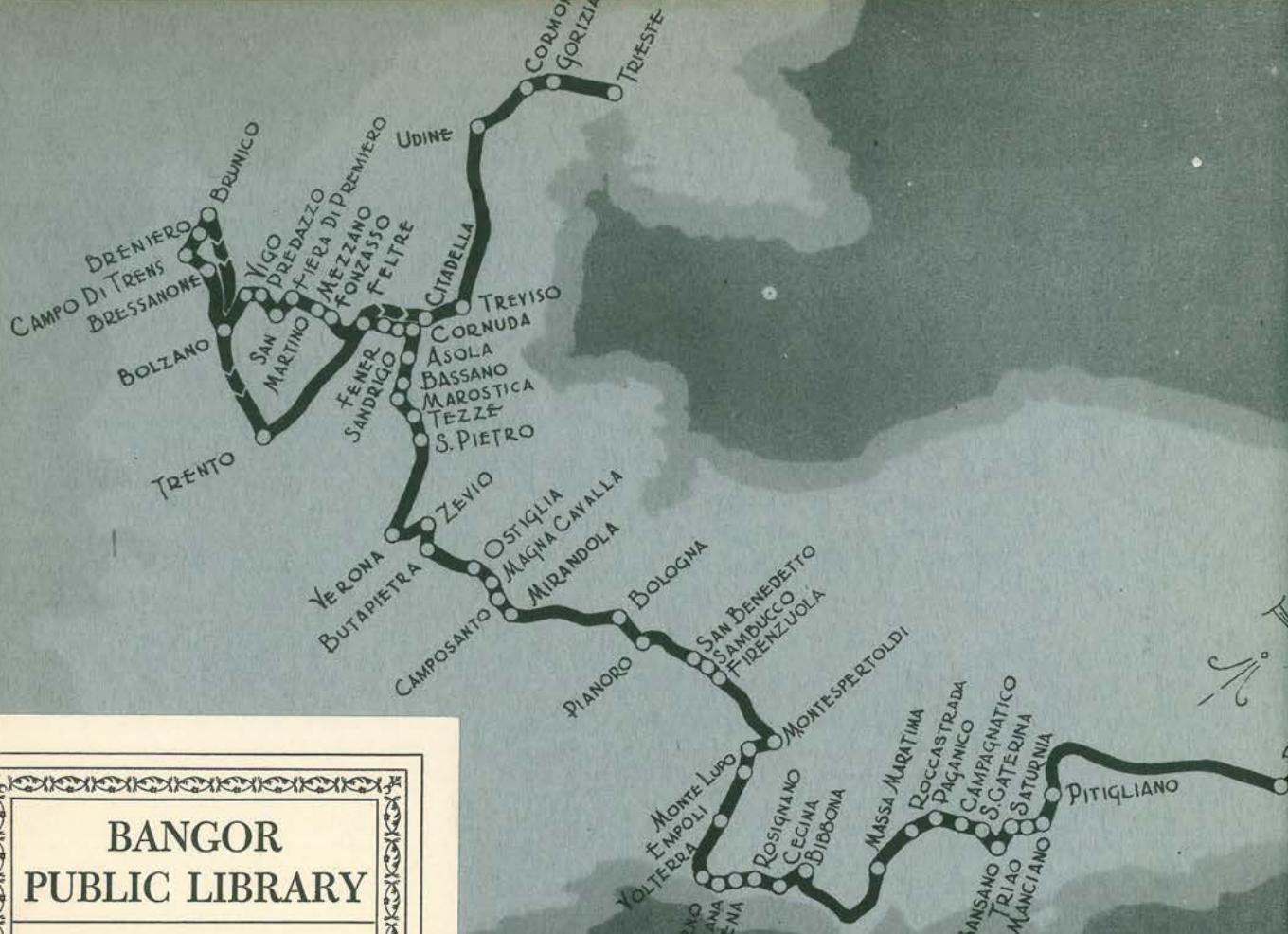
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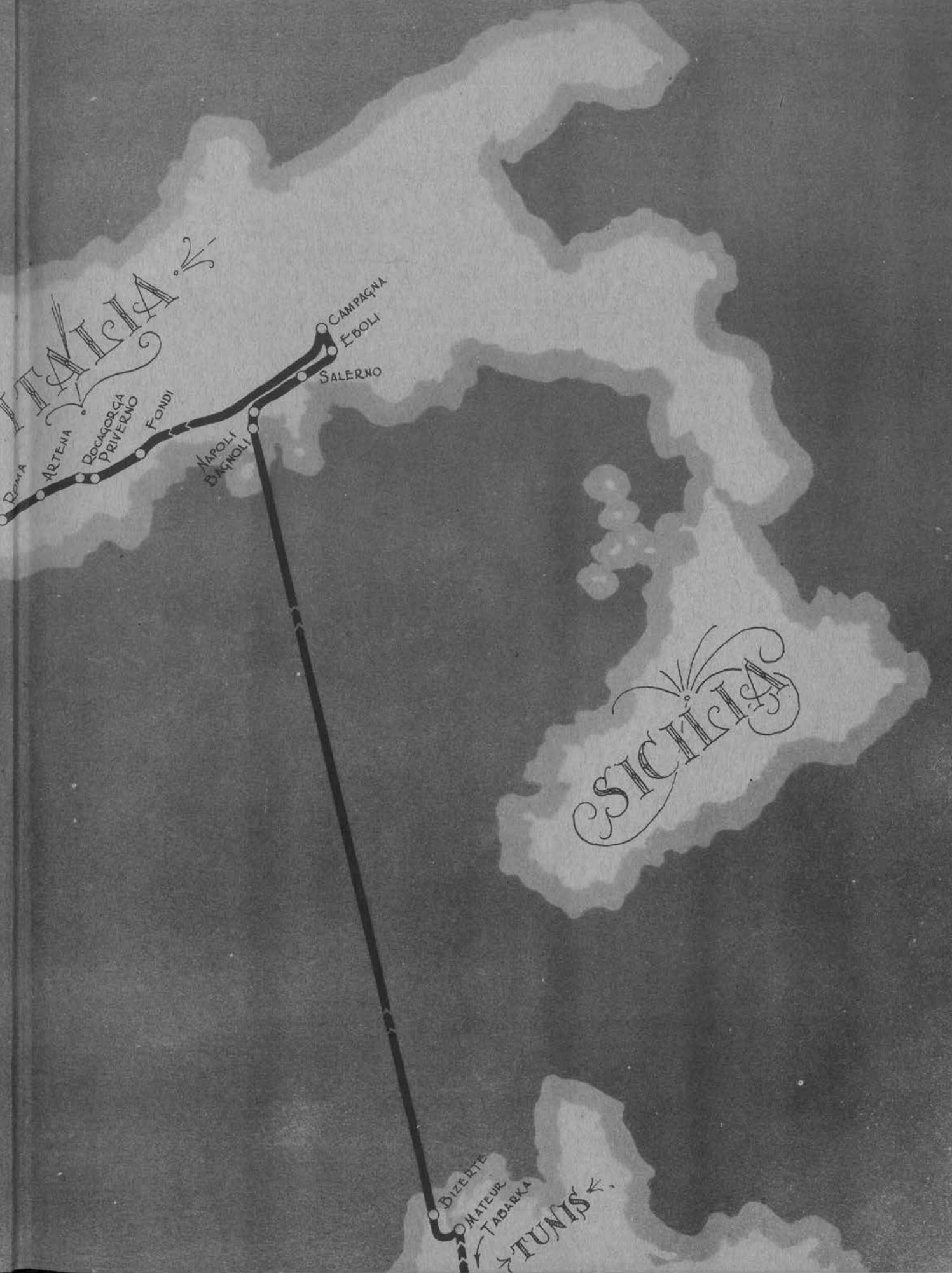
FREDERICK W. HILL
AND
MARIANNE HILL
..... FUND



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Route Map
OF THE
752nd Tank Battalion
1944-1945





Hiya Fellows—

We put in quite a session together during the rat race in North Africa and Italy. Our outfit was the finest I have ever known and I am very proud to have been one of you. Each and every man did an outstanding job and the teamwork and spirit displayed at all times make it a pleasure to remember each incident of the old gang.

The bunch that wrote the combat history of 752nd in the M.T.O. are back in the states now. In the process of being re-habilitated. Some of them have stopped in and visited for a short time with me—always bringing a renewal of old friendships and many reminiscences. I hope that as the time passes more of you will come my way, and I know that whenever you meet another one of the old outfit you will find, as I do, the old feeling of comradeship running strong.

I want to take this opportunity to extend to each of you the congratulations you so richly deserve for a job well done, and to express my best wishes for a successful future in your chosen fields.

May peace and happiness bring their blessings to you, and to your families for many years to come.

Sincerely yours,

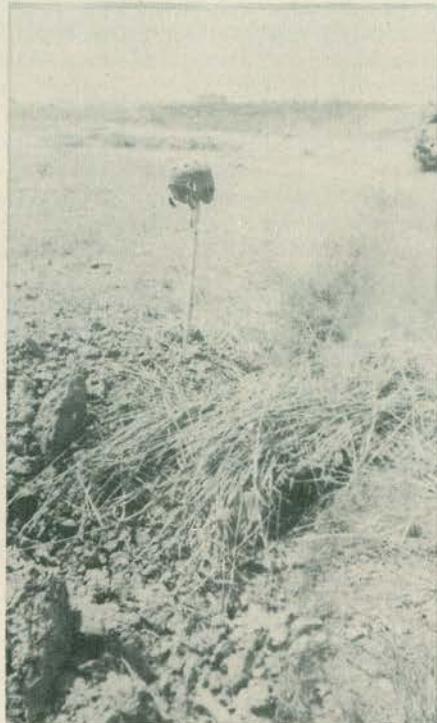
L. H. Herdberg



Honor Roll

GEORGE W. BLESSING
RAY ROBINSON
FRANKLYN S. DIXON
HAROLD V. PRIEST
HAROLD E. WENGER
ARTHUR A. PENDLETON
JOHN GRUBER
JAMES B. MORRIS
SHERWIN R. CLINTON
SEYMOUR TEED
ZACCHEUS W. STEMM
NED R. O'NEILL
MICHAEL J. REVELLA
JAMES L. ROSOLINO
LLOYD T. DOLAN
ALBERT R. WESNER
RALPH J. GATRELL
WILLIAM STOLP
ROBERT W. CASMER
RALPH S. WILLIAMS
ARMANDO D. ACHINO
FRANK L. HEATON, JR.
ERNEST S. WITTWER
JULES F. HENSGEN
EVERETT E. SEARL
ROSS SIFFORD
OTTO F. NOVAK
DONALD C. BARRETT
JOHN W. HOYER

Dedication



We are proud of our outfit. With a record of the highest number of consecutive combat days (315) in the 5th Army, and the status of being the only separate Armored Battalion in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations to be cited by the President, we feel that we are more than justified in our pride.

Many of the jobs which have been done by the companies and individuals of the Battalion have heretofore been recorded only by word of mouth. While the divisions and other units with which the 752nd worked have received the big play, we know that it has been the efforts of this outfit which have often made possible the larger successes for which credit lines were assigned elsewhere.

We were, perhaps, lucky. Our casualties were comparatively light. Those of our buddies who are lined up swapping tales at the Great White Bar, were only figures in the casualty report, but they will live forever in our memories. It is to the memory of those we left behind in the Italian hills and valleys, that this history is respectfully dedicated.

Introduction

You could probably find most of the historical data contained in this booklet in the War Department files—if you had the time and the pull to get at them. On the other hand, there were plenty of items worth remembering which never reached the official mausoleum. The places we've been and the things that have taken place both on and off duty will be subjects for endless reminiscence as long as there are two members of the old 752nd left to get together over a glass of cognac—or some more civilized beverage.

Your own personal party in Bone, London, Roma, Rocca Gorga, Livorno, Firenze, Vicenza and/or other assorted points may not have been mentioned herein; but you can bet your last two lire that it wasn't an intentional oversight. There just has to be a limit to the size of such a history, and some of the items which are juicy conversation really wouldn't look so good in print. The high spots—and we did hit some high ones—have been covered to the best of the knowledge of all concerned. The others -- well, we hope that with this to go on you'll be able to recall your own more intimate details and live over again the fun, the hell, and the cockeyed places you've been with the best damned tank outfit that ever tipped a bottle in the MTO.



Distinguished Unit

CITATION!

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 110

Citation of Unit
I CITATION OF UNIT:

Under the provisions of Section IV, Circular Number 333, War Department, 1945, the following-named organization is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action, and is awarded citation streamers therefor. Individuals assigned or attached to this unit are entitled to wear the Distinguished Unit Badge to identify such citation:

THE 752nd TANK BATTALION is cited for outstanding performance of an infantry division from 22 April to 2 May 1945 in the Po Valley, Italy. Supporting this battalion aggressively participated in the assault on strong enemy positions, driving the hostile forces relentlessly from Bologna to the foothills of the Alps. Displaying great courage and determination, the heroic tankmen utilized the full striking power of their tanks to smash strongpoints of fanatic enemy resistance without regard for grave personal danger. On 23 April in rapid and savage attacks that demoralized large enemy groups and prevented them from reorganizing, the determined tankmen effected the Panaro River crossing, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy, destroying great numbers of vehicles and capturing over four hundred prisoners. Pressing great toward the Po River, this battalion skillfully and effectively shattered the entrenched enemy, overcame stubborn resistance and covered the successful river crossing by the infantry. Continuing the advance, the tanks spearheaded the action into and beyond Verona cutting up and smashing German defenses with a ferocious display of armored power. In an extremely hazardous and unprecedented advance during the night, the tankmen succeeded in capturing Vincenza after a savage struggle overcoming road blocks, bazooka, sniper fire and large caliber guns in house-to-house fighting. Without rest, the gallant men pushed on and blasted the fanatical enemy from town to town and at the cessation of hostilities were moving inexorably into the Alps. The fearless and indomitable courage displayed by the men of the 752nd TANK BATTALION contributed substantially toward effecting the capitulation of the enemy in Italy and are an everlasting credit and inspiration to the Armed Forces of the United States.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL TRUSCOTT:
OFFICIAL:

(s) M. F. GRANT
(1) M. F. GRANT
Colonel, AGD
Adjutant General

(1) DON E. CARLETON
Brigadier General, GSC
Chief of Staff

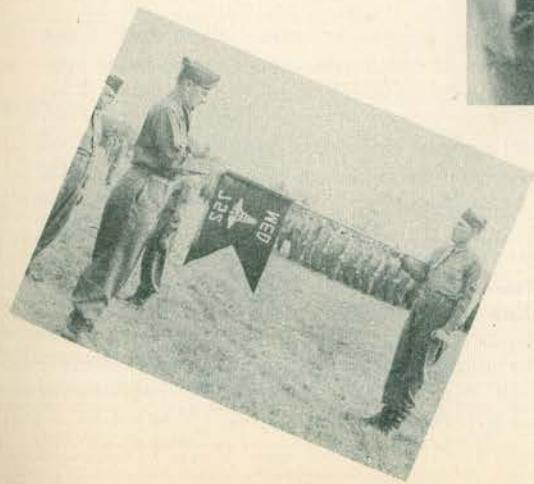
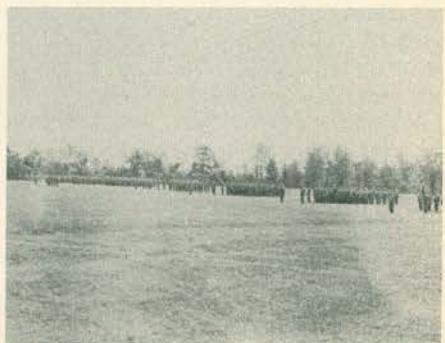
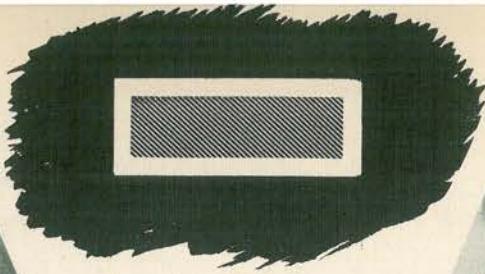
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HEADQUARTERS 752nd TANK BN., APO 464, U. S. Army, 21 September 1945.
TO: All Men of the 752nd Tank Battalion.

The General Order Extract above is a formal acknowledgement of the gallant part each one of you played in winning the Victory in Italy. I wish to personally congratulate you upon this deserved honor which your efforts have brought to the Battalion and to yourselves. I have been proud of the 752nd Tank Battalion as a hard fighting outfit and I am gratified that each man of this organization can wear the badge that is the symbol of a unit which has distinguished itself in combat. It has been a pleasure and privilege to serve with and know you all. In case any of you should want to get in touch with me at any time, my home address is 1301 North Lee Street, Roswell, New Mexico.

/s/ Coryton M. Woodbury
Lt. Col., 752nd Tank Bn., Commanding.

CMW/acd
1st Ind



THE

Story

OF THE

752nd

SECTION I

Activation to Embarkation

As a beginning it wasn't particularly spectacular. Rather like planting seeds. You put them in the ground—they all look pretty much alike—but from there on, although you can coax them along and perhaps push them a bit, it depends pretty much on what's in the seeds themselves what sort of a crop you're going to have.



Lt. Col. Anderson

The initial cadre for 752nd was made up from a picked group of men and officers taken from the replacement pool at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and was under the command of Lt. Col. Glen Anderson. It was due in a large measure to the early training given under Col. Anderson's guidance, that the Battalion received that background and spirit which was to pay off so well on the battlefield months later.

Shortly after having been activated at Fort Knox, the new Battalion moved its headquarters to Fort Lewis, Washington, where its active training as a part of the Armored Command began to take shape. A large part of the original personnel of the organization was made up of men from the Pacific Coast Area. This factor aided in giving the new outfit that close knit feeling of comradeship which later carried over as the personnel changed, until the entire 752nd was as tight an operating group as could be found in the Army throughout its career.

Basic training had its usual ups and downs. A lot of the boys were introduced to tanks for the first time—and took to them as smoothly as a shell fits into the breech. By the time the outfit was well into its basic education it furnished enough trained personnel to form the cadre for the 742nd tank Battalion. The new baby was commanded by Major Hausman, formerly S-3 of the 752nd. Command of the 752nd parent organization at this time was taken over by Major George F. Bender who had been the Battalion Executive Officer under Col. Anderson.

Most of the kinks of basic training had been ironed out when 752nd left Fort Lewis on April 13, 1942, headed for the Desert Training Center at Camp Young, near Indio, California. Here we started the rough work which was to result in one of the best trained tank outfits in the open market. The outfit was part of the first Tank Group which also included the 755th Tank Battalion.



Fort Lewis, Washington

That desert session was rough. When 752nd moved into Desert Center it was mostly just a name on a few not very well known maps. Operated under the direction of General George S. (Old Blood and Guts) Patton, the set-up was designed to give the tankers the most realistic combat training possible, and at the same time to inculcate the rigid discipline necessary for the successful operation of the outfit under the hectic mess that generally characterizes actual combat.

Baby, it was hot! You could fry eggs on

ready the hard driving, hard drinking reputation that scintillated over the 752nd sector in North Africa and Europe was beginning to form. After a session in the desert heat there was nothing quite so satisfying as an ice cold bottle of beer or coke—or stronger if you happened to prefer. After all we were still in the states and you didn't have to worry about the clinical analysis of what was in your glass.

The last desert problem was finally critiqued to the satisfaction of the highest brass; and with George Bender, now Lt. Col., in com-



Desert Training Center, Indio, California

the top of the turret, and what you could do inside the tank shouldn't happen to a 20-cent steak! A guy didn't melt, he dehydrated. Lumping the heat, sand, dust, bugs, rattlesnakes and a number of choice cases of yellow jaundice all to gether you had quite a collection.

Of course there were lighter moments even there. The bunch was beginning to shape up. Tank crews were getting psychic. You could almost tell in advance what the fellow in the seat next to you—or below you—was going to do. Then too, you had to be strictly on the ball at all times. Not just in the matters of the problem for the day. General Patton was on the prowl. He might be in anything from the peep coming up from your left, or the tank just ahead of you, to the plane buzzing around overhead; and if you had forgotten to button the top button on your fatigues, or had a tank hatch open, or had taken off the tin hat to wipe the sweat from you eyes—Brother the results were little short of a first class riot!

There were parties in those days too. Al-

mand, 752nd boarded the trains on July 29, 1942 headed eastward. A parting statement by General Patton was indicative of 752nd even then.

"There", General Patton said, "goes the most highly specialized bunch of killers this army has turned out so far."

The staging area at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, was the destination of most of the Battalion on that move. A part of Service Company went with the vehicles direct to the port of embarkation at New York. The remainder of the personnel pulled into Indiantown Gap at 11:00 A.M. on August 3, 1942, and started processing for the big event. Rumor Hell! The outfit was headed overseas.

Two days later, almost to the hour, we left Indiantown Gap behind and left for New York. That was about 11:00 o'clock in the morning of August 5, 1942. At 9:00 o'clock that night—2100 hours army time—we were climbing aboard the boat which was already warmed up and ready to take off.

SECTION II

England and Africa

Things were just getting wound up in the European theatre at that time. Only a few Air Corps outfits and such veterans as the 34th Infantry and the 1st Armored Divisions had left the states ahead of us. It was 2:00 o'clock in the morning on August 6, 1942, when we steamed past the Lady with the torch in New York harbor. She took one good look at that bunch and nearly dropped her book. There may have been some idea in her mind of the mark that outfit was going to write in the war communiques, but she wasn't a bit more confident than the bunch themselves.

Liverpool, where we landed at about 1900 hours (we're strictly operating on army time from here on out) on the 17th of August, 1942, wasn't such a bad deal. Of course it didn't bear much resemblance to the desert where we'd been sweating it out (literally) for the past few months, but the English gals were definitely on the beam.

Passing through Liverpool, the outfit entrained for our first overseas camp at Camp Pennings, near Tidworth, located on the Salisbury plains. We stayed here about six weeks

and made our first acquaintance with the English people and customs at first hand. British rations in the form of "porridge" and kindred concoctions didn't exactly receive any rousing cheers, but Irish and Scotch whiskey and English beer and bitters were everything they were cracked up to be. Here too we found for the first time that oversea axiom—that a pack of American cigarettes or a bar of chocolate was better than the best currency that ever rolled off a printing press.

So we went to England. A poll of English opinion at that time would have shown that American troops were absolutely tops. (Remember there were just a few of us around at that time.) Naturally the tankers of 752nd were the cream of the crop. This is not exaggeration nor conceit. It is merely a plain statement of fact. Obviously if you don't believe this, you're reading the wrong book.

London was mecca in those days. Even with the krauts paying regular calls over the town it was still the hub of English social life. Everyone went there when he had the chance—and in those days it was still possible to get



Battalion Review, Tidworth, England



Capt. Keach and members of the Battalion Supply Section "fraternize." Oran, Algeria

those almost forgotten items known as weekend passes. Even the blackout wasn't a big hazard. The gals really knew their way around in that place. A number of the boys disregarded Washington's caution concerning foreign entanglements and ended up with English brides. Considering the red tape and time it took to get married in that place and time, it must have been true love.

Closing our training session at Camp Pennington, we moved to Tidworth Barracks and then to the British Artillery school at Perham Downs. Here we continued our advanced training for the next three months.

Along about that time people on our side of the fence got tired of being on the receiving end of all the trouble. Plans were underway to raise a little hell on our own hook. Rumors were available in assorted sizes, shapes, and colors but they never came close to the actual fact.

We moved back to Liverpool again on the night of January 5, 1943 and boarded ship the next morning. Still no one knew where we were going—not even the krauts—and that was a record of some sort. Twenty-four hours later the ship moved out of the harbor and we were on our way.

Yes, we headed for Africa. Old 752nd was there with the latest thing in M3 Medium tanks and all the trimmings. We were loaded for bear, and while some of us may have been a bit leery of the Luftwaffe about that time, we were all convinced that once we got back on dry land again we'd get in our lick and help even a few scores.

The trip was uneventful. Outside of a tendency on the part of some people to get seasick, the biggest thrill of the trip was when we passed through the Straits of Gibraltar. Here we saw our first lighted cities since com-

ing overseas. After the blackouts in England, the city of Tangiers in Spanish Morocco, and the cities along the Spanish coast really looked lovely.

That night the two ships which carried 752nd and its equipment pulled out of the convoy, which was headed for Algiers, and made for Oran. About 24 hours later, the night of the 17th of January, we pulled into Oran, our first North African port. A few of the men and officers went ashore that night to start the unloading details and the rest of the outfit disembarked the next morning.

Oran looked beautiful from the boats. At first we thought that all the movies we'd ever seen about the glamorous Arabs and the beautiful babes must be true. Then we landed. Even in the winter rains the smells, which we later found out were the outstanding feature of North Africa, were present. The Arabs (pronounced Ay-rabs, remember) were there in the dog-gondest assortment of rags, mattress covers, and less. Some of the French chicks weren't bad, but the birds who made up the movie sets and cast the pictures had obviously never been to that part of North Africa.

