



THE STORY
OF
46 DIVISION
1939 - 1945

As follows is a transcription of the story of the 46th Division 1939-45 (Part 3 of 3)

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The transcription was carried out in remembrance of those who gave their lives in the service of the 46 Division and in particular the 46th Reconnaissance Regiment.

Mr S M Ager.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

purpose from place to place. But along the line of the road there were dug positions and strong points in houses which barred direct entry into the town, and bloody fighting went on as the sun came up, before Major Heald led a headlong assault which carried his company into the houses on the outskirts of the village. Tanks which arrived at dawn were forced back behind the ridge, and gave supporting fire from there. Within an hour the town had been cleared of small groups who continued to put up a fight. These stubborn opponents proved to be 100 Mountain Regt. which had been brought over from Gemmano.

A company of 2 Hampshires moved north towards Trarivi, but were held up five hundred yards from the village, and later in the morning were relieved there by the 1/4 Hampshires. 2 Hampshires then concentrated south of Montescudo and in the shelter of farm-houses on the nearer southern slopes of Hill 475, with the intention of joining in the assault on that bare, commanding feature. Patrols from both battalions inflicted some casualties on the enemy before being forced to withdraw by heavy shelling. Shortly after nine o'clock in the evening a heavy artillery barrage preluded 5 Hampshires attack. 1/4 Hampshires had been relieved in front of Trarivi by a squadron of 46 Recce Regt in order that they should be available to exploit the anticipated success. But the enemy brought down a great weight of shelling on 5 Hampshires as they formed up, and the attack was still-born. A company of 2 Hampshires which had penetrated far round to the right was withdrawn in the nick of time, and 1/4 Hampshires, much to their disgust, were brought back from Hill 475, on which they had succeeded in gaining a foothold, to deal with an unexpected development at Trarivi.

It was always apparent that an enemy counter-attack from Trarivi might threaten the right flank of our advance, and that night

a patrol from the Recce Regt, lying up for three hours, had captured the ration party of the garrison. The prisoners had revealed that the village was strongly held, which was in any case fairly obvious from the amount of rations that were captured (and eaten). It was on this account that 1/4 Hampshires had been switched back in the early morning of 16 September. By the afternoon the leading platoons had reached a farm fifty yards from the village, but enfilade machine-gun fire forced them to pull back, and plans were made for a full-scale attack. At five o'clock under a heavy barrage, and supported by tanks and machine gun fire, the attack went in with the infantry moving up through the dust and smoke close behind the bursting shells. The village was then cleared house by house, and in the church twenty-four prisoners were taken, but nowhere else did the enemy give in. For it was another battalion of 100 Mountain Regt.

Meanwhile in Montescudo itself fierce shelling made movement almost impossible. That night our own artillery put down heavy concentrations at irregular intervals on Hill 475 in the hope of catching the enemy in the open preparing to receive an attack. Our machine gunners also harassed the position, and at dawn on the 17 September 2 Hampshires took the hill, where many enemy dead were found, and advanced to the road junction beyond.

Thus ended the enemy's resistance south of the river Marano. These three days had seen very bitter fighting. Enemy shelling and mortar fire was intense, and he clung to his positions right to the end, using his bazookas at point-blank range. Few prisoners were taken, for neither side were in the mood for that.

Down in the valley bed, and somewhat overshadowed by the bigger battles taking place on the ridge above, the Foresters had, on the morning of 15 September, captured Taverna. It was only after a night's complicated and unexpectedly hard fighting among the

outlying foothills and within a quarter of a mile of the Leicesters headquarters that this success was achieved. Great care had to be exercised not to overshoot the battle above. Morning brought the enemy's complete collapse, and most of 3 Company 85 Recce Battalion were taken prisoner.

From the beginning, the enemy attached the greatest importance to these heights from Croce to Montescudo. 98 Division, which had been holding this front, was to have been relieved by 356 Division, but before the relief

took place they cracked in face of our attacks, and an attempt was then made to stop the gap with three Recce Battalions. This was defeated by the Leicesters at Monte Colombo, and at an urgent last minute conference it was decided to bring 100 Mountain Regt from Gemmano, where they were already almost cut off, to hold Montescudo and Hill 475. 5 Hampshires attack had caught them in the confusion of their arrival, and they had suffered heavily before they succeeded in temporarily stabilising their positions on Hill 475 and at Trarivi.

7. THE ADVANCE TO THE MARECCHIA

Ahead the triple crags and ancient fortifications of the little republic of San Marino loomed like a threat, and we wondered who was going to have to scale that precipitous fortress. It did not occur to many that an enemy who had invaded most of the countries of Europe would respect the neutrality of so insignificant a state, nor did it appear likely that a command, which had fought so stubbornly for the low ridge of Coriano, would abandon the magnificent observation from San Marino rock without a bitter struggle. The Intelligence spoke of a "Yellow Line" running from San Marino to Rimini on the coast. But war is unpredictable, and four days later patrols from 46 Recce Regt were lifting mines on the approaches to the river-Marecchia with San Marino towering safely in the rear.

The Lincolns had passed through 1/4 Hampshires at Vallecchio on the morning of 17 September. The river Marano had been crossed without trouble, and with supporting tanks they began to move up the razor-backed ridge towards Montelupo, where the road turned westwards along the same narrow ridge and

led to the town of Domagnano on the eastern approaches to San Marino city. It was just after the boundary of the republic had been crossed that the spandaus opened up. Three houses on the right of the track were cleared in successive platoon attacks and stubborn close-quarter fighting. Enemy mortars and machine guns in the low ground continually plastered the track. Ahead, at Montelupo, a large yellow farmhouse with a round bare knoll behind it was the next to be tackled, and it was captured after the carrier platoon had made a wide outflanking movement. Two tanks moving up the track were knocked out by close range bazooka fire. Four hundred yards away on the left a white rambling building was still holding out, and when the attack went in only Lieut. Stockdale and Cpl. Lewis reached the buildings through a welter of fire. Lieut. Stockdale was killed, and Cpl. Lewis, severely wounded, was taken prisoner. Later when some of the enemy withdrew he managed to crawl back with this information, and just before dark a troop of 46 Recce Regt, making a long and difficult detour, captured the place.

These stiff actions were fought against some of 100 Mountain Regt, who on this occasion yielded forty prisoners.

At last light the York and Lancasters passed through the Lincolns and took the battered town of Domagnano together with some twenty prisoners. The advance continued against isolated but determined opposition on the road to Serravalle, a town remarkable for its neat cleanliness, which was occupied shortly after dawn. In this two mile night advance altogether some fifty prisoners had been captured from three different German battalions. During the morning a squadron of 46 Recce Regt, moving out on the left, lost a patrol on the outskirts of Borgo Maggiore, which squatted below San Marino rock. In the evening 139 Bde took over the advance, and during the night the Durhams captured a nasty ridge at Torraccia, where in the morning the enemy reacted vigorously with small but determined groups of infantry and two tanks, and fluctuating fighting continued most of the day. On the 21st September Verucchio, with its picturesque cobbled streets and square castle overlooking the Marecchia, was occupied by the Foresters, who were more hampered by

the torrential rain and the muddy slippery tracks than by any fierce opposition; the Leicesters entered the little village of Casalecchio below on the right.

Within the republic of San Marino there were innumerable refugees, and as soon as the battle passed they flooded on to the roads, a motley collection carting, carrying or wheeling their household belongings homewards. They were a sore hindrance to drivers already floundering on the slippery roads, and the Security Police were kept busy sorting out suspected agents and obvious German deserters.

With the Division squaring up to the Marecchia a phase in the campaign ended. The advance continued, but not at the same fierce pace or with the same headlong dash. In the rush through the Gothic Line the greatest strain had been put on the R.A.S.C., who had to move forward their dumps with unsettling regularity. Drivers with long distances to cover on narrow winding roads, which had only carried trundling oxen-drawn carts and an occasional car before, never failed to deliver their vital loads in time.

The Fiumicino and Cesena

1. INTERLUDE

Infantry casualties at Monte Gridolfo, Gemmano and Montescudo had not been light, and battalions had lost upwards of two hundred men apiece since the opening of the offensive. As each brigade came out of the line at this stage it received reinforcements from 18 Lorried Bde, which was being broken

up to meet the need for more men. To 128 Bde came officers and men from 1 Bn The Buffs: it was later decided, to reform this regular battalion, and at Christmas, after serving with us during all our fighting, some of them returned to take part later in desperate battles on Lake Commacchio. The 9 KOYLI went to

138 Bde, and 139 Bde received reinforcements from 14 Foresters. At the same time, battalions were re-organized on a three company basis, a change which had a marked effect on infantry tactics, reducing both the staying power and the capacity of the battalion. A change had also come over the character of the fighting. The weather began to play an ever-increasing part in the timing of operations, which would often have to be postponed until rivers subsided. For heavy rain turned ankle-deep streams into raging torrents in a night, and the Sappers became resigned to seeing their feverish work on ford or bridge melt away in front of their eyes. Nights were growing colder, and as the bare sugar-loaf hills that had figured so largely in the early fighting gave way to a more developed countryside, houses became the scene of many of the minor actions. Both with the enemy and ourselves it was becoming normal to centre positions on a house. Attacks were now carried out mainly at night, and searchlights made their appearance, piercing the night sky at a low angle and lighting up the battlefield. The first flush of enthusiasm, engendered by the magnificent news from France and the hope of an early victory in Italy which our own successes had inspired,

began to wane, as behind every ridge captured a second ridge would appear, as if thrown up by some evil genius of the countryside, and for every river crossed, as if from an endless source, another would materialize. For the advance lay across the grain of the country. Rivers and ridges reached down from the mountains first towards the sea, and later towards the broad waters of the Po, but always across our path.

The threat to his hold on Northern Italy which this autumn offensive had produced acted like a magnet on the German command. Instead of the original two divisions engaged and two held in reserve on the Adriatic coast, the enemy had now crowded nine divisions on this narrow thirty mile front. Possession of the ancient Via Emilia, drawn as if with a ruler across the rich plain south of the Po and from Rimini on the coast leading through the main towns of that district, which were like blots on its straight course, had enabled the enemy to switch his divisions from the central front as easily as his limited transport allowed. Our own communications, with the exception of the main coast route up which the Canadians were advancing, were over secondary hill roads which strained our organization and vehicles to the limit.

2. THE MARECCHIA AND THE RUBICON

On the morning of 22 September a squadron of 46 Recce Regt moved across the wide gravel bed of the Marecchia. The first wave crossed in a deceptive hush; then as more men went over mortars and machine guns opened up from the rising ground and they were pinned down all day in the irrigation channels which alone provided cover. A self-

propelled gun joined in the outbursts which greeted any movement in the open river-bed. That evening the Leicesters passed through as 139 Bde took over the attack, and the Foresters on the left also crossed the river shortly after dark. The going was slow, and the Leicesters were out of contact with two of their companies for most of the night, while

the Foresters were having to feel their way through a heavily mined belt. Though the enemy's defensive fire was heavy, by the morning both battalions were well clear of the river. It was then that enemy tanks rumbled on to the scene. Without anything but PIATS forward, the Foresters were forced to withdraw, leaving the village, the prisoners and the tank which they had captured and destroyed. The Leicesters managed to knock out one tank largely owing to the gallantry of L/Sgt Johnson, before they also were forced to fall back to the line of the road.

Throughout the night there was considerable skirmishing; the Durhams relieved the Leicesters on the right, and tanks came across the wide river-bed at dawn to find that the enemy had pulled back. The tanks led the way into Poggio Berni, and in the late afternoon the Durhams crossed the Uso, one of the many rivers thereabouts called Rubicone and perhaps the scene of Caesar's famous decision, and entered Camerano. Both battalions edged forward, and the Durhams forstalled the enemy in seizing the high ground beyond Camerano, and beat off all attempts to dislodge them. Rain was falling steadily and many vehicles were bogged down; the fords were becoming difficult as the rivers rose, and were being continually harrassed by enemy artillery and mortars.

On the evening of 26th September 46 Recce Regt were put under command of 139 Bde, and the following night took over the front. The Durhams had made a further advance, but all afternoon their forward positions had been subjected to probings and counter-attacks, so that their relief was no easy business. It was completed during the night, but shortly after dawn enemy infantry was observed moving up from the west. This threat was to all appearances successfully countered, but at eleven o'clock the enemy, who had been lying up unknown to our men in some nearby houses, put in a determined attack with tanks and a company of infantry, and overran the two troops of the Recce Regt holding Casa Ricci. With only a very limited number of troops across the Uso, this was a dangerous thrust, but intense artillery fire prevented any further penetration.

The low countryside, sometimes open and sometimes wooded, with its frequent farm-houses, was a contrast to the bare high hills among which the earlier battles had been fought. So were the enemy's tactics, and it was undoubtedly the presence of the 90th Light, that most well-known of the enemy's divisions which had first won fame in the Africa Corps, which led to the many armoured counter-attacks, and which inspired the mediocre 278th Division to an unwontedly active defence.

3. PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIUMICINO CROSSING

On the night of 28 September 128 Bde were brought forward from their rest area round Taverna. 5 Hampshires, misdirected on to 56 Division's route across the Marecchia, were bogged down and fresh transport had

to be produced at the far end of the quagmire. Arriving at Poggio Berni shortly before midnight, they found the Uso swollen from a narrow stream into a torrent fifty yards across, and were forced to remain on the near bank

all night. In the morning they waded over the waist-deep river, where small parties were struggling with supplies for the Recce Regt already across. On 30 September, the river having fallen as quickly as it had risen, the attack went in on Montalbano, a small village on a considerable ridge overlooking the flat ground back as far as the Uso. Montalbano, greyly stretched along the crest of the ridge, looked formidable enough, but it was lightly held. It was captured shortly after mid-day. Here for the first time was encountered the papiermache mine, which rendered our mine detectors useless and when deeply buried was almost impossible to discover. All its fittings were made of glass.

Beyond Montalbano the ground fell away to the Fiumicino river; away to the right in the plain the town of Savignano on Highway 9 was conspicuous amidst the flat farmland, while across the river stood Montilgallo with its prominent cemetery. Further south another spur crowned by the church of San Lorenzo reached out towards the river. Between these two spurs there was a wide valley. It was intended to capture Montilgallo on the night of 30 September, and 2 Hampshires came up on the right to join in this attack, but machine guns and self-propelled guns this side of the Fiumicino prevented the establishment of a bridgehead, so that the morning of 1st October dawned with 5 Hampshires still in Montalbano and 2 Hampshires on the right forward of Villa Ribano.

For six days the advance was held up on the line of the Fiumicino river by torrential rain. On 2nd October the fords over the Marecchia, where there was now two feet of water, had to be closed, and by midday the bridges over the Uso had become unusable. Vehicles were bogged down, and many of the guns were up to their axles in mud. Though conditions improved in the next few days the ground would not support tanks, and a crossing

was still considered impracticable on 6th October, especially on the right where the broadening river and flat rain-sodden ground presented 56 Division with an even more difficult problem. So with seven days in which to perfect their plans 128 Bde got ready for the first set-piece attack it had been necessary to mount so far in this offensive.

Constant patrolling built up an accurate picture of the enemy's dispositions. The German command was side-stepping its divisions northwards, so that on 6th October Montilgallo was the boundary between 278 Division, commanded by the energetic, eccentric General Hoppe, who was reputed to be willing to sacrifice any number of men to win Oak Leaves to his Knight's Cross, and 114 Jaegar Division. To the north the enemy still had some positions on our bank of the Fiumicino, but further south his posts lay well back on the high ground round San Lorenzo.

The original plan had been to assault the steep sides of the Montilgallo spur from the north, but on 4th October during a daylight reconnaissance two officers were captured with marked maps and orders in their possession, and the plan had to be altered. It was now decided to make a direct attack from the east, and at the same time to establish a second bridgehead below San Lorenzo where the blown bridge on the road from Montalbano afforded the Sappers a reasonable site. These two spurs joined just this side of the town of Longiano, and until this point had been reached the righthand prong of the attack would have to rely for its supplies on two indifferent fords.

Meanwhile, there was great activity further back. It was only with the utmost difficulty that the guns were moved and deployed in the soggy fields, and the enemy indulged in counter-battery fire with long range artillery far to the rear. Indeed, even during this period

of waiting, enemy shelling of both forward positions and rear areas was on a very considerable scale. Air O. Ps. despite the muddy landing grounds were constantly up, and engaged anything they could see while they helped register the guns for the attack. Rover David, as the close-supporting Mustangs were called, was busy dealing with the enemy's long range guns: captured German artillerymen did not seem unwilling to disclose the positions of their own batteries. The tanks of the 9 Lancers blasted houses across the river from hull-down positions, for the enemy like ourselves was driven by the bad weather to the shelter of a roof. The Sappers, too, were hard at work. Roads, rivers and bridges need-

ed continual attention; numerous reconnaissances had to be carried out of possible fords and bridging sites, mines had to be lifted and craters filled on the routes forward to the river, and bridging material brought up in readiness for the crossing.

The date of the attack was constantly being put back. The infantry waited with their plans complete while one postponement followed another. There was intermittent, heavy shell-fire, and the enemy used numerous phosphorous shells. Their bright, dangerous sparks lit up the dusk, and many haystacks blazed on through the night.

It was the night of the 7th October when the attack went in.

4. THE CROSSING OF THE FIUMICINO

Under a deafening storm of artillery, mortar and machine gun fire, the leading companies began to move down to the river. 2 Hampshires had the impressive task of capturing Montilgallo spur. On the right one of their companies was in difficulties in the thick of enemy defensive fire. But the reserve company was pushed through on the left, where the river had been successfully crossed, and in a determined assault up the steep muddy slopes captured Montilgallo. At midnight heavy rain began to fall just as 1/4 Hampshires moved forward to pass through along the spur towards Longiano. The enemy was using heavy guns against the supposed crossing places. It seemed he had been deceived by the documents he had captured and the Chinese attack delivered at the northern fords into thinking that we were sticking to the original plan.

On the left the leading company of 5 Hampshires was held up just over the river, but a

second company swung right and overran an enemy strongpoint below San Lorenzo, where an hour later they beat off an awkward counter-attack.

At dawn work was begun on the bridge. Continual rain was falling from a leaden sky. 1/4 Hampshires were making progress along the spur. Shortly before midday an enemy wireless message was intercepted which disclosed an impending counter-attack. The whole of the northern flank was exposed, for 56 Division on our right had not crossed the Fiumicino, and consequently 1/4 Hampshires were warned to draw in their horns. By this time the two fords had become impassable, and a fruitless struggle was taking place to get anti-tank guns forward. Four carriers and fifteen men failed to haul them up the muddy path, a bulldozer had its track blown off, and one of the carriers was left blazing from a direct hit. At four o'clock the expected attack was

heralded by the heaviest shelling to date, but our own guns put down such a weight of defensive fire that only a few men reached our forward positions and they were quickly driven off. With artillery officers attached to each of the neighbouring Divisional headquarters it was possible to bring nine or more regiments to bear on an urgent target.

The bridge was completed by dusk, but it did little to ease supply because it was impossible to reach the battalions from there. Some mules attempted to get over the fords, but four were drowned. Rations and ammunition had to be portered, and men from the rear echelons were organized for this weary, hazardous job. Tracks and fields were a slippery sea of mud, and shelling was ceaseless. At the end of the day Lt/Col. Rotherham's headquarters was reduced to himself and his battery commander, while Lt/Col. Boyce, commanding the 1/4 Hampshires, was severely wounded.

The 9th October was a bright, sunny day. Some progress was made, but mainly there were preparations for relief. That night 138 Bde came in on the left at San Lorenzo, and 139 Bde took over on the Montilgallo spur.

The battle had been a hard one, remarkable more for the intensity of the enemy's shelling

and the appalling weather than for any stubborn close-quarter fighting. It was torrential rain that had caused the seven days delay on the Fiumicino, and torrential rain prevented the immediate exploitation of a hardwon bridgehead. Chance also played its part. It was the capture of the two officers which deceived the enemy and forced a change in our plan. If the original intention had been stuck to, the northern crossings would have been terribly exposed when 56 Division failed to cross on our right. Again the enemy's counter-attack might have caught 1/4 Hampshires strung out along the spur, had it not been for the timely warning of the intercepted wireless message.

This attack set the pattern for many subsequent battles. The hold-up on a river line, until the water subsided and supply routes had been established; the attack as soon as it was dark in order to complete the bridgehead and get a bridge built, if possible, before dawn came; the sudden rain and the impassable river; the porters struggling to bring up rations and evacuate casualties — all these things were repeated again and again. The later crossing of the Lamone was a reproduction on a larger scale and in more wintry weather, of this Montilgallo battle.

5. CARPINETA

The 10th October was another sunny day. The enemy took to his heels when 6 York and Lancasters entered Longiano in the evening, but the Durhams moving north from Montilgallo came up against a considerable force in Balignano, a village set on the extremity of a narrow ridge stretching from Longiano towards the Via Emilia. General Hawkesworth

was advancing with two brigades up, and he now decided, after seizing the Balignano feature, to continue his thrust over the higher ground on the left where 10 Indian Division were making good progress, and to entrust the right to 46 Recce Regt.

After a night of awkward probing, the Durhams found in the morning that the enemy

had left only light rearguards in Balignano, which was soon occupied, and so the main impetus passed to 138 Bde on the left. The Lincolns crossed the Rigossa during the night, and having surprised and captured an enemy platoon on the hill overlooking Montiano from the south, entered the village before midday.

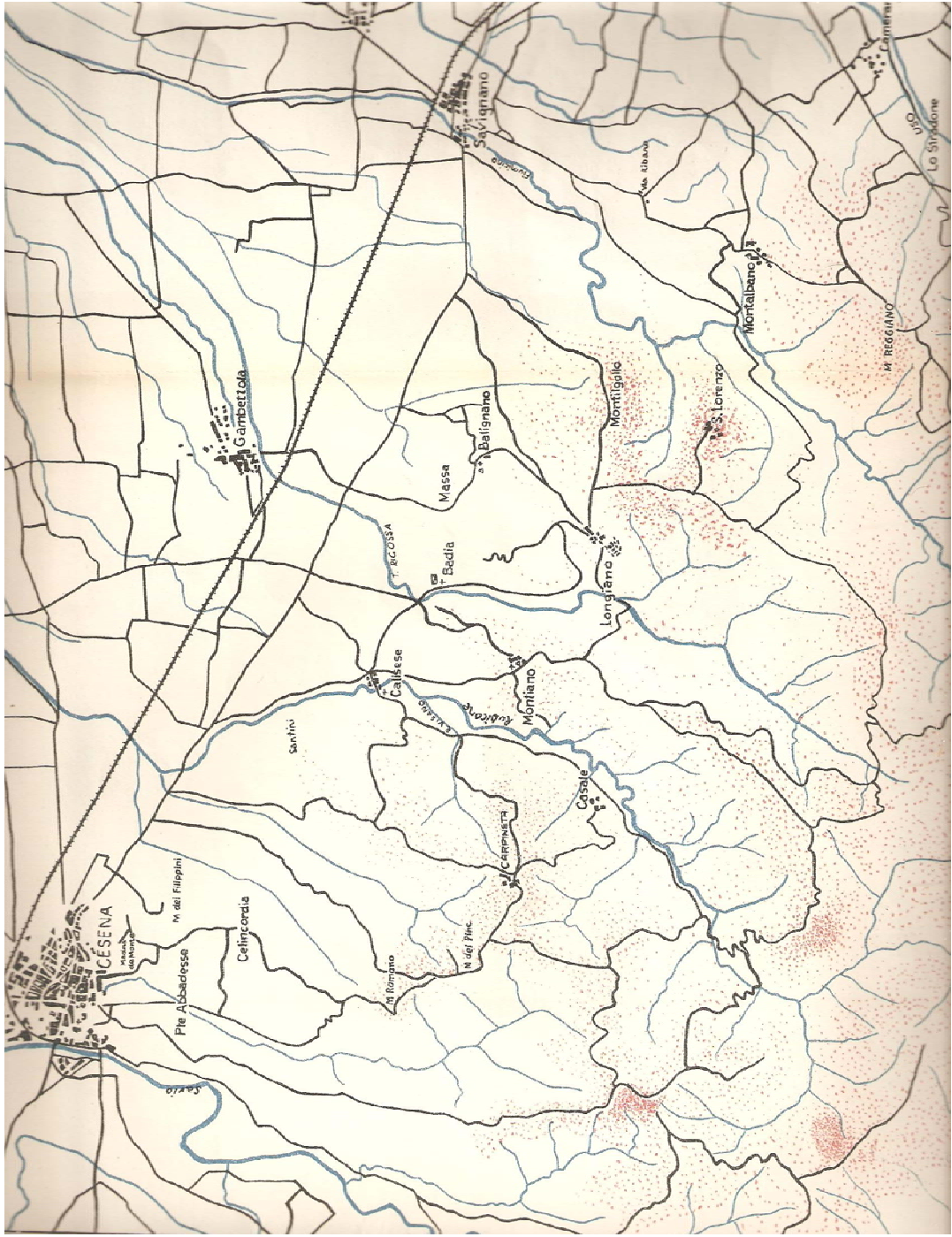
So far 114 Division had not put up a real defence, but had contented themselves with delaying tactics. Ahead another river, the Rubicone, also known as the Visano, presumably to distinguish it from the numerous other Rubicones, and another ridge, this time broad-based and stretching from east to west, barred the way to Cesena. The village of Carpineta, where the roads converged and where the ridge narrowed to a thin neck, was the next obvious defensive position.

Against Carpineta Brigadier Erskine planned converging attack with the York and Lancasters on the right and on the left the KOYLI. It was to be a night attack, as nearly all attacks tended to be, firstly because of the difficult going, but also because tanks were not yet across the last river, the Rigossa. Neither battalion reached Carpineta on the first night of the attack. The York and Lancasters, balancing precariously on a wobbling plank, or else wading the river, got a footing on the thickly wooded ridge and occupied some of the numerous farms. But almost immediately counter attacks began. There was close fighting, and accurate gunnery, before the enemy was driven off. In the morning the enemy, using the ample cover of the thickly wooded slopes, suddenly attacked one of the companies from all sides. A screaming Oberleutenant rushed madly into a house, only to be killed on the stairs. The Gunners wireless set was knocked out, and fire was called for on the 38 set. Later intense, close artillery fire prevented the enemy re-organizing for a further assault. The other company was also attacked

later in the morning, but despite a bazooka and a shower of pencil grenades the enemy wavered and broke in face of small arms fire and shelling. Many enemy dead were buried round these two farms.

The KOYLI also found the going hard and were held up half way to Carpineta. But next night the attack was resumed after a heavy and prolonged bombardment. The York and Lancasters captured the factory above Carpineta in a swift and successful attack, but the KOYLI, who had been ordered to take the village itself, were counter-attacked in the middle of their early advance and made slower progress. But they pressed on, and just before dawn entered Carpineta. In the church they captured forty shaken prisoners, who had found the shelling more than they could stand. A KOYLI officer, who was captured in this attack, later escaped, and with an empty pistol held a German section all day long in a farm, and at nightfall marched them back down the road as his prisoners.

So far the battle had been an affair of infantry and artillery, but on the night of the 12th October the Rigossa had been bridged, and the following night, though the Ark broke down, tanks managed to get over the Rubicone by a ford. The Lincolns passed through and by the morning of the 15th October had gained the nearer end of Monte Romano at the western extremity of the main ridge, the last real obstacle on the road to Cesena. Here during the day they were counter-attacked, but in the evening 139 Bde took over for the last effort before the Division was relieved. The Hampshire Bde was already out resting in the picturesque village of Verucchio, and the advance parties of 4 British Division were on their way. In this fighting 138 Bde had achieved a distinct success. They captured two hundred and fifty prisoners and drove the enemy from a position which from the frequency of his counter-attacks it was obvious he intended to hold.



6. 46 RECCE REGT ON THE RIGHT FLANK

The task assigned to 46 Recce Regt on 10th October was the threefold one of protecting the Division's right flank, of covering the development by the Sappers of a route on the right where the going was less hilly, and of maintaining contact with the Canadians astride Highway 9. For the first time since our return to Italy the Recce Regt had been given an independent role.

Initially, bad roads, craters and mines had to be faced. The second-in-command of the Regt was killed when his jeep went up on a deeply bedded Teller mine. Patrols to the Rigossa found the bridge blown, the banks steep and the current swift. About a company of the enemy held positions along the road from the Rigossa to Calisese, a village a mile ahead on the Rubicone. On the 13th October a bridgehead was established across the river while the Sappers of 271 Field Company brought up bridging equipment, but in face of enemy re-inforcements the post was withdrawn that night, so that work on the bridge could not be started. German patrols crossed the river, but failed to locate the bridging stores.

The following night there were signs of an

enemy withdrawal; the bridging was begun, and a patrol to Calisese, forced to lie up near the village all night, in the morning brought back news that there also the enemy was pulling out. Mines and booby-traps in plenty were found in the village. Another bridge had to be built, and the next morning before it was completed a troop was sent on foot to capture the Santini ridge. They met stiff opposition, and every available man helped with the bridge so that the armoured cars might get up to their assistance. In the early afternoon the bridge was finished, four cars shot across and the ridge was cleared within an hour.

Headquarters had been established in a disused nursinghome, and the caretaker volunteered the information that General Hoppe, commander of 278 Division, had a short time previously moved his headquarters from there to the Palazzo Deria north of Cesena. Within half an hour Palazzo Deria was bombed.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of this operation was the number of patrols and attacks that had to be carried out on foot. For most of the time the Recce Regt were operating as infantry, while bridges were being built to get their vehicles forward.

7. THE CAPTURE OF CESENA

On the night of 15th October the Leicesters relieved the Lincolns on the near slopes of Monte Romano. It was an awkward relief as

the enemy were close, and one company of the Lincolns remained behind. During the day the Leicesters made little headway, for they found

their left flank completely exposed. The Foresters advanced on their right, slowly, against continuous opposition from machine gun groups in the farmhouses. That night both battalions made gains. After a series of small, brisk and noisy encounters the Leicesters established themselves firmly on Monte Romano, while the Foresters in wider and wider movements round the right met frequent counter-attacks in a night of tricky fighting: in the morning the enemy's determination weakened and thirty prisoners were taken.

The Leicesters advanced as soon as darkness fell against slackening resistance. They reached the road junction north of Monte Romano well before dawn; a Sherman dozer immediately churned forward to fill the gaping crater there, so that tanks were able to join in the advance as soon as it was light. Indeed tanks and infantry combined in clearing the buildings along the road to Celincordia, and the village was captured in the late afternoon. A mile to the north lay Cesena.

It was the Durhams who put in the final punch. They passed through Celincordia in the early hours of 19th October. The Madonna del Monte, on a rise on the southern outskirts of Cesena, was their objective, and it was taken by daybreak. The Durhams were then ordered to capture the bridge over the Savio, a river which flowed through the western suburbs of Cesena, and a prepared delaying position. This bridge was being continuously harassed by the guns, who fired a round a minute in an attempt to prevent its demolition; air observation reported it still intact. Fierce, if unco-ordinated, resistance was met in the streets, and tanks and infantry combined in the slow deliberate business of routing out snipers house by house. From Abbadessa the enemy was able to maintain a measure of control over the approaches to the town and to the bridge. This imposing monastery was surrounded by a high wall. The Leicesters

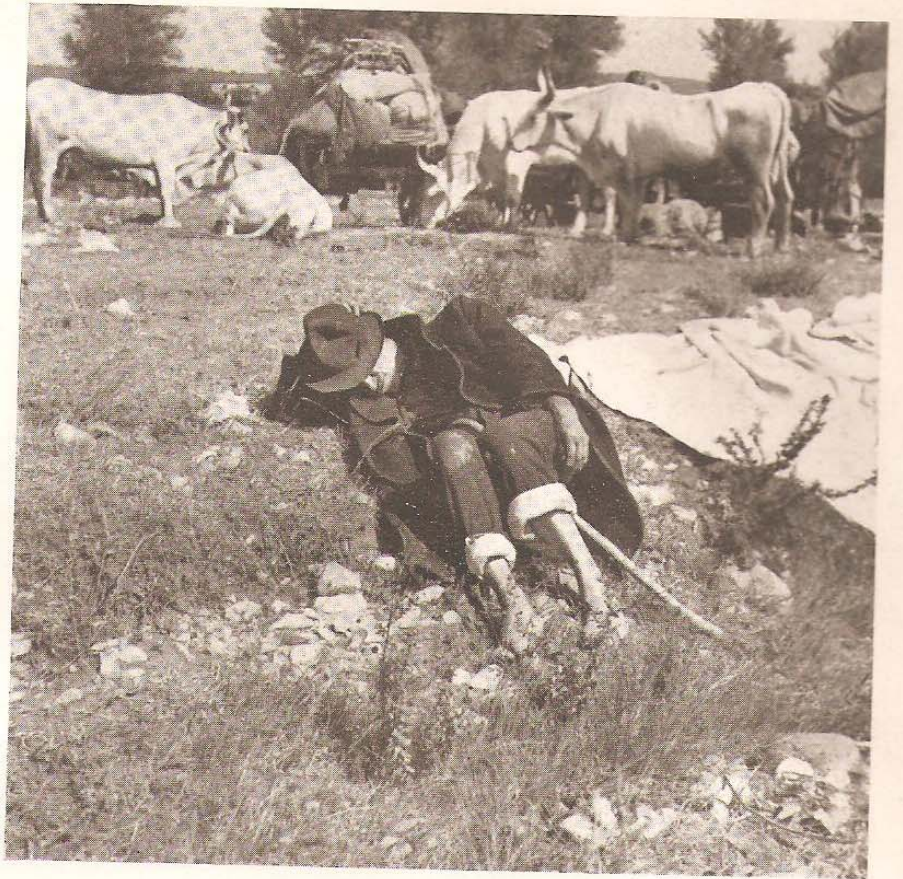
were met by heavy shelling as they moved towards the monastery, but our own guns soon silenced the German batteries. Then with the carrier platoon attracting the enemy's attention by moving round the right, a company moved up on the left and slipped in through a hole in the wall, apart from the heavily guarded gate the only way in. A sharp skirmish and the monastery was taken. Two small counter-attacks were beaten off, and the tanks effectively dealt with some houses on the left. Seventy prisoners were rounded up.

On the morning of the 20th October Durham patrols found that the enemy had withdrawn across the Savio, having blown all the bridges during the night. The castle was quickly occupied and more quickly left, when the Partisans reported a time bomb there. There was a large number of Partisans in the town, who proudly paraded their arm bands. The population was frantic with excitement. Women and children clapping and shouting and throwing flowers thronged into the streets. Shells were falling, but no one seemed to care. Seven Germans were found in a barber's shop having a shave. It was the first big town the Division had captured; there was exhilaration in the air, the people felt that they were at last free, and the Durhams that they were at last going out for a rest.

In this fighting from Montilgallo to Cesena, 114 Jaegar Division, up to then the least battered of the German divisions on the Adriatic coast, had been severely mauled. In the end it was forced to throw in the whole of its reinforcements, the band, military police and anyone else that could be spared from divisional headquarters. Their morale had gradually deteriorated, and they had yielded over four hundred prisoners, besides suffering heavy casualties in killed and wounded. Our own casualties had been comparatively light.

And so the Division went out for its long-anticipated, short-lived rest.

Italian peasant and his possessions



Street scene in Cesena

The Dance Band



Tank captured at San Martino-in-Strada

Forli to the Lamone

I. REST

In two months of continuous fighting 46 Division had met and defeated five German divisions. Sixty miles had been covered as the crow flies. Ten rivers had been crossed, most of them in face of stubborn resistance. Almost two thousand prisoners had been taken. It was a record to be proud of, and as we came out of the line General Hawkesworth received this message from General Keightley, the commander of 5 Corps: —

“I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating you most sincerely on your brilliant successes in the fighting of the last few months.”

“Throughout this phase of the battle of Italy, which has resulted in forcing the enemy through the much publicized Gothic Line, 46 Division has been engaged in all the toughest and the most bitter actions. Throughout all your operations your commanders have shown skill in leadership and your troops the greatest gallantry.”