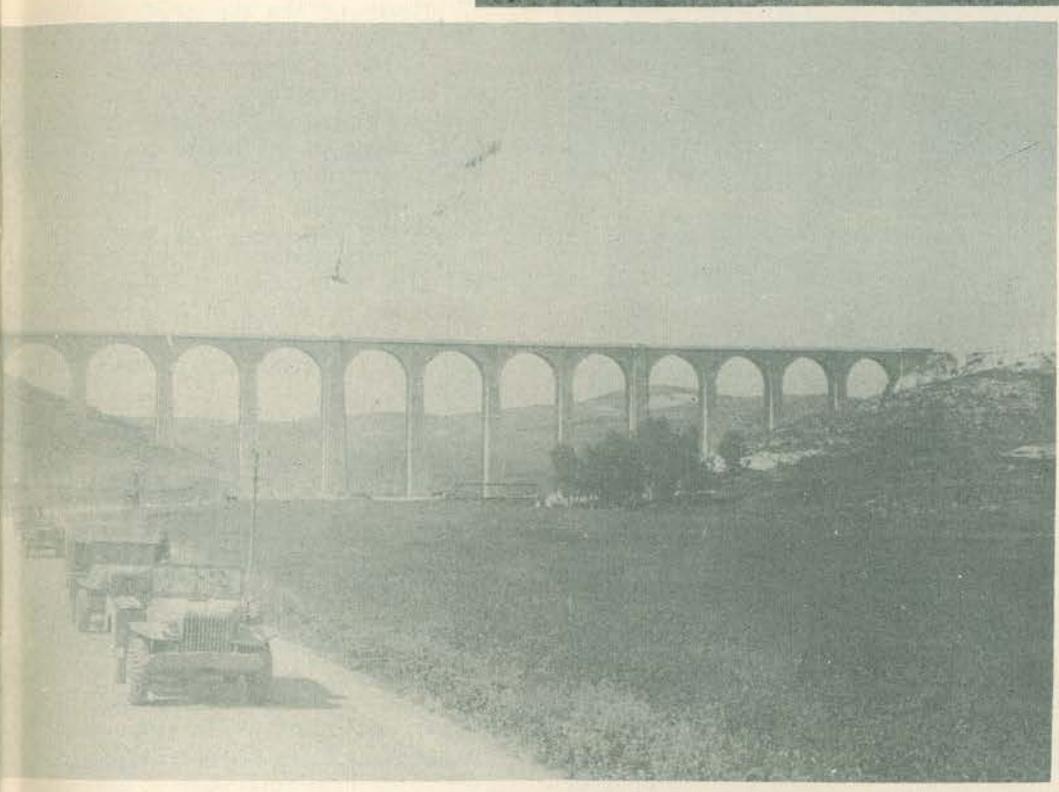
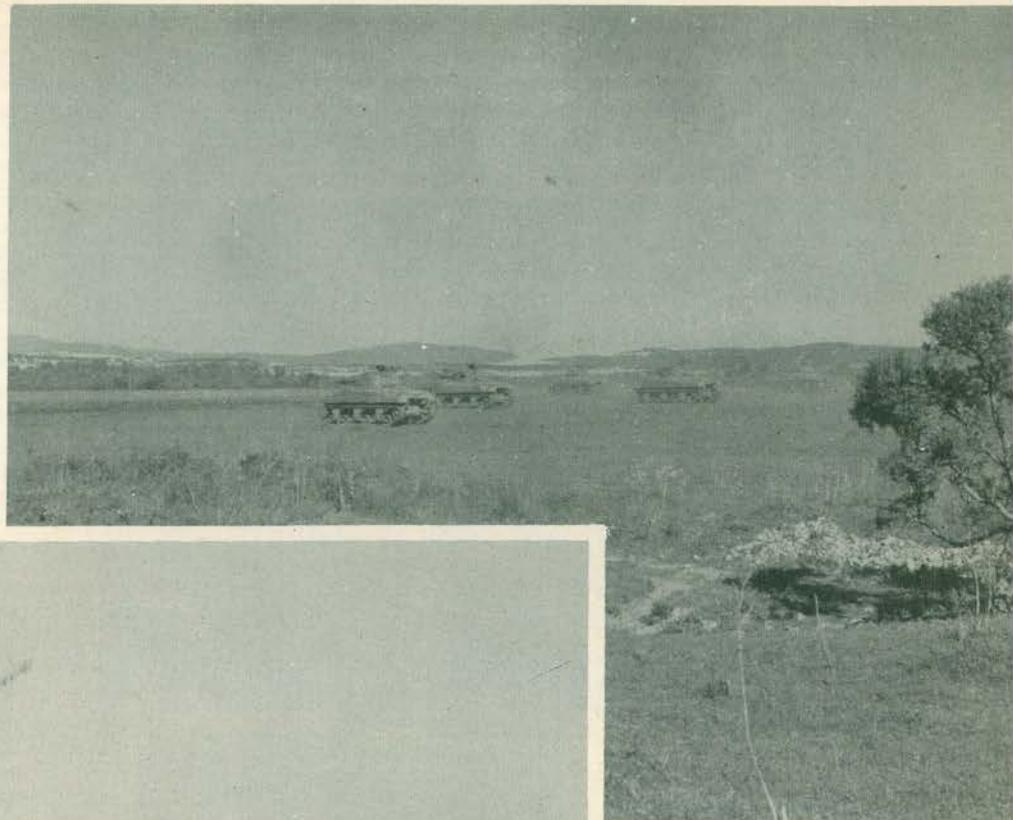
Our first camp in the Dark continent was a short distance from Oran at Foret De Ismael, about 10 miles west of Saint Dennis Du Sig. We set up shop here, and started getting acquainted with the facts of life as set up by the Army in North Africa.

Things were getting tough all over. The krauts still had a lot of fight left in their pockets when 752nd hit North Africa. The 1st Armored had just taken a whale of a shellacking at Kasserine and other units on the line were strictly getting a rough going over from the beer-heads. A lot of our armor had been lost or knocked out in these go-rounds, and replacements were needed badly.



Battalion Personnel Section—Oran, Algeria

Tanks maneuver on the range—Tabarka



Road above Beja, Tunisia

Battalion Area. Home on the Range in Tunisia



Since we were in a rear area at the time, higher headquarters pulled our equipment to re-equip some of those units which had sustained the battle losses. A lot of our tanks were

shipped to the 1st Armored Division. The 755th Tank Battalion also got a few of them, and also 751st. For the time being, we were definitely out of the line-up as a combat force.

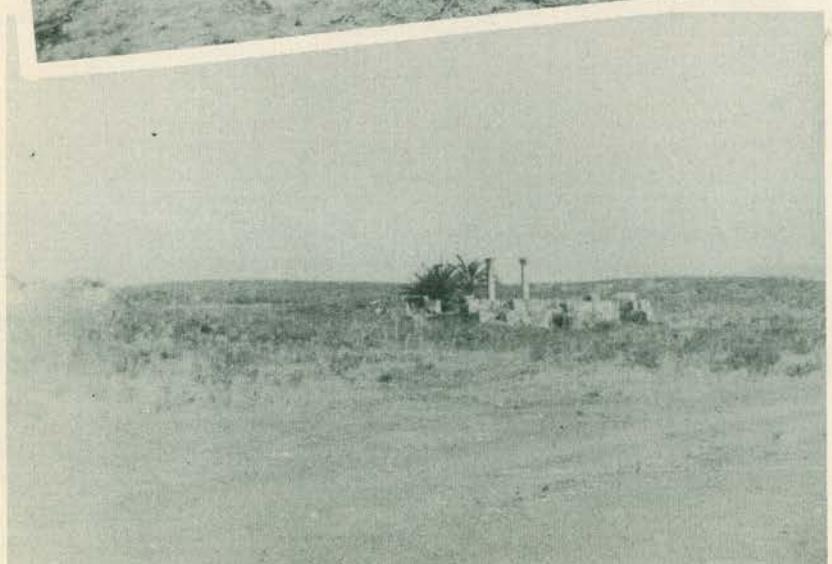
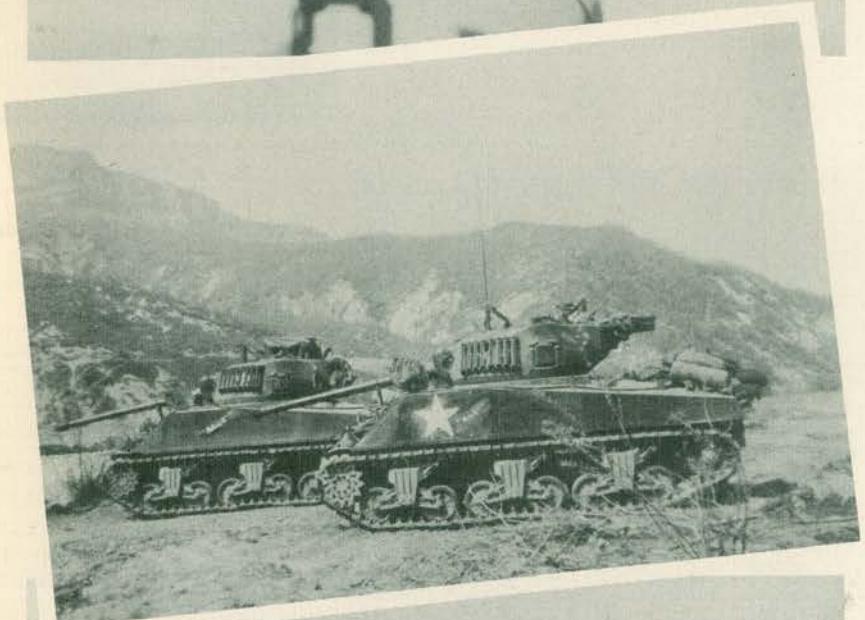
Somebody got their wires a bit crossed about this time and as a result of the misunderstanding, the 752nd Tank Battalion was inactivated at 2400 hours on the 15th of March, 1943, and reformed as the 2642nd Armored Replacement Battalion to train and ship replacements in both personnel and vehicles to the various armored units on the Tunisian front.

However, we remained in the vicinity of Oran until the 26th of March, when we moved out with a convoy of wheeled vehicles scheduled for delivery to II Corps in the battle area. We bivouacked at Orleansville that first night, and at 1000 hours the next morning were on our way again. The night of the 27th we stopped at L'Arba about ten miles out of Algiers. It was here that Major (now Lt. Col.) Woodbury joined 752nd.

The night of March 28 found us at Setif, a British Convoy bivouac area from which place we moved on the next day to our assigned area at As El Oubira, about ten miles east of Tebessa a short distance from the Tunisian border. We arrived here on the night of March 29, 1943.

Our training area at Tebessa occupied 144 square miles of territory about equally distributed on each side of the Tunisian-Algerian border. At the time of the move to Tebessa the Battalion was commanded by Lt. Col. Hyman Bruss, who had assumed command around the middle of the month of March when Col. Bender was sent to the hospital.

When Easter rolled around that year, the outfit (still 2642nd) was on the move again. That week-end on April 23, 1943, we shifted over to Souk-el-Arba just north of II Corps. At the time of this move, Delivery company of 2642nd went forward to the vicinity of Beja. The unit was still work-



ing at the job of furnishing replacements to the fighting front. We were still doing business at the same old stand when the North African campaign came to its close. That was a big day in those parts. Everyone who could find a good excuse, or an excuse for an excuse, took off for Tunis to see the fun. It was our first experience with wholesale lots of kraut prisoners.

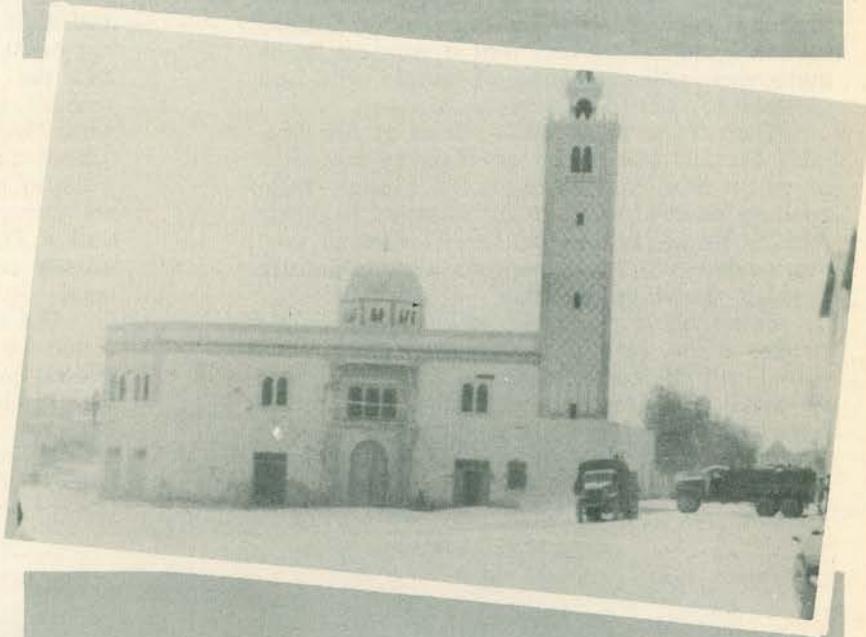
You had to be there to really appreciate it. Kraut truck drivers bringing load after load of their own men up to the PW cages, and turning around to go back for another load without a GI guard in sight. Columns of krauts marching up the roads under their own officers to report to the same cages. What a rat race!

Okay for that session. Africa belonged to the Allies. The higher brass was already hard at work on the next stage of the war which would put American and Allied troops into Italy and Europe.

The 2642nd bunch was moved from Souk-el-Arba the last week in May, after the campaign had closed, and shifted down near the coast to the little Tunisian town of Ras Rajel, about six miles outside of the small port of Tabarka on the Mediterranean sea. Here the training program went ahead with cadre companies which had been formed to train replacements in medium and light tanks, armored infantry and artillery, reconnaissance, mortars, assault guns, signal, tank destroyers, engineers, and general replacements.

It was at this camp that the mistake which had originally disbanded the 752nd tank Battalion was spotted, and the old outfit, with some new faces to be seen, was reorganized as an active tank battalion on the 16th of September, 1943. Lt. Col. Bruss commanded the unit at this time, with Major Woodbury as S-3, 1st Lt. Wirt as S-2/S-3 Air, 2nd Lt. Bieler as Commo Officer, Capt. Keach as S-4, 1st Lt. Smith as Adjutant, 2nd Lt. Hokensen as Personnel Officer, Capt. Burke as Motor Officer, Capt. Stoehr commanding A company, Capt.

Eitel with B company, Capt. Mueller in command of C company, Capt. Troxler commanding Service Company, and Headquarters company commanded by 1st Lt. Wright.



The Cadre companies were still operating as a training school for armored replacements. During the period over which the school was active, around 7500 officers and men passed through its various courses and were shipped out to regular replacement centers for eventual assignments to combat units.

The African interlude after the close of hostilities in that theatre was one of many sidelights. Stuck out in the woods, 90 miles from nowhere, there were few chances for recreation. During the summer months there were hikes to the nearby beaches for swimming parties, and with true GI ingenuity, the officers and men in both the 752nd unit and the attached school units found ways and means to while away such odd moments as could be found.

The cork forest in which we were spotted offered us considerable shelter from the African sun, and later from some of the more vicious forms of the African winter.

Rec trips were rather few and far between, but most of us did at one time or another manage to get in to Tunis, Bone, La Calle or some of the other smaller spots. Takarka furnished some of the local vino for impromptu parties, and in spite of the fact that it was off limits there were still a number of people who had chances to visit friends in the town.

Then there were the sessions at Ain Drahem. For 200 francs you got a pretty fair meal of about the best example of French style cooking most of us ever encountered in North Africa. Naturally this included wine in several varieties and the evenings were generally voted a "howling" success.

Some of us managed to dicker with the Arabs to the tune of some eggs (10 francs each) and chickens (average 100 francs) and do a bit of cooking on the side. Some rather aggravated picnics were produced in the odd evenings before the winter rains made such outdoor activities a bit uncomfortable.

The local inhabitants did their share to

make life interesting. The efforts of some of the Arabs to acquire GI uniforms in a strictly illegal manner led to all sorts of complications. The final solution was the scattering of a few "loaded" barracks bags around the camp. Plainly marked "Booby Trap" for the convenience of the GIs, the bait was irresistible to the Arabs who succeeded in scattering one or two of themselves over considerable African landscape before the rest of them learned not to play that way. After that session the loss in clothes and GI equipment went down sharply.

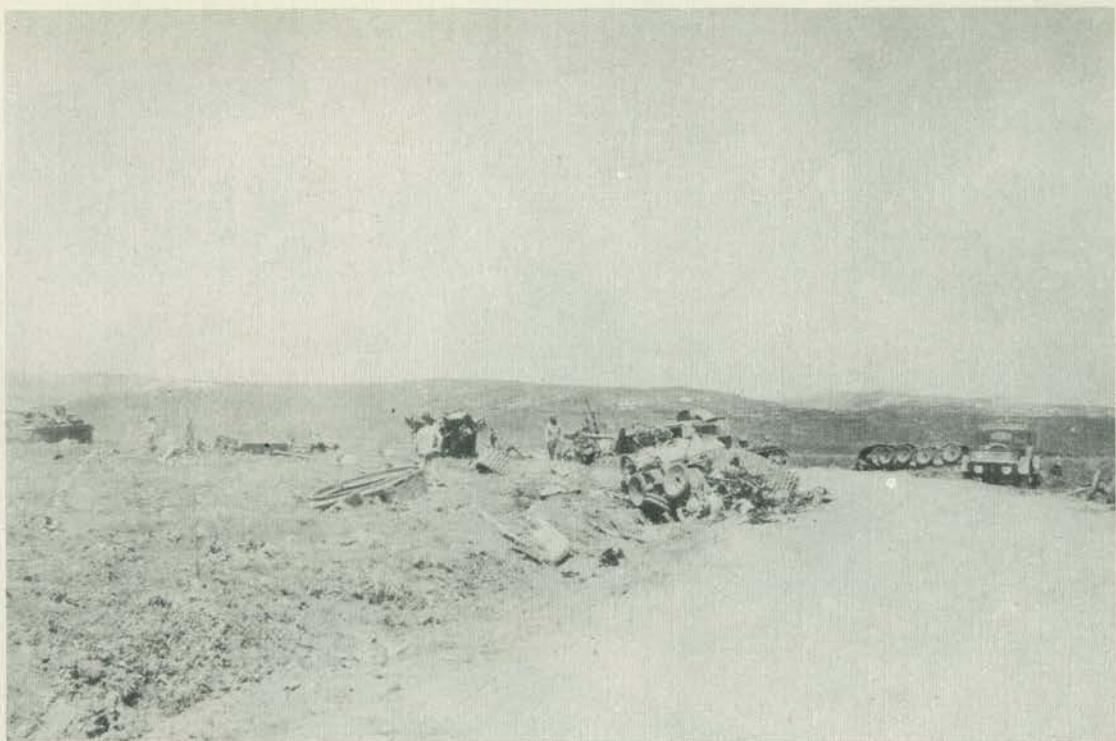
Winter brought its own problems to our thriving tent community, and the variety of heating plants which made their appearance in the separate tents from time to time, was limited only by the equipment and materials available for such construction. Old 88 shell cases were at a premium for stovepipe, and charcoal stoves of every conceivable size and origin cropped up in the camp. Some of the lucky guys had rounded up some coal oil stoves, but the majority of us were operating on something that apparently came under the heading of field expedients.

The fighting in Sicily started, flared up, and died away. Then the big event, the landing on the Salerno beachhead in Italy came into the headlines. Right at this time they weren't using a whale of a lot of armor, and while we were still working at the training school and getting in some darned valuable training ourselves, a lot of the replacements we turned out were no longer going to tank outfits. The infantry, artillery, MPs and quartermaster outfits were getting a majority of the men.

The old reliable North African winter rolled on with the inevitable rain. Our big events during that fall were the meals put out for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years. Man oh man, but those cooks really did a beautiful job on the rations. It was one of the best meals we ever ate overseas on each of the three days.



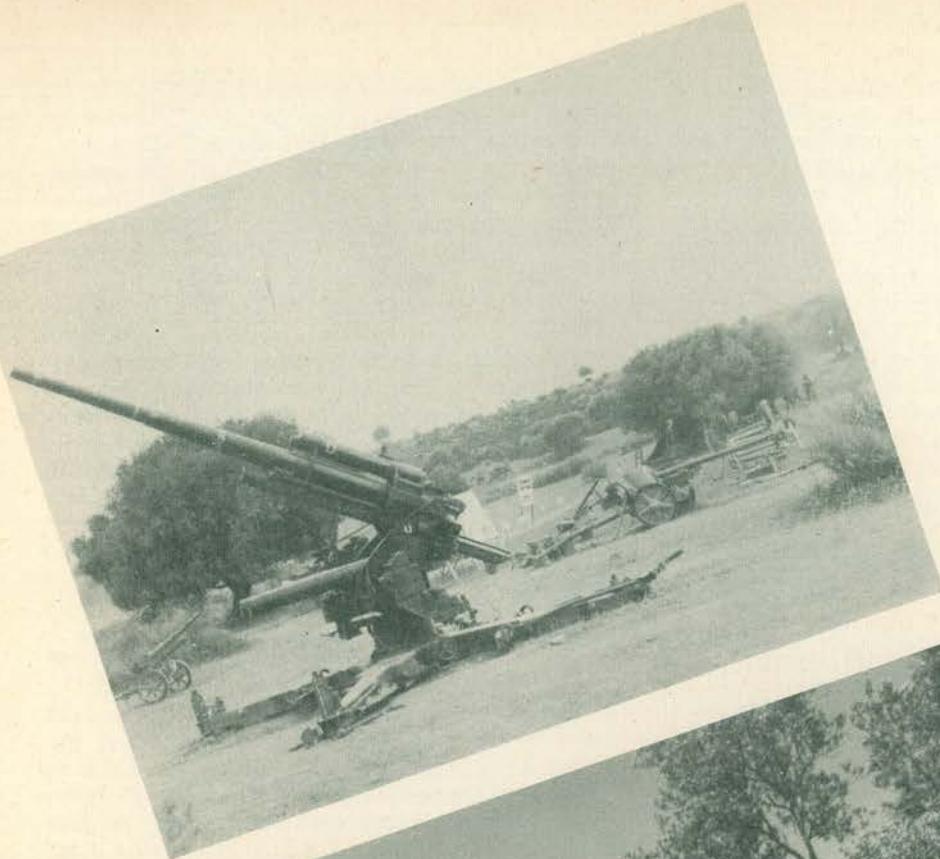
Motor Park at Tabarka, Tunisia



Kraut tanks knocked out between Beja and Ferryville



Hill 609, Tunisia



SECTION III

Early Italian History

Rumors were really on the fly as the end of the year rolled around. Then with the closing days of 1943 the news broke. The advance detail was selected and moved out, then on January 2, 1944 the whole 752nd started its trek from Tabarka to Bizerte and another staging area. Next stop would be somewhere in Italy.

Several days were taken to move the entire outfit to the staging area. Here we turned in a lot of our excess equipment which had been used as training material for the school sections of 752nd, and new equipment was drawn to replace some of the battered stuff which had been kicked around by most of the trainees turned out by the Replacement Training section in the past year or so.

The outfit had been reorganized from a GHQ Battalion a short time before and was now increased by the addition of Dog company, a light tank company which had been placed under the command of 1st Lt. Wirt. This new company drew a new set of M5 and M5A1 light tanks at Bizerte and was set up ready to work. We also drew some new 105s for the Assault Platoon as well as an extra M7 for each of the Medium companies.

It rained, naturally, during most of the interim at Bizerte. But we were too darned busy to have much time to bitch about the weather. There was the session of transferring all our Francs and Gold Seal currency into Italian lire. No question now as to where we were headed.

One black cloud passed over the Battalion while at Bizerte when Capt. Burke died suddenly in his sleep a couple of days after we had set up in the Staging area. His death came as a distinct shock to all of us, and perhaps made us think a bit more seriously about the whole thing.

The visit of Joe E. Brown, the famous comedian, to our outfit while at Bizerte, was really a high spot during our stay at Bizerte. Joe was voted a regular guy by every member of the outfit after he put on a really good show from a makeshift stage set up on an old 4-wheeled trailer which our SSO dug up from God-knobs-where in the port area.

January 9th, 1944, the preliminary work of re-equipping the battalion was completed, and we moved to the port and started loading on the LCIs. Most of the personnel went on the

LCIs, a few of the crew members and selected Service Company members being left to handle the shipment of the vehicles, which were



Bizerte Harbor to

to be shipped in LSTs separate from the rest.

About 1700 hours on the 10th of January the LCIs moved out of the harbor of Bizerte. Most of us were crowded on the decks to take a last look at Africa, although you'd have really been stretching a point to say anyone was sorry to leave the place.

There had been a rather heavy storm on the Mediterranean the previous week and there was some apprehension among those of us who didn't know too much about sailing the ocean blue; but luck was with us and the sea was calm as a mill pond for the whole trip. Had a bit of excitement the second night out when an unidentified plane flew over the convoy, and the lead ships in the convoy later reported sighting some mines which had apparently been dropped by the plane. However, there was no damage to any of our ships during the trip.

We passed Sicily during the morning of the first day on the Mediterranean. The place looked quite pretty from the mile or so at sea where we were sitting. We passed within a couple of miles of Palermo which, according to the tales some of the Navy boys told us that must have been quite a town.



Napoli!

Leaving the Sicilian coast we cut in toward Italy, and the evening of January 11th most of us got our first glimpse of the place which was to be our home for the next year and a half. There was a whale of a lot of the country which was standing straight up and down in that first view. Just how much of the country was uphill we learned at first hand shortly after.

It was a beautiful day the morning of January 12 when the convoy of LCIs pulled past the Island of Capri and into the harbor of Napoli. The view looked just like the pictures we used to have in our grade school geographies. Vesuvius had a little plume of smoke curling from its tip, and the Italians came scrambling out in little row boats to try to sell fruit or bum cigarettes. The Navy boys shooed them off, it was old stuff to them by this time, but it was still new and interesting to us.