But perhaps the finest tribute was paid by the Commander of the Canadian Corps, who said to General Hawkesworth “I think if ever a Division has earned the title of ‘The Iron Division’, 46 Division has.”

128 Bde were already well established in and around Verucchio. The castle with its magnificent prospect across the Marecchia made a romantic picture house, and Patricia Burke sang there to a crowded audience. Visitors to San Marino came back with postcards and a set of the stamps of the Republic, which appeared to thrive on their sale. 138 Bde moved to the stone-built university city of Urbino, where they were at one time almost cut off by the collapse of roads and bridges in the heavy rain. Morciano housed the rest of the Division, in surroundings drab by comparison. The Dance Band and the Concert Party spent an energetic fortnight. A few officers and men went to Rome on leave.

Meanwhile, the advance had gone on. The Savio had been crossed, and though rain caused a four day delay on the Ronco, crossings were forced on the 30th October. Ahead lay Forli, the next large town after Cesena on Highway 9.

On the 31st October came the order to relieve 10 Indian Division. Our ten day rest was at an end.

2. SAN MARTINO-IN-STRADA

On the 1st November 128 Bde moved to a forward concentration area in the hill-top village of Bertinoro. From the monastery with its wide view over the flat plain the beginning of the battle for Forli aerodrome could be

seen in the calm sunshine of an autumn afternoon. But the following morning the advance parties moved forward in torrential rain. There was no bridge over the Ronco, but jeeps could cross by an aqueduct which remained

standing. Most of them got stuck on the sloppy mud tracks on the far side.

In the previous twenty-four hours 25 Indian Bde had made a considerable advance, and had reached Grisignano on the river Rabbi three miles south of Forli. No route forward existed, and there were many craters and small demolished bridges between the Ronco and the Rabbi, so that the battalions of 128 Bde had to march from Bertinoro along tracks ankle-deep in mud. The enemy's shelling had increased during the day, and 5 Hampshires were greeted with a loud demonstration of machine gun fire as they moved up after dark to take over from 1 Kings Own in Grisignano. 2 Hampshires were on the right and 1/4 Hampshires on the left in a sort of semi-circle.

From Grisignano a good road led north through the almost suburban village of San Martino-in-Strada to the southern outskirts of Forli. On the aerodrome east of Forli and south of Highway 9 the enemy was putting up a stubborn fight against 4 British Division, and he had strong outposts at Casa Brigante and along the dykes south of the airfield to prevent his defence being turned by an attack from the south. He was using a considerable weight of artillery, and had a force of tanks in the offing, though it was 356 Infantry Division which was holding the ground.

The plan was to attack northwards through San Martino-in-Strada in order to assist 4 British Division to clear the aerodrome and capture Forli. 128 Bde was then to swing left and cross the Rabbi and, if possible, the Montone, and take San Varano. But first it was necessary to have a route forward so that tanks could come up to play their part in the street fighting in San Martino-in-Strada. In the wet weather this took several days.

For some reason best known to themselves, the enemy would indulge in wild outburst of machine gun fire immediately it got dark... Patrols were out nightly reporting on the river,

and sweeping the roads of mines. A company of 5 Hampshires made a slight advance towards Casa Brigante. Fighter bombers were up daily, bombing and machine gunning enemy positions on the aerodrome, and batteries and tanks further to the rear.

The attack started at eleven o'clock on the night of 7th November. 5 Hampshires had the task of clearing San Martino-in-Strada with 2 Hampshires attacking on their right.

2 Hampshires, aware of the enemy's nightly custom of occupying houses which he abandoned in daylight, forestalled them and made good progress from the start. But 5 Hampshires, hampered by the narrow front at Casa Brigante and by enemy posts on the left flank across the river, were held up for some time, and it was nearly dawn before the blocks of flats and the cinema at San Martino had been cleared. From there the advance was swift, the 9 Lancers shooting their way down the road while the infantry searched the houses on either side. It was a satisfying battle. By nightfall an advance of two miles had been made; one hundred and fifty prisoners had been taken, and one Tiger tank and two anti-tank guns over-run.

This battle was remarkable for three things. First and foremost for the departure of General Hawkesworth from the Division which he had commanded since Salerno. He left to take over command of 10 Corps. General Hawkesworth "the little man with the big stick" was a figure known to every man in 46 Division. Since the end of the African campaign he had commanded in every battle the Division had fought, and while we were resting in the Middle East he went to 1 Division at Anzio. A forceful personality, he was intolerant of incompetence. As a commander he always tried to minimize casualties; he liked to fight company battles, with heavy fire support. He would often himself have a share in the plan for these small attacks. In battle he always went forward to see for

himself, and his dapper figure was a familiar sight to frontline troops on the hills overlooking the Garigliano and in the Gothic Line. Out of battle, he was always conscious of his mens welfare, and the Dance Band and the Concert Party were started under his auspices.

Major-General C. E. Weir, C.B.E., D.S.O., who had commanded the New Zealand Division in the absence of General Freyburg, took over command.

Secondly, in this battle four Hampshire battalions were fighting side by side. For 2/4 Hampshires were on the left of 4 British Division in their attack on Forli.

And last, Littlejohn anti-tank guns were used for the first time. These guns had just been issued to 58 Anti-Tank Regt, and were manhandled up to Grisignano, where the gunners learnt how to fire them with the enemy two hundred yards away.

3. THE MONTONE

With the capture of Forli aerodrome the first part of the plan had been accomplished. On the left the Poles were advancing rapidly, so that shortly after midday on the 8th November General Weir, reassured about the position on his flanks, gave orders for the crossing of the Rabbi. That night 1/4 Hampshires crossed the river near San Martino, and battalions of 138 Bde went across further south. A swift advance, practically unopposed, brought them up to the Montone in the afternoon. Dark, lowering thunder clouds were piling up. Patrols from 1/4 Hampshires encountered Tiger tanks between San Varano and the river, and no attempt was made to force a daylight crossing. But on the left the KOYLI prepared to put a company across. As it was getting dark the leading platoon waded the river. Just then the storm broke. The platoon, which had taken some prisoners, pushed forward. But behind them the Montone had become a raging torrent, and no one else could get across. Every effort was made to get into contact with the platoon, but nothing more was seen of it. Later, it was learnt from a German prisoner that most of them had been captured, and a line shot over by a PIAT in

a vain effort to help them back trailed uselessly in the water.

The weather had cleared the following morning; artillery and fighter-bombers engaged enemy tanks at San Varano. South of Grisignano Sappers of 271 Field Company completed the two hundred and twenty foot Bailey bridge over the Rabbi. Fighting patrols, with difficulty, crossed the Montone that night, and 270 Company Sappers were out looking at the bridge at Terre del Sole which was still standing. All patrols reported considerable movement of enemy tracked vehicles across the river, which was still, on the average, waist deep. Further details of the bridge were obtained the next day.

The Montone was crossed in the early hours of 12th November. The Lincolns were first over. They waded the river south of Terre del Sole and swinging right captured the village, where the bridge, though damaged, was soon made capable of carrying vehicles. On their right the KOYLI were clearing the enemy from houses close to the river, while further north opposite San Varano 1/4 Hampshires were meeting heavy shelling, and had only a precarious footing on the far bank. Prisoners

were identified as coming from 26 Panzer Division. Not only was this a better division in other respects than 356, but it also possessed more artillery as well as the twenty to thirty tanks of 26 Panzer Regt. So the reports of tracked movement were accounted for.

Ahead, on the right, the ground was flat and cut up into a rectangular pattern of ditches and small canals, while on the left were low foothills. General Weir decided to push forward along the foothills.

There was some difficulty in getting an Ark into place beside the bridge at Terre del Sole, but counter-battery fire reduced the enemy's shelling and a squadron of tanks was across before dawn. The advance began. The York and Lancasters were directed on Monte Poggiolo, where the ancient, square, keep, set on the crown of the hill must have well-nigh impregnable in the days when it was built, and appeared nearly so in 1944. It had thick walls which tank shells failed to penetrate, and as far as could be seen no entrance other than one small iron door. As it grew dark a platoon crept forward; they overcame the sentries. At that moment the German company commander came out of the castle. He was captured, and the garrison of 5th Company 39 G.A.F. Regt surrendered on

his orders. In his possession was a map of the defences of the Cosina canal, which lay about a mile ahead. It appeared to be a strong position and had been dignified with the name Gerhild I.

Meanwhile, on the right 1/4 Hampshires had occupied San Varano. 2 Hampshires pushed through, but were held up a mile short of Villagrappa.

Next day the advance went on, but slowly, as small groups of the enemy in houses each required a platoon attack to clear them out; enemy tanks and self-propelled guns were a constant menace, as our own tanks bogged down as soon as they tried to move across country. The flat fields, separated by a line of vines, were awkward places to be caught by machine gun fire. Progress was more rapid on the left, where the York and Lancasters, pushing out along the foothills, occupied Petrignone. On the extreme right 1/4 Hampshires entered Villagrappa.

On the night of 14th November 139 Bde relieved 128 Bde at Villagrappa. 5 Hampshires were already at Meldola, a pleasant town which had not yet lost the spirit of liberation, and 1/4 Hampshires joined them there. 2 Hampshires moved to Forli, where there was still occasional shelling.

4. CASTIGLIONE AND THE COSINA CANAL

As soon as the relief was completed Brigadier Block began to push forward. The Leicesters, after a heavy artillery bombardment, advanced along the road from Villagrappa. The Durhams were moving up on their right. The Rio Balzanino was reached at midday after enemy rearguards had been driven from houses on this side of the canal. The bridge

had been blown, and neither tanks nor anti-tank guns could be got across. In the afternoon a company crossed; houses on the right opposite the Durhams proved a thorn in the flesh, but the village of Belfiore was captured, and a counter-attack fifteen minutes later was beaten off. It was essential to hold this exposed position, unprotected by any anti-tank defence,

in order to cover the bridging of the Balzaino. During the night the Durhams were repulsed in their attack north of the road, but the Sappers succeeded in finishing the bridge.

The Leicesters attacked again the following morning with tank support. Initially they met with considerable success, and even crossed the Cosina. But then the strength of the enemy positions revealed itself, tanks appeared, and the Leicesters withdrew under intense shelling. Further north the Durhams met with no more success in their renewed attacks. It had become apparent that the outposts of the Gerhild I line had been reached. Many mines had to be lifted, and movement in daylight was hazardous in a countryside that had become less fertile and where the absence of trees and vines robbed the advancing troops of all cover.

Meanwhile on the left 138 Bde were closing in on Castiglione, a village on high ground this side of the Cosina and, according to the captured maps, a strongpoint in the enemy's defences. In an awkward platoon attack the York and Lancasters took Baldraccone, east, and almost part, of the main village.

Such was the position on the 17th November when General Weir decided to regroup prior to attacking the Cosina Line. His object was the relief of 138 Bde which had been fighting for nearly a fortnight. The regrouping was a complicated business, but there was time available, for the Poles, on the left, had been viciously counter-attacked and had lost ground, and, until they regained the initiative, the forcing of the Cosina was out of the question. The eventual line-up was, from north to south, 46 Recce Regt, 5 Foresters, 6 Lincolns (in a holding role) and 2/5 Leicesters, who had taken over from the York and Lancasters short of Castiglione, 16 D.L.I., who had had the unpleasant experience of being bombed by our own planes, were in reserve.

The crossing of the Cosina was to be made along the stretch of the canal where it flowed

in an east-west direction. In addition to the normal artillery support, a special blitz programme by tanks, armoured cars and the machine guns of 9 Manchesters was worked out with the intention of isolating the positions being attacked. The Manchesters prepared for their first battalion shoot since joining the Division. But it was not to be; owing to the great shortage of machine gun ammunition in Italy, their part of the plan had to be cancelled.

The first essential in Brigadier Block's plan was the capture of Castiglione, and on the 20th November the Leicesters set about it. They had had three days in which to make detailed reconnaissances and to perfect their preparations. At ten o'clock the Desert Air Force carried out a brilliant, devastating preliminary bombardment. Preceded by half an hour's battering by artillery and tanks, the infantry assault went in. Soon Castiglione was in their hands, and the hamlet of Salambrine beyond. Both places became the target of intense enemy artillery fire. Two anti-tank guns moving up were lost on mines; a further two were brought forward, and another company moved into the village. An intercepted enemy message gave warning of an impending counter-attack. Enemy movement during the night was engaged by a heavy concentration of artillery, and though two tanks penetrated to Salambrina and knocked out the anti-tank gun there, the beginning of the Polish attack on the left brought eventual relief.

Just before dawn the Foresters joined in the battle. In a morning of confused fighting through desolate, open country, they reached the Cosina on the right, but their left company made little headway, so that there still remained a considerable pocket of enemy resistance in the Cosina bend north of Castiglione. Further north 4 British Division had had to withdraw a company that had forced its way over the canal. Medium bombers were out

attacking enemy gun positions, and fighters took on closer targets; the artillery of both sides thumped away. On the left the Poles had gained a notable success, and taken nearly a hundred prisoners.

That night the attack was resumed with the Durhams taking up their position between the Foresters and the Leicesters. The enemy was holding stubbornly to the farmhouses in the canal bend and progress was slow as they were cleared in the darkness, so that Brigadier Block had to report that no crossing would be possible that night. But by the morning the Durhams had virtually cleared the east bank of the Cosina.

During the afternoon of the 22nd November Sgt Johnson of the Leicesters made a lone reconnaissance of the bridge at Ponticello and found it intact. As darkness fell a platoon crawled forward, crossed the canal, and occupied the houses just beyond the bridge. The Germans were taken by surprise; two walked into the house whistling; two more were found entertaining their girls in the cellar. The platoon held these houses throughout the night, while a company made a long, rough trek round the left to come in at dawn on the rear of the village. At the same moment the tanks of the 10 Hussars trundled over the bridge. It was too much for the enemy, and the village was captured.

Meanwhile, a successful crossing had been made on the right. The Foresters, cleverly in-

filtrating between enemy posts on the canal bank, in consecutive company—encircling sweeps, came in on Fugna and Cantoniera from the rear and overran the bewildered defenders. Shortly after dawn the Ark crossing was in position, and a company of the Leicesters advanced with tanks and took Strocca and twenty prisoners. This company, which had been placed under command of the Foresters, had previously been forced to withdraw from Strocca to await the arrival of tanks. On their stretch of the canal the Durhams had met bitter and protracted resistance, but in the morning they crossed by the Ark and advanced westwards to make a junction with the Leicesters.

Further north and overshadowed by the main battle 46 Recce Regt had fought a series of small, fierce actions to clear houses east of the canal and to protect the right flank.

On the morning of 23rd November, just as 1 KRRC were beginning to pass through, the enemy mounted a powerful, dangerous counter-attack on the Leicesters at Ponticello. A tank penetrated almost to the bridge, but was knocked out in the nick of time. But this was the end of the enemy's effort to hold his strongly developed Gerhild 1 position, and during the day the bridgehead was methodically extended. That night 270 Field Company bridged the Cosina, and the stage was set for 128 Bde to pass through towards Faenza at dawn on the 24th November.

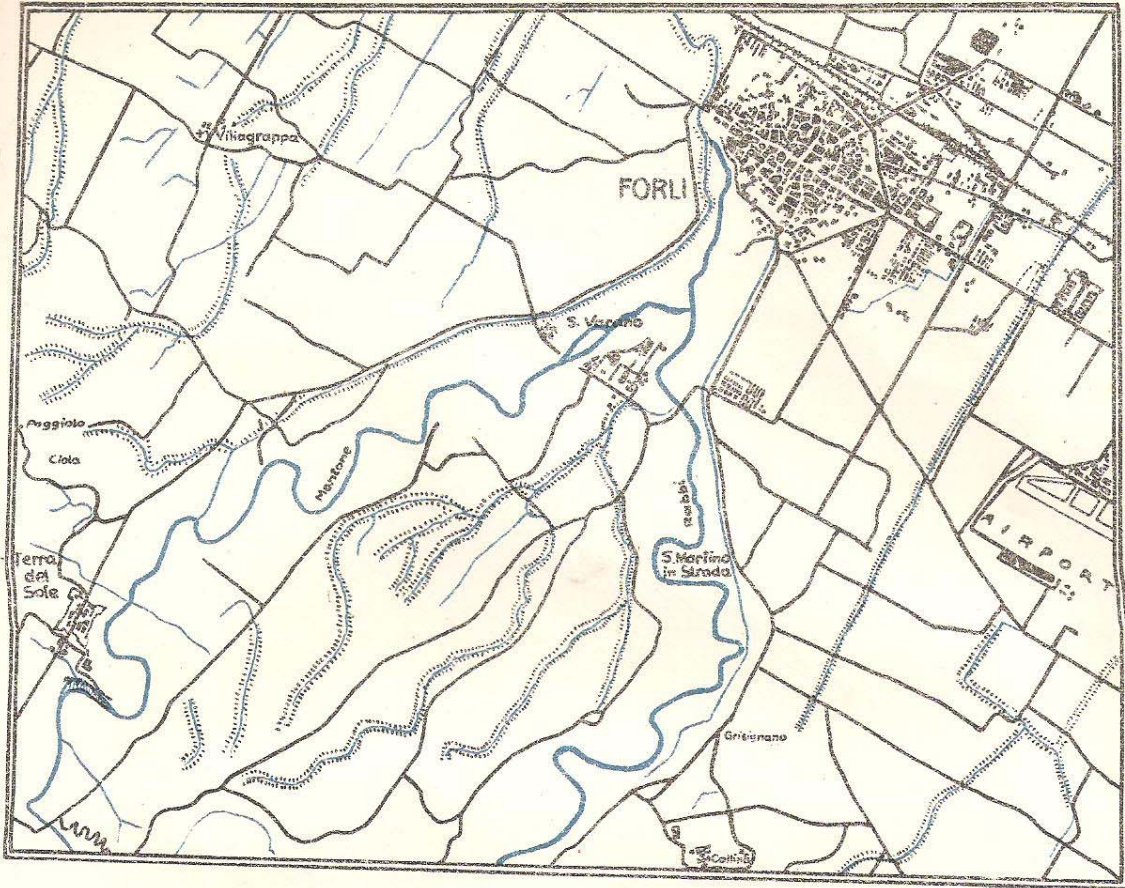
5. THE MARZENO

An elaborate fire plan had been arranged to support the Hampshires advance. But they found themselves making a triumphal progress through farms where everyone turned out to cheer and thrust wine and fruit at them as

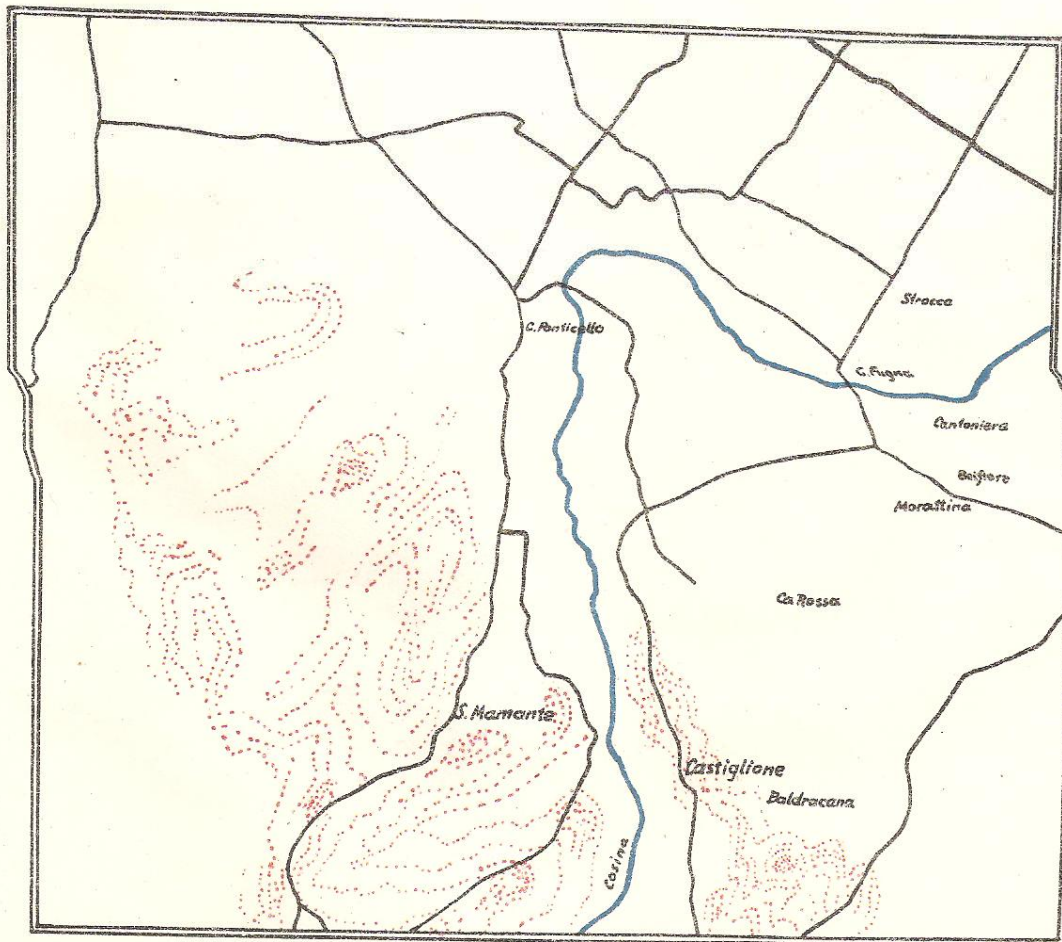
they hurried past. By eleven o'clock a company of 5 Hampshires was in Borgo Durbecco looking across the Lamone at the walls of Faenza. All the bridges had been blown.

Just south of Faenza was the junction of

FORLI



THE COSINA CANAL



the rivers Marzeno and Lamone. Between them there was a tongue of land with its tip pointed at the southern outskirts of the town. Both the bridge on to this tongue, and a second bridge which led back into Faenza, had been blown. There were no other bridges over the Marzeno for five miles to the south. A direct assault on Faenza, which even in a hasty withdrawal the enemy was certain to have defended, was bound to be a costly, uncertain undertaking with the enemy manning posts on the walls and in houses directly overlooking the river.

Shortly after midday came the news that 1 KRRC, who were under command 128 Bde and advancing on their left, had forced a crossing of the Marzeno three miles to the south of Faenza. General Weir therefore ordered Brigadier Kendrew to exploit this success, while 139 Bde took over the ground in front of the city.

At first little opposition had been encountered at the crossing, and an Ark was got into position and some tanks went over. Later the enemy began to react with artillery and tanks, and it became clear that he intended to contain the bridgehead. 5 Hampshires and later 2 Hampshires had companies across in the late afternoon, but little progress was made and darkness fell on a congested and overcrowded bridgehead, less than half a mile wide and a quarter of a mile deep, into which the enemy was constantly, if inaccurately, pouring shells.

The night's activity consisted of probing patrols, while the enemy shelled the bridgehead and the approaches, to the crossing. Dawn came enveloped in a thick mist, which lifted spasmodically during the day but never cleared. The enemy opposed our advance with machine-gun fire from small posts in houses, and with constant and heavy shelling and mortaring, directed somewhat randomly into the bridgehead. But it was four or five enemy tanks which caused the greatest delay. These were positioned covering the few roads out of the bridgehead, and, as our own tanks attempting to manoeuvre round them bogged down as soon as they left the road, it was no easy business to dislodge them.

Between the Marzeno and the Lamone there was only one road, and that in places only a narrow, rough track, which led across the low ridge to Sarna. The main roads ran south alongside the rivers. This secondary road was the prize of the day's difficult small encounters. Progress was made during the night without real opposition, and the three battalions of 128 Bde moved down towards the Lamone on a sunny morning, whose stillness, unbroken by shot or shell, was like the lull after a storm. Patrols to the river were not interfered with, but when, in the afternoon, strong fighting patrols crossed the river they immediately encountered enemy posts and were engaged by machine guns and mortars. Later the enemy started to shell any positions that he had observed being occupied on the slopes and on the flat ground nearer the river.

6. PREPARATIONS FOR THE LAMONE CROSSING

Rain began to fall steadily on the evening of 26th November. In any case, it is doubtful whether a crossing could have been forced in

the then state of communications. Over the Marzeno the Sappers erected eight different types of temporary crossing before finally

finding a permanent site for a hundred and ten feet Bailey bridge. There was a footbridge; an assault boat raft which carried stretchers; an aerial ropeway which broke in an attempt to swing a jeep across; a trestle bridge; a ford over the top of an existing weir where carriers could cross; a raft; a Bailey bridge whose approaches eventually became unusable; and an Ark crossing which was later washed away in the flood. Moreover the road between the Marzeno and the Lamone, which had to carry the whole weight of the division's operational traffic, was in many places only wide enough for one-way movement; its muddy unmetalled surface crumbled and gave way with passage of heavy vehicles. Under such conditions it was necessary to bring up tanks, guns, and bridging lorries if the crossing was to be made in strength.

Opposite us the enemy had 26 Panzer Division astride Highway 9 in the neighbourhood of Faenza. Further south 305 Infantry Division was disposed along the ridge which ran parallel to the Lamone in a gradual ascent from Faenza. In reserve, against the offensive which he expected from both the Fifth and Eighth Armies now converging on Bologna, Field Marshall Kesselring held 90th Light so placed as to be quickly available if either front was badly threatened.

Over against 128 Bde, where it was intended to make the crossing of the Lamone, the ridge reached its culmination in the little village of Olmatello five hundred feet above the river. Further south large scale erosion and the collapse of hillsides had formed many steep precipices and cut out alternate valley and spur from the rising slopes. At the head of this complicated mass, which on the aerial photographs looked like a vast quarry, lay the village of Pideura, from which a second ridge stretched northwards to Castel Bolognese on the road to Bologna. Through the half

mile wide level stretch beside the river a main road and railway ran north to Faenza.

For a week the Hampshire battalions waited, while intermittent heavy rain kept the Lamone in a state of flood and while hectic work went on in the rear to prepare and keep open the forward routes. All night and most of the day traffic jostled on the narrow roads, and the harassed Military Police endeavoured to control convoys which invariably claimed urgent priority for themselves. Telephones hummed as Staff Officers asked where this was, and why that was on the road at all. RASC drivers took eighteen hours and sometimes more on their twenty mile supply circuit. From the towers of Faenza the enemy had observation over the Marzeno and the flat country to the east, and rear areas came in for repeated heavy shelling. 71 Field Regt had to move their guns away from the unhealthy neighbourhood of Faenza. 172 Field Regt, which had after much struggling moved across the Marzeno, found it so difficult to get their ammunition forward that they had strictly to limit firing until their stocks were built up.

So the preparations went on. Bridging equipment and tanks were brought up. Every night the Hampshires had patrols down looking at the swollen river, and the Sappers were out selecting bridging sites and crossing places. The enemy seldom interfered, but was content with odd vicious outbursts of shell and mortar fire. Our own guns observed a strict policy of silence in the area selected for the crossing, stealthily registering all the important features under cover of a daily display against Faenza itself.

On 28th November 139 Bde was ordered to move south to an unknown destination, and 169 Bde of 56 Division took their place in front of Faenza. On 2nd December the enemy fired propaganda leaflets at our forward troops.

The bridge at Terre del Sale



*The Corps Commander's
escort moving up towards
the Lamone*

*Major-General C. E. Weir
CB., CBE., DSO.*



The Leicesters March Past

7. THE LAMONE BRIDGEHEAD

Brigadier Kendrew's task was to make a bridgehead from Olmatello on the right to Casa Poggio on the left, and then to extend it north to Pideura. He planned a two battalion crossing; 2 Hampshires were to capture Olmatello; 1/4 Hampshires after taking two intermediate hills were to push on through Casa Poggio towards Pideura, while 1 KRRC, who were still under command, took over the left flank as they advanced; 5 Hampshires were to push through 2 Hampshires at Olmatello and moving along the narrow sharp ridge capture Pideura. An elaborate artillery programme of boxes and concentrations was arranged to start simultaneously with the attack, and 169 Bde and the guns of the New Zealand Division were to carry out a large scale Chinese attack against Faenza itself. The attack was to start at 1900 hrs.

There were two immense craters blocking the main road beyond the Lamone, and this meant that three bridges would have to be built before supplies could be got forward. Careful plans had to be worked out to cover this barren period; battalions organized large parties of porters, and 58 Anti-Tank Regt commandeered oxen to tow their Littlejohns up the steep slopes.

Just after dark on the evening of 3th December the uneasy silence was broken by the thunder of the opening barrage. The two leading battalions had already begun to move down to the Lamone. On the right 2 Hampshires soon had patrols across, but difficulty was experienced with the specially constructed and somewhat delicate ladder-bridge. Some houses had to be cleared on the lateral road. The ladder was now in position, and the remaining companies crossed dry-shod. The moon was rising and cast a ghostly uncertain light

over the hills. Two companies began the stiff climb up the steep, slippery fields to Olmatello. One post was overrun and some prisoners taken; machine guns on the crest above their heads held up the leading platoons, and they crouched in the hollows below. Then the Commanding Officer himself went forward, and just before dawn a headlong charge carried the two companies into Olmatello. 5 Hampshires passed through, but it was already light and they were held up at Casa Balassa. The enemy were holding the ridge beyond, and it was impossible to deploy on so narrow a front.

1/4 Hampshires on the left were faced with difficult, sticky going once they had made good the line of the main road. They pushed out well to the left, but dawn came before they had been able to get more than a firm footing on the hills above Quartolo.

The initial bridgehead was almost complete. 271 Field Coy hoped to have a bridge and a tank crossing ready by nightfall: the latter consisted of two Arks, one on top of the other, and it was the first time that the Sappers had put up such an erection. In view of this undertaking, General Weir ordered 138 Bde to cross the Lamone that night and build up within the bridgehead ready to push out in a north-east direction on the 5th December.

Neither 1/4 nor 5 Hampshires were able to advance during daylight. After many vicissitudes (the oxen proved not to have been battle trained) forty men manhandled a Littlejohn anti-tank gun up to Olmatello, where the stream of porters which was to flow continuously up and down the hillside began its long meanderings. Even water had to be brought up, for there were no wells.

8. ENLARGING THE BRIDGEHEAD

After a night of desperate toiling up and down sheer, muddy hill-faces $\frac{1}{4}$ Hampshires occupied Casa Poggio at dawn. Beyond Olmatello 5 Hampshires found the ridge more heavily defended than had been anticipated and no advance was made in face of heavy machine gun fire. It was decided to try and get tanks up, but the only possible route was a road well out to the right, and the KOYLI were fighting all day for Castel Raniero where this road reached the ridge a mile north-east of Olmatello. The house was once entered, but a determined garrison wiped out the few who had managed to force their way inside. In the evening the leading tank as it churned up the road lost a track when it struck a mine, and slewed across, blocking the way. That night the KOYLI captured Castel Raniero, but heavy shelling drove them back from Colombara beyond. Feverish work went on to clear the road, and the disabled tank was finally disposed of in the early morning.

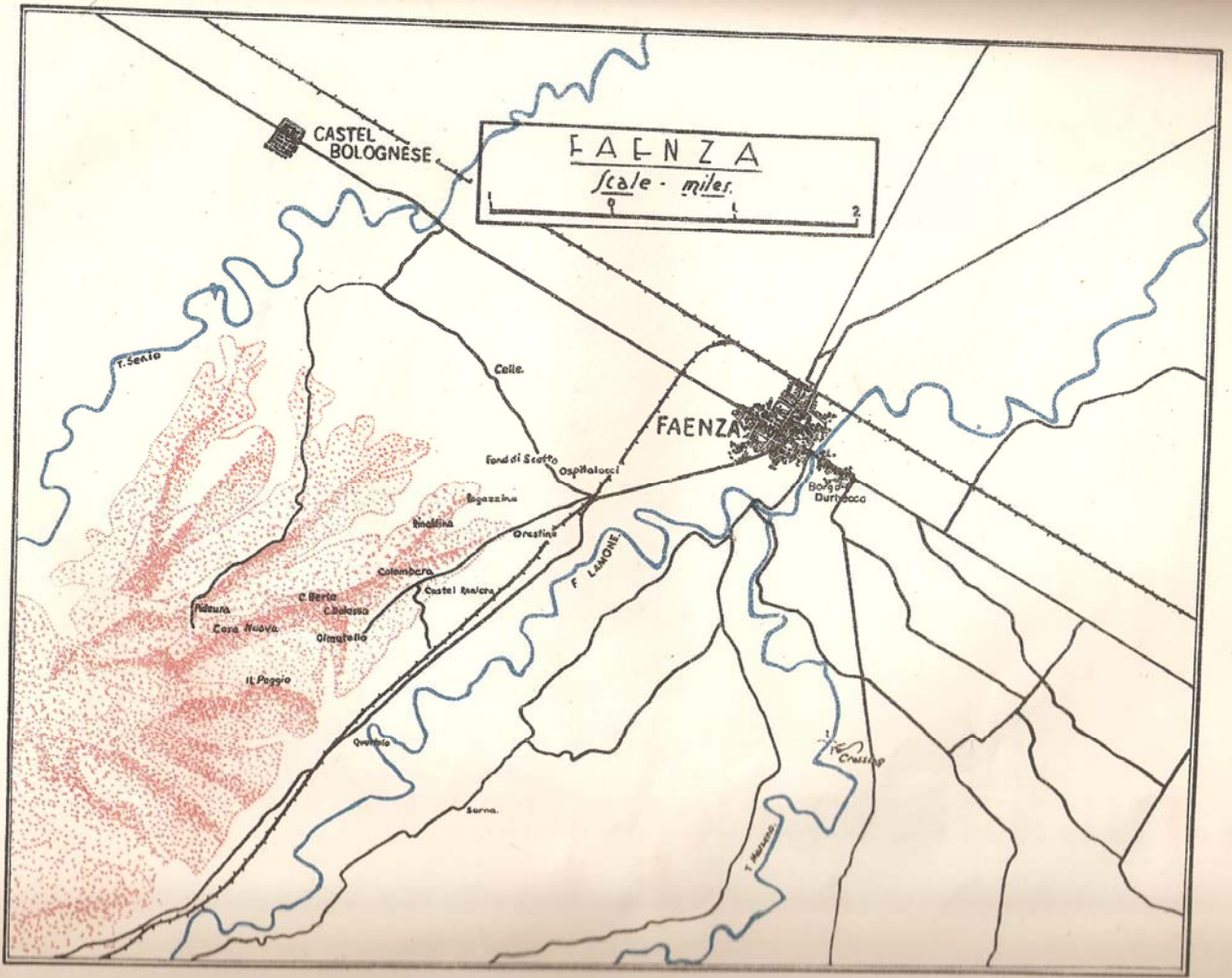
Meanwhile it had been decided that $\frac{1}{4}$ Hampshires should capture Pideura, as on their flank there was more room to manoeuvre. They were unsuccessful in advancing on the night of 5th December in face of growing exhaustion and determined small opposition. 5 Hampshires captured the ridge ahead of them and in the morning reached Casa Berta (known by the code name Trinity); but they had suffered heavy casualties as they debouched along the narrow ridge. It was a mile carry for the stretcher-bearing parties down the steep track under constant shelling.

A blanket of mist lay thick over the fighting on the 6th December. In slow house-clearing the York and Lancasters advanced a mile down the ridge-top road to Orestina, while the KOYLI in the afternoon captured Colom-

bara on the left of the road, and moved on beyond. In the evening rain began to fall, but the Lincolns pushed out through the KOYLI and took Ragazzina, where some of the enemy were found in bed but others put up a fight. Indeed all along the front 305 Division were putting up an obstinate, if unimaginative, defence and the backward trickle of prisoners was evidence of their stubbornness. Shortly after midnight one of the bridges was swept away, and the other two were under water; the Lamone had risen fifteen feet.