We went on across the harbor and landed at the little port of Bagnoli just north of Napoli about noon on January 12, 1944. After disembarking, we marched up the hill to some buildings which had been built by Mussolini for some of his military cadets. After a year or so under canvas, the buildings were pretty nice. Not many of the modern facilities were left, the krauts had stripped the place pretty well when they moved out, but the buildings were strictly swell.

In the meantime, back in Africa, our vehicles were being loaded up and on January 12 the LSTs sailed from Bizerte. They followed about the same route as the preceding group, but put in at Salerno where the tanks were unloaded on January 14th.

An area about midway between the towns of Eboli and Campagna, in the province of Salerno, had been selected for the set up for the Battalion, and on the 15th of January, the group at Bagnolia moved to join the group with the vehicles in the Eboli sector.

That first couple of weeks at Eboli, the Italian weather lived up to all the chamber of commerce poop and was very lovely. We got our tents up in an olive grove, selected our training areas, and were set up in pretty good shape when the rains came. We were used to rain, but the Italian mud was one thing we never did get used to.

It didn't take the boys long to get oriented in Italy. We discovered bright and early that the Italian gals were friendly and Italian liquor was mostly pretty tricky. The people around those parts were pretty indicative of what we encountered throughout the rest of our stay in the Italian boot. Some were friendly, some were antagonistic, all would sell you anything you wanted (at a price) whether it was theirs or not, and most would take the shirt off your back if you didn't have the collar buttoned tightly.

Here at Eboli we discontinued some of the cadre companies we had operated back in Africa. The medium and light tank companies, the GRP, infantry, armored artillery, assault guns, reconnaissance, and mortars were discontinued as training companies. Signal, T.D.s and Engineers were kept in operation.

The outfit stayed pretty much the same as it had operated in Africa. We still ran our problems with the battalion, and had occasional groups of officers and enlisted men attached for training as replacements.

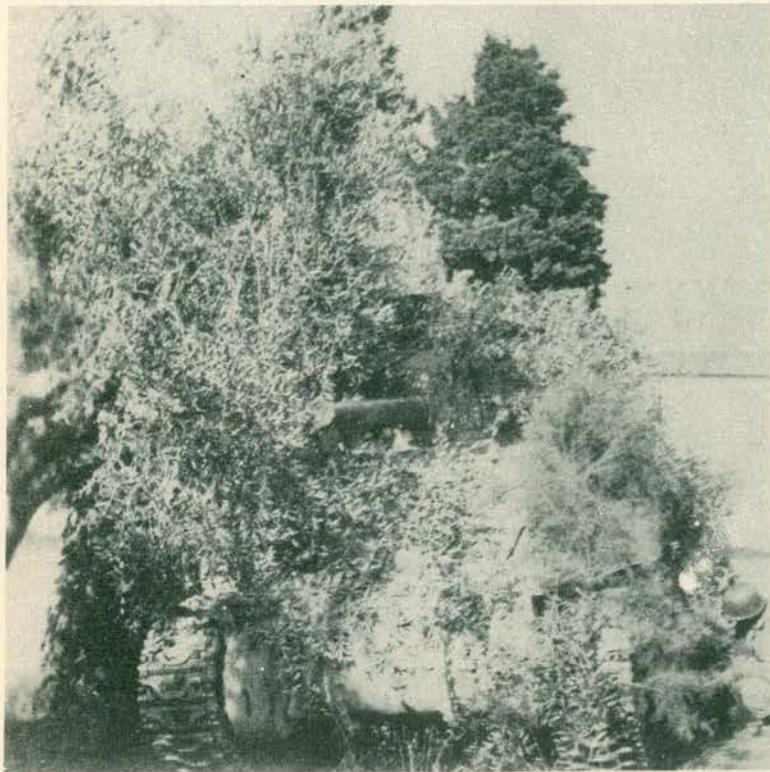
The month of May, 1944, showed an increase in tension. The big try by the 5th Army to break through at Cassino was underway. A number of officers and men from 752nd had been attached to front line outfits such as 755th, 756th and 760th for observation, to determine the latest combat methods for armored units in Italy. The "guinea grapevine" by which it seemed all Italians knew at least two weeks in advance just what we were going to do, told us we were going to move up into the fight for which the outfit had been training and practicing for the past three years.



Shower exchange unit at Anzio



Bombardment of Manastary Hill at Casino



Tank on road block near the C.P. in
the vicinity at Roccagorga



On the road to ROMA

Road to Roma!

SECTION IV

Fondi to Roma

May 23, 1944, was the date! We had the usual collection of rumors that day, but nothing official. The movie was well underway out under the olive trees that night, when we received an order for all battalion officers to report to the C.P. immediately. The time was 2200 hours. Ten P.M. by Italian war time.

What a mess. The reconnaissance platoon was scheduled to move out at 0500 hours the following morning, and the rest of the battalion, less Dog company, was to be on the road by 0700 hours the same day. Things really buzzed the rest of the night. Nobody got any sleep and some high power celebrating was done by numerous individuals. D company was left behind to continue the school work, and the rest of the outfit was on its way to combat.

Fondi, on the left flank of the Hitler line, where the 5th Army was making the first successful breakthrough, was the assembly point for the battalion. The unit closed at this point on the 25th of May, 1944, and was attached to the 88th Infantry (Blue Devil) division at 1200 noon on this date.

Baker company received the first combat assignment. With the six 105s of the Assault platoon attached, the company moved to the vicinity of Priverno. The company went into position at 1145 A. M. on the 27th of May to support the right flank of the 349th Infantry regiment. The three half tracks of the Mortar platoon also participated in this action.

We got a rough introduction to combat. The mission of supporting 349th in a counter-attack on Maenza was successfully completed, with 752nd destroying two antiaircraft guns, killing a number of snipers, and capturing two prisoners. Just a few hours after being committed the battalion suffered its first casualties when enemy artillery opened a counter-battery mission on our assault guns.

T/4 John W. Hoyer and T/5 Donald C. Barrett, both of the Assault Platoon, were the first men of our unit killed in action. Caught outside their vehicle when the kraut counter-battery fire came in from the vicinity of Maenzo, the boys were killed by air bursts from the enemy 88s. Five other members of the platoon were wounded by the same shelling which occurred at around 1600 hours. The wounded men were Sgt. Eldon Smith, T/5 Albert Stein, Pfc. John H. Gloyne, Pfc. Frederick O. Will, and Pvt. William L. Peck.

Able company went into the fight at 1215 hours on the 27th, supporting the 350th Inf.

Regiment in its attack on Roccagorga. A heavy fire fight was launched in the battle for the town and two of the enlisted men and one officer were wounded. Lt. John A. Thompson and Pvt. Oliver R. Roberg, both of A company were hit, as was T/Sgt. Floyd F. Louy, of Charley company. One of A company's tanks was knocked out during the fighting.

Fighting continued through the night, with A company being relieved the following day by C company. Roccagorga fell to our troops on the 28th of May. The 350th was being supported by Charley company and a company from the 804th T.D.s during the actual taking of the town.

Next day Able company was shifted to the right flank of the attacking force, relieving Baker company which had been holding down this end of the fight. At 2100 hours on the evening of the 29th, the Battalion was reassembled in the vicinity of Priverno, where it was held in reserve for the remainder of the month.

The 31st of May saw the Unit moving to the vicinity of Norma, and on the 1st of June we were attached to the First Special Service Force which we joined in the vicinity of Arteno. Company A was attached to the 3rd Regiment, while the remainder of the Battalion was attached to the 2nd Regiment.

While in the Division Reserve area at Priverno, 752nd sent a total of 20 tank crews to the First Armored Division as replacements for losses which the large outfit had suffered while in the process of breaking out of the beachhead perimeter at Anzio. This operation made a terrific drain on the fighting strength of the newly combat-christened 752nd tankers. Fortunately we still had D company back at Eboli, and were able to draw a sufficient number of trained tankers from this reserve pool to make up the major portion of our losses to the First Armored.

There was a terrific shortage of tankers about that time. No one seemed to know where in hell all those men we had trained back in Africa and Eboli were. Anyway they weren't available. Every tank outfit in the 5th Army was screaming for replacements. They got 'em! And what replacements! Men who hadn't seen a tank outside a newsreel were sent up to replace expert gunners and tank commanders. The situation, as they say in the communiques, was critical.

As a result of this demand for experienced armored personnel, the output of the school group left behind with D company was tripled,

and the outfits on the front got their new replacements from there. They weren't tankers. God knows you can't train an artilleryman or a QM truck driver to be a tanker in 10 days (which was the period allotted for training) but at least they knew how to get in and out of the vehicle and how to load the guns. That was something, anyway.

The Battalion's replacements arrived on June 1, right along with orders for the outfit to move out from its position at Priverno. A quick distribution of the new arrivals placed them in

take the town and the high ground to the north of it, after which the remainder of the SSF forces, supported by A company, were to pass through and continue the attack to make contact with elements of the British 8th Army which was advancing west on Highway 6.

There was some tough fighting on the approaches to the town, as the krauts put up the same rugged resistance which characterized their fighting along the whole campaign. A slight mix-up resulted in Lt. Sherwin R. Clinton and his recon platoon finding themselves in



Coming through an olive grove in the advance on Roma

the various companies and platoons where they took their places alongside their old buddies, who had already gotten their battle indoctrination the hard way. The Battalion moved to join the First Special Service Force at Ferretino.

The race for the junction with the Anzio beachhead forces was in full swing and the 5th Army was operating with all stops out in the drive for Roma. The krauts had their own ideas about this operation and fought fanatically to hold back our forces. No holds were barred in the fighting; and strafing, artillery, mortars, and small arms fire was in operation 24 hours a day.

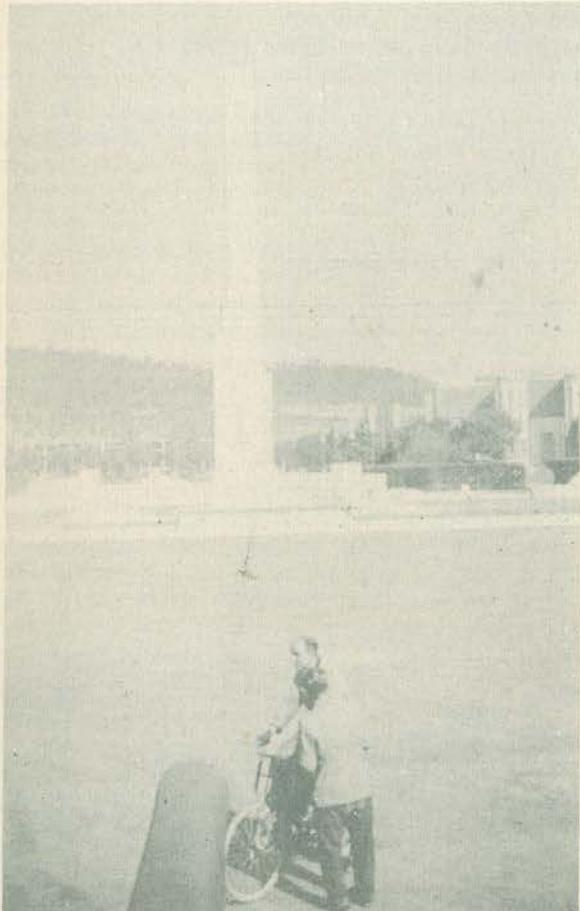
The FSSF troops went into action about noon on June 2, attacking east out of Artena toward Colleferro. B and C companies of 752nd supported this drive along with B company of the 601st TDs. Our mission was to

the town while the jerries were still very much in possession. While the recon bunch didn't exactly take the town, they had undisputed right to the questionable honor of being the first U.S. troops in the place.

The main advance units of the task force took the town at around 1315 hours, and rounded up some 300 prisoners in the course of mopping up the place. Following capture of the town C company swung to the east where it set up defensive positions to cover the flank of the force, while Baker company continued north with the infantry attack on the high ground overlooking the town. Shortly after setting up its positions, C company was contacted by advance elements of the CEF (Corps Expeditionnaire Francais) which was also attacking toward Colleferro. The French units swung into line with the SSF advance and continued the attack north, with C com-

pany moving out from its holding spot to support the infantry advance.

The sector was taken over completely that evening by the CEF, and 752nd was reassembled in the vicinity of Norma. The day's operations had netted some 300 prisoners and a fair share of kraut equipment in addition to



752nd moves into Piazza Mussolini in Roma

the number of enemy killed. We had one officer wounded, 1st Lt. (later Major) Lyle K. Robinson, C.O. of A Company, who was hit while on a forward observation position. Command of the company was taken over by Lt. Roy A. Freitag when Lt. Robinson was hit. The entire area had received heavy shelling from kraut artillery during the day's operations.

Link-up with the beachhead forces had been completed and the drive on Roma was on full blast as the outfit moved up to the vicinity of S. Cesareo on June 3. C and B companies again hit the line, this time with 351, attacking from Monte Porieo Catone to cut highway 6 and advance toward Rome from the east. A company, held in Division reserve, underwent a heavy session with a kraut barrage which resulted in the wounding of Sgt. Leonard E. Gabriel and Pfc. Abraham Shatkin.

During the night Headquarters and A

company joined C company at its advance position along Highway 6. A strafing attack along the highway knocked out one of our medic half tracks with an incendiary bomb which killed T/5 Ernest S. Wittwer and Pfc. Armando D. Achino; and wounded T/4 John R. Worwood and Pfc. Richard W. Cochrane and Clinton L. Gregory. The Battalion took ten prisoners during the course of the day's operations.

Rome was in sight! Every outfit in eastern Italy was driving for the Eternal City, and the krauts were fighting desperately to hold us out. The Battalion moved out at 0830 hours on the morning of the 4th in support of the 351st Infantry which was mounted on trucks and proceeded up the road in advance of the tanks. We were set for a quick move, but the Krauts objected. The three leading infantry vehicles were knocked out by anti-tank fire and Baker company was thrown into the attack in an effort to knock out the jerry guns.

A heavy fire fight developed between the tanks and the Kraut guns, and the enemy SP and Mark VIs knocked out three of the Baker company tanks. Three of our men were killed in this operation; including T/A Everett E. Searl, T/5 Jules F. Henagen, and Pvt. Michael J. Revella. Three other Baker company men; Dewey W. Ellard, 2nd Lt.; Cpl. Donald D. Wilson and Pvt. Joseph D. Bickley were wounded when the tanks were knocked out.

C Company went into the fight with a swing to the left flank to support Baker company in the frontal attack and succeeded in knocking out one of the SPs. Company B then moved to the left and Able company moved in on the right to press home the attack along with units of the infantry under artillery support. This cinched the matter for us and we evened up the score for the boys who had been killed earlier in the day by killing 90 krauts and wounding or capturing about 50 others. Able company gunners knocked out one Mark VI tank, one Mark IV, one SP and two other vehicles. This broke up the kraut's party and opened the gates to the "Eternal City." There was still heavy fighting going on but the boys took every thing jerry had to offer, and fought him into the ground.



Piazza Venezia in Roma, where Musso made his speeches

At 1800 hours our first tank, commanded by 2nd Lt. (later Captain) William H. Darby of Charley company, rolled into Rome. Other elements of our armor which were among the first into the city along with the infantry boys, included the tanks of Lts. Frank L. Heaton and Charles K. Hokensen. Hokie gets the nod for firing what is believed to be the last shot fired in the battle for Rome. His crew spotted a German scout car coming around a corner, firing as it came, and his gunner scattered the scout car and crew over the street.

Coming into the city along the main highway, Able company ran into some heavy opposition and destroyed a Mark VI, two Mark IVs and a personnel carrier as they came into town. The whole Battalion was in the city by 1930 hours that evening, and a fair percentage of them were doing their share to give the liberation celebration that unique 752nd punch.

We had helped to accomplish what had been done by no other army in history. We had taken Rome from the south. It was a great day for us, and being in on the liberation of that Capitol city was an experience which none of the boys will ever forget. It got to be a routine chore after a while, this lining up of the population along the streets almost before the shooting stopped, but the cheering and yelling that came with the driving of the krauts out of another town, never again quite reached the peak that we felt when Rome turned over the keys to the city. The boys were tired, hell yes! Tired with that numb feeling that hardly lets you know whether you'll take the next step or not, but tired or no, that day was one which will be remembered by everyone who was there, for the rest of their lives.



A Kraut Mark IV takes the count

SECTION V

Roma to No. Appenines

Our headlines from the liberation of Rome were hardly dry on the newspapers of the world before the people back home got another big thrill in the news of the invasion of France. That was big news all right, and when we heard it it was with a feeling of relief to think that we weren't exactly by ourselves in this corner of the world any more, but as far as the news went in affecting our private war, it wasn't noticeable except perhaps the krauts were a little nastier than before—if possible. That next day, June 6, was invasion day for the rest of the world, but for us it was the day we left Rome and took to chasing the kraut headed bastards farther up the boot of Italy.

The Battalion was switched to the support of the 88th Infantry on the morning of June 5, and A and C companies went in in support of the 351st astride highway two leading north from Rome.

A mile north of the city Able company ran into a couple of Jerry tanks which scored a hit on the tank of Lt. Ross Sifford, killing him and Pfc. Otto F. Novak, and wounding Cpl. Robert F. Norris. Our tanks in turn KO'd a kraut Mark IV and damaged a Mark VI in the fighting, as well as scoring cleanups on three machine gun nests. The company was later drawn back to Headquarters where B company was being held in reserve.

Charley company also ran into trouble, losing one tank, but evened the score by flanking an enemy truck convoy and wiping out 25 trucks loaded with ammunition, and knocking out an SP gun which had been reconstructed from a Mark III tank. The day's operations showed over a hundred Tedeschi killed and ten prisoners taken by the tankers.

The 349th Infantry replaced the 350th next morning, and Able company went back into the fight in support of the 349th doughfeet. Charley company swung over and gave full support to the 350th boys until 1900 hours that evening, when it was pulled back and went in to Division reserve, being replaced by Baker company's tanks. The going was slow that day, no heavy opposition being encountered, but the terrain was becoming increasingly difficult for the tanks to get through.

Next day, June 7, was much the same. Scattered sniper fire was encountered, and an occasional anti-tank gun would cut loose, but our boys suffered no losses. The ground was rough going and it was impossible to make good time, but the krauts couldn't claim

credit for the hold up. Able company continued to work with 349th until relieved by C company at 1900, while B company tanks were still supporting the advance of 350th, until that outfit was relieved by 351st, at which time B company switched to the support of the new regiment.

On the 8th of June we drew a complete blank. None of our tanks met a kraut, and the score at the end of the day was no hits, no runs, and no errors. Baker company made a 20 mile advance after dark, moving up with 351st while C company was supporting 349th and A company continued in Division reserve. The situation remained pretty quiet during the day of June 9, most of our time being spent in waiting for units of the 6th South African Division to move up through our positions to take over and relieve the 88th Division.

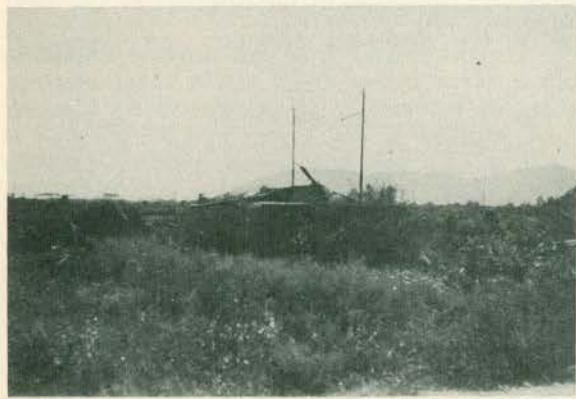
Relief of the 88th was completed the following day, June 10, and the next day 752nd was attached to IV Corps and moved to the vicinity of Tarquinia where we spent two days on some much needed maintenance and repairs—on ourselves as well as the vehicles.

Charley company was on the go again at 1300 hours on June 13, being attached to Task Force Ramey and moved up to the vicinity of Pitigliano where they took up defensive positions overnight. Next day the company moved over to Nanciano to support the advance of Troop A, 91st Recon Squadron. One platoon from C company worked north with a recon platoon on the Nanciano-Triano road and reached a spot just north of Saturnia where they ran into some SP fire and some indiscriminate mine fields which held them up. A second platoon of the company, working northeast toward S. Caterina, moved up to Scansano where they remained in position overnight the 14th of June to keep their progress on a par with the platoon at Saturnia. The remainder of C company joined the platoon at Scansano early in the morning of June 15.

The rest of the Battalion was attached to Task Force Ramey at 1600 hours on June 14, and moved to the vicinity of Nanciano that night. Next day the outfit moved to Scansano to support the advance of the 141st infantry of the 36th Div., to the north in an effort to seize the line Vallerona-Roccalbegna-Triana. The column moved out at 1500 hours on the 15th of June, headed by a platoon of the 91st Recon and two platoons of C company of 752nd.

Heavy enemy opposition was encountered, with most of the kraut fire coming from the vicinity of S. Caterina. The bunch knocked out one enemy scout car and several mortar and MG positions during the day.

The stray C company platoon operating on the Nanciano-Triana road was delayed during the 15th by the heavy mine fields and SP fire. Going forward in his peep to check the situation, Lt. Frank L. Heaton, C company commander, struck a mine with his vehicle and was mortally wounded, dying a few hours later. Pvt. Adolfe Salazar, who was riding in the peep with Lt. Heaton, was wounded in the blast. Command of Charley company was taken over by Lt. Edgar M. Blanford. The col-



A Mark VI makes a pillbox north of Roma

umn continued to the vicinity of Sampugnano where it halted for the night.

Early the next morning the advance was resumed with the 141st Infantry moving forward. The enemy had withdrawn during the night, and our troops occupied Valleronia and Roccalbegna without encountering opposition. Our bunch took up defensive positions around Santa Caterina with the exception of C company which went into Battalion reserve. The one C company platoon working with the Recon elements moved into Triana where it also set up in a defensive position.

The tanks remained in approximately the same positions throughout the day, the 16th, while the infantry moved ahead and took over the towns of Cana and Pianetta, crossing the Ombrone river and approaching the town of Campagnatico. The Assault platoon went into position and took up a counter-battery mission against a kraut SP gun, silencing the enemy fire. It could not be definitely determined whether or not we knocked out the gun, or merely forced the jerries to pull out.

In their try for Campagnatico the doughboys ran into trouble, and A company went forward to help them out. Additional engineers and foot troops went along, riding on the tanks. The tanks knocked out at least five kraut machine guns, but were in turn held up by the rough ground and heavy fire about 1500 yards

from the town. The ridge overlooking the town was cleaned of krauts by the following evening, and the tanks pulled back to resupply.

The rest of the Battalion moved up from the set up at S. Caterina the evening of the 17th and Baker company went into action relieving Able company. During the night the enemy opposition eased up a bit, and at 0900 hours the morning of the 18th, the Infantry moved into the town. Advance of the tanks was delayed by mines which blocked the only possible entry to the town for the armored vehicles. In reconnoitering for a possible by-pass, Lt. Richard S. Bonner of Baker company, stumbled into a stray kraut patrol and was taken prisoner. He was taken to the rear by his captors, but escaped from them during a heavy barrage from our own artillery and got back to our own lines after spending the night ducking our own shells. One of our men, Pfc. Thomas F. Boyle, was wounded during the day's fighting, when a heavy caliber HE hit his tank.

Our tanks (B company) arrived in Campagnatico about 1330 hours the 18th of June and aided in mopping up the town; killing five kraut soldiers and taking one prisoner.

The evening of the 18th Able company was attached to Task Force Dodie and occupied hill positions to protect the right flank and rear of Task Force Ramey during the advance. Italian partisans reported a bunch of krauts on Mt. Cucco, and C company shelled the area scattering the enemy troops.

Our forces advanced on Paganico the next day, with Baker company supporting the 141st. Two SP guns firing from the town were zeroed in by our tanks and knocked out of the fight. The tankers also accounted for seven machine gun positions which were covering the road leading to the town and holding up the infantry advance. We picked our way over the back trails and managed to keep our noses pretty clean although the T-2 from B company was hit by kraut fire and Pvt. John F. Haley was wounded.

C company relieved B company in support of the 141 that evening and supported the advance on the town of Paganico on the morning of the 20th of June. We entered the town at 1130 hours and patrolled a short distance north, remaining in defensive positions for the night inside the town. At 1500 hours on the 20th Baker company relieved A company with Task Force Dodie, and A company went in to the support of the 3rd Bn of 141st attacking a hill position. No opposition was found in the advance on the hill and our troops took over without trouble. One platoon was left in positions on the hill during the night and the rest of the company withdrew for supply purposes. The tally of the day's work for the tankers showed five machine gun positions destroyed and one Mark IV tank probably damaged.

Interdictory fire was received along the roads during the night, but our forces moved ahead the morning of the 21st, advancing along trails and back roads to take and hold

the road junction north of Paganico. A company supported the 1st Battalion and C company the 2nd Battalion of 141st while Baker company remained with Task Force Dodie, until 1900 hours on the 22nd of June when it was relieved and rejoined the Battalion.

During the 22nd Company A moved to the vicinity of Battalion headquarters, and at 2400 hours that night went in to support the 3rd Battalion of 141st in the attack on Roccstrada. No opposition was encountered in the advance on the town which was entered at 1400 hours on the 23rd. Eight prisoners were taken in the town which was found to be heavily mined and booby-trapped so that our forces pulled back a short distance south of the town where defensive positions were manned for the night. Charley company moved back to the vicinity of the CP where B company was already in position.



Tedeschi hadn't counted on this. A "slightly" damaged Mark IV near Sienna

A company moved back to the vicinity of the CP next day, the 24th of June, and joined the rest of the Battalion in catching up on some maintenance work on the tanks. We worked on the vehicles and other equipment for the next several days, with ordnance checking our guns and instruments which had taken quite a beating over the past month and really needed a good going over.