On the left $\frac{1}{4}$ Hampshires with tanks up in support had captured Casa Nova in the late afternoon after a stiff climb and a brisk battle. The remnants of a company forced their way into Pideura, but a sharp counter-attack as it grew dark drove them back to Casa Nova. During the night the KRRC company under command was brought up, and on the morning of 7th December they attacked Pideura under an artillery bombardment and with the support of a troop of tanks. They soon got a footing in the village, but fighting went on throughout the morning with small parties of the enemy with bazookas and machine guns in the remaining houses. Two self-propelled guns on the ridge beyond were troublesome, and shortly after midday a counter-attack gained some ground and succeeded in putting two tanks out of action. Another troop of tanks came up and the position was restored.

That night, the 7th December, 25 Indian Bde relieved 128 Bde. All day patrols from 46 Recce Regt were out commandeering any available labour to repair the ravages the night's rain had made on the roads, and the Sappers succeeded in saving two bridges over the Lamone. Across the river a bulldozer was



used to tow supplies up to Castel Raniero — the Sappers had a name for that muddy track. A 5 Hampshires patrol returned from Casa di Lucca, where they had surprised and captured a garrison double their numbers and where they had been forced to lie up all day until darkness enabled them to bring their prisoners in along the exposed track.

So ended the first phase of the La-

mone battle, in many respects the hardest of the campaign. It was not so much the fighting, which was stubborn enough, but the appalling terrain, the cold and, at times, the lack of food which imposed the greatest strain. Only the barest necessities could be brought up, and the wounded had to be carried a dangerous, weary trek to the nearest ambulance.

9. COUNTER-ATTACK BY 90TH LIGHT

So on the 8th December General Weir was commanding, from left to right, 25 Indian Bde, 138 Bde and 169 Bde. The Queens had reached the multiple junction south-west of Faenza, where low road, high road and railway met. On their left the York and Lancasters had fought their way to Ospitalacci, just across the road which led from this junction to Celle. The Lincolns, who had pushed out towards Celle, had been forced to make a slight withdrawal to Fondi di Sotto, where the front took a sharp turn left to follow the line of the ridge to Pideura. The KOYLI were on the left of the Lincolns, then came 3/1 Punjabs, and finally 1 Kings Own in Pideura itself.

During the day the Queens were involved in close, confused and indecisive house-fighting. Enemy shelling was heavy on the whole front, and 2 New Zealand Division reported very considerable movement of vehicles and half-tracks north of Faenza. Rain began to fall in the afternoon and increased later, threatening the Lamone bridges. Traffic on the narrow overcrowded "Up" route was the usual succession of jam and crawling patient progress. That night a platoon of 1 Kings Own was overrun at Paventa, north-west of

Pideura, and 3/1 Punjabs attempting to cross the valley in front of them were forced back by an armoured counter-attack. Blazing haystacks lit up these sharp engagements.

Shortly after seven o'clock on the morning of 9th December the enemy opened up a bombardment of unparalleled intensity. Reports soon began to come in of enemy counter-attacks along the whole front. An hour later it was becoming clear that the main weight of the attack was being launched from Celle against the Lincolns. At Pideura 1 Kings Own reported that a rather half-hearted thrust had petered out, but the shelling was continuing all along the Indian front, and the Queens were also being heavily shelled. Opposite the Lincolns enemy preparations, tanks and half-tracks moving forward, were heavily engaged by our artillery, which throughout the day put an endless curtain of fire round the forward positions, and tirelessly took on the many targets called for by the harassed infantry. Enemy infantry first made their appearance at Rinaldino, where the KOYLI beat them off with sustained mortar fire, and the artillery put a stop to an attempt to infiltrate round the right. Then tanks began to move forward against the Lincolns. Despite the inferno of

shells and the attacks of fighter-bombers on Celle, the tanks came on. They overran the carrier platoon, whose withdrawal was covered by the heroic action of Capt. Brunt, who firing any and every weapon he could lay hands on, single-handed held up the enemy infantry. Two of our tanks and an anti-tank gun were knocked out attempting to stem the onslaught. The platoon at Fondi di Sotto, reduced to an officer and seven men, clung on to its position, and the main attack was held at Ragazzina. By eleven o'clock the enemy's first effort was spent.

In the lull the Lincolns made some adjustment to their positions. The platoon at Fondi di Sotto was withdrawn, and the carrier platoon put in on the left to hold the gap between the Lincolns and the KOYLI. Here a further attack in the early afternoon was driven off; Capt. Brunt directed fire from the top of a tank. Two hours later the KOYLI were fighting hard at Rinaldino, where the enemy had come right up with bazookas, and

just after dark the York and Lancasters repulsed further attacks and took some prisoners. This was virtually the end of 90th Light's effort to drive in the Lamone bridgehead, though the artillery continued to fire defensive tasks through the night, and medium guns engaged the main roads further to the rear.

A wounded German company commander captured near Rinaldo had in his possession a map which with other valuable information showed his first objective as the rear Headquarters of the Lincolns, and later the New Zealanders found in Faenza a document slating all and sundry of 200 Panzer Grenadier Regt for the inglorious failure of their attack. It was not courage they were lacking, and their casualties were very heavy. A prisoner stated that of his company only five were left after the attack. Largely instrumental in this defeat of 90th Light was the overwhelming weight of artillery, which swamped every penetration — and there were few — before it became really menacing.

10. RELIEF OF 46 DIVISION

Both the battalions of 25 Indian Bde made gains that night. On 10th December the advance parties of 5 New Zealand Bde arrived and in the evening took over from the Queens, the Lincolns and the York and Lancasters. Capt. Brunt, who was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, was killed by a stray mortar bomb.

General Weir was now commanding an Indian and a New Zealand Bde, but all further large-scale operations were put off pending the completion of regrouping — a respite much

welcomed by 90th Light, it was later discovered. That night enemy aircraft made one of their rare appearances and did considerable damage in Forli.

At 1900 hrs on 11th December command of the left sector passed to 10 Indian Division, and at 0830 hrs the following morning 2 New Zealand Division assumed command of the right sector. 46 Division went out to rest.

There were few who suspected that 46 Division had fought its last battle in the second German War.

Christmas interlude

I. LOOKING BACK

It was all over, and few thought about the last long four months fighting. The headlong, mad rush through the Gothic Line; the deadly struggle for Gemmano; Monte Colombo and Montescudo; the scramble across the Marecchia; the shelling on Montilgallo; Cesena; Forli; the bitter, protracted wrangle on the Cosina Canal; the hard, slow, desperate battle for Faenza. A length list of battles fought and won, of obstacles overcome, of hardships endured. So ended 46 Division's second campaign in Italy.

What had been achieved? The Division had advanced more than eighty miles, fighting all the way. Eighteen rivers had been crossed. Nine German divisions had been severely mauled. Nearly three thousand prisoners had been taken. To accomplish this seventy Bailey bridges had to be built; one hundred and forty

craters to be filled, and nearly one thousand miles of road swept of mines and maintained.

And the cost? The Division had suffered over four thousand casualties. Sixty-eight Officers and six hundred and twenty-four men had been killed.

And memories? The early endless hills? The long night marches? A tank brewing up or a blazing haystack? The occasional comfort of an Italian farmhouse? The peasant refusing to leave the farm on which his life had been spent, even in the midst of battle? The chickens cooked with such care, and the vino? The pouring rain and rushing, swollen streams or the sudden warm sunshine? A hectic (or quiet?) leave in Rome or Florence? Long, cold hours of waiting or swift-moving minutes of fighting?

Anyway, it was over for a while.

2. CHRISTMAS

The Division moved south of Ancona on the Adriatic coast. Headquarters were in the inland university town of Fermo; below on the coast 138 Bde were in Porto San Giorgio, and 128 Bde spread out further south. Their headquarters were in Cupra Marittima; 5 Hampshires were in Grottamare, 2 Hampshires in San Benedetto and 1/4 Hampshires in the hills at Ripatransone. The sun was bright that first morning and the red and brown sails of the high-prowed fishing boats

from San Benedetto moved slowly across a shining sea. On the strand fishermen were mending their nets.

There was to be no training before Christmas, and preparations went ahead for what was confidently expected to be the last wartime Christmas. A vermouth factory that had been captured near Forli had yielded a good dividend. Eventually somebody clamped down on it, but not before a long procession of vehicles piled high with an assortment of con-

tainers had ensured at least a Merry Christmas. Even water-trucks were known to fill up from this delectable source. For some time, too, a collection of livestock seemed miraculously to have become on charge to many a rear echelon, where turkeys strutted importantly and an odd pig wallowed.

It grew colder. There was snow on the hills, and on the coast snow fell but did not lie. Parties went off to Rome and Florence on leave. Men who had gone north on the deception plan "Shellac" returned. Some reinforcements arrived. Then just before Christmas came an order to be prepared to move to Greece, which threatened to deprive us at the

last minute of our Christmas. But Christmas Day arrived safely.

This was probably the best Christmas of the war. A fancy dress football match a San Benedetto between Officers and Sergeants resulted in an Honorable Draw. The Lincolns claimed that by lunch-time every one had reached a state of "sublime bliss". The York and Lancasters enclosed their menu in their War Diary, and certainly the mouth of the future historian, reading it, will water. In the evening there were dances for any who felt capable of dancing, and for many who were undoubtedly incapable.

So passed Christmas 1944.

3. GREECE OR NOT?

We were half packed up to go to Greece, and life continued in a sort of suspended animation until 31st December when the operation, daily postponed, was finally cancelled. An Officers Pantomime at Porto San Giorgio proved a great popular success. Heavy snow had fallen; parties were out clearing the roads to Fermo and Ripatransone; trucks slithered and clanked in skid-chains, and leave parties to Rome struggled through the southern passes or were held up completely. Route marches in the snow had a certain exhilaration, and there were several good football matches.

With the New Year training started. But on 2nd January a tragic accident befell the York and Lancasters. Some enemy mines exploded in a room full of men attending a course, causing considerable loss of life and many injuries. This tragedy cast a gloom over the last days in Porto San Giorgio. On 4th January the dead were buried in Ancona Military Cemetery.

On 6th January orders came for the Division to move to Taranto for shipment to Greece. Under the guise of special training in assault river crossings to be carried out on the Volturno — which many remembered having crossed without any special training at all — the Division moved south in cold, crowded three-tonners through barren staging areas, past ruined Ortona and across the sodden plain of Foggia, to the familiar camps of Taranto. Slashing rain and a high wind did not make them look any the more beautiful.

It took nearly eight weeks for the complete Division to cross the narrow Ionian Sea to Greece. Men, equipment and transport went piecemeal in any ships that could be spared. On 10th January General Weir and a small staff went by destroyer to Patras. The next evening Divisional Headquarters and advance parties of 128 Bde embarked in LSTs. At sea they were redirected to the Piraeus and changed their course to round the Peloponnese.

Off Aegina one LST struck a mine, and was just saved from drifting ashore; a doctor came aboard but no other ship would venture in among the mines.

On 13th January 2 Hampshires embarked on the "Hai-Lee" and 5 Hampshires in the "Marigot" and two days later entered Piraeus harbour, where the flat-roofed bungalows and the barren red soil looked almost African, and where occasional rifle shots and now a burst of automatic fire emphasised the desolate emptiness of the place. In the darkness they

were driven along the modern waterfront to Glifadha.

The remainder of the Division was kicking its heels in Taranto. 138 Bde ran courses for 70 and 71 Field Regts in the simple arts of the infantryman. In the mornings there were route marches and in the afternoons trucks went to Taranto and to Bari. On 20th January 138 Bde embarked in H.M.S. Easton and a number of LSTs for Patras, where they were to relieve 139 Bde. Rear parties and others continued to make the best of mud, tents and Taranto.

CHAPTER IV

Greece

1. ATHENS AND THE PIRAEUS

Rumours had been circulating at the time that the mysterious disappearance of 139 Bde from the Lamone battlefield had to do with troubles that had arisen in Greece, and sure enough on the 3rd December the Durhams emplaned from near Rome, and the following day the Leicesters left Bari in Dakota aircraft of the Balkan Air Force. After a short journey, for many their first flight and for all a change from the sardine-like packing in the back of a dust-choked three-tonner, they touched down on Kalamaki aerodrome, Athens. It was the beginning of a new and strange life. Gone were the stark simplicities of fighting the German. Gone the rules and usages of war which had become a sort of second nature. Here were no uniforms or distinction between friend and foe, between peaceful citizen and desperate gangster. In the handsome city of Athens, disfigured by the blatant signs of many rival parties, it was our old allies against the Germans. the ELAS army, which had been trained by British officers and armed with British weapons, which threatened to complete an armed "coup d'etat" by occupying the capital and taking over the government.

At this time negotiations were still going on between General Scobie and the ELAS

leaders, and there were no open hostilities, though local clashes occurred between ELAS and the Greek Gendarmerie, whom they accused of association with the Germans. The Greek civilians, when they felt it safe to do so, eagerly welcomed the British troops.

On the 5th December the Leicesters were ordered to occupy all the police stations in the Piraeus. By mid-morning they had reached the main police station, which was guarded by a strong detachment armed with an impressive variety of weapons. After a parley with Colonel Sotiriou, commander of the 6 Piraeus Regt ELAS, which was attended by much ceremony and a large crowd, this disputed building was amicably occupied by both parties. But that night action was taken against ELAS, who had refused to obey General Scobie's order to leave the city. To the Leicesters had fallen the task of clearing the Piraeus peninsula, and on the morning of 6th December they moved down to the southern tip, from which they intended methodically to carry out the clearance. In the afternoon an alarming situation developed at Navy House, where a vociferous crowd of nearly two thousand, many of them armed, threatened the meagre garrison. A company

was dispatched with three tanks and three armoured cars, and there were some casualties among the crowd before the danger was eliminated.

Meanwhile the house-clearing was a tricky, gruelling business. It was impossible to be sure who was who in the oddly assorted crowd, and often firing would start up from a house that had already been cleared. Snipers in upper stories and on roof tops required a lot of winking out. On all the streets road blocks of rocks, iron girders and heaps of rubble hampered the movement of tanks.

On the afternoon of 8th December the right hand company was cut off, and a section taken prisoner. This involved a threat to the Naval House and the only remaining landing jetty, which was averted by the timely dispatch of a tank to the scene, and by the supporting fire of a destroyer and a corvette. Thus passed the most anxious moment of the whole fighting, and on the following day further progress was made with Greek sailors giving valuable assistance in sorting out the dangerous characters, an idea suggested by the Bishop of Piraeus.

On the 9th December 1/4 Essex Regt, the leading battalion of 5 Indian Bde, landed, and the following day moved forward to cut the neck of the peninsula. This was done on the 11th December, and on the 12th, with the landing of the two Indian battalions of the brigade, the Leicesters were allowed to stand down, except for the company at Navy House, which had been supplied by sea for the previous five days.

Meanwhile the Durhams, who had been ordered to keep open the coast road from Athens, had had a quiet time after one small skirmish with a party of ELAS intent on manning a road block. But on the 13th December three men patrolling the streets in carriers were wounded, and that night fighting broke out. With an unerring instinct, born, it was suspected, in daylight spying by innocent

looking civilians, headquarters were attacked. The Greeks' knowledge of the city enabled them to work their way in between platoon and company positions, but though the battles were loud, confused and bitter, no ground was lost. At battalion headquarters clerks laid aside their pens to join in the defence of the building, which was rudely shaken just before dawn when a terrific explosion demolished the next house. It was several hours before three trapped men could be extricated, though with daylight the attacks petered out, and the enemy withdrew. His casualties were reliably reported to have been very heavy.

Lieut-General Hawkesworth arrived in Greece on the 15th December to take over command of operations. The following day the Leicesters again joined in the clearing of the outer Piraeus, and that night occupied part of the British Consulate and established their headquarters in the Bank of Athens. ELAS appeared to be in strength in the neighbourhood of Kononos Station, from which direction counter-attacks of varying weight and determination were regularly delivered during the hours of darkness. By this time 1/4 Essex Regt had made contact with the Durhams, thus opening the coast road, though only for armoured vehicles, except at night when odd open trucks ran the gauntlet of occasional sniping.

During the next five days 5 Indian Bde were relieved of their commitments, and on the night of 22nd December crossed the harbour and landed on the north side. As the first step in effecting a junction with them the Leicesters attempted to capture Kononos Station, but a fanatical defence maintained even in the face of tanks, held them up all day, and it was only after the carrier platoon had out-flanked the station during the night, and rocket-firing Beaufighters had joined in the battle that the place was cleared. After stiff fighting on the 24th December the

Essex linked up with the Leicesters on Christmas Day to complete the firm perimeter round the harbour, and finally to open the coast road. Here the Durhams had fought some successful actions and reached the line of the railway.

Thus the stage was set for the arrival of Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and Field Marshal Alexander, who spent Christmas night on HMS. Ajax which was lying off Piraeus harbour. This visit of the British Prime Minister in the midst of his many other cares and preoccupations achieved for Mr. Churchill a popularity with most of the Greek people unrivalled by any other Englishman since Byron, and throughout our stay in Greece we were frequently met by crowds chanting "Chur-chile, Chur-chile" with a fervour almost as great as that reserved for their own particular party.

On the 29th December the Leicesters concentrated for the attack on Evyenia Hill. After an artillery and mortar bombardment and under cover of a dense fog the attack went in early the next morning. Tanks helped to overrun a determined defence, and shortly after mid-day Anastasis cemetery was captured. The final assault on the summit was made the following morning, and the enemy, demoralised by shelling and rocket attacks and harassed by a destroyer firing on the reverse slopes of the hill, put up only a weak show of resistance.

In the course of the next four days many successful raids and patrols were carried out, until on the 5th January patrols probing forward in an unusual silence found that the enemy had withdrawn. These were troops of 13 Division, a regular ELAS formation, which was reported to be on its way back to the comparative safety of Thebes.