Instructions were received at 2000 hours on the 28th of June for the Battalion to move to the vicinity of Massa Marittima. The outfit moved out at 0500 hours the next morning and reached the town at 0915. Several of the tanks dropped out during the march because of maintenance trouble.

During our maintenance "rest" we had installed 14 new tank engines and switched our steel tracks for rubber, putting our bunch back in fairly good shape. We lost another of our boys during this period. T/5 Ralph S. Williams, who had been wounded on the 22nd of the month, died of his wounds on the 27th.

A company was attached to the 34th Division at 1700 hours on the 29th of June, and moved out along highway One to its new job. The remainder of the Battalion moved out from Massa at 1800 hours shifting over to the vicinity of Monteverdi where it went into bivouac at about 2100 hours.

Until 2015 hours on the 30th of June, the Battalion sat tight. At that time we received orders to be ready to move out on 30 minutes notice, and bedded down on that basis. At 2200 hours Baker company was attached to the 34th Division and moved out to join the new unit.

A month of continuous combat against some of the toughest opposition the krauts could show, had turned 752nd into a rugged, battle-wise outfit. Earlier mistakes had been pretty well smoothed out, and the outfit was a smooth-working machine as we moved into the month of July 1944.

During the final hours of June, Company A joined with the 133rd Infantry Regiment near Bibbona, and moved out with that unit in its approach on Cecina. The krauts were waiting and threw in everything they had. Small arms and mortar fire became too hot for the dough feet and, they were forced to pull back, taking the tanks with them. Bazookas and anti-tank grenades got two of our tanks before they could withdraw. Four of our men, Sgt. Anthony Baggetta, Corporal William L. Cwalina, and Pvt. Sherman W. Justice, and Lt. Roy A. Freitag were wounded here. In the same engagement, two men were captured by the enemy while attempting to return to friendly lines. They were Cpl. Michael Giove and Pvt. Vern F. Abel.

Crossing the Cecina river was impossible for the tanks at this point, so the tankers supported the infantry crossing with heavy fire while efforts were made to obtain a tank crossing at another point. At 0700 hours on the morning of July 1, Able company succeeded in fording the river to rejoin the infantry and resume the attack. Running into heavy anti-tank fire, we lost five tanks which were hit and burned, and another four tanks were immobilized. The remaining tanks withdrew across the river, and we drew three new tanks as replacements. Hard work on the part of the crewmen put three of our disabled tanks back into action, and the company swung over to attack astride highway 68 with 135, and capture ~~Corte~~ Mezzano. In spite of the heavy damage to our armor, only three men were wound-

ed, and we chalked up one kraut SP to somewhat balance the score.

Support of 133 had been taken over by Baker company, which forced a new crossing of the Cecina river and attacked the town of Cecina from the west. The tankers fought their way into the town, knocking out two Mark VI tanks and making quite a few "good" krauts in the process. Mopping-up operations were continued in the town through the 2nd of July, and then B company was shifted to relieve Able company supporting the 135th. Charley Company, supporting the 442nd Infantry boys, had two of their tanks severely damaged by kraut fire, and were moved to position to support the infantry advance by fire. In this engagement, Lt. Edgar M. Blandford and Pvt. David I. O'Malley were wounded. On the 3rd of July, A company was attached to Brigade Ramey, less the 1st Platoon, which was attached to the Recon company of the 776th TDs, and later to Task Force Shirly. While on this mission, the Platoon moved up through Casselglin. One man in the company, Albert Wessner, was wounded by a shell fragment on July 7, during this operation, and died of his wounds a little later the same day.

Company B, supporting the 135th, underwent heavy enemy fire of all calibers while advancing on the town of Rosignano. We went in on July 3 from the southwest and southeast simultaneously, with the infantry riding on the backs of the tanks. Jerry was dug in and fighting for all he had. We knocked out a lot of burp guns and snipers, but the road into the town was zeroed in by all the kraut artillery in the vicinity and was too hot to travel by anything but the tanks. On July 5th, B Company's T-2 Recovery Tank received a direct hit, wounding T/Sgt. Robert J. Rewkauf, T/4 Emmit C. Costello, T/5 Alfons A. Budnik, Pvt. Joseph G. Lucero and Pvt. Arthur W. Sego, Jr. It took all week to mop up the town. The infantry pointed out the kraut strong points, and the tankers blasted them loose. On July 5th, a coordinated attack was made to clear the town and in spite of the fact that supplies still had to be carried up by the tanks, the attack was pushed heavily, and the town occupied by 1000 hours on the 7th of July. Cpl. Bob Casmer was killed during the initial fighting in the town, and Capt. Eitel's tank was knocked out, with the crew members receiving wounds from enemy grenades after abandoning the disabled tank. The men receiving injuries were Capt. Henry G. Eitel, Sgt. William C. Roller, Sgt. Clarence Ison, Cpl. Nicholas Knasel, Pvt. Michael Hurley and Pvt. Allan E. Leafblad. On July 6th, B Company listed three more casualties, Sgt. Leonard M. Hampton, Cpl. Stanley S. Shulenski and Pvt. Fidencio Ortis.

While Baker company was engaged in the Rosignano scrap, Charley company, in support of the 442nd, was having their troubles. The outfit ran into terrific resistance in the hilly terrain, and was unable to make very rapid progress. Part of the company moved to sup-



Road block North of Roma

port 135th, leaving one platoon with 442nd. The unit was fighting for control of hill 163 to the east of Rosignano, and lost one man, Sgt. Bill Stolp, who was killed when a kraut HE shell exploded in the tree under which he had stopped his tank. The rest of the boys paid off for Sgt. Stolp and killed an undetermined number of krauts in taking the hill and overrunning the German positions. Lt. Bill Darby was wounded in the action, being hit by fragments from his periscope which was shattered by a sniper's slug as he stood up in his turret to wave some prisoners to the rear. Also wounded in the same action was Cpl. Thomas R. Gunnell.

Things continued to move hot and heavy. Sleep was a word in the dictionary which nobody bothered to look up. Companies A and C, supporting the 442nd, continued to work ahead and chalked up a score of one Mark VI tank, a kraut staff car and an enemy CP during the next few days. A hell of a lot of beer-heads were killed in the process, but no one had time to count 'em.

Back with 135th to the north and east of Rosignano, B Company was really catching it in the neck. July 11th, Cpl. Onorato Pallisco and Pvt. Farrell R. La Donna were wounded. An infantry officer ordered four of our tanks around a hill—and we lost all four. A platoon of Mark VIs opened up on our boys as they rounded the hill, and our tanks were knocked out before the boys even got a chance to see who was shooting.

Two of the boys, T/4 James Rosolino and Lloyd Dolan never even got out of the tanks. The rest of the men managed to escape from the tanks, but only four, Cpl. Charles Patski, T/5 Andrew F. Moles, Jr., T/5 Daniel Samardick and Pvt. Richard D. McQueen, got back to the company, the remaining fellows, S/Sgt. Peter J. Kowaleski, Sgt. Elwin E. Ringer, T/4 Damon C. Holben, T/5 Harlan W. Aldrich, T/5 Theodore A. Landiak, Pvt. Arvie Mackie, Pvt. Grant E. Narrow, and Pvt. Morris Singer, were taken prisoner.

This occurred on the 12th of July. That same day heavy caliber artillery barrages caught some of the other B Company tanks in the open, and a direct hit with a 150mm shell knocked out the command tank, killing Ralph Gattrell. Everybody else was shaken up, and three boys, Pfc. Robert L. Mathew, Pvt. William K. Smith, Pvt. Arthur W. Scholl, went to the hospital to recover from the jar.

Our losses were high that day of July 12, but A company evened the score for us somewhat by knocking out two Mark VI tanks, destroying a lot of buildings, two machine gun nests, and a small enemy supply dump in the vicinity of Pastena. They also captured six enemy peeps, two 81mm mortars and five motorcycles. The company was in support of the 100th Battalion of the 442nd at the time.

The next few days, the battalion spent its time supporting a number of road blocks, and moving ahead slowly in the vicinity of Livor-



Livorno (Leghorn to you) was a mess when we got there

no (Leghorn, remember?), which we entered about 2200 hours the evening of July 18. Able company went in at that time in support of 363rd of 91st Division. We located a brewery almost intact, and got a big bang out of jeering the next bunch as they rolled into town all keyed up and looking for trouble, while we were sitting on the curb making with the beer. Will anyone ever forget that brewery? Lt. Col. (then Major) Woodbury really gave us a party on that one, and the kraut beer really hit the spot.

Moving up to Livorno, C Company took over support of the 168th of 34th Division company, and advanced through Lorenzana on the night of the 16th of July. The advance was pretty hot, with the company split—one platoon working toward Fauglia and the rest of the company at Treinaletto. Jerry lost another Mark IV tank and an ammunition truck during this rat race, and about 30 more krauts joined their ancestors. On July 18, the company was switched to 135th, with which unit they entered Livorno on the 19th of the month. Baker company had been held in Division reserve after getting shot up in the Rosignano deal.

Following the taking of Livorno, the battalion reassembled although the companies remained attached to their respective infantry regiments. On the 27th of July, the battalion was relieved from attachment to IV Corps, and was attached to II Corps and the 85th Division. The next day we moved to an area about 11 miles east of Volterra where we spent two weeks getting straightened out and doing a bit of brush-up work. The light tank company of 755th Tank Battalion was later attached to our outfit, and went into Division reserve along with Battalion Headquarters. In the afternoon of August 14, 1944, we moved up to support the 85th Division on the Arno River defensive line. Charley company went to the 339th Regiment, A company to 337th and a couple of days later, B company was attached to 338th. Seven five five's light tanks joined us on the 19th of August. The Assault platoon was also farmed out and attached to the 85th Division Artillery, and later to the 910th Field Artillery Battalion.

The next week or so with companies scattered around Monte Lupo, Castel Fiorentine, Empoli, and any of several other small burgs which you may recall, the outfit was working primarily on indirect fire, with harassing missions into the kraut rear areas. During the period we were fortunate in having only one man slightly wounded by a booby trap in Empoli. The former was Cpl. John P. Leech, Baker company.

August 27th, the battalion, still attached to the 85th, moved to the south of Montespetoldi where it remained until the 12th of September when the attack on the Gothic line was opened. With the renewal of the offensive operations by our forces, 752nd tankers continued their direct support of the infantry. The 1st platoon of A company knocked out a pillbox on Mt. Altuzzo while working with 338th, on the 13th of the month.

The other companies were similarly employed and on the 16th of September, C company tanks knocked out three pillboxes, following with five more knocked out on the following day. Baker company tank gunners took out seven pillboxes on the 17th. Enemy positions on Mt. Altuzzo, Mt. Pratone, and Mt. Verruca were taken by 0800 hours on the 18th of September, and the advance continued.

The outfit moved north through Passo Il Giogo on the 19th of September and B com-

pany with the 338th Infantry knocked out an SP gun, killing about 50 Germans and capturing another 25. One of the B company tanks took a direct hit from enemy artillery but no one was hurt. Company C went to the 339th on the 20th, and on the 21st B company supported the advance of the 3rd battalion of 338th on the ridge of hill 464.

The companies reverted to the battalion on the 22nd of September and the unit was given the mission of supporting the attack of 338th toward Firenzuola. The sector was under terrific shellfire from German positions along the ridge and above and below highway 65 on our left. The krauts were holding desperately along this line where they planned to dig in for the winter fighting which they knew was coming.

Advance element for the attack was supported by Baker company at the start, and later by Charley company when it was necessary to resupply the leading tank elements. Three of our men, S/Sgt. Charley E. Glasscock, Pfc. Dominic G. Challen and Pvt. Ernest W. Walsh were C company casualties resulting from shell fragments by heavy artillery fire. One kraut SP was knocked out by B company gunners on the 23rd of September, and the following day the same company accounted for three pillboxes while firing on enemy positions in the vicinity of Mt. Canda to the



The ground got a bit muddy up around Firenze and points north

U. S. Armor Strikes In Mountain Region Against Gothic Line

By Sgt. JACK RAYMOND

Staff Correspondent

WITH THE 5TH ARMY AT THE GOTHIC LINE, Sept. 17 (Delayed) — Everybody knows that tanks can't fight in the mountains except the tankers of an outfit here who have been fighting in the mountains since the Allies began their assault on the Gothic Line.

True, they're not sweeping across these extremely high hills in anything like the fashion they expect to once the line is cracked, but you should see some of the places these big babies get up into. The tanks, as often before in the Italian campaign, are being used as direct fire weapons on light artillery style and the men who are handling them are so overworked that they keep running into regimental headquarters for new missions.

ROLLING FORTS

Capt. Gayle Stockdale, Enterprise, Ore., has a company of the rolling fortresses splashed across the countryside in several of our secondary forward positions, some on mountain slopes, some in the draws, and some sitting right on top of the high ground as though they had been dropped there by parachute. From these positions they whack into the pillboxes and machine gun nests with more than ordinary results.

To get to one tank, commanded by Lt. 'Dinty' Moore, St. Paul, Minn., you have to wind your way through a trail that has even the

most versatile peeps groaning and gasping. There is one angular turn, cut into a hillside around which a peep cannot be driven in a continuous arc. But the driver must stop, back up and start again. Yet Lt. Moore's tank made it. At another point in the loop-the-loop former mule path, the peep passengers must all sit on one side for ballast so that the vehicle won't overturn and tumble into the valley. At still another place the descent is easily a 45-degree angle for a stretch of nearly 20 yards.

Back in the States, laughingly points out Lt. Howard Dean, Bennington, Vt., a liaison officer, they claim that tanks can't do better than 35 degrees. These guys ought to come around here.

After your peep has slowly slid down hills, crawled through farm fields, spanned creeks and climbed up the mountains as far as its tires and wheels will permit it, you get out and walk further until you come to the top of a 2,000-foot hill. The position is so good, Lt. Jack Calladay, Washington, D. C., uses it as an artillery observation post.

TAKE TURNS

That's where Lt. Moore's tank is boldly ensconced and that is where his gunners, Cpl. Waldo Klondike, Albany, N. Y., and Tiny Tassisch, Omaha, Neb., and Pfc. Raymond Clayton, Webb City, Mo., take turns at Jerry about 2,500 yards away.

It took one and a half hours for Sgts. Guy Richardson, Dayton, Ohio, and Clarence Ison, Cincinnati, Ohio, to drive the tank up from the valley, and that's terrific time considering how they had to put the tank through narrow passes and cut a good deal of the road themselves, bulldozer fashion. It took four hours to dig the tank into position and camouflage it. This tank is only an example of what the others are doing, although admittedly a prime example.

north and west of Firenzuola. In the same vicinity, Pvt. Lawrence Murdock, A company was wounded.

The roads and the river bed leading into Firenzuola were being constantly shelled and mortared throughout the period, but tankers and infantry fought their way into the town and held the positions despite the frenzied attempts of the krautheads to drive them out. A counter-attack on the 25th of September was beaten off by Baker company, and later that day, the Battalion CP was moved ahead to the vicinity of Peglio.

Men from C company led off in the attack on the 26th of September in support of the 1st Battalion of 338th, and advanced over 1,000 yards during the day to take the towns of Ca Burraccia and Sambucco before night. Over 60 prisoners were taken, and an unknown number of Germans were killed. Baker company held over-watching positions during the C company advance, and with the Assault platoon supported the attack, knocking out one SP and killing and wounding a number of Germans in the defending positions.

Next morning the attack on hill 966 was resumed by C company, with A company in the supporting position. The objective was taken by the tankers by 1130 hours, and by 1430 hours the infantry had consolidated the newly won positions. Jerry threw in everything but the kitchen sink during the attack, and after arriving on top of the hill Sgt. Ned R. O'Neill was killed by small arms fire when he dismounted from his tank. Even the Battalion CP caught it from kraut artillery and SP guns, with one man, Pfc. Robert F. La Fatta, wounded.

Moving onto the position the tankers were operating at close quarters and using every gun on the tanks at point blank range. The in-fighting use of the heavy tank guns with HE scattered krauts from hell to breakfast and the machine gunners were working overtime. In addition to the infantry casualties inflicted, the tankers knocked out one kraut 105 SP, another 75mm SP, and forced the crew of a third to abandon their vehicle intact.

Light rains had been falling during the past three day's fighting, making the job a cold and miserable mess. Things were just getting wet now though, winter was sneaking up fast and the Italian weather started to act more normal. On the 28th of September, the bottom dropped out of the clouds and for the next three days, the rain came down in sheets, completely halting tank operations. Only unit in the Battalion to move during this time was the Assault platoon, which took up more advanced firing positions on the 29th.

First of October showed a barely noticeable letup in the rain, and efforts were made to get our advance on the roll again. The lousy weather had made cross country operations almost impossible for the tanks, and we had to stick pretty much to the roads. Something of

this sort must have been in Jerry's mind, as he had sprinkled enough mines in that area to cause no end of trouble. On October 2nd, enemy counter-battery wounded T/5 Rufus M. Woods, B Company.

As things got under way, B company went in to support 339th, while A company was working with 337th, and the Assault platoon was attached to the 329th FA. Tanks from C company remained in reserve to complete their maintenance.

We had been working with the 805th TD Battalion for the past week or so, and the boys from that organization continued with us, giving us the kind of assistance a tanker dreams of, and winning the complete approval of our whole bunch, who voted 805th the best damn TD battalion in the business.

By the morning of October 3, the attack had been pushed across the valley beyond Firenzuola and the attack was proceeding in the vicinity of a large granite outcrop which became known throughout the area as "The Rock". Engineers from 337th were working with the tanks clearing the mines from the roads, but continuous rain cut visibility and softened the ground until progress became a matter of question, with the mud holding us back more than the krauts. Moving out after the engineers had completed clearing the mines from the roads, A company started in support of 337th but bogged down five tanks in the mud and was held up for about two hours before they could get rolling again. The crews got the tanks out of the mud holes, and the company moved ahead with the infantry, contacting the enemy around 0800 hours on the morning of October 3. A large kraut convoy was spotted at that time, and the tanks took it under fire, inflicting heavy casualties on both vehicles and personnel. When the tanks stopped firing it took the krauts three hours work with their ambulances to clear out the wounded. A number of mortar vehicles and one large 6-wheeled gun were destroyed by the tankers' accurate fire.

About 1500 hours on the 3rd, the infantry passed through the tanks to make it possible for our vehicles to pull back and re-supply. We had one tank damaged by mines, and the 805th boys also hit a mine with one of their guns during the operations. Further advances were made on the 4th of October with A company working with the 337th, but another tank was stopped by mines, and a 3rd was knocked out by the same means.

The weather continued to be strictly miserable, and tank movements were cut down to the point that it became necessary to set up indirect fire positions to support the infantry operations. On the 9th of October, four of A company's tanks, and five of the 805th TDs were surveyed in by the 403rd FA and fired harassing missions. Two men from A company, T/4 Richard L. Smoldt and Cpl. Ralph M. Chanck were wounded by mortar fire on the 5th of October.

Tanks from B company were ordered to the support of 338th, and moved out on this mission with one platoon from 805th attached. The company had one man wounded by shell fire on the 3rd of October, and joined the infantry on the 8th of the month.

Moving with 339th, C company bogged down four tanks in the sand on the 2nd of October, and was held up until bridges could be thrown over the route of advance. A mined bridge stopped them again on the 4th of October, but the tanks were in position from which direct fire support could be given to the doughfeet. One section of the company's tanks advanced to Quinzano in support of the 1st Battalion of 339th on the 5th of October, and another tank section moved to San Martino. The rest of C company's tanks were in the vicinity of San Benedetto at this time and remained at this point to support the infantry attack on the hill north of the town. Considerable sniper fire was encountered in the town which was not cleared completely for a couple of days. The company went into reserve on the 6th of October, and remained there until the 15th.

The infantry was moving toward Mt. Delle Formiche, and Baker company moved two tanks to hill 475 on October 9th to support this advance. The krauts were using every house in the area as a strong point, and the tankers and TDs had a field day knocking down houses to clear the way for the infantry. Roads and trails were getting worse all the time, and blocked the first attempt of the company to move to Il Poggio. An effort to move up to Mt. Delle Formiche to support the infantry was also stopped by impassable roads. However, on October 12th, two B company tanks succeeded in getting to Formiche, and took up positions from which they were able to fire to support the 338th. On October 13, three tanks got to hill 525 but were stopped here by road conditions and fired from that position for infantry support.

The krauts had good observation across the area from the vicinity of Crocetta and were able to direct SP fire blocking those roads which might still have been passable for the tanks. Enemy positions on Crocetta were shelled throughout the 14th and 15th by tanks from B company and a platoon from the 805th.

A company was still working with the 337th infantry, and moved one platoon to hill 514 on the 11th of October. Reconnaissance was made forward from this position, and the next day, October 12th, arrived at hill 488 and went ahead to hill 494 and to hill 510. The division objective on hill 572 was reached by A company on the 13th of October, during the course of this day's operations, the company was dive bombed by our own planes and had one tank knocked out. Kraut mortar fire wounded one A company man on the 13th, it was Pfc. August H. Gliem. Also Pfc. Walter S. Shirley was wounded by a mine.

Engineers went to work to construct roads for the tanks on the 14th of October, and the company moved ahead on the 15th to positions from which they could overwatch hills 554 and 400. More kraut mines held up further advance at this point. The company remained at Poggioli until the 21st of October while engineering work was continued on roads forward to Castel Di Piazza and to hill 622.

Company C and a platoon of the 805th moved ahead on the 16th of October to C. Stella, and then proceeded to Baccanello. The second platoon of C company moved to Fiumetto. The following day the company returned to Baccanello and went from there to Osteria and then to Castel Rocca. During this operation, T/5 Zaccheus W. Stemm was killed when his dozer tank struck a mine while working on the Osteria by-pass. Marvin J. Grew was wounded at the same time. C company finally arrived at Castel Rocca at about 1400 hours on the 17th. Efforts were made to advance toward C. Sepattra but heavy small arms fire from that point halted the infantry, and the tanks received heavy fire from kraut SP guns which scored two hits with AP on the company commanders' tank. The company directed several fire missions for the Assault platoon, and drew back to Baccanello for the night.

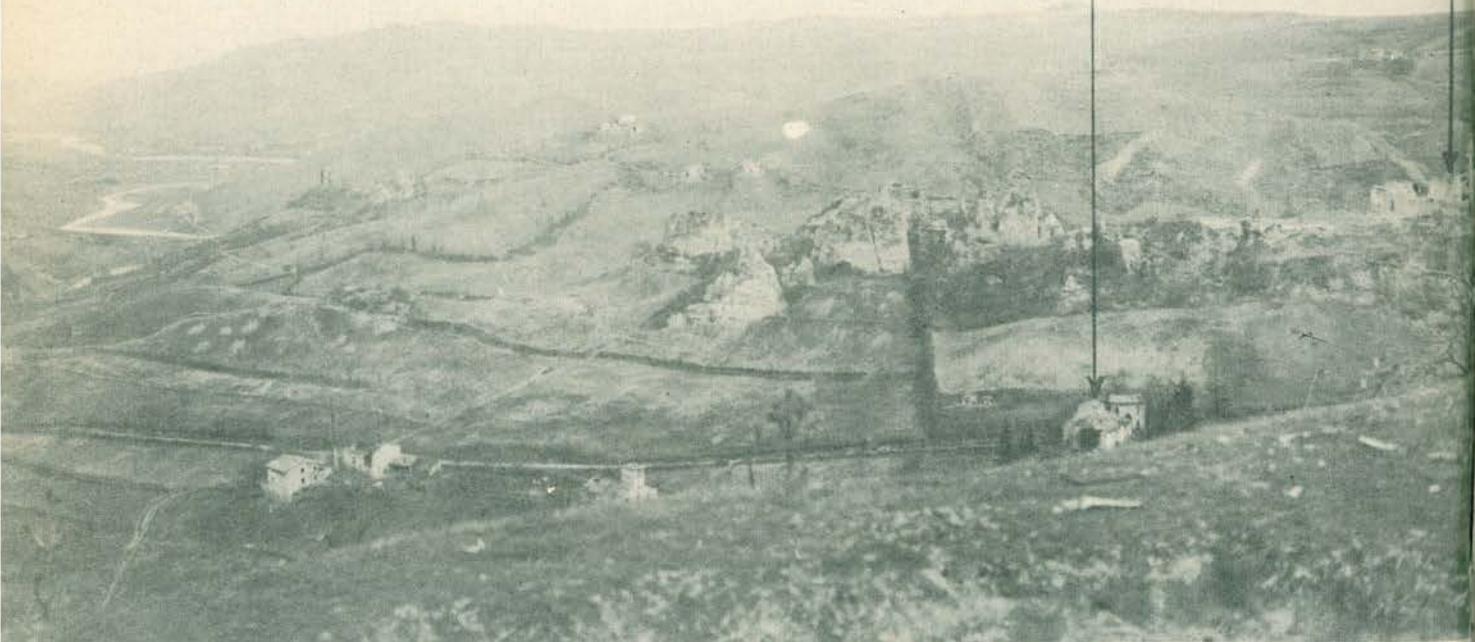
Early on the morning of October 18, C company returned to C. Rocca and knocked out two Mark IV tanks and two machine gun nests. Three other Mark IVs were located and fired upon. Two tanks from C company remained at this point and the remainder of the company was held at Baccanello in support of the 338th infantry.

Baker company was moved to indirect fire positions in the vicinity of Villa Di Cassano on the 18th of October. The company fired harassing missions from this general area until 29th of October, with one change in firing positions during this period. Crews on the guns were relieved by two platoons from A company on the 29th, and firing was continued from these positions.