There was an air of unreality about all this fighting. Suddenly in the midst of a peaceful city war had flared up, but, despite the road blocks and the wire and the constant background of firing, Athens was never wholly

given up to battle. Soup kitchens followed the forward troops, distributing to the hungry civilians. Many citizens went about their normal business. But there was a continual nervous tension, as no one knew when or where the next skirmish was going to break out. The ELAS troops themselves were a very mixed lot, and the atrocities which were undoubtedly committed were almost always the work of the irresponsible extremist element. The following account of one street battle in which the Durhams were engaged shows the enemy's methods: —

"On one occasion when this company held a road block on the coast road a large and vociferous mob led by screaming women and young girls approached. This was dispersed several times by small arms fire over their heads and was finally persuaded to retire by mortar bombs, neatly dropped in front of its leaders. At the same time, however, a small group of armed men approached silently from the opposite direction, apparently with the intention of surprising the platoon on that flank. This trick was foiled."

Tribute was paid to the work of these two battalions in the Special Order issued by General Scobie on the 27th January: —

"I send my warm congratulations to all ranks on the successful outcome of the operations in Athens and Piraeus.

"The prolonged street fighting in the heart of a friendly city has been a sad and most difficult operation of war. In these exceptional and testing circumstances, you have done your duty without fear or favour. Your discomforts have been severe.

"Despite great provocation you have fought with a self-restraint and self-control truly worthy of the British Empire: the minimum of harm was caused to civil life and property, although this sometimes caused you to suffer avoidable casualties.

"I am proud of you.

"But you have a far greater reward than any words of mine can express, in the grateful

thanks and warm friendship of the Greek people who will for long remember what you have done for them."

2. PATRAS

Suddenly, in the early hours of 6th January, both the Durhams and the Leicesters were ordered to embark for Patras. The Durhams were the first away and had a stormy passage, enlivened by necessary sniping at floating mines. The Leicesters had embarked in the Norwegian troopship "Bergensfjord", which reached Patras on the 10th January and lay about a mile off shore while the Durhams disembarked. In the city itself, the modern capital of the Peloponnese, a curious state of affairs prevailed with troops of 11 Indian Bde and ELAS both under arms and both patiently ignoring the others presence. The Indian Bde had received a series of orders, first, to avoid hostilities; then to turn ELAS out; then to evacuate Patras (for which purpose H. M. S. Ajax was lying in the roadsteads). Now they had been reinforced and Brigadier Block's first action was to deliver an ultimatum to the ELAS forces to quit the city. The Durhams prepared to back up this threat, but the following morning it was found that ELAS had withdrawn and the city was peacefully occupied.

Patras harbour was a roomy roadstead capable of accommodating ocean-going cargo vessels, and a most useful supply base. Beyond the outskirts of the town the hills were capped with snow, which made a fine sight but offered little hospitality to the retreating ELAS army.

The Leicesters were billeted in the military barracks, where the walls bore traces of Ger-

man and ELAS occupation. There were facile drawings and bright scrawled propaganda slogans everywhere, and the place stank. On the 12th January they moved out of the city with the task of opening up the road to Araxos aerodrome. Having failed to comply with an ultimatum, an ELAS company at Kato Achaia was hustled on its way by mortar and artillery fire. The next day the Durhams occupied the aerodrome without incident, and General Hawkesworth landed there within a few hours. Bridges had everywhere been blown, and craters and collapsing roads set a limit even to patrolling.

At midnight on the 14th January a general truce throughout Greece brought about a complete cessation of hostilities while the ELAS forces withdrew behind the agreed boundaries. So ended the fighting in Greece, and on the 18th January amid scenes of wild enthusiasm a March Past of the troops in Patras was attended by a numerous, clapping crowd of citizens.

In the short space of one month the Leicesters and the Durhams had covered many miles by road, by air and by sea. They had left the plodding Italian fighting to take part in the strange, eerie battle of the Piraeus, from which they were suddenly transplanted to this demonstration of force at Patras. They had earned a rest, and at the end of the month the arrival of the advance parties of 138 Bde heralded their return to the re-awakening city of Athens, where another welcome awaited

them from the grateful citizens. In an impressive ceremony, attended by many dignitaries of the Greek Government and most of the citizens of Piraeus, a street was renamed

Brigadier A. P. Block Avenue in honour of the moderation displayed by 139 Bde in the Christmas fighting and in thanksgiving for the new tranquillity of Piraeus.

3. SALONIKA

The Foresters had been the first to leave Italy. After concentrating at Lido di Roma on the 30th November, they left by air two days later, each plane carrying fifteen fully-equipped men with a certain amount of essential stores and supplies. As was the case with the other two battalions, their transport left from Taranto in any available shipping, and they hoped rather than expected that they would soon see it again. They landed at Sedes Airport, Salonika, and proceeded to billets in the city.

Whereas, in Athens and Piraeus, precipitate action had prevented any real attempt to gauge the political situation, in Salonika the Foresters had time to look around. Salonika had been freed from the Germans a month previously. The Greek Security Battalions, which had been raised during the occupation as a counter to the Partisans, and which had been responsible for many atrocities, had been soundly trounced by the local ELAS army at Kilkie. ELAS was the army created by a coalition of the left-wing parties born in the hour of Greece's downfall. Unquestionably they had carried out a considerable, effective guerilla policy of harrying the Germans, but with the rapid decline in German fortune the extreme Communist element, had begun to direct the efforts of the National Liberation Front (EAM) and its army (ELAS) towards establishing for themselves complete military

and political control of Greece. In Salonika, after their victory at Kilkie, their power was unchallenged. The administration and policing of the city was in their hands, and their propaganda was everywhere. But General Bekerdjus, their Corps Commander in Macedonia and an able soldier who had won a D. S. O. in the last war, was a man of no pronounced political views. It was believed that attacks against British troops were withheld by his order. ELAS strength in the city was estimated at two thousand, with another four thousand immediately available in the surrounding countryside — a formidable force which would have swamped the garrison of 7 Indian Bde, with the Foresters now under command.

In appearance ELAS troops conformed to the approved style of Partisan armies. Their dress was made up from the discarded uniforms of the various armies which had been in Greece during the past four years. They seemed to have a strong preference for German steel helmets, which were invariably too big. They were unwashed and unshaved. As they strolled about the streets they carried a variety of weapons, some even had spandaus on their shoulders, with belts of ammunition slung round their necks, and an alarming number of grenades dangling from their belts. But despite their somewhat picturesque appearance, they were an organised army, and their officers included some Germans.

With the outbreak of fighting in Athens, it was confidently expected that there would be trouble in Salonika, and all possible precautions were taken against a surprise attack. Guards were placed on supply and Red Cross dumps, the power station and the beach-head. ELAS sentries stood alongside ours at many of these places, but there were no incidents. On the 7th December a mass anti-British demonstration was arranged, to be followed by a general strike. It was a fine day and not too cold, and the demonstration was a decided success. Attendance was compulsory, so there were big crowds there who marched along singing, waving flags and banners, and thoroughly enjoying themselves in this typically Greek fashion. The slogan of the day was "Out with the British", and speaker after speaker reiterated that they would not lay down their arms and would resist any attempt at disarmament by the British authorities. The general strike lasted for two and a half days, and was then called off, largely because only they themselves were being inconvenienced and the British troops, who had enjoyed watching the demonstration, were quite indifferent to their threats and propaganda.

On the 15th December another demonstration and strike was planned. Heavy rain damped the ardour of the demonstrators, and the performance was postponed for two days, and when it finally did take place both the attendance and the enthusiasm were much less than on the first occasion. German and Italian soldiers, who were either prisoners of ELAS or part of their army, began to give themselves up to our guards. Indeed, by this time the KKE propaganda machine was beginning to break down. Their methods were naive, in any case. A British corporal was offered officer's rank in their army as the reward for desertion, and a committee was formed to write a pamphlet in the "Indian language"

in an attempt to convert the Indian troops. In the only two papers published in the city, Mr. Churchill and General Scobie were monotonously denounced as "butchers, fascists, tyrants". But in face of the tactfulness and neutrality of the British forces it was difficult to put across stories of British terrorisation. The people saw British troops playing football against Greek teams, and unarmed soldiers drinking with ELAS troops in the innumerable small bars.

The New Year was greeted by a considerable fusillade of small arms fire all over the town, an old Greek custom, apparently, which resulted in one woman being hit by a spent bullet. In the early days of January the morale of the ELAS army continued to deteriorate. Private armies must be fed and paid, and though money was being collected by many ingenious methods none of it reached the rank and file. Cinema takings were confiscated, collections were made for the "poor in Athens" — a similar collection for "the poor in Salonika" was being made in Athens — and the stocks of many shops were compulsorily sold. The food supply was inadequate, for most of the ELAS troops came from outside Salonika and the district could not support this additional population. To prevent large-scale desertions, they were confined to barracks when not on duty.

Then like a bombshell came news of the truce, one of the terms of which was that Salonika should be evacuated. For a while the ELAS commanders were undecided what course to pursue, but it soon became clear that they were going to accept the terms. It was in some ways a pitiful sight as that bedraggled army moved out of the city. The main exodus took place on the 16th January. Food, stores, tables, chairs, stoves, chimneys, pots, pans were piled high on any cart or vehicle they could lay hands on. Guns were towed by



tractors and carts. Despite exhortations to the citizens to join in a grand marching out parade, there was none of the colour or excitement of their demonstrations about this inglorious retreat. A few stalwarts turned out, and certainly no one dared to show pleasure at their departure.

The Foresters now took over the policing of the town, and Lieut-Colonel Welchman was installed as Chief Constable. Looting civilians had to be restrained, and the constabulary was bombarded with complaints and enquiries of the most varied nature. On the 23rd January the Greek National Guard took over these duties. These recently recruited soldiers, whose sympathies were predominantly Royalist, had

often to be restrained from a too impulsive and thorough purge.

A week later, Major-General C.M. Boucher, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., took the salute at a march past, when the applause and enthusiasm of a large crowd expressed real gratitude for the part the Foresters had played in averting a crisis and in removing a menace from the city. The only fear of the majority of citizens was of the return of the departed army, which agents left behind asserted would not be long delayed.

On the 8th February the Foresters left Salonika by sea, bound for Athens. In these two months tact and diplomacy had won a bloodless victory.

4. THE PELOPONNESE

By the terms of the truce that had been agreed by the ELAS leaders early in January, ELAS troops were to withdraw from Attica and Salonika, and in the Peloponnese were to pull back south of a line drawn from Pergos on the west to Argos on the east. Except for 139 Bde in Patras there were no British troops in this area, and accordingly in mid-January General Weir prepared to move south with that part of the Division which had already reached Greece — 46 Recce Regt and two Hampshire battalions. On 18th January the Recce Regt with two companies of 2 Hampshires and a platoon of 272 Field Coy R.E., moved west along the historic coast road past Eleusis and Megara, across the narrow Corinth Canal to the ugly modern town of Corinth, where a vociferous welcome awaited them. Their task was to open up the road from Corinth south to Argos and Navplion, and

west to Patras, along which the force in Patras was pushing to meet them. General Weir moved to Corinth and took over operational command of the whole Peloponnese north of the demarcation line. His command was known as "Bruteforce", but two days later assumed the more pacific title of "Brewforce".

Southwards through the barren, stony hills the road to Argos was soon open. The town lay in a plain at the head of the gulf of Argos. Snow covered the surrounding hills. To the east of the gulf Navplion, at one time capital of Greece, was clamped between high rock masses and the sea. Into this fertile plain, the seat of an ancient civilisation, 128 Bde, thenceforth known as „Tigerforce“, moved on 24th January. In Argos 2 Hampshires were greeted with flowers and cheers, and at Navplion the streets were lined with coloured lights to welcome 5 Hampshires; only at Miloi,

across the gulf opposite Navplion, was there unease. Miloï lay just north of the demarcation line.

So, with the end of January, the Divisional lay-out was taking shape. Headquarters moved to Loutraki, a lovely resort on the northern shores of the bay of Corinth. To the south Tigerforce, based on the plain of Argos (1/4 Hampshires, who had just arrived, were in the area of Corinth), were responsible for the province of Argolis-Korinthia. Patforce, based on Patras, where at the turn of the month 138 Bde relieved 139 Bde, controlled the province of Akhaia. 139 Bde with only a vague responsibility for the security of the capital, were resting and training in the outskirts of Athens.

The main early task throughout the broad expanse of the northern Peloponnese was to restore confidence in the rule of law and order. For four years there had been no stable government; peasants were afraid to sow where they might not be able to reap; little work was done, and men lived on their capital or their stock. German or Italian garrisons occupied the towns, and in the hills Partisan bands roamed, living on the land. For each of their forays against the occupation forces a terrible vengeance had been exacted. No sooner had the Germans gone than ELAS troops installed themselves, and dealt out a stern retribution on those who had associated in any way with the Germans. So for the next month Brewforce was engaged in collecting arms and ammunition from ELAS dumps and from the population, in searching for wandering ELAS bands and notorious leaders, in penetrating to the lonely hill villages, and in setting up in the larger towns a working administration. A thorough survey was made and much detailed information collected of the economy of whole districts, and there was a start in the distribution of the most urgent necessities of life. To increase confidence among the ordin-

ary citizens it was necessary to impress the Greeks with the power of British arms, and much was done in the way of ceremonial parades, which in any case appealed strongly to one side of the Greek temperament.

The modern Greek is noted for three things — his political instability, his business cunning and his hospitality. Of all three there were numerous instances, but especially of Greek hospitality. Their national drink, retsina, a sort of resinated wine, and ouzo, a liqueur of almost pure alcohol, were tastes that they forced us to acquire, and out of their scanty stock of food they delighted to give lavish banquets for their British Allies.

In the towns the effect of our presence was soon evident. Shops began to open up. "Civil Affairs" offices, run by officers of each unit, set the Greeks to work putting their own house in order. Apart from the political rancours to be smoothed away, with a shortage of transport and material this was no easy undertaking. But progress was made. By 2nd February the road from Corinth to Patras was open. The following day a company of 1/4 Hampshires moved up their third base camp at Kastania. From here they went forward, supplied by mules and donkeys, to the lovely, lonely valley beneath Mount Killini, where later in the month they were cut off by a heavy fall of snow in this gloomy, magnificent mountain fastness. 169 Bn of the Greek National Guard came under command of Tigerforce. Argos was cordoned and searched. From Patras a reconnaissance party got through to Pergos where they had a tumultuous welcome.

On 17th February agreement was reached between the Greek Government and the EAM leaders; the ELAS army, having made dumps of its arms, was to be disbanded. The Division assisted the returning soldiers on their homeward way.

5. INTO THE SOUTHERN PELOPONNESE

On 2nd March Tigerforce began the occupation of the Southern Peloponnese. In Tripolis Royalists and EAM, assembled in different squares, vied with each other in a welcome of flowers and cheers and ratsina. In Sparta the troops entered the town through a close-packed crowd chanting "E-A-M, E-A-M, E-A-M." Kalamata turned out to greet 2 Hampshires. Only at Megalopolis, erstwhile ELAS Divisional Headquarters, was the reception frigid.

At the same 9 Manchesters moved north across the gulf of Corinth into Aitolia, where the population of Aigrinion, the capital, were inclined to be hostile. In an address of welcome to the British troops the KKE President said "We will not tolerate the Fascism of Patras." Both at Aigrinion and at Mesolonghi the displacement of the Mayors, part of the policy of the Greek Government, was received with displeasure.

172 Field Regiment had taken over the province of Korinthia. In Corinth itself minor clashes occurred, and some disbanded ELAS troops were caught trying to smuggle arms to Athens.

Patforce was pushing out to the western islands. Rocky Ithaca extended a hearty but somewhat timid greeting to the Sappers who landed there on 5th March. Later in the month a detachment of the National Guard was established on the island. A company of the KOYLI landed on Kefallinia and, though at first poorly received, enjoyed a pleasant three weeks there. From Zakynthos had come reports of serious clashes, but at the end of the month a party visiting the island had a tumultuous welcome.

In mid-March the Leicesters were put under command of 138 Bde and moved up into Northern Epirus. Despite the sympathies of

the people, which were predominantly EAM, the British troops were welcomed enthusiastically, though the Nomarch and the Bishop, whom they had brought with them, had difficulty in getting a hearing when they attempted to speak from a balcony in Yiannina. This lakeside town had at one time been the headquarters of General Zervas, a regular soldier and leader of the EDES, a partisan group with Royalist sympathies. Both the EDES and the EAM parties co-operated in the handing in of arms, though south of the Albanian border EDES bands were said to be terrorizing the population. Like many similar reports this later appeared somewhat of an exaggeration.

Further south 9 Manchesters occupied Amphilokhia, where a well-organized dump yielded over a thousand rifles.

In the southern Peloponnese Tigerforce was generally meeting a friendly reception. Patrols to the outlying villages would often return wreathed in bouquets and a little incoherent from the ratsina which had been poured down their not unwilling throats. At Kalamata, where 570 Coy RASC were operating the port, relations were at times somewhat strained. A company of 5 Hampshires was sent down to the coast at Yithion, where the Nomarch and British officers were entertained to a sumptuous feast. But at Molaoi the situation was tense, though there was no actual attack on British troops. On 25th March, Greek Independence Day, there were great celebrations, and marches and processions throughout Greece. In Sparta the square was thronged with well-martialled contingents from the outlying villages, all dressed in their elaborate traditional costumes; there was dancing in the afternoon and in the evening torchlight processions marched through the streets, singing.

The handing over of responsibility to the Greeks began in earnest towards the end of the month. Outlying detachments were drawn in, and the Division prepared to move back to Italy. This was done under the cover of an exercise, called "Terrific", which was to take place north of Athens. Few were deceived.

At the month's close a cross-country run was held over a gruelling nine mile course at Navplion, and won by the Leicesters. Indeed, in Greece, the home of the "Games", athletics had been boosted, and battalions and brigades held sports meetings in preparation for a Grand Divisional Sports, which never took place.