SETTEFONTI

ORBEGA

HILL 365



SECTION VI

Winter in the Hills

Things were reaching a stalemate all along the line by now. Road conditions made it almost impossible to move vehicles, and the situation was settling down into the routine which would continue throughout the remainder of the winter months.

Tanks from A company were moved into firing positions and supported infantry units from the vicinity of hill 522 which was under attack by the doughboys at that time. On the 25th of October Sgt. Harmon C. Huff and T/4 Rudolph W. Bizayak were wounded. Two platoons of A company were relieved in the firing positions by B company personnel on the 29th of October when A company took over the indirect fire positions which B company had established. During the next night Able company moved up to Castel Vechio where they set up for the winter. On the 27th, S/Sgt. Seymour Teed of A company, died of wounds received when a shell fragment struck the periscope of his tank during a heavy artillery barrage the day before.

Headquarters for company C were moved to Baccanello on the 27th of October, and the company moved all but two of its tanks to that area and set up for indirect fire. The one section from the company was left at C. Rocca for direct fire and observation. One man, Edward Kalama of Service company was wounded by shell fragments while driving near Scuazza on October 30th. The fighting by now had settled down to a defensive battle by both sides and on the first of November, Battalion Headquarters was moved to Fiumetto. The Battalion was set up in indirect fire and defensive positions along a general line running north from Baccanello to Mt. Cuccoli, and lying between highways 65 and 31. We were attached to the 85th Division until the 22nd of November at which time the British 13th Corps took over relief of the 337th Infantry Regiment, and 752nd was attached to the 88th Division. The Battalion continued to occupy the same positions which it held during the operations with the 85th Division.

Forward positions were alternated between the various companies of the Battalion insofar as was possible, with those men relieved in the forward tanks, coming back to man the indirect fire positions. The unit remained in action "north of the light line" continuously throughout the winter months.

A company's tanks were moved out of the

337th sector on the 10th of November when that infantry outfit was relieved by the British. After this move the company operated in support of the 339th Infantry for the remainder of the 85th operations at that time.

The area around Baccanello was a definite hot spot those days. Not a day passed without a heavy shelling in the area, and with the combined attentions of the Luftwaffe along the road from time to time, the sector soon came to be known as "Death Valley." Roger B. Hill of Charley company was wounded by artillery fire near Baccanello on the night of November 4, and a Baker company man, Raymond R. Marek, was wounded on the afternoon of November 11.

One of C company's tanks was damaged on the 20th of November when the krauts threw in an 80 round concentration of 88mm HE. The tank was set afire, and two of the men were injured in extinguishing the blaze.

With the taking over of the sector by the 88th Division on the 22nd of November, fire control of the Battalion's tanks in the indirect fire positions were taken over by Division Artillery.

Two days later, on November 24, the 805th TDs were again attached to 752nd. We were darned glad to have them back with us. The Assault platoon was released from attachment to the 403rd FA on November 26, and went over to the 913th FA. B and C companies' tanks fired over 12,000 rounds from their indirect fire positions during the month of November.

Not much change occurred during the month of December, 1944. The companies spent some time in moving their tanks to improved firing positions for both direct and indirect missions. The Battalion, still working with the 88th Division, occupied positions along the line from highway 6531 to C. Castelvecchio in the same general set-up as had been the case during the preceding month.

Continued shelling of the valley around Baccanello was experienced, and on December 4, one of C company's tanks was damaged by a heavy caliber shell. The Assault guns destroyed several enemy occupied houses during fire missions on December 10. Two more C company men were wounded by shell fire in the Baccanello sector; T/4 Clyde W. Debar, who was hit by shell fragments on

the 9th of December, and Joseph S. Pirog, who was lightly wounded on the 15th of the month.

As Christmas neared there was some slight shuffling of positions. Company A of the 805th TDs with the 1st and 3rd platoons of Company C, 752nd, attached, was attached to the 91st Infantry Division on December 23. The weather was persistently cold, with temperature below the freezing point most of the

of one kind of liquor or another to help put the day over right.

Two days after Christmas, on the 27th of December, Company A was shifted to support of 365th of the 92nd Division, which had taken over the sector from 349th of the 91st Division. On the 29th of the month 349th took over the 350th sector, and C company reverted to support of 349th.



Time out for a drink. "No Female Civilian Guests Permitted Above the Ground Floor"—Excelsior Bar in Roma

time. Quite a little snow fell and the roads, as usual, were a mess.

Some new equipment was making its way up to the Battalion to replace some of the vehicles which had been driven to a frazzle on the push north from Rome. The day before Christmas our Assault Gun platoon turned in its old faithful M7's and drew a new set of 105s mounted in the new M4A3 tanks. It was rather a comfort to have that turret overhead, but the boys hated to get rid of the old reliable SP artillery mounts.

Christmas was just another day on the lines. Not much chance to celebrate, although the kitchens really went to town and we had a swell dinner which most of us got a chance at and really enjoyed. Some of the boys had a bottle or two on hand and except for a few strays, most of us got to take a nip or two

The year had been a busy one for 752nd. Moving from Africa to Italy and into its first session of front line combat were both major changes for the Battalion, but it had come through in first class shape. There was no finer fighting outfit on the Fifth Army front as the year 1944 bowed out. We had taken our share of knocks. Our record showed 18 enlisted men and two officers killed in the six months of combat, along with another 86 men and eight officers wounded or injured in action, six men missing, and eight men listed as prisoners of war. Nineteen of our tanks had been destroyed in the fighting, and 14 were damaged by enemy action.

Sure those were hard to take. Every figure in the column meant some one real and personal to us. It wasn't exactly a one sided affair though as our boys had killed upwards

of 1400 krauts and wounded an unknown number. We also had taken 484 prisoners which had been turned over to the infantry. During the operations our gunners threw 39,033 rounds of 75mm HE, as well as 8500 rounds of 75mm AP, 2000 rounds of 76mm HE and 750 rounds of 76mm AP. We lost count of the 30 caliber fired, but the number would look something like the national debt.

In addition to the krauts knocked out of the picture, we had notches on our guns to account for 13 SP guns destroyed, six Mark IV and five Mark VI tanks knocked out, one Mark VI and one Mark IV damaged, three personnel carriers and 41 wheeled vehicles destroyed along with two AA guns, 47 machine guns, four mortars and 21 pillboxes. The boys had also captured five motorcycles, six jeeps and two 81mm mortars, all intact and in good working order.

New Year's Day rolled around as it has had a habit of doing for the past several hundred years. Everything was pretty much as usual with the Battalion. The weather was colder than a witch's heart and roads were either so muddy or so icy that it was a real chore to get around. In spite of everything, however, the boys got along okay. By this time we had been sitting pretty much in one spot and had ourselves dug in to where we managed to keep reasonably warm and comfortable, if not particularly satisfied.

A number of the fellows had been lucky enough to get back to the States on the rotation and temporary duty set-ups, while most of the rest of us managed to get south of the light line from time to time on one or the other of the recreation trips which had been arranged to Rome, Florence, or Montecatini.

On the lines things were rough all over. There was plenty of excitement now and then as the krauts locked horns with our patrols or kept us ducking as they threw in numerous harassing fires. Jerry aircraft were getting leery of coming around, and generally didn't show up during the daytime, although "Bed Check Charley" still showed up on his recon flight every evening about dusk, and once in a while a few bombs were dropped.

The Battalion, with the exception of Company A, was supporting the 349th and 351st Infantry. Able company was in support of the 365th Infantry Regiment. The Rocket Tanks were also under 91st Division control, and the 805th TD boys were still with us.

Roads and weather combined with Jerry to make it impossible to move vehicles in the forward positions, and the old Missouri (or maybe it was Italian) mule was in his element bucking the knee deep mud to supply those units up front. Our Recon platoon was working with the mule skinners and tramped, slid, rolled, and wallowed many weary miles hauling up ammo, chow, and the indispensable mail. The opinions of all concerned in regard to Guinea weather at this stage of the game would burn holes in the paper if printed, and

will be left to your own memory for reminiscence.

The tanks were firing occasionally, with those guns in the indirect fire positions keeping the krauts on the jump with harassing missions every night. The Assault platoon was also taking part in this and had plenty of action to keep them busy.

The first few days of the month held pretty fair in so far as weather was concerned, but it clouded up about the 5th of the month, and



North of Futa Pass. Halftrack on the road above Boccanello

snowed like blazes for the next three days. The whole area was foggy and visibility wasn't so hot.

Company A was shifted to support of the 350th on January 7 when that outfit relieved 365th. On the 11th of January the Rocket tanks were detached from the 91st Division and rejoined the Battalion. Weather cleared up for a day or so but more snow piled up on the ground the next night.

The 88th Division was relieved on the 12th of the month, with the 34th moving in to take over. Our outfit stayed in position, and was attached to the 34th, supporting the 133rd, 135th and 168th Infantry regiments.

A number of awards were made to members of 752nd on the 12th of January. The presentations were made at II corps headquarters by General Keyes who was in command of II Corps.

Captain Charles K. Hokensen and Cpl. Ralph J. Zerhusen were awarded Silver Stars;

It's cold in them thar hills. Winter in the North Appenines south of Bologna



It doesn't look so far—But. Looking over into the Po Valley from the winter ('44-'45) line

Krautland, as seen from the Artillery F.O. post on Mt. della Formiche



while Bronze Star awards were made to 1st Lt. Anson A. Bombard, T/Sgt. Emerson E. Seaman, Frank Adams, Sgt. Nephi G. Schwab, Valmore Baker, Robert R. Talley, and Sgt. Arthur J. Cramer.

The Rocket platoon was attached to C company on the 17th of January, and two of the tanks were placed in position at Baccanello, and one at Osteria.

Another Battlefield Commission was awarded on the 18th of January, when 1st Sgt. Palmer O. Bakken of Charley company was discharged from the army to accept a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. Baker company moved to new locations to relieve six tanks of the 757th Tank Battalion. The remainder of the company remained in its indirect fire positions.

Dog company, which had remained behind with the Armored Command School at Eboli when the Battalion moved into the lines, had been ordered to rejoin the unit and moved out at 0700 hours the morning of the 19th. The company left their light tanks at Eboli, and moved by motor convoy, arriving at Rome at 1900 hours that evening for their first stop on the way up.

Next day Baker company, except six tanks, moved to support of the 135th Infantry on the 20th of January, relieving Company A of 757th; the same day that Dog company men reached Firenze at 2400 hours. The light tankers bivouacked in Firenze during the night and on the following day rejoined the Battalion, moving into the area with Service Company at Battalion rear in the vicinity of S. Benedetto Di Querceto. Weather overhead was clear, but roads were icy and slippery throughout the area. A portion of the light tank company remained behind in Firenze to draw tanks and equipment to replace that which had been left at Eboli.

The light tanks were drawn but road clearance could not be gotten immediately to move the vehicles over Futa pass, so a small detachment was left in Firenze to

guard the equipment and the remainder of the men rejoined Dog company on the 22nd of January.

Additional awards were presented by General Keyes to members of 752nd on the 23rd of the month; with T/5 Rich-

remainder of the vehicles being assembled in the Battalion reserve area by 0700 hours.

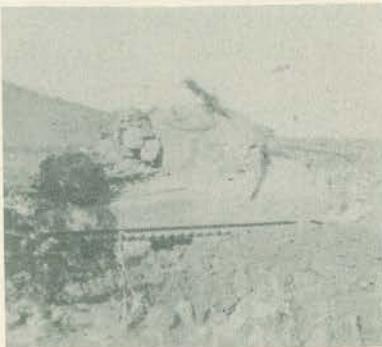
Action picked up a bit on the 30th of January, with B company gunners knocking down and setting fire to a kraut occupied building in the Zanorella area, and getting a session of counter-battery fire in return. Baker company suffered no casualties, but one man in C company, Frank Adams, was wounded when the company bivouac area was bombed and strafed by some of our own aircraft.

Operations moved into the month of February with a continuation of the routine work which had been in operation for the past two months. The Battalion continued in support of the 34th Division, with A company supporting 168th, B company with 135th and C company with 133rd. D company continued in reserve for the first two weeks of the month.

A limited objective attack by the 34th Division with hill 363 in front of Charley company's forward position at C. Di Gusi, was opened on the 5th of February and continued to the 7th. Seven Five Two, supporting the line between Belmonte and C. Castelvecchio, threw in a heavy volume of fire to back up the infantry attack. The entire area was covered with a heavy volume of artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire from all guns in the sector which the tanks supplemented from both direct and indirect positions.

The krauts layed it back pretty heavily with everything from 170s to rat pistols and held off the infantry attack. The doughboys had it pretty rough, but there were no tanker casualties.

Our tanks were spotted along Castel Vecchio ridge, on Mt. Belmonte, and on the ridge north of Mt. Delle Formiche, while the Rocket tanks joined in the general firing on these days. The infantry managed to advance to Orbega and also took Pizzana, both of which were covered by the tank fire during the attack. The tankers fired nearly 5000 rounds of



ard O. Welch of Company A, Carl S. Badenhausen and John Keister, both of C company, receiving the Bronze Star.

Battalion line-up at this time had A company in support of 168, B company supporting 135th and C company supporting 133rd. Dog company, still without tanks, was in Battalion reserve in the Service Company area. This situation remained, with the medium companies firing occasional harassing missions, for the rest of the month. The light tanks were brought up over Futa pass on the 29th of January, one tank skidding off the icy roads and overturning en route. No one was injured in the mishap, and the tank was returned to Ordnance, the



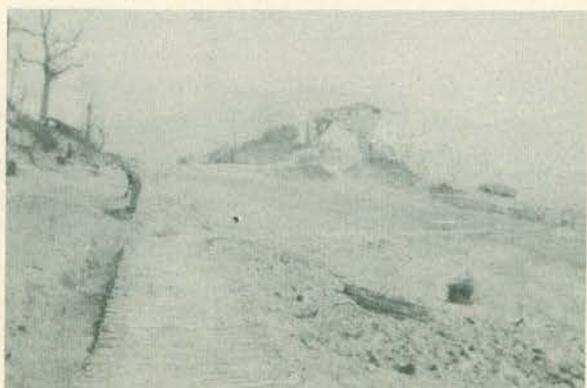
Sometimes even the mules bogged down. The Assault platoon hauls supplies up to their gun position

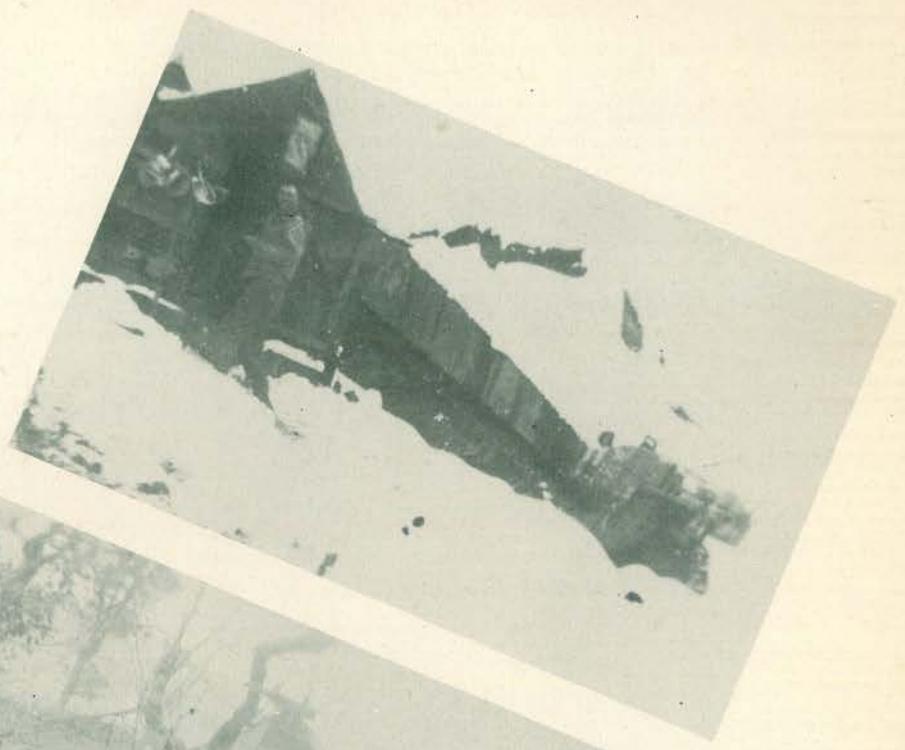
Service company area near San Benedetto



Some of the Dog company boys collect bedding

The mule trail comes up to Farnetto.
Mt. Grande in the background.





Home Sweet Home in the Italian hills south
of Bologna

TAKEN FROM C.ZANARELLO
(HILL 437)

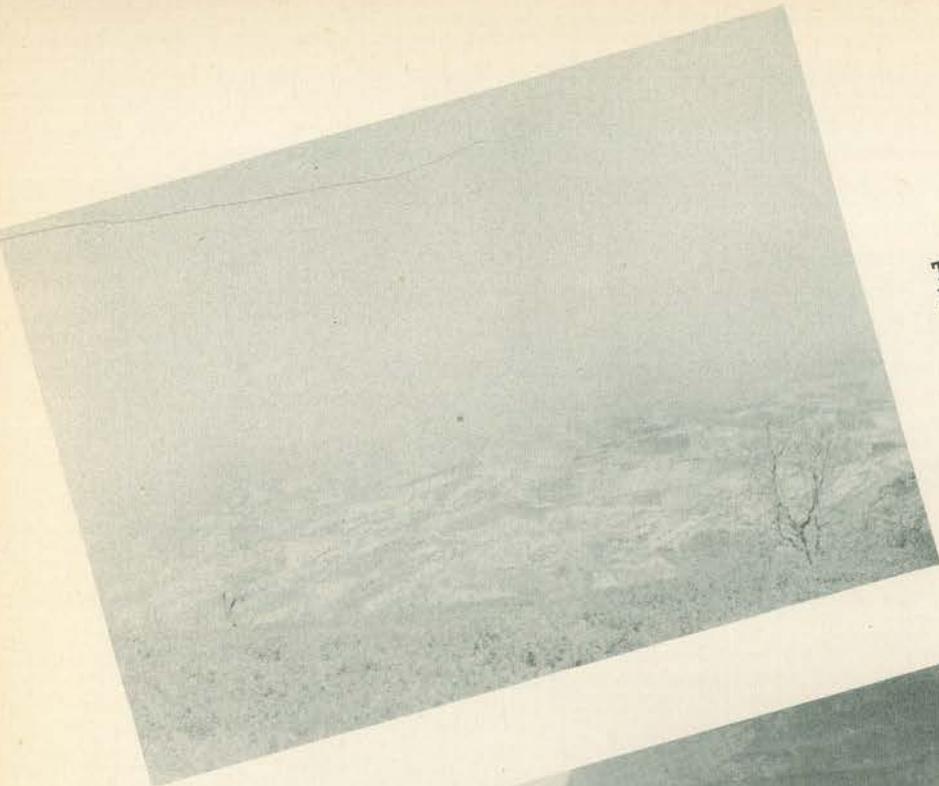
HILL 363
S.CHIERICO





Rocket tanks firing on Hill 363

The view towards the Po from
Farnetto



Fiume Zena and the area be-
hind Mt. Formiche



Artificial moonlight for those
dark nights in the North Ap-
penines





Castel Zena, just behind Belmonte

HE ammunition of all calibers during the attack. T/5 Roy L. Castelman, of B company, was injured in action on the 12th of the month. The 34th Division was relieved on the 13th of February by the 91st Infantry, and A company was transferred to the support of 362nd, while B company was supporting the 361st, and C company was supporting the 363rd. The companies continued to hold their positions in the line, and to give direct and indirect fire support on call from their respective Infantry units. Continued counter-battery fire was experienced, but there were comparatively few casualties on our side.

Firing was conducted principally by tanks of Charley and Baker companies with targets at Gorgagnano, Poggiolo, Hill 363, Ca Merla, C. Del Fiume, Perdini, Monte Armato, Poggia, and several unnamed houses which were occupied by the krauts from time to time. Severe fire from enemy SPs was experienced on the 17th of February by Company B, and C company went into action in support, firing on the suspected gun positions with the immediate silencing of the enemy fire. One C company

man, Cpl. Merril S. Sloan was injured lightly in action on the 15th.

Company D was detached from the Battalion on the 18th of February and moved to take over several tanks in the San Clemente-Mt. Grande sector where it was attached to the 85th Division. The company took over eight tanks from 755th Tank Battalion which were in indirect firing positions to the south of San Clemente, and also 12 tanks at Farneto and Mt. Grande which had been abandoned by Canadian and American armored units at the time of the slowing down of the fall offensive.

The eight tanks firing indirect missions were tied into the 403rd FA fire direction center. Immediate steps were taken by the company to put the demobilized tanks in the forward positions into running order.

C company tanks backed up a raid by infantrymen of the 363rd Regiment on February 25. The doughboys seized two enemy bunkers and were pinned down by fire from another German position. The tankers were called and opened fire on the active kraut bunker, pinning the Jerries down and enabling the infantrymen to withdraw. C company gunners also destroyed two pillboxes and damaged an additional two others on hill 363. Baker company tanks in position at Savignano destroyed two gun positions, one of which was camouflaged as a haystack.

By this time the Battalion had received a number of the new M4A3 tanks with the 76mm gun and the boys were strictly in favor of the new high velocity weapon. As new supplies of the tanks were received in the theatre arrangements were made to completely re-equip the Battalion and the companies began moving their remaining M4's from the forward positions on the 24th of February. As fast as they could be moved out the 75s were turned in and 76s drawn to replace them. The



The mule head near Grande. Pack train just starting for the forward positions



The tanks select new positions as winter rolls along

ice and mud on some of those mountain trails made for all sorts of excitement as the old tanks were moved out from positions which, in some cases, they had occupied for nearly four months without being moved, and the new jobs were pulled into position to replace them. We also put "duck feet" or mud grousers on the tracks and found that they were one whale of a big help when it came to maneuvering in the gooey country.

On the last day of the month Pfc. Leslie C. Hankins of Charley company was lightly injured in action. The following day, March 1, S/Sgt. George W. Fast of Dog company was injured while firing a harassing mission.

Two men were wounded on the 2nd of March by enemy shell fire. A barrage in the vicinity of Baccanello resulted in T/4 Carroll D. Erickson of C company being lightly wounded. Pfc. Albert M. Klose of Service company was seriously wounded the same day.

The companies continued to maintain their same relative positions during the first part of the month. Tanks were moved to improved firing positions as improving weather conditions made it possible to get around over ground that had been previously impassable for the tanks. We fired principally on direction of the infantry which located targets in the kraut positions and directed our fire for the most part by telephone communication, a majority of the tanks in forward positions having been equipped with phones for just this purpose. Positions of the tanks enabled us to fire on the kraut strong points on hill 363 behind Mt. Belmonte and in the vicinity of Pizzano. We had positions on the Castelvecchio ridge, near Belmonte, at Savignana, C. De Gusi, and hill 516 as well as a number of guns in indirect firing positions.

On the night of 8-9 of March the infantry launched three raids on enemy positions. The attack was carried out by troops from 363, and 752nd tanks supported the movement. Fire was concentrated on hill 363, Mt. Carrara, and in the vicinity of the church at Armato. The 805 TD boys were with us in this support mission. A number of hits were made on the immediate targets and the infantry reported good coverage by our guns.

This was the first month that our rocket tanks had seen any continuous action. The rockets were on the job for 12 days of the month and put out over 1300 rounds during the period. The rounds were fired on hill 363, C. Rio Buia, Mt. Armato, Casella, Scanno, C. observed by the artillery and air OPs which reported beautiful coverage on the targets. One man, Pfc. Francis T. Whalen, of company B, was injured in action on the 9th of March.

Dog company was detached from the 85th Division on the 13th of March and returned to Battalion control, going into Division reserve for the 85th in the vicinity of S. Benedetto. The Battalion was by this time completely re-equipped with new tanks. The medium companies had completed drawing the new M4A3s by the 7th of the month and the light tank company exchanged its M5s for the new M24s on the 12th.

With the acquisition of the new vehicles it was felt that some instruction should be given the crews to be certain that everyone was completely familiar with the equipment, and a driving range was set up in the back of the A company sector for instruction and practice. It was necessary to sweep the area for mines before the driving could be done, and instruction went on for the rest of the month within easy range of the kraut artillery. Intelligence reports seemed to indicate that the jerrys were completely mystified by what must have sounded like large scale tank movements in that area. Strangely enough, however, we never did get any fire in the area, for which no one was a bit sorry.

Since the light tankers were now equipped with 75mm guns, they were moved into the lines for additional fire power, and to relieve some of the medium units which had been in position constantly since the previous October.

Everything the Battalion had was used for the rest of the month. We threw over 75s, 76s, 105s and 4.5 inch rockets at targets on Gargagnano, Poggiolo, hill 363, Ca Merla, C. Del Mieme, Monte Armato, Perdini, Poggio, and the several unarmed houses which the krauts had been using from time to time. Nu-



Operations Incorporated. Major Stoehr and Major Woodbury at the C.P. in Fiumetto.



Mud and mountains—from the Assault gun position

merour direct hits were scored on bunkers, pillboxes, and other enemy positions. A small ammo dump in the vicinity of Savignana was knocked out on the 14th of March by B company. Another was hit by C company gunners the same day.

The krauts seemed to be a bit touchy but at the same time were either conserving ammunition or were leery of sticking their heads up. We still got an occasional shelling from the other side, but it was a hell of a lot quieter than it had been a few weeks before. One other man, Cpl. Robert R. Evans of B company, was injured on the 15th of March, the last casualty of the outfit for that month.

An Italian outfit, the Legnano Group, moved into our sector during the month and went into action supported by A company. There was some question in our minds as to just what we could expect from the Guineas, but they did a pretty fair job even if they didn't operate the way our own infantry was used to. Telephone communication through

the Italian switches got a bit complicated from time to time, but everybody made out okay.

Dog company was again attached to the 85th Infantry and moved back to the vicinity of Gagliano on the 21st of March for additional training with the infantry. The company remained in this area until the end of the month. T/4 Harry J. Read of Dog company was

injured during the time the company was training with the 85th.

One of our medical detachment boys, Cpl. Pedro Rodriguez, was killed on the 26th of March when the medic's jeep turned over on the rough mountain trails.

Command of the 752nd passed to Major C. M. Woodbury our fighting executive officer, on the 28th of March, 1945. Lt. Col. Bruss who had commanded the unit up until this time, was transferred on that day to command the 91st Cavalry Recon. Squadron.

Although the calendar showed spring still some weeks away, the weather continued warm and dry with the result that roads and fields were drying rapidly and transportation was becoming much easier. The early part of April showed a marked increase of traffic on the roads in the rear areas as heavily loaded convoys moved supplies to the various depots in anticipation of renewed action. Gasoline and ammo dumps grew all over the place and the feeling grew that things would break



Tuning up for the Spring show.
"Indirect Fire Positions."

loose some time in the not too distant future.

Our tanks in the forward positions were moved to improved firing positions as the terrain hardened to permit shifting the heavy vehicles. Harassing fire at night and observed direct and indirect fire on the enemy during the day was stepped up all along the line. Our rate of fire was increased from 600 rounds per day during the first week of the month to better than 3000 rounds per day by the 7th of April. Heavy destruction was effected among enemy positions and personnel by the well aimed tank firing.

Relative positions of the companies remained stable at the first of the month with Able company (plus C company of the 805th TDs) in support of the Legnano group of Italian troops, and D company in support of the 361st Infantry Regiment. Companies B and C of 752nd were held in Battalion reserve and continued maintenance and training to keep their equipment in top shape.

On the 5th of April the light tank company lost its new M24s to the First Armored. The company was pulled back from the lines, with platoons from A and B company relieving them. The new tanks were turned in and the company drew a complete complement of M5A1s. This was one of the worst jolts the light tankers had taken since they had hit the lines about three months before, and the whole Battalion felt that they were getting a really rough deal.

During the period the Rocket tanks had been refitted by ordnance, and had been placed in positions to fire on the enemy strong points mainly in the vicinity of Poggio Dei Mori and Hill 363. The Assault platoon was moved to the forward slope of Mounte Formiche where the guns were dug in and commenced pounding the kraut positions with direct fire. The gunners worked over targets at Riosto, Talmone, Casa Medola, Casa Cretola, Casa Casoli Canina and Di Stiga. Baker company moved some of its tanks in position to fire from the Crecetta sector.

The 34th Division took over from the 91st on April 6. Able company remained attached to the Legnano Group while B company went over to support of the 133rd. C and D companies were held in reserve while the process of re-equipping the light tank company went on. Baker company moved its CP to the vicinity of Savignano.

A kraut ammo or gas dump was hit by our fire on the 7th of April, with heavy explosions and fires resulting. The same day the 805th nailed a jerry truck and trailer which burned merrily for several hours.

Other preparations were also going on in the Battalion rear. Seventeen M4 tanks had been received as a reserve pool for the outfit, and each of the medium companies exchanged one platoon of their M4A3s for an equal number of the 75mm tanks. Plans called for the use of the older tanks to be used in advancing through the mine fields, and the newer jobs to be held as replacements in the event of loss or damage in the advance. Some 50 additional men were also drawn by the Battalion and were assigned to Dog company to be held as reserves. The new men were given a rapid orientation course on the tanks and were tentatively assigned to the reserve vehicles to form an emergency company in the event of its being needed.

All units of the Battalion were being moved to forward positions in preparation for the jump off. The Battalion CP moved up to position a few hun-

dred yards behind Castel Zena. Dog company, with the reserve tanks and the personnel pool was moved into the area south and east of Formiche in the same general area as C company's rear.

Lieutenant George W. Higley was wounded lightly on the 9th of the month by a shell fragment in the most prominent portion of his anatomy. This incident is possibly a round-about commendation of his company (Baker Co.) cooks since it is an established fact that if Higley hadn't been such a chubby li'l rascal the splinter would have missed him entirely. Two Headquarters company men, S/Sgt. William A. Rosenberg and Pfc. Michael E. Ciganek were injured the same day when their truck overturned on one of the steep mountain trails while moving up supplies to one of the forward positions after dark.

An attack, or more correctly a raid in force, on hill 459 was made by Italian troops of the Legnano group on the 10th of April. A company supported the action and knocked out two MGs and killed six krauts enabling our troops to successfully complete their mission and capture a number of German prisoners. The tanks also covered the withdrawal of the raiding force after completion of the mission. In preparing for the action the heaviest fire had been concentrated on the forward slopes of hill 459 but two tanks had been placed to cover the rear slope from the adjoining sector controlled by the British 10th Indian Division. When the attack was opened on the hill, the krauts pulled out hurriedly and were immediately taken under fire by the two tanks set up to cover the back slope. The troops we were supporting received no serious casualties and the German position was wiped out.

Forward elements of our infantry seemed to have lost contact with the enemy about the evening of April 12, and it was thought they might be pulling out. In order to check this two tanks from B company moved forward from the vicinity of Belmonte that evening, and advanced to hill 368 in the Gorgagnano sector. The tankers had to feel their way through mined territory but got to the vicinity of the church on 368 and were promptly fired upon by a kraut SP. The tanks remained in position in spite of the fire, and the infantry sent out a patrol to scout the kraut positions under cover of fire from the tanks.

The position was held by the tanks and infantry patrol through the night in spite of heavy fire from the Germans trying to dislodge them. During the counter-battery fire, one of the B company tanks supporting the action from a direct fire position near Savignano received a direct hit on its ammo pile, and the resulting explosion slightly wounded Lt. Edwin S. Cox.

A flail tank, or scorpion, was drawn by the Battalion on the 15th of April for the purpose of clearing mines in advance of the tanks. An engineer detail clearing mines near Chilli had been pinned down by small arms and MG fire on the 13th, and it had been necessary to call on A company tanks to silence the fire before the work could proceed. Several casualties were inflicted on the enemy in the vicinity of Mt. Armato during the action on the 15th. Some fire was received from what was believed to be a 75 How., and the area was snowed under by fire from our tanks. One kraut truck and several horse-drawn vehicles were seen attempting to pull out of the area, and were fired upon effectively, with several hits seen, and one cart destroyed.

SECTION VII

Po Valley

D-Day for the Po Valley push was April 16, 1945, and the boys were ready for it. Things had been building up to a climax for the past two weeks and the stuff we had been throwing at the krauts 24 hours a day for that period was really something. The artillery was really working overtime, and on the morning of the 16th they opened the ball with a show that really gave you a preview of hell.

Under cover of the barrage our two assault companies, B and C, were moved to their assault positions, with B company of the 805th in support. Positions were taken up by 0230 hours that morning, and at H-hour the show was underway. The tanks moved with the 3rd Battalion of 168th, of 34th Division, the assault battalion, while the remainder of 752nd and 805th supported the advance with direct fire from everything that would throw a shell.

The rocket tanks were pushing them out at fast as they could reload, from relatively exposed positions. With the fuss they kicked up they were bound to attract attention, and in attempting to silence them the krauts threw over several rounds, one of which struck within 20 feet of Lt. Sherwin R. Clinton who was in command at the forward Rocket position, killing him instantly. Another round landed almost on top of the stacked ammunition, but failed to damage the rockets.

The attack was proceeding slowly. Jerry was giving us everything he had in an effort to hold the line he had spent all winter preparing. Mortars, MGs, SPs, artillery and anything else he had was coming our way to make progress across the rough, heavily mined terrain even rougher. In spite of everything though, the doughfeet and the tankers managed to plug ahead. The main road to hill 367 had been blown and it was necessary to re-route the tanks up the Fiume Zena road. Several of our tanks were damaged by mines or enemy fire during the day, and five men wounded, including Capt. Gayle Stockdale and Pvt. Joseph Indelicato, both of B company; T/4 Emerson E. Seaman and Cpl. Stephen V. Good, of C company; and Pfc. Alexander J. Gilmore of Headquarters company. T/4 Seaman was the only one seriously wounded.

Positions gained during the day were held, and supplies and reinforcements moved up during the night to continue the attack. Operations continued the next morning and things really got hot. The 3rd platoon of B company moved on hill 367 and promptly lost the lead

tank on a mine. An attempt was made to use the Scorpion to clear the trail, but the ground was too steep and the gadget didn't work too successfully. The remaining B company tanks started for Poggiolo and the 3rd platoon started around 367 but was again stymied when the lead tank hit a stack of Rigel mines which buckled the floor of the tank and set it on fire. This blocked the trail and made it impossible to continue along that route. Another tank turned over while trying to by-pass the knocked out vehicle.

Those tanks moving up the river road had better luck, and by late that afternoon we succeeded in getting three of B company's tanks into Poggiolo. Over on the right flank A company was still supporting the Legnano group, covering targets at Hill 363, Poggio Dei Mori, Scanno and C. Chilli. The enemy tossed some 170's back and Pfc. James B. Morris was killed by the shell fire. Observers spotted the kracut position and our guns plastered the area silencing the fire.

Charley company was working on our left flank supporting the assault on hill 394. Two of the company's tanks turned over when the narrow road they were trying to follow caved in under them. Another assault was made on the hill, and the tanks managed to get back on the road when the lead tank hit another mine wounding Pfc. Jack W. Stephens and forcing the rest of the crew to abandon the vehicle. The dismounted crew fought as infantry, covered by the remaining tanks in the platoon, until the infantrymen could close up and consolidate the position.

The next day, April 18, was a continuation of the day before, with things getting even warmer. Baker company continued to support the 2nd Battalion 168th, and pushed through to Poggio Dei Mori through heavy mine fields which knocked out two of our tanks, killing Pvt. John M. Grober and wounding 1st Sgt. William A. McDowell, Cpl. Tyler B. Watson, Sgt. Clarence E. Perreault, Cpl. Lawrence J. Hogan, T/4 Minzo J. Rowden, and Pvt. Michael W. Hurley. The company succeeded in reaching the objective and holding until the infantry could come up. Eleven krauts were collected as PWs and a lot more were killed when the tanks fired into the caves which were being used as hide-outs for the jerries.

The 3rd platoon of C company advanced with the 3rd Battalion 168 to the vicinity of Barchetta. One C company man, Sgt. Patrick R. O'Leary, was wounded in action. The advance of the unit made it possible for the T-2

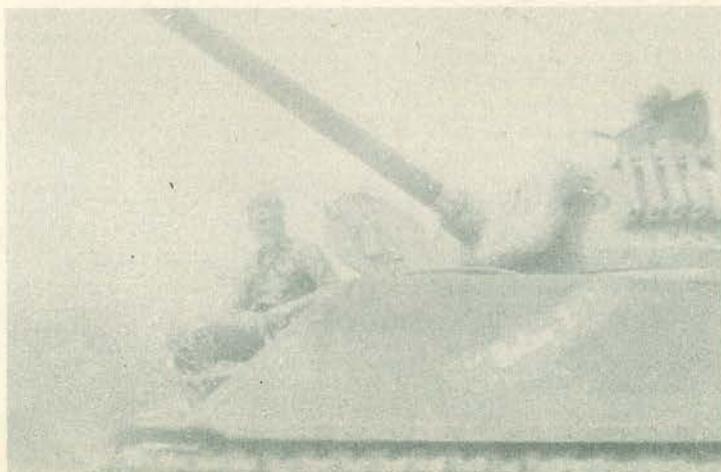
to go forward and the maintenance crew succeeded in recovering one of the M4A3's which had been knocked out the day before. The area was hotter than blazes but the maintenance boys got her back. At the end of the day the company was shifted to support of the 133rd Infantry.

Advances continued on the 19th. A company continued to support the Legnano group on the right flank, killing a number of krauts and getting several hits on enemy armored vehicles which were spotted near C. Collina. Baker company moved its 2nd Platoon to Mt. Aringo where it overwatched the advance of the 3rd platoon. The 1st platoon remained in position to support the infantry advance by fire. Progress was difficult as the narrow roads had been repeatedly cratered by the retreating Germans, but work of the 109th Engineers made it possible for the tanks to move ahead. The 1st platoon later moved up from hill 394 to hill 356, and the company occupied C. Nuova, C. di Sapra and hill 376. Second Lieutenant Orville E. Vipperman, of B company, was lightly wounded in the day's fighting and the company collected a total of 17 kraut prisoners in addition to an unknown number of dead ones.

C company, working with 133rd, used one tank as a supply wagon to move up chow and ammo to the doughboys, and then advanced to Mt. Aringo where positions were taken up on the crest and side of the hill.

Dog company had continued in Battalion reserve during this opening phase of the fight, and the assault guns and Rockets were working constantly delivering supporting fire to the advance elements on call. By the evening of the 19th, the front lines had advanced to the point where it was impossible for the rockets to give effective support, and preparations were made to move them further forward. These weapons had given good support and the crews were still going strong, but the show was really opening out now and from here on things moved too fast for the rocket tanks to be moved into position for any additional firing. Our lead tanks had moved up along Sevizzano ridge during the day and were swapping shots with the krauts from those positions. The area was under heavy German mortar and artillery fire which pinned the infantry down on the rear slopes behind the tanks, but the armored boys held the position.

The entire Battalion swung to the support of 133rd on the 20th of April as operations had progressed to the point where 168's sector had been squeezed out. Reconnaissance was initiated early that morning of the section of highway 65 on our immediate left. The Recon platoon found the road blown on each side of Pianoro and contacted the engineers who assured us that the road would be passable for tanks by 1300 hours that afternoon. The highway was checked for several miles toward Bologna, and the patrol returned after having



Sgt. Stine takes a break on the Major's tank

encountered scattered small arms and mortar fire from kraut positions on the hills on either side of the road.

At long last we were coming out of the hills where we had spent the winter, and breaking into the valley country of which we had dreamed and speculated during the mud and cold. It looked mighty good, and the weather was warm and springlike for the first time in many moons. The omens were good, and we made 'em stick.

That morning the infantry rode the backs of our tanks, and C company moved up on the left flank toward Hill 286 under heavy fire, with mine fields still adding to the hazards of rough country. Upon reaching the crest of 286, the infantry dismounted and the tanks deployed, moving across the hill by sections after alerting a battery of supporting artillery and its accompanying "Maytag Messerschmitt", the cub observation plane. As the first tanks crossed the hill they were fired on by three kraut SPs, but the enemy positions were promptly spotted by the artillery observation plane, and the artillery promptly knocked out two of the guns and forced the 3rd to pull out, leaving the area clear for our tanks to pick their way through the mine fields with no further heavy interference.

Progress of the 2nd platoon of C company was held up, and Baker company went to their support, the combined units blasting the krauts out of the way and putting the infantry on their objective. The fight took place in the vicinity of a spot called Casino. One of B company's M4's was knocked out by a mine in the action.

The whole kraut winter line was falling apart fast that day. By mid morning the Battalion CP had moved up to the vicinity of Zanarella along with the battalion reserve. The CP was set up in the deep draw just northeast of the village, and behind the Sevizzano ridge which had been one of the main kraut strong points all winter. While located in this sector a bouncing betty mine was set off when the Scorpion tank was moved, and three of our boys were wounded by the mine. Cpl. Willard L. Ohde and Pfc. Herbert E. Lawson both of Headquarters company, and Pfc. Lynn C. Marshall, of Dog company were the casualties.

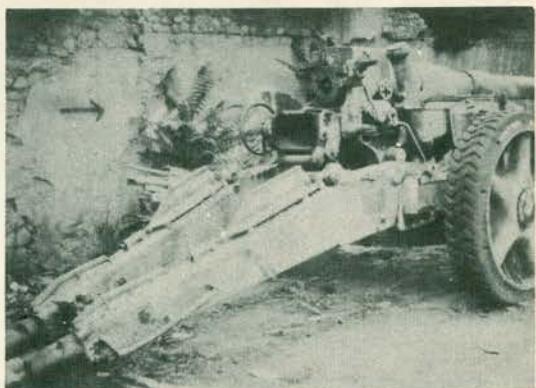
Upon return of the recon platoon from Pianoro, the Battalion CP was moved forward along highway 65 to the vicinity of C. Tam Bertto, following Baker company which had moved up on the left and was to contact the infantry during the night near C. Boaria. Seven prisoners were picked up during the day and at least 10 krauts were killed.

Everything was pouring into the valley below Pianoro on the afternoon of the 20th, and by the time the CP had been moved for the second time that day, the artillery was already wound up around there and throwing enough stuff toward Bologna to keep the jerrys shaken up during the night.

The tankers from B company, with the first platoon of Dog company attached, moved out toward Bologna early in the morning of the 21st of April. Some delay was encountered when mines were found in the highway. Sixty-

five Arigel mines were removed from the road, and the tanks proceeded to the pick up point where infantrymen of the 3rd Battalion, 133rd, were loaded on the backs of the tanks and headed for the big town. The tank-infantry team moved out at 0430 hours and drew one round of fire from a Jerry SP which was waiting at a road junction. The krauts scrambled after firing once, but the SP got away as our tanks were held up again by scattered mines.

As the tanks reached the outskirts of Bologna a heavy fire fight got underway with krauts which had been left behind to cover a blown bridge. About 100 of the jerrys were taken prisoner in the scuffle, and an undetermined number killed before our boys found a



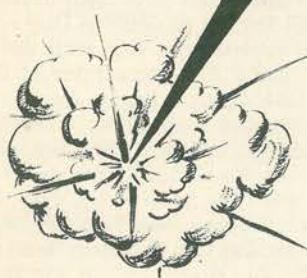
The Krauts left this one behind. We probably heard from it all Winter.

by-pass around the demolished bridge and proceeded into the town. The combined tank-infantry forces reached the center of Bologna at 0700 hours on the morning of the 21st, with Major C. M. (The Iron Major) Woodbury and Capt. Gayle M. (Stocky) Stockdale riding the lead tank, the first Allied troops to enter the town. The infantry Battalion commander was also a passenger on the lead tank.

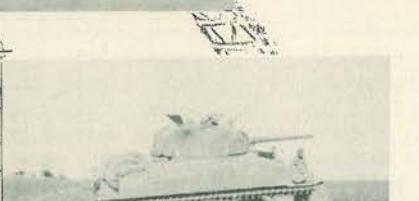
The initial column was made up of B and C companies of 752nd, and two companies of the 805th TDs, with the 1st platoon of Dog company, 752nd as it entered the city with the infantry riding the tanks. The remainder of Dog company joined the group shortly thereafter, and the entire objective was taken over with only scattered resistance being encountered.

Bologna was the fourth large city in which tankers of 752nd were the liberators along with the infantry. Rome, Cecina, and Leghorn were the earlier ones on the list. Bologna was our first meeting with the North Italian Partisans and they looked like rough individuals. The gals running around with pistols and hand grenades were strictly the living examples of "Pistol Packin' Mamma." Everyone in Bologna was having a whale of a time and flag-waving crowds were all over the place—and us. It didn't take long for the GIs to get into the spirit of things, and everyone celebrated considerably for a while.

ON TO



On the go again, 752nd and 805th move up to Sevizzano Ridge



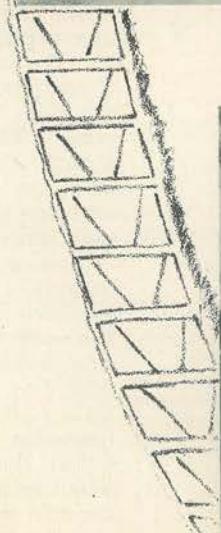
Sevizzano Ridge, and the Kraut winter line is folding.



They're on the run—Charley company moves through Pianoro as we headed for Bologna.



On the downhill grade—coming out of the Hills on the road to the Sarti factory in Bologna.



Bologna at last! 752nd moves in



The boys from 805th were with us right along



The Battalion assembles in the main square of Bologna.



"No, it was this way—." The boys hash it over while waiting in the Bologna Square.



Wotta reception! "Tommy" Thompson relaxes after helping the Italians celebrate the liberation of their city. Major Woodbury grabs a quick bite of those delicious K rations.

BOLOGNA!



Italian troops fighting with the 5th Army get the glad hand as they arrive in Bologna.

A company moved up and into Bologna with the Legnano group, and then was returned to the Battalion that evening. The tanks were moved to the north edge of the town for perimeter defense, and the CP was set up in the race track where it was joined by the 805th CP and our own Battalion rear. We had one man wounded during the day, Pfc. Isaac W. Talley, of Baker company.

Next day, hangovers and all, we changed over from the 34th Division to support of the 88th Blue Devils, and relieved the 757th and 804th tankers and TDs which had been working with the 88th. It was a long haul from Bologna to the vicinity of S. Agata and Bolognina where we stopped that evening, and the roads were dusty as the devil but the krauts were only hitting the high spots and travel as we might, the artillery couldn't even get within range of the running square-heads.

Company A, with C company of 805th attached, went to support the 349th Infantry. Charley company supported the 351st doughfeet, and Baker and Dog companies remained in reserve. The only kraut we saw that day was one stray who wandered into our area

and was picked up as a PW by a D company outpost.

At daylight the next morning, April 23, Company A forced a crossing of the Panoro river in support of the 3rd Battalion of 349th. The drive continued to the north, with infantry riding the rear decks. No

heavy resistance was met, but about 14 miles north of the River the force ran into several kraut columns trying to get away, and really shot up the place. It was a field day for the tank gunners who shot up horse carts, trucks, busses, guns and krauts until the roads were nearly blocked with the wreckage. The air force was working in close support of the column head, sometimes as close as 200 yards ahead of the lead tank and added to the confusion and destruction among the jerries.

At one point the tankers had collected a batch of prisoners but had no way of dealing with them, so the krauts were loaded on the backs of the tanks and hauled along until the infantry could come up and take over the job of moving them back. One of our tanks was hit and burned by kraut artillery fire and another was set on fire but the flames were extinguished and the tank continued to operate. The advance was so rapid that the tanks outran their supply columns and later in the afternoon two of the company's vehicles had to drop out of the scrap and wait for the gas truck to catch up so that they could refuel. The advance was



The Partigiani stage their own parade, and hunt Facists on the side.



So long, Bologna—the drive North goes on

continued to Borgo Franco which was reached around nine o'clock that evening.

When the tanks reached the river at Borgo Franco a large number of Germans had been cut off and the prisoners started coming in in large bunches. An estimated 1000 prisoners had been taken before reaching the town and an additional 1370 were picked up in that vicinity. A large ammo dump and numerous smaller pockets were by-passed by the swift advance and the infantry mopped up as they followed the advance elements. Sgt. Walter L. Lugo was wounded during the fighting in the vicinity of Borgo Franco.

The 2nd platoon of A company, which had been placed in support of the 350th Infantry, continued on north to the vicinity of Revere, capturing 980 prisoners and destroying 150 enemy vehicles. Total bag for the company during the day amounted to 3070 PWs and over 1800 vehicles destroyed.

Company B was released from Battalion reserve and committed in support of the 350th, advancing to Poggio Russo along Highway 12 after sending one platoon ahead to cut the highway and check the town of Mirandola. The 350th passed through the 351st and advanced by way of Camposanto into San Felice then swung east to Rivere and then north to the Canal.

Charley company working in direct support of 350, found the canal bridge blown and was held up for a short while during which time the Tank dozer contructed a by-pass under cover of fire from the tanks. C company's tanks then crossed the canal and entered Poggio Russo cutting all roads to the West. Passing on through the town, C company continued to the north cleaning up pockets which had been by-passed by Baker company in its advance.

After cleaning up Poggio Russo, B com-

pany moved north using side roads and encountered a large German supply column protected by two SP guns in the vicinity of Magna Cavalla. The krauts opened the ball, and were promptly taken under fire by the tanks and TDs which deployed off the road. In the ensuing fire fight both kraut guns were knocked out along with 40 enemy trucks. Reforming, the column moved north encountered only scattered resistance, and capturing a complete hospital and rest camp with all vehicles intact. Some 400 prisoners were taken with this unit.

The advance was pushed ahead reaching the Po river late that afternoon and road blocks were set up cutting the main East-West highway on the south bank of the river. One platoon was sent to the east of Agnolo and the remainder of Charley company went into bivouac in the vicinity of Quattrocasas. Baker company reached their objective, Bonizzo, at around 2300 hours that evening. One of Baker company's tanks was knocked out by a jerry bazooka that afternoon, with Pfc. Arthur A. Pendleton killed by the panzerfaust explosion. Other members of the crew were wounded, including S/Sgt. Robert L. Wilson, T/4 John M. Reading, and Pvt. Harold B. Walker. C company reported only one casualty, Lt. James R. Blount, who was wounded while taking prisoners.

Dog company, remained in Battalion reserve during the day except for several of the light tanks which had been operating as liaison vehicles with the supported infantry regiments.

Service company continued to operate as closely behind the fighting elements as the rapidly moving situation would allow, and on several occasions was left in a rather ticklish spot as by-passed groups of krauts would show up well to the rear of the advance lines. Quick action on the part of the Maintenance personnel enabled us to keep our tanks running and in fighting trim, while the truck drivers were working 24 hours a day to keep chow, gas, and ammo up with the forward units and maintain the advance at its level where the krauts would have no opportunity to hole up for a stand.