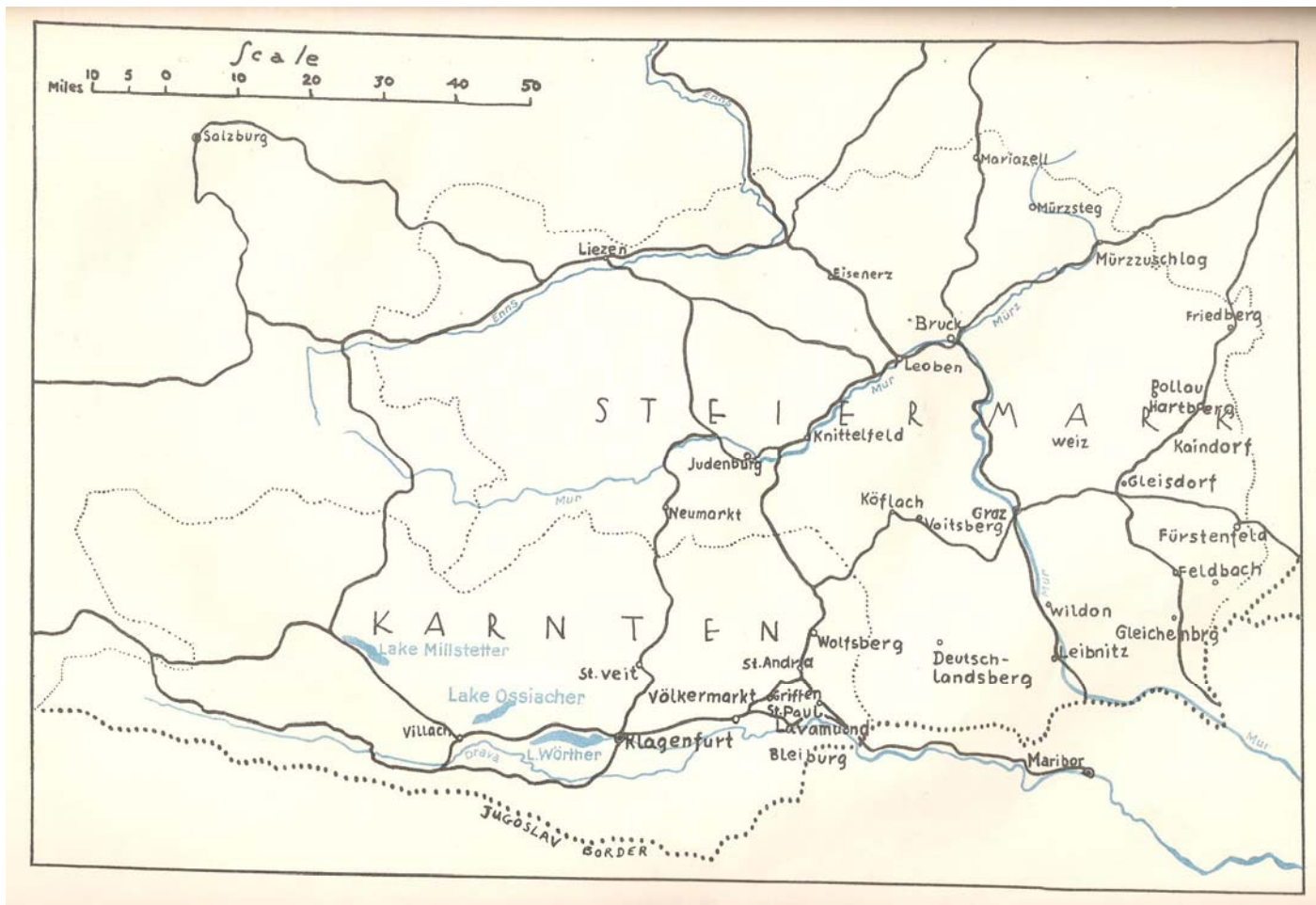
By that time Tigerforce had left the Southern Peloponnese and was back in the plain of Argos. On 5th April 46 Division handed over its commitments to 23 Armoured Bde, and two days later the return to Italy commenced. 138 Bde began to embark from Patras and the remainder passed through a dusty staging camp in Athens on their way to Taranto.

Athens had many attractions. The rest camp at Glifadha was never more popular; there was wine, women and song. In the city itself the barbed wire had gone and life had returned

more or less to normal, though prices were absurdly high. This was not to be wondered at, when German printed drachma bills were rubbish in the streets. Luxury goods there were, but clothes, boots, food and cigarettes fetched fabulous sums.

The Parthenon had been chipped by bullets in the fighting three months previously. Otherwise Athens showed little signs of war except along the beaches where the barbed wire, entanglements and concrete road blocks erected by the Germans had not been removed. In many little bays round the coast of Greece concrete, wire and mines were a monument to the enemy's wasted anti-invasion preparations.

So ended the Division's first experience of the problems that were to face the countries of Europe in the difficult days of early freedom from Nazi rule. Greece, with its immortal traditions of liberty and its deep, genuine friendship for England, had been a test case. But for us it had been a pleasant change from the battlefields of Italy, and its barren, rocky hills, where Arcadian shepherds eked out a far from idyllic existence, its blue bays, its ruins of a greater past, its pageantry and its hospitality are among the better memories of this war.



Epilogue

Many were already in the familiar rich farmland round Forli and Bertinoro, and some were still on their way north by ship or road, when news came of the immense surrender of Germany's southern armies. In some ways it was a relief that we arrived too late to take part in the final battle of Italy. On the other hand, to a Division which had suffered much in the hard slogging battles that had made eventual triumph possible was due the thrill of headlong pursuit and final victory. For even in North Africa our part was finished before the last act of disciplined surrender; and in Italy it was fighting all the way. Salerno's near failure only led to the Volturno;

the Volturno to the Garigliano and Ornitto. On our return from the Middle East, the triumph in the Gothic Line was not conclusive; three months later we were fighting bitterly and more slowly on the Lamone.

So in a blazing May we celebrated successive Victory Days. Perhaps as bonfires lit up the night there were some who felt

“My dreams are of a field afar

And blood and smoke and shot

There in their graves my comrades are,

In my grave I am not.”

The move up into Austria had already begun, and two months later the Division moved into its final occupational zone in Styria.

Order of Battle

137 Bde (1)

2/5th Bn The West Yorkshire Regiment
2/6th Bn The Duke of Wellington's Regiment
2/7th Bn The Duke of Wellington's Regiment

138 Bde

6th Bn The Lincolnshire Regiment
2/4th Bn The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
6th Bn The York and Lancaster Regiment

139 Bde

2/5th Bn The Leicestershire Regiment
2/5th Bn The Sherwood Foresters (2)
9th Bn The Sherwood Foresters (3)
16th Bn The Durham Light Infantry

128 Bde

1/4th Bn The Hampshire Regiment
2/4th Bn The Hampshire Regiment (4)
5th Bn The Hampshire Regiment
2nd Bn The Hampshire Regiment
46th Reconnaissance Regiment, R. A. C.
2/7th Bn The Middlesex Regiment (5)
2nd Bn The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers (6)
9th Bn The Manchester Regiment

Royal Artillery

69th (West Riding) Field Regiment (7)
70th (West Riding) Field Regiment
71st (West Riding) Field Regiment
172nd Field Regiment
58th Anti-Tank Regiment
115th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment

Royal Engineers

270th Field Company
271st Field Company
272nd Field Company
273rd Field Park Company

RASC

520 Coy (Inf Bde)
519 Coy (Inf Bde)
570 Coy (Inf Bde)
521 Coy (Inf Div Tps)

RAMC

183 Field Ambulance
184 Field Ambulance
185 Field Ambulance
15th Field Hygiene Section

REME

128 Inf Bde Workshops
138 Inf Bde Workshops
139 Inf Bde Workshops
46 Div Light Aid Detachments
46 Light Recovery Section
46 Infantry Troops Workshop

RAOC

46 Division Ordnance Field Park
60 Mobile Laundry and Bath Unit
46th Divisional Signals (Royal Corps of Signals)
46th Divisional Provost Coy (Corps of Military Police)

NOTES

1. Replaced by 128 Bde, September 1942
2. Re-designated 5th Bn The Sherwood Foresters, February 1943
3. Replaced by 16th Bn The Durham Light Infantry, November 1940
4. Replaced by 2nd Bn The Hampshire Regiment, May 1943
5. Replaced by 2nd Bn The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, May 1943
6. Replaced by 9th Bn The Manchester Regiment, May 1944
7. Replaced by 172 Field Regiment, R. A., September 1942

Commanders and Staff⁽¹⁾

46 Division Commanders

Major-General H. A. Freeman-Attwood, DSO.,
CBE., MC.
Major-General J. L. I. Hawkesworth, CB., CBE.,
DSO.
Major-General C. E. Weir, CB., CBE., DSO.

GSO. 1

Lt. Colonel H. C. W. Eking, OBE., R. E.
Lt. Colonel J. Loveday.
Lt. Colonel J. C. Anderson.
Lt. Colonel J. H. S. Reid, OBE., R. E.

AA AND QMG

Lt. Colonel M. B. Jones, OBE.
Lt. Colonel G. H. McMurtrie, OBE.
Lt. Colonel C. E. Bond, OBE.

CRA

Brigadier T. Rigby, DSO., MC.
Brigadier B. Daunt, DSO.

CRE

Lt. Colonel J. C. Walkey, CBE.
Lt. Colonel J. V. C. Moberley, DSO., OBE.
Lt. Colonel G. O. N. Thompson, DSO.

CR SIGS.

Lt. Colonel A. R. B. Dobson
Lt. Colonel G. Mellor
Lt. Colonel J. W. Mills, OBE.

ADMS

Colonel A. L. Crockford, DSO., MC., TD.
Colonel J. B. S. Guy, CBE., TD.

CRASC

Lt. Colonel F. R. Humphreys
Lt. Colonel J. Austin, OBE.

CREME

Lt. Colonel C. Alexander
Lt. Colonel K. Estlin, OBE., MC.

ADOS

Lt. Colonel R. F. Barker, OBE., MC.
Lt. Colonel E. Horsey
Lt. Colonel P. C. Stovin
Lt. Colonel D. S. Ingham, OBE.
Lt. Colonel F. D. M. Harding, OBE.

Royal Artillery

70th Field Regt. Lt. Colonel H. G. Pepper, DSO.,
TD.
71st Field Regt. Lt. Colonel D. A. Hunt, DSO.,
OBE.
Lt. Colonel P. M. Thomas, DSO.
172nd Field Regt. Lt. Colonel W. D. McNeill Gra-
ham, DSO., OBE.
Lt. Colonel F. E. Jarvis, DSO.,
TD.
58th A. Tk Regt. Lt. Colonel H. S. L. Pugwell,
MC.
Lt. Colonel W. S. F. Tetlow,
TD.
115th Lt. A. A. Regt. Lt. Colonel R. B. Woods.

128 Bde

Commanders

Brigadier M. A. James, VC., DSO., MC.
Brigadier J. L. Spencer, DSO., OBE., MC.
Brigadier T. P. B. Scott, DSO.
Brigadier D. A. Kendrew, CBE., DSO.

2 Hamps

Lt. Colonel S. J. Martin
Lt. Colonel P. D. Miller, OBE.
Lt. Colonel T. A. Rotherham, DSO., MC.

2/4 Hamps

Lt. Colonel J. H. Robinson, DSO., OBE.

1/4 Hamps

Lt. Colonel C. C. Smythe, OBE., MC.
Lt. Colonel R. Chandler, DSO.
Lt. Colonel A. Boyce, DSO.
Lt. Colonel A. Rychworth-Hill, MC.

5 Hamps

Lt. Colonel H. C. C. Newnham, DSO., MC.
Lt. Colonel D. Colville, MBE.
Lt. Colonel A. C. Ward MC.
Lt. Colonel J. H. Robinson, DSO., OBE.

138 Bde

Commanders

Brigadier E. P. Harding, CBE., DSO., MC.
Brigadier M. D. Erskine, DSO.
Brigadier A. D. McKechnie, DSO.

6 *Lincolns*

Lt. Colonel J. Myrtle, TD.
Lt. Colonel D. P. Yates, DSO., OBE.
Lt. Colonel F. C. L. Bell, DSO., MC.

2/4 *KOYLI*

Lt. Colonel L. F. E. Wieler
Lt. Colonel N. A. H. Joynson, MC.
Lt. Colonel S. Enderby, DSO., MC.
Lt. Colonel J. R. Johnson, DSO., MC.

6 *Y AND L*

Lt. Colonel C. E. Beckwith
Lt. Colonel D. A. Kendrew, DSO.
Lt. Colonel A. D. Miller, DSO.

139 *Bde*

Commanders

Brigadier R. Chichester-Constable, DSO., MC.
Brigadier R. E. H. Stott, CBE.
Brigadier A. P. Block, CBE., DSO.

2/5 *Leicesters*

Lt. Colonel G. L. Dolman
Lt. Colonel D. W. B. Orr
Lt. Colonel S. Enderby, DSO., MC.

Lt. Colonel N. L. Martin, DSO.
Lt. Colonel J. H. Cubbon, OBE.

5 *Foresters*

Lt. Colonel R. E. H. Stott, CBE.
Lt. Colonel E. A. Hefford, DSO.
Lt. Colonel J. R. Welchman, DSO.

16 *D. L. I.*

Lt. Colonel R. F. Ware, MC.
Lt. Colonel J. C. Preston, DSO.
Lt. Colonel L. Worrall, MC.

46 *Recce Regt*

Lt. Colonel F. H. Cotton, MBE.
Lt. Colonel J. H. C. Preen, OBE.

9 *Manchesters*

Lt. Colonel F. G. A. Parsons

2 *RNF*

Lt. Colonel F. H. Butterfeld

NOTE.

(I). For the period of action in the Mediterranean Theatre only.

Honours and Awards ⁽¹⁾

VICTORIA CROSS

Lieut. G. R. Norton (UDF.) MM.
1/4 Hamps.

Capt. J. H. C. Brunt, MC. 6 Lincs.

C. B.

Major-General J.L.I. Hawkesworth
Brigadier A. P. Block

Major-General C. E. Weir
Brigadier G. P. Harding

HQ. 46 Division

C.B.E.

Colonel J. B. S. Guy

O.B.E.

RAMC.

Lt.Colonel R. N. Jones

Lt.Colonel G. H. McMurtrie

Lt.Colonel C. E. Bond

Lt.Colonel J. H. S. Reid

<i>B.E.M.</i>		<i>M.B.E.</i>		Major J. M. McKiddie	RAMC.
L/Cpl. R. Brennan		CMP.	Major B. W. F. Marfell	Lt.Col. R. H. Camrass	
RRM. G. F. Jenkins		CMP.	Lt.Col. M. S. Bates		
<i>Bar to M.M.</i>			Capt. P. M. Gardner	<i>M.M.</i>	
Sgt. H. Wilman		CMP.	Major G. F. H. Archer	Sgt. J. S. Bowley	CMP.
<i>D.S.O.</i>			Major D. Craig	Cpl. W. Adams	CMP.
Colonel A. L. Crockford	RAMC.		SQMS. A. Taylor		
			SSM. H. Taylor		

Royal Artillery

<i>Bar to D.S.O.</i>		Major A. T. Eeles	L/Bdr. G. A. Collier
Lt.Col. H. G. Pepper		Capt. D. G. Purnell	Bdr. J. A. R. Nunn
<i>D.S.O.</i>		Lt. K. M. Maddow	Bdr. Goodger
Lt.Col. W. D. McNeill Graham		Capt. J. Weeslake	L/Sgt. E. Page
Lt.Col. D. A. Hunt		Major J. E. Porter	L/Bdr. F. H. Orton
Lt.Col. H. J. Wainwright		Capt. H. D. R. Buck	Bdr. G. Williamson
Lt.Col. B. Daunt		Capt. D. H. Tildesley	Cpl. R. L. Mitchell
Lt.Col. F. E. Jarvis		Capt. M. A. C. Frewer	Gnr. R. Kennard
Brigadier T. Rigby		Capt. L. Silvers	Bdr. G. H. Wallis
Lt.Col. P. M. Thomas		Lt. E. Slade	Gnr. W. Skelton
<i>M.B.E.</i>		Lt. P. L. Daly	L/Bdr. J. Coe
RSM. A. H. Briggs		Major R. Smith	Bdr. F. C. Bradley
Capt. J. B. Hirst		Major G. C. Willis	Sgt. A. J. Webb
<i>B.E.M.</i>		Lt. R. H. Mathews	Gnr. J. Maione
Sgt. W. Blamires		Capt. J. F. Norris	L/Bdr. W. G. Wright
Bdr. Jakeway		Lt. E. R. Hutchins	L/Sgt. C. W. Belt
<i>D.C.M.</i>		Major L. W. D. Wetlake	L/Sgt. E. Slater
L/Bdr. R. Hitchin		Capt. J. A. Hartley	Gnr. G. T. Werham
BSM. E. G. Blackmore		Lt. H. F. Webber	Gnr. Barraclough
Sgt. R. Haithwaite		Major F. W. Boyce	Gnr. R. T. Baker
<i>M.C.</i>		Capt. D. H. Cox	L/Sgt. Nelson
Major R. A. Gunn		Capt. T. J. Gordon	L/Bdr. G. A. W. Scott
Lt. J. S. Perry		Capt. C. L. Warnock	Sgt. R. Lodder
Major R. T. V. Hay		<i>Bar to M.C.</i>	Gnr. M. Woods
Capt. H. T. Craggs		Capt. D. H. Tildesley	BSM. R. Stenton
Capt. S. L. G. Garland			Gnr. J. Peaker
Lt. E. E. Kisch		<i>Bar to M.M.</i>	RSM. R. Richards
Major W. C. Hudson		Bdr. J. Coe	Bdr. M. Greig
Capt. R. A. Swinford			Gnr. S. W. Last
Lt. A. T. Johnson		<i>M.M.</i>	Gnr. R. B. Cowler
Lt. M. C. Swift		Sgt. J. Bland	Bdr. A. J. Johnson
Major R. P. Kensington		Sgt. G. Rushton	Sgt. G. Morgan
Capt. W. D. Vincent		Cpl. J. Wright	Gnr. W. Shipman
Capt. G. H. Shingleton		Sgt. A. Milne	BSM. E. Stanley
Major R. C. Vickers		Sgt. A. A. Mappleback	Bdr. A. L. Cutlef
		Sgt. D. A. Russell	Sgt. J. A. Ricketts
		Gnr. R. S. Smith	BSM. Smith
		Gnr. E. C. Clarke	<i>Silver Star (US. Army)</i>
		Gnr. P. McKay	Major J. W. Kennedy
			L/Sgt. E. Page

Royal Engineers

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. G. O. N. Thompson

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. J. C. Walker

M.B.E.