Alligators or Amtracks or whatever you want to call 'em had been brought up for the crossing of the Po river, and Dog company men manned the guns on the amphibious tanks to put the lead elements of the infantry on the north bank of the big river. Units of the 351st Infantry forced the initial crossing in the amtracks under covering fire from the three medium tank companies which laid down a heavy curtain of fire forcing the krauts to lay low. Some 40 prisoners and eight vehicles were captured by the infantry in the initial crossing.

Jerry was strictly hurting for material by now. His big try to get back across the Po for a stand was stymied by our rapid advance



752nd Tankers line the bank of the Po River to keep the Tedeschi on the jump while the 88th Div. Infantrymen make the crossing

and with the assistance of strafing aircraft, we had left thousands of vehicles and horses scattered over the roads leading to the Po crossings. Whole columns of kraut vehicles were destroyed, and entire ordnance and supply dumps had been captured, shot to pieces, or destroyed by the retreating jerries because they had no time to pull them out.

The infantry crossing of the river was under the direct control of Major Woodbury, and with the coordinated tank support our forces got across with no casualties. Tanks remained on the river line throughout the night firing steadily at German positions and personnel as they were spotted.

Company D's light tanks made the first crossing of the Po by armor, at 1600 hours the afternoon of the 25th of April, the vehicles of the 1st platoon being ferried across together with the A company vehicles from the 805th. The units joined

with infantrymen of the 351st Regiment on the north side of the river, and taking the doughboys on the back deck of the tanks moved down highway 12. The 1st Platoon of Dog company spearheaded the advance down the highway after the river crossing had been successfully completed under the cover of guns of A and C companies. Baker company moved to an assembly area near the site where engineers were throwing a pontoon bridge across the Po and was held in readiness to cross the river immediately upon completion of the treadway.

A running fight took place between the krauts and our light tankers and TDs during the run up highway 12. The 37mm peashooters of the light tankers eliminated three 20-mm jerry guns and the TDs knocked out an SP gun in the advance. The rapid advance by the armor enabled the infantry to capture more than 300 PWs while moving on the town. The combat team reached the outskirts of Verona at 2000 hours and took up positions covering the vital cross roads on the southern end of the town.

The advance of the tank-TD-Infantry team had been so rapid that a huge number of krauts were bypassed, and during the night efforts were being made by these retreating forces to funnel through the town of Verona in their attempts to escape to the north. The tankers held their positions on the roads throughout the night, blocking every attempt by the krauts to use the junction. Both tanks and TDs fought off attacks from entrenched positions within the city itself as well as shooting up a large number of enemy vehicles and killing or wounding a great many of the jerries. When the sun came up next morning there were krauts and kraut equipment scattered all over the road junction, and the tankers promptly dubbed the site "Bloody Corner".

First of the medium companies to cross the Po was Able. The company with C company of 805th attached, joined Task Force Fry crossing on the completed pontoon bridge at 0330 hours on the morning of the 26th and moved north on highway 12 to Buta



The doughfeet load one of their 57's on an Amtrack to be ferried over the Po.

Pietra, encountering scattered resistance on the way from juries whom the advance force had by-passed the night before. At this town the infantry mounted on the backs of the tanks and the force swung east toward Zevio. The krauts put up a stiff fight for the town, two fire fights being mounted between Buttigietra and Zevio during which 50 prisoners were taken, 10 machine guns destroyed and an unknown number of the enemy killed and wounded.

Reaching Zevio, the task force captured a complete field hospital with a staff of 250 officers and men, and 150 patients. In addition the loot included 80 hospital vehicles, two armored cars, 10 prime movers, 20 loaded trucks, four 20mm cannons, and several motorcycles and machine guns. The prisoner bag in Zevio brought the total PWs captured by the task force during the day to over 1500.

The Po was crossed about 0830 hours by C company's tanks which moved north to Buttigietra and then swung east to Raldon, then north to Pozza and thence west to S. Giovanni. A road block was encountered at S. Giovanni and the company back-tracked through Pozza and Raldon and moved over to Zevio. Working with the 351st infantry, C company aided in clearing the town of Zevio and then moved north to the Adige river where the bridge was found to have been blown by the retreating krauts. The tanks took up support positions along the river which were held through the night. Approximately 150 prisoners had been picked up during the day's operations.

B company, in support of the 350th, moved up to the vicinity of Pozzo where an unsuccessful reconnaissance was made for a crossing of the Adige river. Dog company moved to the assembly area at Zevio while A company moved to S. Marie Di Zerio for the night. The Battalion CP was set up in Buttigietra and moved to Leone that evening.

Headquarters was put across the Po about 1100 hours and advanced to Buttigietra and then turned east toward Zevio. At that time the attack had not yet begun on Zevio although this was not known



Initial Troops were ferried across the Po to secure a bridgehead in Amtracks driven by 752nd tankers.

when the company started out. A messenger caught up with the unit in time to warn them, and the company pulled off the road and set up in the vicinity of Leone, putting out outposts and remaining on the alert awaiting the advance units of the infantry, which showed up about half an hour later.

Service company experienced some delay in crossing the Po, but was over by late afternoon and moved up to Buttigietra where it was set up and ready for business at 1900 hours that night.

Fast work by the engineers made it possible to get the tanks over the Adige river in the vicinity of Verona early in the afternoon of April 27, and the armored units joined with the infantry in a swing to the east down highway 11 toward Vicenza. Able company made the first crossing of the river and joined with the 350th Infantry to form Task Force Fry.



Men of the 88th disembark after crossing the Po River—courtesy of the 752nd



"Bloody Corner" just outside Verona

Starting from the vicinity of Bonifacio, the combat team continued to push ahead through the night, encountering savage resistance from kraut positions dug in along the roads. The jerries were using bazookas, small arms, mines, and everything else they had in an effort to halt the advance.

At several points along the road the krauts had constructed heavy road blocks of reinforced concrete, and it was necessary to dismount the infantry which was riding on the tanks, and remove the barriers before the advance could proceed. A hit was made on one of the tank machine guns, putting the gun out of action; but none of the vehicles was damaged and we suffered no casualties in the operation.

Reaching the canal near the vicinity of Montebello, the tanks found the bridge blown by the retreating jerries, and the tank dozer was called forward to construct a by-pass. The work was completed in two hours and the column proceeded toward Vicenza, which was the main objective of the force.

Following a short distance behind A company, B company tanks crossed the Adige river on the railroad bridge at Verona and swung to the right to parallel the advance down highway 11. Near Montiperto the tanks made contact with the enemy and a rather hot little party was dreamed up for a few minutes. Two platoons from B company were sent out to clean up the pockets of resistance which had been by-passed by the advance forces and a lot of the krauts were taken prisoner or killed in the fighting. The boys also knocked out two heavy caliber kraut guns which they found in this area. As soon as the clean-up work was completed, Baker company was moved up to join Task Force Fry immediately to the rear of A company.

Charley company moved from the assembly point at Zevio at 1500 hours the afternoon of the 27th, and with the Assault Platoon attached, crossed the river at Verona and proceeded east to the vicinity of Zucherificio. The main highway bridge at this point was damaged and the company swung to the north of town. A few rounds of kraut HE were dropped in the vicinity of the column as it rounded the

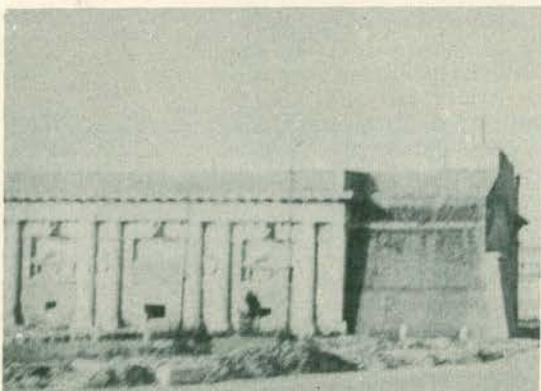
town, and the tanks were halted. The company remained at this point until after midnight, taking advantage of the opportunity to service the vehicles and grab a quick bite to eat. Dog company's light tanks were moved up from Zevio to the vicinity of Areale, and one platoon was detached from the company and moved to assist the infantry in occupying the town of Lonigo.

Units of the various organizations, both armored and infantry, were moved out from their positions under cover of darkness and made a forced march down highway 11 toward Vicenza. The advance was a rough go, with several heavy fire fights being mounted all the way. The Battalion CP moved up at the tail of the tank column, and on several occasions found itself in the middle of a real man-sized battle. The CP group finally made a dash for a house just off the main highway and settled down to its work in the questionable safety of this spot until morning.

The krauts had definite ideas of their own on how important the town of Vicenza was to their retreating forces. The town set squarely across the main roadways leading to the north and safety for the kraut troops retreating up the east coast from the British Eighth Army troops as well as those jerries who had been by-passed and cut off to the south by our own rapid advance. As long as Tedeschi held Vicenza they had a fair chance of pulling out enough troops from the southern sectors to man their proposed defense lines in the Alps mountains now clearly in sight to the north.

Preliminary reports had indicated that only a few troops were occupying the town, but the cold facts were that krauts had been funneling into the town from all directions, and the joint was loaded for bear. As our tanks rolled up with the infantry to the outskirts of the town on the early morning of the 28th of April—all hell broke loose. The advance had been rough, with krauts fighting a savage delaying action all the way up highway 11, but that was a Sunday school picnic compared with the fight they put up in the town proper. That developed into the fiercest battle of the Po Valley campaign.

The tanks reached the city at dawn, about 0600 hours on the morning of the 28th. Ele-



Part of the old city walls in the city of Romeo and Juliet.

ments of B company swung to the left to go around the town while A company moved directly into the center, followed by C company which had come up from Zucherrio. The krauts opened up with everything in the book. Machine gun and sniper fire stopped the infantry cold and the tanks worked forward slowly through the narrow streets to blast the jerries from their positions and make it possible for the doughboys to clear 'em out. Inside the town was a bad spot for the tanks to operate and the krauts took full advantage of the fact.

They were ready for us; and bazookas, AT guns, panzerfausts joined the party in support of the snipers and burp gunners. It was rough. Between 0800 and 1030 hours, A company had four tanks knocked out by bazooka fire, with Cpl. Harold V. Priest and T/5 Harold E. Wenger killed in action. Every officer in A company and seven enlisted men were wounded in the fierce fighting. Company personnel who were wounded in the operations included Capt. Joseph T. Schwellenscattl, 1st Lt. Arnold W. Dove, 1st Lt. William E. Cawood, 1st Lt. John F. Crowson, Pfc. Moss A. Hatchell, Pfc. Harold J. Willacker, Pvt. Melvin D. Allen, Sgt. Norman C. Kraatz, Sgt. William A. Stevenson, Cpl. Jules B. Rohrer, Jr., T/5 Robert W. Adamson, and Sgt. Archie D. Johnson.

C company, which had moved up along the secondary roads to the town ran into the heavy fighting on the north side, losing one tank to a bazooka gunner who killed the tank commander, Sgt. Franklyn S. Dixon, and wounded the other members of the crew, including Pfc. William J. McMullen, T/5 Carl S. Badenhausen, Cpl. Myron, S. Bower, and Pfc. Robert R. Hopstetter.

Baker company passed through A company at about 1400 hours when the lead company was regrouped and re-formed after its heavy losses. The relieving company moved up highway 53 to secure the bridge just west of Cittadella, completing this mission and killing 10 krauts and capturing 48 more in the process. After winding up its operations in Vicenza, C company moved out on the Sandrigo-Bassano highway to secure a river crossing near Bassano. Dog company's CP was moved up from the vicinity of Arcole to the vicinity of Vicenza, and Service company also moved forward from the vicinity of Bonafacio.

The town had been heavily defended by some of the best troops Jerry had available. However in spite of his fanatic stand, the tankers had completed their mission and the infantrymen had finished cleaning up the town by noon of the 28th. It was a mean, nasty fight, but we had sealed completely the last main escape route for the German troops and although we did not know it at the time, the stage was set for the final fold up of the kraut army in Italy.

Enemy casualties in the town were too numerous to count, but we could chalk up one complete vehicle column which the krauts had tried to move into town with reinforcements. A company's gunners made a clean sweep of the convoy, destroying all 15 trucks and killing, wounding or capturing every kraut in

the collection. When the final tally was made on fighting in the town by the infantry, the score for our side showed hundreds of enemy dead, while the prisoner toll was racked up in the thousands.

There was no time for stopping to lick our wounds and count up our scores right then. The columns rolled ahead before dawn the next morning, with A company in support of the 349th moving to Longa, and then east to Friola with the mission of holding the ford over the river at this point. The mission was accomplished and the tank-infantry team set up positions near Tezze on the east bank of the river.

Baker company put in some more hard fighting on the 29th. With the 1st platoon of Dog company attached, they moved east in support of the 350th Inf. The force met the kraut 10th Paratroop Battalion which launched a counter-attack. Our troops broke up the attack killing a number of krauts and capturing 75. As the force continued to advance eastward they encountered an enemy convoy just east of Pietro. The tankers opened up on the kraut vehicles destroying seven trucks and one SP gun. Enemy dead were counted at 286 at the close of this engagement which completely eliminated the kraut convoy. A short time later an enemy bicycle troop was met—and wiped out before it could go into action. The jerries scored two hits on our tanks with Panzerfausts in the day's operations, knocking out the two tanks and wounding Cpl. George W. Blessing, Cpl. Jeff Stewart, Pfc. Ralph A. Merck, and Pfc. Francis T. Whalen of B company, and Pfc. Joseph Gentile of Dog company.

Gentile of Dog company.

C company progressed to the river crossing at Bassano where the advance was held up by the bridge being blown by the retreating enemy. The company, supporting the 351st Inf. sent the 2nd and 3rd platoons around through Marostice which was taken by our troops after a heavy fire fight. As the units advanced toward Bassano, heavy enemy resistance was met, with the krauts spraying the area with MG and Mortar fire. Snipers were busy in the town of Bassano as our troops entered, and Cpl. Ray Robinson of the 2nd platoon was killed by sniper fire.

As the other two platoons moved through Marostice, Charley company's first platoon moved up on the right flank of our forces. The beerheads were trying desperately to get across the river, and the fighting was a rough go on several occasions. By the close of the day, our score showed more than 600 krauts captured and an unknown number killed and wounded.

The last day of April found company A and company D pushing northeast in support of the 349th Infantry, headed for Levada. Scattered small arms and bazooka fire was met, and the force advanced to Asola and then to S. Maria which was cleared by the tanks and infantry after a heavy fire fight. Over 800 prisoners were taken in this town, and the units moved north to Bassano with the infantry, and then east on the Bassano-Coronda highway. A number of strong points were en-

countered and blasted out by the tank guns, but the krauts seemed to be softening, and more and more prisoners were taken without a fight.

As the task force reached the outskirts of Corunda a strong pocket of fanatic Germans was encountered, and a heavy fight flared up. Our gunners knocked out 10 horse-drawn carts, six trucks, and one 20-mm cannon in the fighting, while over 200 prisoners were taken and a number of enemy killed. Pushing through the town our forces mopped up a number of scattered enemy groups, and then turned north headed for Feltre.

A short distance north of the town of Corunda, an enemy SP opened fire on our column, but was promptly knocked out by fire from the tank guns. The column continued to



Across the Po valley. We got our first view of the Alps in the vicinity of Vicenza

move until late in the evening when the advance was delayed by a large crater blown in the road. The infantry forces put out the security patrols, and the tankers managed to get their vehicles gassed up and some maintenance done while engineers filled in the road. The work took the remainder of the night and the column remained in place on the highway ready to move out.

Operations for Charley company during the 30th of April were confined to the vicinity of Sandrigo, where the company with attached units of the 805th TDs was held to protect the Division flank and rear from by-passed kraut elements. Charley company stayed in the vicinity of Bassano, patrolling the road with the 351st boys, and picking up 300 prisoners in the course of the afternoon. Later in the evening the tanks and infantry moved north to Mignano.

Advance of the lead elements, including A and D companies supporting the 2nd Bn of 349th and with the assault platoon attached, was resumed early on the morning of May 1 with the infantry riding the tanks. As the task force approached the town of Fenner fire

was received from kraut positions along the road and in cave positions around the town. An enemy bazooka struck the lead tank wounding 1st Lt. John F. Crowson of A company, and Pfc. Walter J. Breuggerman, also of company A. The tank return fire forced the enemy to give up his positions, and some 25 prisoners were taken while one 20-mm cannon and six machine guns were destroyed as well as a number of krauts killed and wounded.

The main highway bridge had been blown and the tanks were forced to swing around to the left of the town by hill trails, regaining the highway at Quero. As the advance continued, enemy machine guns opened up in the vicinity of S. Maria, but were quickly silenced by tank and infantry fire. As the column approached the outskirts of Carpen, an SP opened fire on our troops. The lead tank returned the fire and promptly knocked out the SP killing all but two of its crew. These remaining two men were taken prisoner. A mile further down the road an enemy tank opened fire, but was also quickly knocked out by the fire of our own tanks.

Our units pushed on north toward Feltre, which was entered late in the afternoon. Italian partisans had forced withdrawal of the German forces from the town prior to our arrival, so we moved into the town with no trouble except from a few scattered snipers who did no damage. The companies remained in the town overnight, setting up road blocks in the edges of the town along highway 50.

Tanks from Charley company, with TD units attached, moved from Mignano in support of 351st and advanced North. The first platoon passed through Perfeghetti and Racca en route to Arsie where the force met an enemy convoy of some 35 horse drawn vehicles and equipment. The tankers wiped out the convoy completely killing 100 of the krauts and capturing 160 more together with all the equipment which had been loaded on the carts. In the meantime the 2nd and 3rd platoons advanced with the infantry to Primolano. A sharp fight developed at this point and the task force inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, picking up an additional 200 prisoners. Cpl. Fred E. Elliot of C company was wounded in the action.

At Primolano the 3rd platoon cut east to assist the 1st platoon at Arsie, leaving the 2nd platoon in position. Baker company held their positions in the vicinity of Sandrigo during the day to cover the Division's left flank and rear. In the afternoon the company moved from Sandrigo and advanced to Marostica where they arrived around 2300 hours. Service company was moved up to the vicinity of Bassano where it set up in the Stadium.

Cpl. George W. Blessing, of B company, who had been wounded in the fighting two days before near Ospitale Di Brenta, died of his wounds on the 1st of May.

The task force of the 349th Infantry with Company A, Company D, the Assault platoon

and a detachment of TDs moved out from Feltre on the morning of May 2, with the infantry mounted on the tanks. The unit proceeded down highway 50 to Arten, and then turned north to Fonzasso where the bridge had been blown blocking the advance. Three kraut



Up into the Brenner Pass—the Tanks roll through Bressanone while the Bambini take in the show

MGs set up across the river, opened fire on our forces. The tanks promptly knocked out the three machine guns, and 18 of the surviving krauts came in as prisoners.

A secondary road was found which wound up over the hill in a series of switchbacks, and the force moved out over this road to by-pass the blown bridge. The trail was so narrow that in many cases the grousers on the sides of the tank turrets were scraped off on the overhanging rocks, while the boys observed that if a tank ever went over the edge, the crew would need a week's rations before they hit bottom. The krauts had some beautiful positions built along the road, and across the valley from which the road could be covered, but none of the positions was manned or equipped.

wild shooting to celebrate the end of the war, and our column came to a quick halt in anticipation of a sniper raid. The march was resumed as soon as the reason for the shooting had been determined, and the company completed its movement without further incident. During the day Baker company had moved from Marostica to Arsie with the 351st, but encountered no enemy during the advance.

All advances were ordered halted by Division that evening, and A and D companies were held in Flera Di Premiero, Charley company was in Castelnuovo, Baker company in the vicinity of Arsie, and Service company at Primolano. Headquarters and Headquarters company were in the vicinity of Fonzasso.

It had been rainy and chilly for the past couple of days, and late that evening the rain turned to snow. The fact that we were well on our way up into the Alps was very evident the next morning when we woke up to find nearly eight inches of snow on the ground. The sun was shining brightly, however, and it was not particularly cold. The main topic was the end of the war, naturally, and guesses were a dime a dozen as to what we would do now.

Things remained pretty much static during the day of May 3. Headquarters and A company moved up to San Martino, B company was moved to Premiero where D company remained, and C company was moved up forward of Levico. All units were completely resupplied and the day was spent primarily in performing vehicle maintenance while awaiting further orders from Division.

The fighting was over. The last campaign from the Appenines to the Alps had lasted less than three weeks, but the work done had really shown results. Tally sheets for 752nd during the final campaign showed 12,963 prisoners taken and an estimated 2,536 krauts killed by the tanks and infantry teams combined. In addition to these figures, the tankers accounted for 2,269 wheeled vehicles, 12 armored cars, five Self-propelled guns, one tank, 27 20mm cannon and 71 machine guns. No record was made of the number of horses and horse-drawn vehicles knocked out by the tanks during the rapid advance, but the number ran into the hundreds.

Hostilities were officially over, but the situation was still touchy when the Battalion moved out early on the morning of the 4th to push north toward Austria and take over control of the Italian territory from the newly surrendered German troops. There was no way of knowing whether all the krauts had received the surrender order, and we moved out under orders to "fire only if fired upon". Spotting the other guy the first shot wasn't exactly the way to get along in the racket we had been in, so we advanced with a funny feeling in the back of our necks and everybody keyed to a high pitch.

A company moved out first that morning, starting from San Martino where they had spent the night in the little resort town which

The column, less the assault guns, proceeded over the mountain through Servo, regaining highway 50 at Carno, and resuming the advance north on the main road. Arriving at Mezzano, machine gun and sniper fire was encountered and a sharp fight went on for about 20 minutes during which six machine guns were destroyed, two enemy trucks abandoned, and many krauts killed or wounded. Seventy-five Germans surrendered to our troops when the fight was over.

Charley company, working with the 351st, moved west toward Bargo, engaging in several fire fights and inflicting a number of enemy casualties. When the task force reached Bargo, German soldiers told us that an Armistice had been signed in Italy and that they wanted to give up. We had no official confirmation of this, but set up road blocks and sat tight until the information could be confirmed.

Official word of the end of the war in



Tutte Finito. The war in Italy is over, and the Krauts to be shipped back to the PW cages line up in Bolzano.

Italy came to the front line troops about 1900 hours that evening. The Assault platoon was about the first to hear the news. The platoon was working its way over the narrow by-pass road over which A and D companies had passed when a peep containing an American Staff officer and a German Field officer came up the trail behind them and asked the tankers to try to find a spot wide enough where the tanks could be pulled over sufficiently to permit the peep to pass and get forward to contact those units in the lead, as the war in Italy was over and it was necessary to stop the shooting immediately.

The feeling was almost a shock! As the word was passed on up the line morale, which had been excellent all along, went sky high. There was no wild cheering, but the look on everyone's face was like a man who has just been shaken out of a bad dream. It hardly seemed possible—but it was true!

Service company heard the news while traveling up to the vicinity of Primolana from Bassano. The boys got a brief scare during the trip when the Italian partisans started some



The boys did some small celebrating in and around Bolzano

was a convalescent rest center for kraut officers. The company, supporting the 349th Infantry, raced up to highway 11 and swung north through Bressanone toward Brenner pass. By 2000 hours that night the task force reached Ceppaia, having traveled a distance of 160 miles through territory that was lousy with krauts and equipment, and over roads which were icy and covered with the snow which had been falling fairly steadily since the second of the month.

Battalion Headquarters and Baker company moved up from the vicinity of Premiero to Bressanone, where the units made immediate arrangements to take over police of the district and begin collection of krauts and equipment for movement to the southern sector of Italy. Charley company remained in Castelnouve, with one platoon operating in the vicinity of Levico, continuing in their patrol and police duties.

Following A company over Rolle Pass, Dog company with the Assault platoon and a platoon of TDs attached, moved through Bressanone and swung east to Brunico which they reached at midnight. The combat team included the 2nd Battalion of 349th which followed the tanks in trucks.

The whole day was one of queer feelings and occurrences. It really felt odd to move through a town and see the krauts standing fully armed on the streets looking at you as you went by. Some of them would smile, others just looked, and others scowled as you went by. Sometimes a sentry on duty would stick out his arm in the Nazi salute which made more than one GI cuss fluently. Meeting a kraut staff car full of brass on the road was an open invitation to blast 'em out of the country—but hell, the war is over Joe, get those ideas out of your head.

That night was the pay off. It happened all over the place. GIs found themselves billeted in towns that were swarming with krauts. In some places there were krauts sleeping in one part of a building while our own troops used the other part. Kraut sentries and GI guards walked the same posts—and kept a wary eye on each other. Tedeschi MPs tried to convince our boys that they had to get off

the streets at curfew time. Everybody felt foolish. It was a cockeyed situation and there just wasn't any way to get used to it.

Things gradually straightened out though, and the work of getting the thousands of PWs organized and sent south. We set up road blocks to check vehicles, established collecting points for kraut equipment and PWs, and generally got set up to acting as MPs for the new area. Dog company moved over to San Lorenzo on May 5, and one section of the Assault platoon plus one TD, were sent to Rio De Piesteria to give the Infantry a little armor to back them up in case of trouble. The krauts had renamed all the little towns around there. The spot which the map called Rio Di Piesteria, was listed as Mulbach on the highway markers. Bolzano was Bozen. Bressanone was Brixen. Brunico was Bruneck. It was all very confusin' to try to locate some town which didn't seem to exist anywhere except on a map. But we got around.

The "Iron Major", 752nd's commanding officer, Major Woodbury, was made provost marshall for the district, and the rest of us worked with the doughfeet on patrols or guard details to keep things straightened out.

By the 20th of May, things were getting pretty well straightened out and the Battalion CP had been moved back to Bolzano along with Dog company and the SS troops which had been headquartered in that spot had been shipped out. The krauts were formed into transport companies and used their own vehicles to move the thousands of Germans who had given up in the Italian surrender back to PW cages near Trento from which point they were shunted on to the rear.

The rest of the war in Europe had folded by this time, and we were on our way back to a garrison status with such things as training schedules and saluting being brought to our attention again. We were still plenty busy, with details guarding ammo dumps, escorting prisoners, and any or all of the hundred and one other jobs that came up from time to time. The companies continued to occupy scattered towns, with Headquarters company, Service



Occupation duty—the outfit's new home on the plains of Venezia-Giulia near Udine in Northeastern Italy. Closest town was Premariacco or do you remember?

Company, and Dog company with the Battalion CP in Bolzano; A company at Bressanone, B company at Corano, and C company at Pergine.

As the krauts were cleaned out of the northern Italy area, Italian troops were moved into the area. We knew there was a move coming up for us but no one knew where. Rumors had it that we were going up in to Austria, that we were to be sent home as reserve troops for the Pacific campaign, that we were going direct to the Pacific. There were as many ideas as to where and when we were going as there were men in the Battalion. Darned few of them were right.

The Battalion was detached from the 88th Division on the 30th of May and ordered to Udine. Nobody knew where it was, but we were sure as heck going there. Some fancy checking of maps finally located the place clear over in the northeastern part of Italy where the Guineas and Jugs had been arguing for the past several weeks over who got what.

That was the wrong way for us to be headed for home, so among some plain and fancy bitching, the outfit loaded on transporters and headed for Udine. Battalion headquarters moved first, followed by A company, Headquarters company and Service company. First tanks were in the new area on the 31st of May, and on June 1 Baker company started the trip on the 2nd of June, to be followed by Dog company on the 4th.

All of the tanks were in the new area by the 9th of June, and the place started to take shape in a large open field near the little town



Venezia! City of canals, gondolas, and smells

of Premariacco northeast of Udine. The Battalion, less A company, was attached to the 91st Infantry Division, while A company had been attached to the 10th Mountain Division.

Things were not much different. We were in a section of Italy not many of us had seen before. There were chances to go down and see Venice (Venezia) now and then, but it was the same old Italy even with canals instead of streets, and the routine was pretty much the same. From time to time the com-

panies would be sent out to garrison one or two of the little towns where the Partisans were having trouble getting along with each other, but no large scale trouble was found. We got acquainted in such places as Gorizia, Cividale, Udine and smaller spots.

The old gang was staring to break up now. It started right after the war in Italy had



Trieste Harbor, where the Jugoslavs and Italians glare at each other while 752nd keeps its fingers crossed.

stopped. The first five of our old bunch had been sent home (wonderful word HOME) on the 6th of May. The lucky fellows were 1st Lt. James R. Blount of C company, 1st Lt. Wolcott W. Merrow and S/Sgt. Walter A. Averill of Headquarters company, 1st Sgt. Claude A. Bruner of B company and S/Sgt. George W. Fast of Dog company. From then on the process went ahead. The point system came into being and after the first flurry of figuring points and computing chances, it settled down to the routine of sweating out who was going and when.

The process continued all summer. The climax was reached on the 22nd of September, when Lt. Col. C. M. Woodbury left the outfit to go back to the States to Command and General Staff school. By that time almost half the old outfit had been replaced by men transferred in from other outfits, mainly the 88th and 85th Infantry divisions. Major Singley took over command of the outfit, which had a short time before been moved from Premiarraco to Soleschiano.

Just before the Colonel left, on Sept. 19, 1945 the outfit received its highly prized citation from the War Department for the fighting done during the Po Valley campaign. The award was made by Major General Bolte of the 34th Division to which the Battalion had been attached. Not many of the bunch who had fought through the campaign were there for the presentation, but new and old, the fellows stood out well in the brief formation held for the award. It was a great day—the time when the War Department admitted what we had known all along. The 752nd was the best Damn Tank Battalion on tracks.

Epilogue

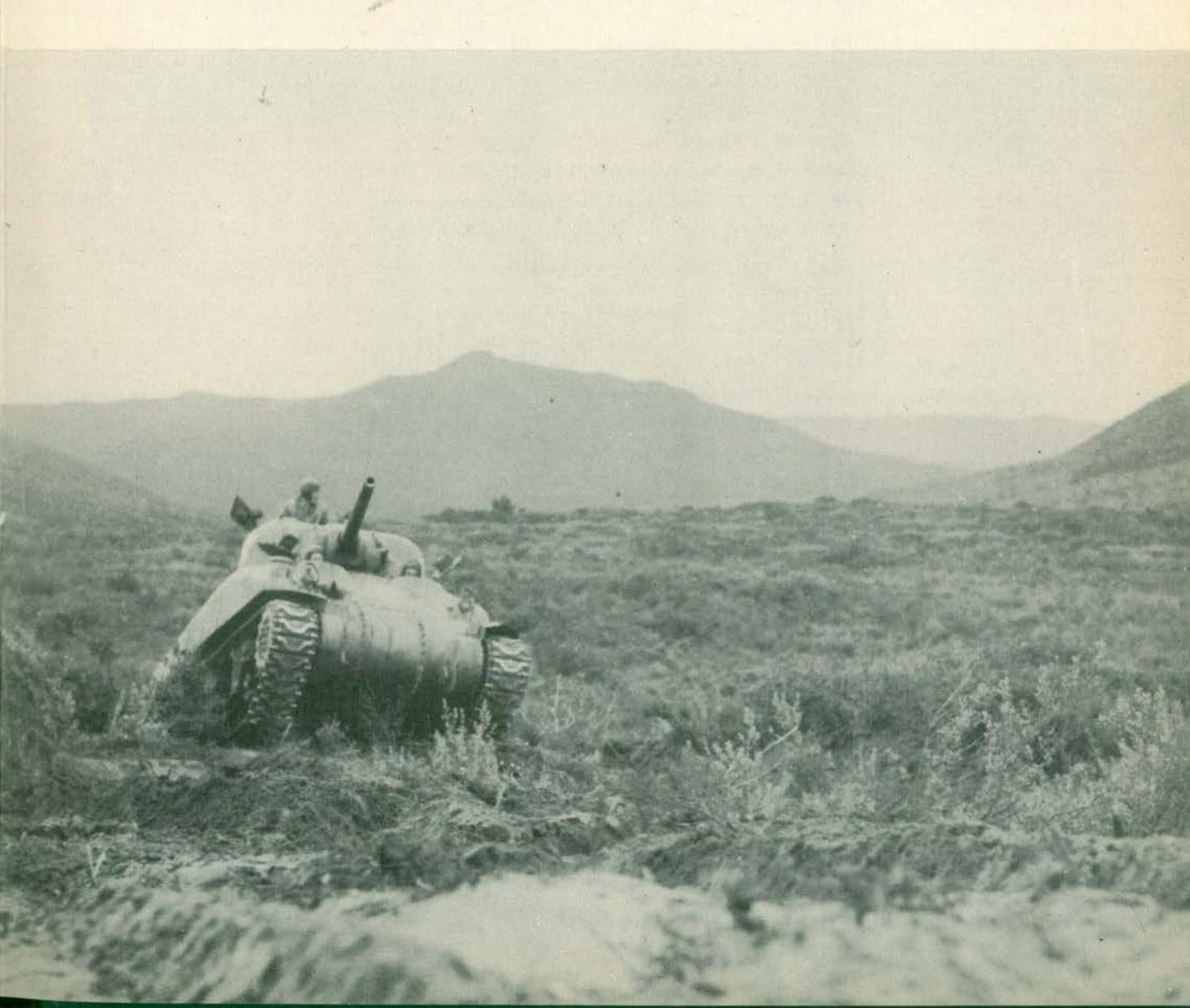
We're still here. Old 752nd is still hitting the ball in the MTO. If one of the old timers were to walk around the Battalion area here in Cormons, Italy, today, he wouldn't recognize many faces—but the old spirit is still strong.

Officers and men, the personnel has changed. In a few weeks the boys who made the outfit from scratch will be home—or on their way, leaving behind a tradition which the replacements who have come, and who will come later, are upholding beautifully. The outfit still sparks. They are still a hard fighting, hard working, hard drinking crowd. The best you'll find. And the best is none too good for us.

Drink us a toast in the finest stuff you can get your hands on boys. One of these days we'll run into each other again, and swap the stories and lies that didn't get into this history.

Until that time then, we raise our glasses in a silent toast with those of our buddies who are lined up at the Great White Bar and say,

"So long for now TANKER, you did a damned fine job!"

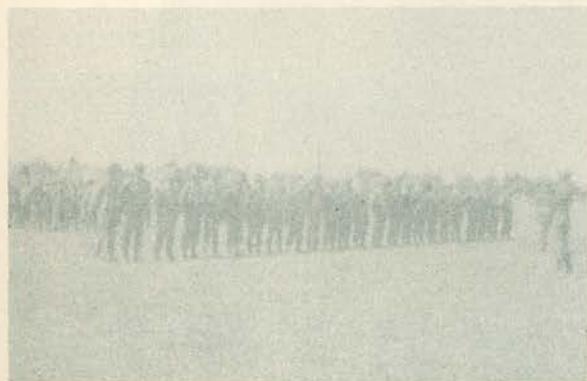


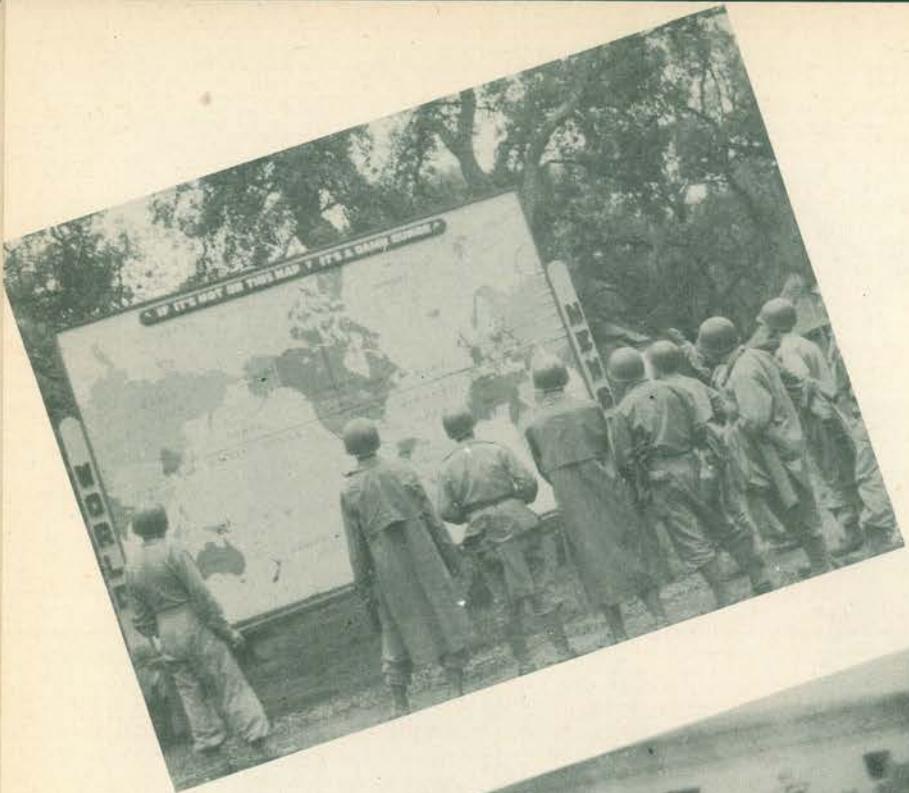
Drinking Songs of 752

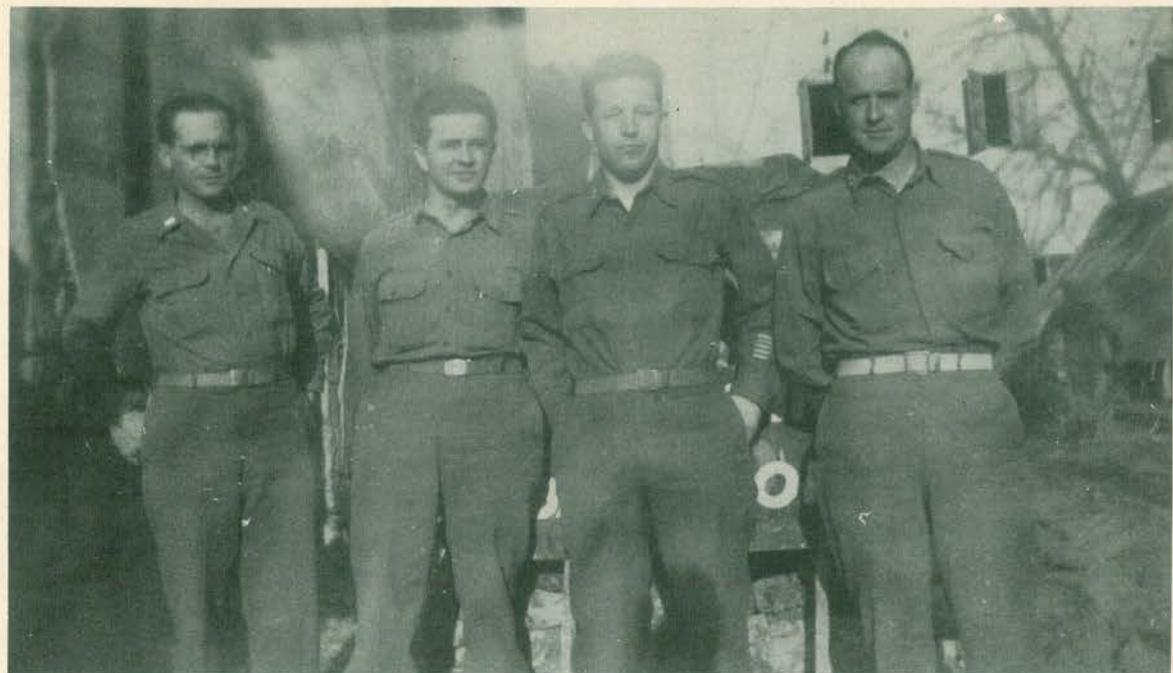
The Ball of Carrie Moore
Please Do To Me What You Did To Marie
The Air Corps Song
Monday I Kissed Her On The Ankle
Down Argentine Way (W/Betty Grable)
Three Old Maids Locked in the Lavatory
When You Joined The Armored Force
When They Tried To Make A Tanker Out Of Me
I've Got Six Pence
In The Hills of West Virginia
Caviar Comes From Virgin Sturgeons
Midnite Ride of Paul Revere
A Man Without A Woman
I Had To Call You Up (To say I'm rugged but right)
O'Reilly's Daughter
Red Wing
Comma Ti Yi Yippie Yippie Yay
'Twas Just An Old Beer Bottle
We Are The P.B.S.
The Same Old Shellalay Stick
McNamara's Band

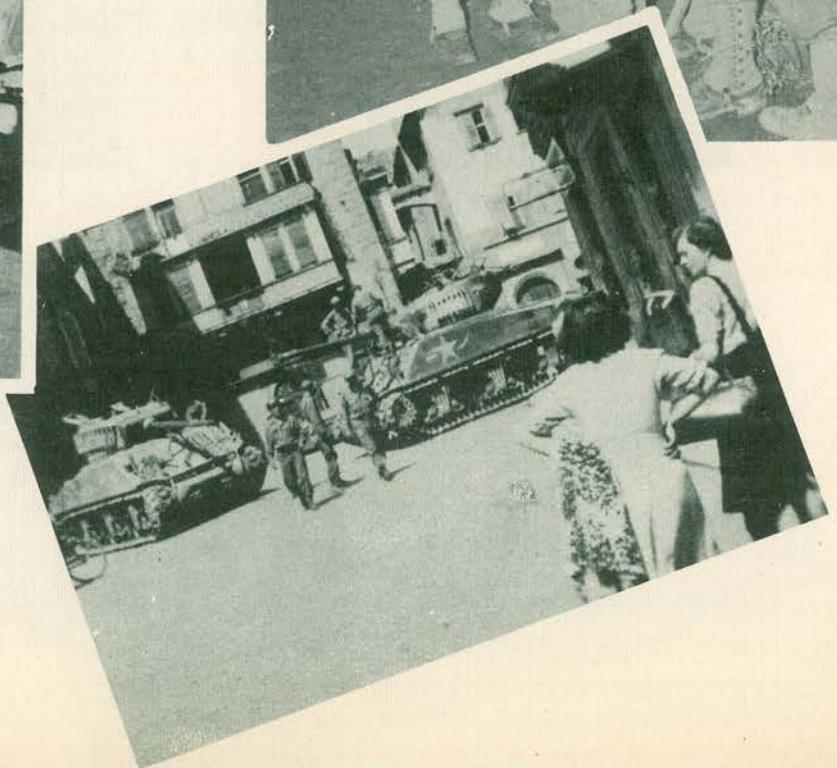
"That was a dirty old song; Sing us another one,
just like the other one, Sing us another one — do."

Random Shots









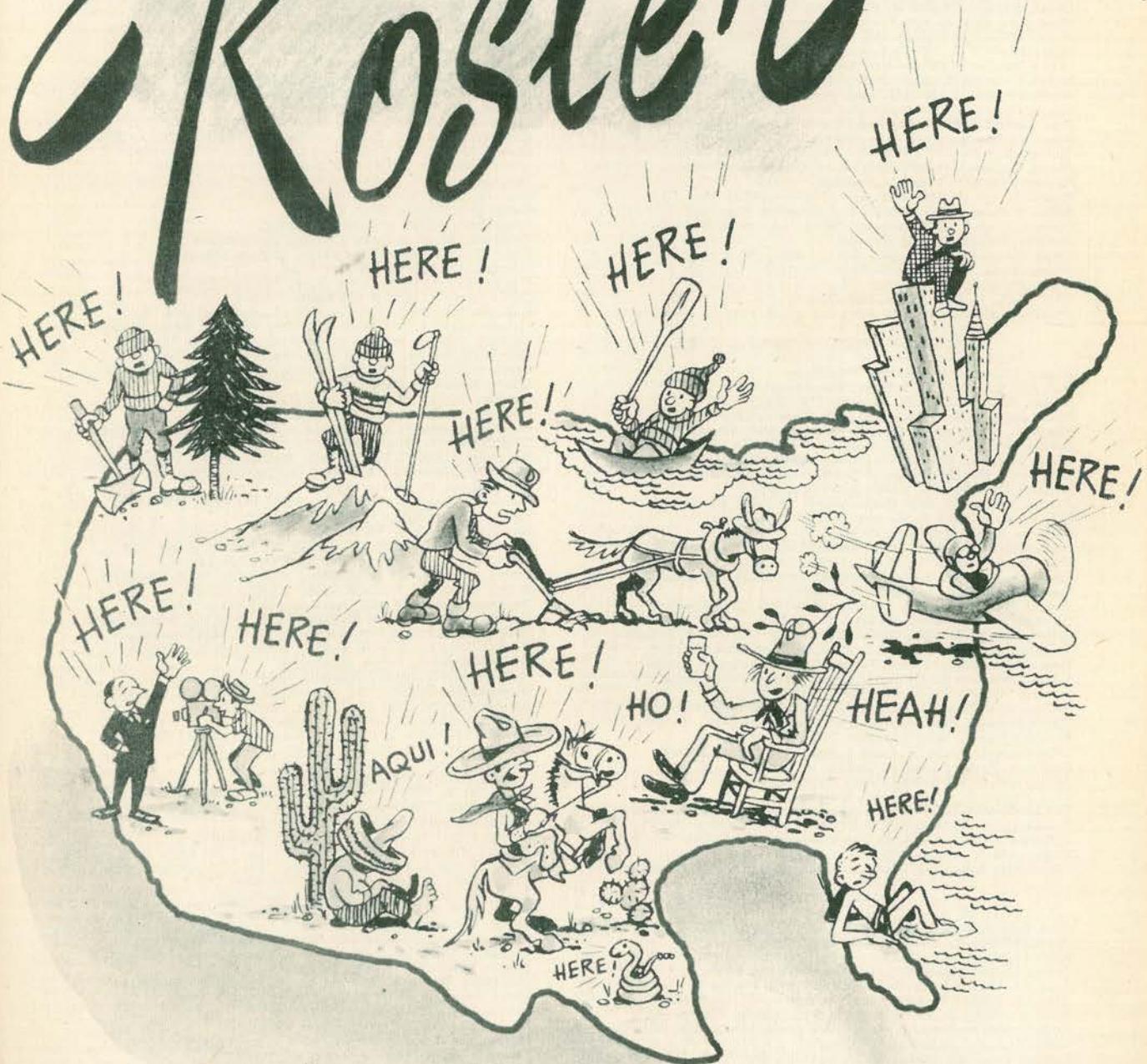




Officer's Nick Names

Sir Cedric Cesspool	— Messer
Matchless	— Blanford
The Iron Major	— Woodbury
Shorty	— Miller
Stocky	— Stockdale
Hoky	— Hokenson
Wookie Bear	— Merrow
Speak To Me One Time	— Novack
The Brain	— Keyser
Mother	— Wirt
One Meat Ball	— Singley
Red	— Troxler
Shorty	— Bierley
Cap'n Beel	— Darby
The Real	— Mc Coy
Robby	— Robinson
Vip	— Vipperman
Lum	— Bieler
Rat Top	— Lomas
Hank	— Eitel
B.T.O.	— Bruss
The All-American Boy	— Speece
Santy Claus	— Medwick
Tommy (Little & Big)	— Thompson
Smitty	— Smith
Fat Stuff	— Higley
Mule	— Townley
Yohan	— Yanalavage
Handsome Anson, The Speed Ball Artist	— Bombard
The Skunk Woiks	— C. P.
Ball Buster	— Abney
Roe EE	— Frietag
Parson	— Heaton
Clint	— Clinton
Grandmother	— Wright

Roster -



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 Smellie, Robert K., Tetonia, Idaho
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 Smith, Eldon, Route 1, Mt. Hope, Alabama
 Smith, Eugene E., Dinuba, California
 Stevenson, William A., Saunemin, Illinois
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 Whitson, Claude, Route 2, Hollis, Oklahoma
 Wickham, Hersey E., Route 1, Shawville, Virginia
 Willacker, Harold J., Route 1, Whitehall, Michigan
 Williams, Charles W., 1200 Bryan Street, Old Hickory, Tennessee
 Wodarczyk, Stephen, 4520 Almond Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 Wolfe, Robert W., Ravensford, North Carolina
 Wright, Woodrow W., Bent Avenue, Whitewater, Colorado
 Wrightsman, Bill, 211 W. San Fernando Street, San Jose, California
 Young, Charles C., 35 Perry Street, Cape May, New Jersey
 Von Boeckman, Leo C., Station G, Route 4, Box 335, Memphis, Tennessee
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 Smoldt, Richard L., Atwater, Minnesota
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 Eidsness, Noria A., Farmington, Minnesota
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 Bocock, Frank V., 3417 Valley Street, Catlettsburg, Kentucky
 Boyle, Thomas F., 491 Craig Avenue, Tottenhill, S. I., New York
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 Burd, Donald F., (No Address Available)
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 Casey, Alvin N., Meehan, Mississippi
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 Dowdell, Sheldon, 141 State Street, Hammond, Indiana
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 Johnson, Harold H., Beverly, Ohio
 Kirkpatrick, Cecil B., Fort Sumner, New Mexico
 Knasel, Nicholas J., 142 Clay Street, Erlanger, Kentucky
 Kolonky, John J., 337 Clinton Avenue, Albany, New York
 Layne, Roy R., Route 1, Rayland, Ohio
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 Lord, John C., 229 Kenilworth Place, Memphis, Tennessee
 Lucera, Joe, 1187 Cerro Grede Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico
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 Mello, Edward F., 20 Collins Street, Peabody, Massachusetts
 Mitchell, August A., 142 Hendricks Avenue, Staten Island, New York
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 Debar, Clyde W., Route 1, Manson, Washington
 Deeter, Joseph B., Eaton, Indiana
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 Echler, Max J., Box 295, Montpelier, Idaho
 Fossum, Milton H., Maddox, North Dakota
 Getz, Charles L., Route 1, Salem, Ohio
 Gillian, Robert R., Sandstone, West Virginia
 Glasscock, Charles E., 711 8th Street, W., Cullman, Alabama
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 Hopstetter, Robert R., Route 1, Nelsonville, Ohio

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 Brand, Joseph G., 1645 N. Maine Street, Brooklyn, New York
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 Harris, Herman H., Jr., Glenn Street, Mary, Florida
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 Hornback, William H., Highland Center, Iowa
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 Walker, Lloyd E., Box 1072, Beckley, West Virginia
 Weaver, Kenneth S., 7 2nd Street, Fieldsboro, New Jersey
 Wendt, Hugo H., Route 2, Greenleaf, Wisconsin
 White, Harold E., 214 N. Osage Street, Caldwell, Kansas
 Whitten, John A., Route 1, Grand Cane, Louisiana
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 Bedard, Joseph E., 608 S. Main Street, Waterbury, Connecticut
 Bell, James M., New Plymouth, Idaho
 Bishop, Leland S., Putnam Station, New York
 Blackwell, Archie B., Route 2, Holly Springs, Mississippi
 Bodner, Edwin T., 3906 S. Third Street, Louisville, Kentucky
 Boscheri, Ervin F., Burlington, North Dakota
 Boucher, Clifton, 406 Keigan Street, Dawson Springs, Kentucky
 Bradley, Lester W., Sunburst, Montana
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 Cantrell, Jack C., Parsley, West Virginia
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