Major R. E. Manning-Sanders

Lt. B. C. Le May

M.C.

Major J. J. Evans

2/Lt. J. D. Eaton

2/Lt. W. J. Chapman

Major A. J. Turner

Major J. H. Fyson

Major I. S. Keelan

Lt. S. G. Merchant

Major J. B. Bond

Major R. T. Brain

Lt. J. C. Braithwaite

Major W. P. Gardiner

M.M.

Spr. T. Elkerton

Sgt. J. N. Horne

L/Cpl. D. I. Robb

L/Cpl. A. Hancock

L/Sgt. J. A. D. Wilcock

L/Sgt. A. Martin

Cpl. W. F. Storkes

Spr. J. McGhee

Cpl. H. R. Wilkinson

Royal Corps of Signals

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. J. J. Ballard

Lt.Col. J. W. Mills

M.B.E.

Capt. L. K. Bramwell

Capt. R. S. Walker

Major H. C. Wainman

D.C.M.

L/Cpl. R. Wilkinson

M.C.

Capt. A. A. Holifield

Lt. N. R. Williams

M.M.

Sigmn. L. Buck

Cpl. H. L. Mitchell

Cpl. J. F. Waite

Cpl. A. F. Fuller

L/Cpl. A. B. Thorpe

Cpl. J. Harriman

Sigmn. H. R. Ward

B.E.M.

L/Sgt. S. Eaddie

L/Sgt. S. Ibbotson

Royal Army Chaplains' Department

M.C.

Rev. G. H. Parkes

HQ. 46 Div.

Rev. C. McKinnon

6 Y and L.

Rev. F. Hunter

Attd 70 Fd Regt

Rev. J. Bown

HQ. 128 Inf Bde

Royal Army Service Corps

M.B.E.

Capt. J. E. G. Roberts

MSM. A. B. Brown

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. J. Austin

B.E.M.

Sgt. T. A. Carrick

M.M.

Dvr. P. Murphy

Dvr. R. Willsher

Dvr. G. Howle

Dvr. H. E. Hand

L/Cpl. J. Butler

Dvr. A. A. Lawton

Dvr. P. C. Taylor

L/Cpl. F. J. Wratten

Dvr. J. W. Hughes

Dvr. F. A. J. Baker

Dvr. R. W. Armstrong

Royal Army Medical Corps

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. J. J. O'Connell
Lt.Col. A. T. Pitkeathly
Lt.Col. D. T. Swift

M.B.E.

Major D. G. Liversidge
Lt. (QM.) H. A. Stephens
RSM. R. Hardie
Capt. R. H. Renwick

B.E.M.

Cpl. L. Hammond

M.C.

Major T. R. Wilson
Major V. J. Downie
Major R. A. Hooper
Capt. H. M. Jones
Capt. G. E. David
Capt. J. Braham
Capt. E. H. Jeanes
Capt. J. B. Jayne

M.M.

Pte. L. Caras
Pte. A. C. Emery
S/Sgt. F. E. Reed
Pte. E. Thompson
Sgt. G. P. Brown
Cpl. A. Cockerill
Cpl. G. E. Andrews
L/Sgt. D. T. McKay
Pte. A. J. Ruffle

Royal Army Ordnance Corps

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. D. S. Ingram
Lt.Col. F. D. M. Harding

M.B.E.

Sub/Cdr. W. T. Anderton
Capt. W. F. R. Batson

B.E.M.

Sgt. Sloane

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. K. S. Estlin

M.B.E.

Capt. C. H. Brickell

B.E.M.

Dvr. J. Beverley
S/Sgt. T. B. Lorimer

M.C.

Major J. H. Pinches
Capt. C. Petherick

M.M.

S/Sgt. T. Armitage
Cpl. E. Sparrow
Cfn. A. C. Taylor

46th Reconnaissance Regiment

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. J. H. Preen

D.S.O.

Major J. Langham

B.E.M.

L/Cpl. F. V. Taylor

D.C.M.

Sgt. W. Anderson
Sgt. A. K. McLean
Sgt. R. W. Fisher

M.C.

Lieut. P. J. W. Perks
Lieut. P. Purcell
Major D. Neill
Lieut. J. F. Carver
Lieut. H. H. Plackett
Capt. P. H. Mason

M.M.

Tpr. J. Higgins
Cpl. W. P. Fellows
Tpr. E. W. Sweeting

Tpr. E. D. Bridges
Tpr. W. Wood
Tpr. C. Mansfield
Tpr. Dowdney
Tpr. J. Blake
Cpl. R. Boyes
Sgt. L. Zenftman

Croix de Guerre and Star

Tpr. A. Frost
Tpr. C. Sinclair
Lieut. Martin

2nd Bn The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers

M.C.

Lieut. R. R. Gibson

M.M.

Sgt. T. Dobson

9th Bn The Manchester Regiment

D.C.M.

Sgt. J. Hargreaves

M.C.

Lieut. G. Weymout

128 Infantry Brigade

HQ, 128 Inf Bde

C.B.E.

Brigadier D. A. Kendrew

O.B.E.

Major W. J. Eldridge

M.B.E.

Major B. H. Leader

Major B. M. Harris

M.C.

Lieut. P. B. Brooke

2nd Bn The Hampshire Regiment

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. T. A. Rotherham

O.B.E.

Major P. D. Miller

D.C.M.

Sgt. E. Carter

M.B.E.

Lt. (QM.) A. J. Truran

M.C.

Major B. Doughty-Wylie

Major M. H. Hutchinson

Major N. G. Davey

2/Lt. R. R. Stolworthy

Major D. Jenkins

Capt. A. W. B. Goode

Bar to M.C.

Major J. W. Brohaut

M.M.

Cpl. A. Hawes

Pte. M. W. Levy

Pte. V. E. R. Willmott

Sgt. D. A. Carter

Cpl. J. C. A. Cull

Sgt. W. Wise

Pte. R. Barff

Pte. A. J. Barnes

Sgt. M. Nolan

L/Cpl. H. J. Hooper

1/4th Bn The Hampshire Regiment

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. R. Chandler

Lt.Col. A. Boyce

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. C. C. Smythe

M.B.E.

Capt. R. L. T. Elwin

Lieut. F. P. Edwards

B.E.M.

Sgt. A. J. Rutherford

D.C.M.

Pte. A. Fowler

Pte. F. Page

CSM. A. A. McAllister

Sgt. N. S. Wynn

Sgt. A. Fry

Bar to M.C.

Major L. L. Baillie (UDF.)

M.C.

Major J. W. Tinniswood

Major H. J. Winn

Major T. A. Rotherham

Major J. P. Salmon

Capt. H. Killick

Lieut. D. P. Cunningham
Lieut. E. O. Bowles (UDF.)
M.M.

Pte. K. Magson
Pte. A. W. Epps
L/Sgt. F. Price
L/Sgt. B. W. F. Roe
Cpl. A. Fry
Pte. R. J. Fryer

Cpl. R. F. Woodward
Pte. N. H. Alexander
Pte. A. G. F. Thorne
Cpl. J. W. Scott
Cpl. G. Scott
Sgt. C. H. Taylor
L/Cpl. L. Money
L/Cpl. A. Stoner
L/Cpl. C. P. Croucher

Sgt. F. Hughes
Pte. H. Lee
Pte. E. J. Smith
Sgt. J. D. H. White
Cpl. T. Harrison
Pte. S. P. Wynn
Silver Star (US. Army)
Sgt. A. Fry

2/4th Bn The Hampshire Regiment

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. J. H. H. Robinson

M.C.

Capt. A. H. C. Cock

M.M.

Sgt. A. D. Bennigsen
L/Sgt. W. F. Brown

5th Bn The Hampshire Regiment

Bar to D.S.O.

Lt.Col. J. H. H. Robinson

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. H. C. C. Newnham
Major L. H. Heald

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. J. H. H. Robinson

M.B.E.

Lt. (QM.) S. A. Osgood
RSM. T. A. Barnett

D.C.M.

Cpl. G. Minnigan
CSM. T. H. Cooke
Sgt. P. S. Yorke

M.C.

2/Lt. R. F. D. Pemberton

Major R. E. H. Ward
Lt. J. F. Wallace
Major P. Sawyer
Capt. E. B. Foster-Moore
Capt. P. M. Mordaunt
Major G. E. Gower
Lt. J. E. B. Conder
Lt. L. R. Roux (UDF.)
Lt. A. G. Oakley

M.M.

Pte. W. A. Baldwin
Cpl. B. Wynne
Pte. H. McKay
Pte. J. Anderson
Pte. H. C. Barrett
Pte. J. Roberts
CSM. A. Light
Pte. R. G. Spencer

Cpl. A. R. Bremner
Pte. D. J. Couzens
Pte. W. Dunford
CSM. R. McLean
L/Sgt. R. Stevens
Sgt. E. W. Godfrey
Pte. G. Minnigan
L/Cpl. L. W. Etheridge
Sgt. T. H. Cooke
Pt. H. P. Evans
Pte. R. Chalmers
Cpl. A. Soles

B.E.M.

Sgt. J. E. MacLaren

Bronze Star (US. Army)

Cpl. E. H. Hale

HQ. 138 Infantry Brigade

HQ. 138 Inf Bde

C.B.E.

Brigadier G. P. Harding
Brigadier B. M. Archibald

D.S.O.

Brigadier G. P. Harding

M.B.E.

Capt. T. B. Jackman

Major M. C. K. Halford
Capt. R. Walker
Major P. L. Brock

6th Bn The Lincolnshire Regiment

Bar to D.S.O.

Lt.Col. D. P. Yates

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. J. Y. E. Myrtle

Lt.Col. F. C. L. Bell

Lt.Col. D. P. Yates

O.B.E.

Lt.Col. D. P. Yates

M.B.E.

RQMS. C. G. Barr

D.C.M.

Cpl. G. Grutchley

Cpl. J. J. Lyons

Cpl. A. Lewis

Bar to M.C.

Major R. P. Thorman

M.C.

Major F. C. L. Bell

Major R. P. Thorman

Lt. J. H. C. Brunt

Lieut. T. V. Charity

Lieut. R. P. Roach

Major A. M. Glenny

Major M. F. Staniland

Lieut. H. Savage

Major A. de Broe-Ferguson

M.M.

L/Sgt. A. Matthews

Cpl. C. F. Rudkin

L/Cpl. T. Overton

Pte. C. J. Lewis

Pte. T. Hindmarsh

Pte. T. C. Hayes

Pte. R. B. Beagey

Cpl. A. Gibson

Sgt. C. Maynard

L/Cpl. S. R. Shipman

L/Sgt. A. C. W. Sampson

Pte. A. Spooner

Pte. A. B. Smith

Sgt. L. Grainger

Sgt. Parrish

Pte. S. Lawtey

Pte. E. Sherratt

Sgt. A. Frith

Pte. R. Tait

Sgt. C. Smellett

Cpl. W. M. Dalton

Cpl. G. Hollinger

L/Cpl. J. Pickles

Bronze Star (US. Army)

Lt. W. A. E. Todd

2/4th Bn The King's One Yorkshire Light Infantry

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. J. R. Johnson

D.C.M.

L/Cpl. E. Bentham

M.B.E.

Major D. D. Penfold

M.C.

Lieut. M. Oldfield

Capt. F. W. Cook

Capt. W. J. Addison

Lieut. D. L. Burke

Major G. H. Wilford

Lieut. J. H. Browne

Lieut. A. R. Hill

Lieut. H. P. Barnett

Capt. R. E. O. Bell

Major O. P. S. Jones

Lieut. A. B. O'Pray

Major A. J. Drury

M.M.

Cpl. A. Marsden

Sgt. C. Smith

Pte. W. Grace

Cpl. N. McIvor

L/Cpl. G. E. Humble

L/Sgt. H. Sayles

Cpl. S. Lightfoot

Pte. E. P. Holmes

Sgt. J. Boylen

Cpl. E. Mitchell

Sgt. F. Dolby

6th Bn The York and Lancaster Regiment

Bar to D.S.O.

Lt.Col. D. A. Kendrew (2 Bars)

Lt.Col. A. D. Miller (1 Bar)

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. D. A. Kendrew

Lt.Col. A. D. Miller

M.B.E.

Lieut. (QM.) H. J. Winterbottom

RSM. R. Lax

D.C.M.

Sgt. T. Skeats

CQMS. D. Smythe

Bar to M.C.

Major R. Elmhirst

Bar to M. M.

Sgt. J. Sunderland

M.C.

Major G. F. Dark

Capt. R. G. C. Taylor

Capt. W. L. Howard-Smith
Major E. S. Kearsley
Major R. Elmhirst
Major J. W. Bottell
Lieut. R. Gray
Major A. G. Ryshworth-Hill
Major H. J. W. Marsh
Lieut. I. G. Lange

M.M.
Sgt. D. Gill
Cpl. W. Campling
Pte. E. M. Kent
Pte. R. Willans
Cpl. R. Hings
Pte. G. P. Foster
Sgt. C. A. Murphy

L/Sgt. A. Handley
Cpl. C. Day
Cpl. D. Farley
Pte. G. Morrison
Cpl. L. Wilson
CSM. R. Young
Cpl. A. Goodison
Cpl. B. McHugh

HQ. 139 Infantry Brigade

HQ. 139 Inf Bde

C.B.E.

Brigadier A. P. Block

M.B.E.

Major B. R. D. Peppenstall

2/5th Bn The Leicestershire Regiment

D.S.O.

Major H. A. L. Cripps
Major R. O'Brien
Lt.Col. S. Enderby
Lt.Col. F. L. Martin

D. C. M.

L/Sgt. W. Leadbetter
Sgt. H. Sibson

M.C.

Lieut. C. P. Dumenil
Lieut. J. C. B. Ellis
Lieut. R. W. Pearce
Major J. Cassie
Major M. Moore
Major N. T. Lennan
Lieut. P. J. De Moore

Lieut. G. A. Ryland
Lieut. E. L. Trotter
Capt. T. F. H. Addis
Major F. G. Walker
Lieut. C. B. Grant
Capt. R. A. Leigh

Bar to M.M.

Sgt. J. Hurt

M.M.

Pte. L. A. Jones
Pte. J. R. Woods
Pte. F. C. Lingfeld
Cpl. W. J. Booth
L/Sgt. J. Johnson
Cpl. R. White
Sgt. G. Spencer

Sgt. N. French
Pte. T. W. Tams
Cpl. J. Hurt
Cpl. J. Hegg
Sgt. R. Smith
Pte. H. Knott
Cpl. R. Smith
Pte. W. Pinchess
Pte. J. H. Warwick
L/Cpl. R. B. Dickings
Pte. Shiels
L/Sgt. E. Stafford
Pte. A. Creighton
Pte. T. Banks

Medal for Valour (Russian Army)

L/Sgt. B. J. Hammond

5th Bn The Sherwood Foresters

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. J. R. Welchman

M.B.E.

Capt. E. L. Armitage
Capt. R. V. Hammond

D.C.M.

Sgt. L. A. Hunter
Sgt. L. Stevenson

M.C.

Capt. P. Palmer
Lieut. C. Stalley
Major G. A. Lord
Capt. W. S. Thompson
Major C. A. W. Williamson
Lieut. A. Wright
Lieut. R. J. J. Oliver
Major B. Williamson

Lieut. F. Griffiths

Capt. R. J. Carson

M.M.

Cpl. W. Pigeon
L/Cpl. C. Adshead
Pte. G. Dale
Sgt. H. Littlewood
Sgt. G. T. Stokes
Cpl. C. E. Banton

Pte. G. Oakes
Sgt. W. Gilbert
L/Cpl. J. Wilson
Cpl. A. W. Harvey
Pte. J. H. Jones

Medal for Distinguished Battle Service (Russian Army)

Lieut. W. R. Crane

Major D. K. Crews
Sgt. C. Newbold

16th Bn The Durham Light Infantry

Bar to D.S.O.

Major G. Jobey

D.S.O.

Lt.Col. J. C. Preston
Major G. Jobey

M.B.E.

RSM. J. Thommasson

D.C.M.

CSM. S. Wilson

M.C.

Lieut. T. Reynolds
Capt. F. Duffy
Major P. A. Casey

Major T. G. L. Ballance

Lieut. R. Sherlaw

Major D. H. C. Worrell

Lieut. R. L. Elliott

Lieut. R. H. Collins

Lieut. Pearson

M.M.

L/Sgt. J. Drake

L/Sgt. J. Winterhausen

Pte. R. Hulse

L/Sgt. W. Hudson

Pte. H. Hooley

Sgt. H. Chilvers

Sgt. P. W. H. Griffin

Pte. A. Leadbitter

Cpl. J. Lewindon

Cpl. R. Sykes

Cpl. J. Hall

Pte. F. Cerowski

Pte. J. Douglas

L/Cpl. A. Calderbank

Cpl. J. Saunders

Cpl. J. Cawdron

Pte. R. Crookes

Pte. J. J. Peckett

CSM. A. Mattin

Silver Star (US. Army)

CSM. A. May

Attached Units

D.C.M.

L/Cpl. J. Byrne
3 Grenadier Guards
Tpr. J. L. Coombes
40 Royal Tanks
L/Cpl. A. Baker
1 Commando

M.C.

Capt. R. J. Griffiths
N.I.H.
Lieut. D. H. Cowap
1 Commando

Lieut. G. Barton

40 Royal Tanks

2/Lt. H. E. Irwin

N.I.H.

Capt. D. M. Davidson

1 Commando

M.M.

Cpl. R. B. Cox

N.I. H.

Cpl. J. Beattie

1 Commando

Pte. J. Williams

1 Commando

Cpl. E. W. Edwards

50 Royal Tanks

Tpr. A. Maguire

N.I.H.

Cpl. R. Scantlebury

1 Commando

Cpl. I. Ross

40 Royal Tanks

Croix de Guerre and Star

Capt. O'Brien

1 Para Bde

NOTE. 1. This list of Honours and Awards covers the campaigns in North Africa and Italy only.